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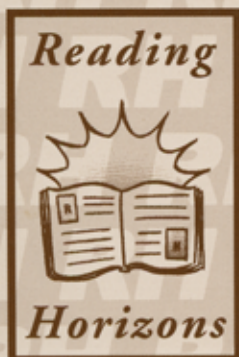
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Dorothy J. McGinnis Reading Center and Clinic
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Western Michigan University



Reading Horizons

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Reading Horizons

History and Mission of Reading Horizons: *Reading Horizons* began in 1960 as a local newsletter and has developed into an international journal serving major colleges, universities, and individual subscribers across the United States and Canada as well as a host of other countries. The journal serves as a forum for ideas from many schools of thought dedicated to building upon the knowledge base of literacy through research, theoretical essays, opinion pieces, policy studies, and syntheses of best practices. *Reading Horizons* seeks to bring together school professionals, literacy researchers, teacher educators, parents and community leaders as they work collaboratively to widen the horizons of literacy and the language arts.

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There is no more crucial or basic skill in all of education than reading.

READING HORIZONS

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Creating a Pathway to Multicultural Education in Urban Communities: Real-Life Experiences for Preservice Teachers

Margaret A. Moore-Hart
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The classrooms within our nation are becoming rich tapestries, interwoven with people of diverse cultures and ethnic groups. In response to the evolving tapestries, many educators advocate the need to heighten preservice teachers' sensitivity to cultural issues so that they might apply this cultural knowledge within their teaching and learning. Using a reconstructionist approach, where preservice teachers become caring citizens who reach out to help culturally diverse children, is one way to address these issues. This manuscript describes an alternative tutoring program, where meaningful teaching and learning emerges within an urban community, and its' evaluation process. As a result of participating in this experience, preservice teachers learn to understand the social context within which literacy can occur. The evaluation process reveals, through the use of observations, questionnaires, interviews, and writing samples, the impact of this experience on preservice teachers' teaching and learning, as well as young children's reading and writing performance.

DURING THE PAST DECADE, alternative pathways to multicultural education for preservice teachers have surfaced within various teacher education institutions. Even though many of these pathways recognize the existence of a culturally diverse population within our schools and the need to address this diversity, few pathways lead to the successful development of behavioral changes of preservice teachers once they enter the classroom. Holms and Nations-Johnson (1994), for example, report that preservice teachers are saturated with information about multicultural education, only to ignore it when they enter field settings. Similarly, even though Banks (2001) feels that his students begin to seriously challenge their beliefs, attitudes, values, and knowledge after taking his class, he questions whether these attitudinal and value changes transform their behavior in the classroom. Other preservice teachers artificially insert culture into the curriculum, which results in simplification, reductionism, and universalism (Banks, 1993; Erickson, 1990; Giroux, 1993; Sleeter & Grant, 1994).

In order to become effective teachers in a culturally diverse society, preservice teachers need to be culturally sensitive (Banks, 2001; Bristor, Pelaez, & Crawley, 2000; Goodwin, 1994; Hoffman, 1996; Jordan, 1995) and to be able to apply their knowledge about differences among students so that they might facilitate learning of all students (Banks, 2001; Bristor, et al, 2000; Goodwin, 1994; Greenman & Kimmel, 1995; Kirk, 2001). Artificially infusing culture into the curriculum will foster stereotypical viewpoints and encourages people to think that culture can be dissected, categorized, and inserted into convenient slots. Understanding of cultural perspectives requires a holistic and comparative perspective that allows students at elementary, secondary, and university levels to draw their own conclusions and abstractions from evidence and reflection (Banks, 1993; Hoffman, 1996).

As evidence of preservice teachers' failure to apply their multicultural education knowledge increases, the search for effective training models continues. In response to this search, Hoffman (1996) advocates the need to promote more genuine forms of multicultural teaching and learning so that we might realize real transformation of the way preservice teachers conceptualize and practice education in plural societies. Other researchers state the need for teacher educators to model

various examples of learning about culture within their university courses (Ladson-Billings, 1991; Smith, 1981). According to these researchers, this model will facilitate preservice teachers' application of multicultural practices within their teaching in the classroom.

Shaw (1993) moves beyond modeling. He affirms that conceptual changes, or real growth, occur when preservice teachers engage in "powerful experiences" that involve the whole person, require mental and emotional attention, and challenge one's ways of seeing the world. Part of this "powerful experience" is addressed by Tyler (1949) and Packman (1991) who point out that learning emerges through the active behavior of the student. They affirm that students learn more from doing than watching.

Similarly, if we want to encourage preservice teachers to use strategies that reflect multicultural theories and trends in instruction, educators need to provide active experiences within multicultural settings (Bristor, et al, 2000; McDiarmid, 1992; May, 1992; Potthoff, Dinsmore, Eifler, Stirtz, Walsh, & Ziebarth, 2000). However, placement in a culturally diverse setting does not ensure that "powerful experiences" or meaningful multicultural teaching and learning is occurring. Goodwin (1994) and Haberman (1991) reiterate that there is a need to carefully select and assess the field placements.

One way to provide both powerful experiences and meaningful multicultural teaching and learning is through volunteer tutoring programs located in culturally and linguistically diverse schools or urban communities. Preservice teachers participating in these programs can construct clarified cultural identifications and become knowledgeable, caring citizens who use their knowledge to make society more just and humane (Banks, 2000; Potthoff et al, 2000; Sleeter & Grant, 1994). According to Sleeter and Grant (1994), education which is both multicultural and social reconstructionist is the least developed approach. However, they emphasize that this approach holds the most promise for social change, justice and equality. If teacher education faculty further direct these tutoring, we will simultaneously be able to monitor the selection and assessment of placements more easily (Potthoff et al, 2000).

During the past few years, I have been the Director of Project Literacy, a volunteer tutoring program sponsored by United Way and Eastern Michigan University's (EMU) Institute for Community and Regional Development (ICARD) and Department of Teacher Education. This tutoring program is an outreach program for African American children within their neighborhood community center to foster their love for reading and to help them increase their reading performance. In addition, the tutoring program is a "powerful experience" that actively involves preservice teachers in teaching and learning through modeling by a literacy professor. The program is also a way for preservice teachers at EMU to practice the strategies they have been learning in their multicultural education course and elementary reading methods course. Most important, the program is a way to promote social change, justice, and equality.

Helping Children Improve their Literacy

As a result of current initiatives to help elementary students improve their reading performance so that they might read at their appropriate grade level by third grade, interest in tutoring programs for at-risk students has emerged across the nation. Current research suggests that many students improved their reading performance through these tutoring programs (Fitzgerald, 2001; Moore-Hart & Karabenick, 2000).

If tutoring programs are to be successful, they must be grounded in current theory and practice (Fitzgerald, 2001; Moore-Hart & Karabenick, 2000). For example, to help culturally and linguistically diverse students improve their reading performance, there is also a need to help them develop thoughtful, clarified, and healthy identifications and connections with their cultural heritage, history, and beliefs (Au, 1993, 1995; Banks, 2001, 1993; Kirk, 2001; Diamond and Moore, 1995). These authors further emphasize that culturally and linguistically diverse students also need to feel that the school curriculum acknowledges, reflects, and values their cultural heritage and them as individuals. One effective way to foster and develop healthy connections between students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds is through multicultural literature (Au, 1998; Bishop, 1987; Diamond & Moore, 1995; Moore, Diamond, & Knapp, 2003). Daisey (1997) similarly suggests the use of storytelling and

biographies of culturally diverse scientists and mathematicians as another way to promote these healthy connections.

Kirk (2001) and Fairbanks (1998) similarly emphasize the need to immerse students in authentic reading and writing situations that evolve from students' family histories, life circumstances, and cultural roots. Writing autobiographies, poetry, journal writing, or narratives about their life experiences are examples of authentic writing situations suggested by these authors. Immersing students in authentic reading and writing events is consistent with research that recognizes the relationship between reading and writing (Routman, 1994; Shanahan, 1988; Tompkins, 1994). Kirk (2001) and Fitzgerald (1993) caution that there is a need to ignore incorrect grammar, nonstandard punctuation, and spelling at first for culturally and linguistically diverse learners. They state that rewards should evolve from students' efforts and experimentation with print rather than from their mistakes.

Even though research illustrates that instruction which integrates reading and writing reinforces and strengthens students' performance in reading and writing, few tutoring programs integrate authentic writing activities into the program. Many tutoring programs are limited to interactive reading between tutors and tutees through the use of trade books (Moore-Hart & Karabenick, 2000). Equally interesting, most tutoring programs are not structured to foster and develop healthy connections between students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds through multicultural literature, storytelling, or biographies; most programs are not structured to include authentic reading and writing experiences that evolve from tutees' family histories, life circumstances, and cultural roots.

Purpose of Article

As the director of Project Literacy, I decided to restructure our tutoring program to include these multicultural principles and perspectives, as well as research on reading and writing. The following article describes Project Literacy, how I monitored and assessed the tutoring program, and what I learned from my evaluation of the program. As I evaluated the tutoring program, I wanted to explore the significance

of the tutoring program for preservice teachers and culturally diverse children. In the course of examining the tutoring program, I hoped to gain insights into preservice teachers' learning experiences within culturally diverse settings and tutees' reading and writing performance when it emerges from their families' history, life experiences, and cultural roots. The insights I gained from the evaluation would help me modify and reform the tutoring program as I continue. Specifically, the following questions guided my evaluation of the tutoring program:

1. How did the preservice teachers feel about participating in this tutoring program, located within a culturally diverse setting?
2. How did the preservice teachers feel that this experience within a culturally diverse setting influenced their understanding of multicultural education?
3. How did the culturally diverse tutees feel about participating in this tutoring program?
4. How did the culturally diverse tutees feel their reading and writing changed?

Project Literacy: A Description of the Tutoring Program

What is it and Who is involved?

Project Literacy is a weekly tutoring program designed to help children who live in an urban community improve their reading and writing at their apartment community center, located centrally within a large apartment complex. Children of varying ages have a place to come to read and a place to get help with their schoolwork from volunteers at their apartment community center. The two-hour sessions are informal, providing children, who are predominately African American, opportunities to read, listen to stories being read, write poems and stories, and receive help with their homework from caring, supportive preservice teachers. The philosophy of the program is to deliver services at the neighborhood level; the mission is to help create successful reading experiences for the children.

Children (N=25) participating in the program reside within the apartment complex. Approximately 98 percent of the children are

African American, with a small population of Asian or Mexican American students. The children live in a low-income neighborhood, which has areas of urban decay and a high degree of crime and substance abuse. Many of the children live in single parent homes where their mothers who are struggling to make ends meet, have two or more jobs. The children attending the tutoring program range in ages from 5 to 13. Although most of the children are elementary students, some are teenagers seeking help or desiring to help the younger children within their apartment complex. For example, one 13 year old, Monica, explained she came because her mother thought it would be good for her. She also shared that it was fun because some of her friends are here and she can help out with the younger children.

In addition, most of the children were reading below grade level in school. They had limited opportunities to read at home with their parents or mothers. Many of their parents were overwhelmed and exhausted from working long hours. Some of their parents did not believe they could help their children because they, too, had experienced difficulties reading and writing in school. Most of the children further had limited experiences with writing at home or school.

The tutors (N=20) participating in the program present primarily female, European-American preservice teachers taking a reading methods class at a nearby university located in southeast Michigan. Three of the tutors are African American; two are male preservice teachers. Fifteen percent of the tutors were freshmen or sophomores; 85 percent were juniors or seniors. They all volunteered their time, two hours per week, in order to help these children who live in poverty. According to one tutor, Sandi, it is important that we let these children know that there are people who care about them. The tutors also share they have an opportunity to try strategies and techniques they are learning within their reading methods class. As Jennifer explains, "We get to see what really works." She also pointed out that she could practice developing her own lesson plans while working with the children.

Importantly, as director of Project Literacy, I am a learner among learners as I simultaneously extend my own understanding and

knowledge about diversity within this urban setting. Consistent with Joyce and Showers (1980), I organized our tutoring program to include five essential elements: study of the theoretical basis of the new teaching method, observation of demonstrations by a model educator, practice in simulated settings, opportunities for feedback, and coaching. As preservice teachers participated in the program, they would have additional opportunities to see multicultural literacy strategies modeled by a literacy professor. They would also have someone to guide them as they begin implementing the modeled strategies with their tutees or trying other strategies they are learning within their methods classes at the tutoring site. Importantly, they would also have someone to provide them feedback, coaching, and support as they practice the strategies with their tutees. In addition to directing the program, I recruit volunteers from reading methods classes, order and maintain supplies to be used with the program, and plan the tutoring sessions for each semester.

How Does Project Literacy Work?

I organized the tutoring program to give children a chance to interactively read books with their tutors, listen to stories being read by their tutors, or do their homework with the assistance of their tutors for the first hour. During the first forty minutes, tutors interactively read with their tutees, following the techniques modeled at their workshop or within their reading methods classes. While informally reading and talking about the stories they are reading, tutors and tutees enjoyed a healthy snack provided by United Way. The books children are reading are part of the Project Literacy library, located in the apartment community center. The library, which is continually growing through funds provided by United Way, includes a large number of African American picture books, various multicultural books (See Diamond and Moore, 1995), and numerous picture books which are part of "Children's Choices," sponsored by the International Reading Association (Children's Choices includes favorite books of children and teachers determined through a survey process each year).

During the second hour, I modeled a variety of interactive literacy activities that evolved from the children's families history, life circumstances, or cultural roots for the preservice teachers. These

activities frequently began with a selection from a multicultural picture book, which I read aloud to the group while asking questions to stimulate thinking and active participation in the reading event. The selections, which included a variety of genre, were chosen to foster healthy connections between the children's cultural and life experiences. The multicultural stories also provided a context for authentic writing experiences, including poetry, narratives, biographies, and informational texts.

During this portion of the session, I further modeled the importance of prewriting activities in the writing process for the preservice teachers and students. Once the prewriting activities were completed, preservice teachers and students composed their drafts. Then they informally revised and edited their drafts together. Since preservice teachers were prewriting and drafting their own writing pieces as well, the children always had a model of how to prewrite and compose their pieces.

The sessions culminated with an opportunity for tutees to share their writing with their peers. Throughout the sessions, I continuously circulated, giving praise to preservice teachers and the children as they socially interacted and participated in these literacy experiences. I further supported the children as they used their temporary spelling, giving them words of praise for their efforts. Consistent with Kirk (2001), incorrect grammar, nonstandard punctuation and capitalization were ignored by myself and preservice teachers at this point. Our goal was that the children become confident in their ability to write. The writing pieces were later typed in a monthly newsletter for parents and put in student folders for the children by a graduate assistant. Since the writing was to be published, the graduate assistant changed the grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling, as necessary, so that the pieces could easily be read.

A Workshop for Preservice Teachers

To provide preservice teachers the theoretical framework for both the tutoring program and multicultural issues, I planned a two-hour workshop prior to their first tutoring session. During this workshop, I shared information about the Literacy Corps, its history, philosophy, and mission. Following this introduction, I modeled several current multicultural reading/writing strategies they could use with their tutees.

To help the preservice teachers become better acquainted with one another at the beginning of the workshop, I began by having them interview a partner using the "I AM" format. Working in pairs, the partners interviewed one another, asking for words to describe themselves, things they like and don't like, things that they do well and not so well. Interviewees recorded their partner's responses on their "I AM" sheets. Once interviewers completed their poem, partners switched roles and interviewees became interviewers. Upon completion of the interviews, the partners realized they had created poems describing one another. Not only did the preservice teachers have an opportunity to get to know one another better, they also practiced the interviewing process they would use with their tutees during our first session.

At this point, I cautioned the preservice teachers that many of the children might have concerns about correct spelling when interviewing. To alleviate these concerns, I encouraged them to have the children use "temporary spelling," spelling the words the best they could, using their knowledge of sounds and letters. If tutees were unsure of how to spell a word, I modeled how to say the word slowly; stretching the word out, and having the children record the sounds/letters they knew. Using this approach, I shared, will reinforce the symbol-sound relationship so that their tutees will begin to read and write words independently. I also explained that our goal was to increase students' confidence in their ability to write and to increase fluency. I added that all the children's poems would later be typed and published in their tutoring folder and in a monthly newsletter for the parents. The published writing would include the correct spelling and grammatical components.

Next, I modeled strategies for reading with their tutees. First, I modeled the Directed Reading Thinking Listening Activity (DRLTA) Stauffer (1975), a strategy that can be used when reading stories aloud. While reading the story, *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe (1988), an African version of Cinderella, I showed preservice teachers how to stop and ask prediction questions as they read stories with their tutees. After reading the story, I demonstrated how to use the "I AM" format to create a poem about one of Mufaro's daughters, using prewriting strategies (For more specific information about these strategies, see Diamond and Moore, 1995).

I AM

I am _____, _____, _____
I like to _____, _____, and _____.
_____ and _____ are important to me.
I am good at _____, _____, and _____.
I am not good at _____, _____, and _____.
I love my _____, _____, and _____.
I don't like _____, _____, and _____.
This is me.

I finished the session by modeling various ways to read with a tutee, using the cloze procedure. With the use of overhead transparencies of multicultural stories, I showed preservice teachers how to use this procedure while they read interactively with their tutees by having the tutees help them read the story. Depending upon the reading ability of the tutee, I explained, tutors could pause at single words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs. Whenever they pause, I shared; their tutees would then read the single words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs. I reemphasized that they could decide whether to have the tutees read single words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs according to their reading level and ability and the difficulty of the book. Reading with their tutee in this interactive way helps tutees learn to recognize more words and learn to use appropriate phrasing and expression, which is modeled by them, the tutors. This strategy could further reduce the stress reluctant readers often experience when reading by themselves, having to stop frequently to seek assistance in the pronunciation of numerous words.

Finally, I concluded the workshop session by sharing the importance of understanding and appreciating differences among people and fostering positive human relations in a global society. I further emphasized the importance of making positive connections between children's cultural and personal experiences by integrating authentic reading and writing activities that reflect their life experiences, beliefs, traditions, history, and values. We then reflected about the various reading/writing activities modeled within the workshop and how these activities might promote successful reading and writing experiences for the African American children. We also discussed other ways we might construct authentic reading and writing experiences that evolve from the

cultural and personal experiences of these children. Finally, I congratulated them for being proactive, striving to make a difference in the lives of these children. I pointed out that this is the highest level of multicultural education striving to change the status quo of society, justice, and equity.

What Does the Tutoring Program Look Like?

The following week, we met at the apartment community center for our first session of the Literacy Corps. Tutors began the sessions by introducing themselves to their tutees and then interactively reading books with them while enjoying their snacks. After about forty minutes, we regrouped. After introducing the tutors and myself to the children, I explained the interview process for the "I AM" poem and shared that we would publish their "I AM" poems and the "I AM" poems of their tutors in their parents' monthly newsletter in a few weeks. I further explained that all their weekly writing pieces would be typed and published in folders for them to keep.

Tutors and tutees eagerly began interviewing one another. While recording their responses, tutors and tutees further had the opportunity to get to know one another better, asking one another more questions. The children also experienced the joys of writing, while practicing their reading, as they shared their "I Am" poems with the whole group. As the children worked on their poems, I also circulated, giving them praise for their ideas and willingness to record the responses, using their temporary spelling. This further modeled the importance of praise to the preservice teachers. At the same time, I guided the use of temporary spelling whenever needed, supporting the preservice teachers as they applied this teaching strategy with their tutees. Children who finished early drew pictures to accompany the poem or practiced reading their poems aloud. By the end of the session, new friendships were forming; new bonds were developing. The children began to look forward to the next few weeks with anticipation.

All subsequent sessions followed this same format. Children read books with their tutors, listened to stories being read by their tutors, or did their homework with the assistance of their tutors while eating their

snacks during the first forty minutes. The last forty minutes included a variety of interactive reading and writing experiences modeled by me. At the close of the tutoring sessions, tutees always had an opportunity to share their writing with their peers. To facilitate the interactive process and model effective teaching and learning strategies during the sessions, I continuously circulated, praising preservice teachers and the children as they interacted and participated in the literacy experiences. I also used this time to coach preservice teachers as they applied various strategies or to answer questions.

How Did We Promote Children's Reading Through Writing?

As the weeks continued, tutors and tutees continued to read and write together. The topics included authentic reading and writing situations that evolved from students' family histories, life circumstances, and cultural roots. They wrote autobiographies, poetry, or narratives about their life experiences as suggested by Kirk (2001) and Fairbanks (1998). During one session, for example, after reading a variety of poems about winter together, the tutors and tutees wrote winter poems. After I read a variety of poems about winter aloud to the group, preservice teachers and students took notes, in a list form; of activities they enjoyed doing in the winter as I reread the poems more slowly. Students were encouraged to use their temporary spelling as they took notes. Those who were unsure about taking notes followed their preservice teachers' model at first. Once they saw how to take notes, they continued on their own. After everyone took notes on the poems, we then dramatized two of the poems about building snowmen. The children were now ready to compose their own poems about winter in Michigan. Once again, those who were unsure about writing a poem began to see how to organize their ideas into a poem from their preservice teachers' model. Importantly, this literacy experience helped them see connections between reading and writing and their life experiences. Tesha's and Dion's poems are displayed below:

Winter
When I think of winter
I think of cozy clothes,
Knitted hats, sweaters and mittens.

Tiny, cute, purring little kittens.
Ending all my coldness with hot chocolate
Run jump, skate and play
Winter
Tesda, Age 8

Winter
Build snowmen,
Make a snow angel,
Have snowball fights.
Drink hot chocolate with marshmallow and whipped cream
Winter
Dion, Age 7

On another occasion, I read the story, *A Weed is A Flower* by Alike (1988), aloud. I hoped that students might form role models for their own lives as I read this story about George Washington Carver, an African American scientist. As I read this story aloud, preservice teachers and children wrote notes about George Washington Carver's life, his values and beliefs, and his accomplishments as a scientist. Once again the preservice teachers modeled the process for the children who quickly caught on and began notetaking on their own papers. The notes were then used to compose biopoems about George Washington Carver. Shakisha's (age 9) biopoem is found below:

George Washington
Son of a slave
Lover of flowers, weeds, roses
Who feels curious, happy, courageous
Who needs education, clothes, love
Who fears slavery, shadows, dark
Who gives peanuts, sweet potatoes
Who would like to see freedom, snow, friends
Resident of Alabama
Carver

Her poem reveals the importance of courage, education, love and freedom in George Washington Carver's life. Perhaps George Washington Carver's beliefs and values will be a model for Shakisha to

pursue in her own life.

Many children like to dream about imaginary trips or events in their own lives. Just before the preservice teachers were to leave for their spring break, I read the story, *Just us Women* by Caines (1982), aloud to the group. After reading this story, which is about a young African American girl and her aunt taking a trip, I had the preservice teachers and children brainstorm a place they would like to go someday. Then I had them form a web of where they would go and what they would do on this trip. Donita (age 8) chose to go to Disney World:

Let's go! It's jump-up time. Me and my friend Katrina are going to Florida. We cannot wait to get there! The first thing we are going to do is to go check into a hotel and now we are on our way to have fun. Then we are going to spend the weekend at Disney World. When we get there I want to go on a lot of rides like water rides and rides that go high up in the air.

Now we are there, getting up on those fun and exciting rides. We have gotten really tired so we are going back to the hotel and go to sleep.

One can see how the model of the story helped her come up with a creative lead and a great ending for her story.

Desiring to help the children form healthy connections between their cultural roots and traditions, I read Maya Angelou's (1994) book, *My Painted House, My Friendly Chicken, and Me*, a story that depicts the life of a young girl living in Tania. As the preservice teachers and children listened to the story, they recorded notes about African traditions and customs in this African village. Once the story was read, they composed letters to a friend or relative, sharing what they had learned about life in this African village. This is a letter Dewayne wrote to his mom and dad:

Dear Mom and Dad,

To day we read a story about a girl in Africa. The girl went to school. She is an eight year old girl. She has a friend who was friends with a chicken. She had been to her friends house before. They had bikes just like us.

From,
Dewayne, Age 7

On another occasion, I read the story, *The Talking Cloth* by Mitchell (1997). The story recounts how two children's aunt, who had just returned from Africa, told them about the African tradition of the talking cloth. After listening to the story, preservice teachers and children created their own "story cloths," using colored markers. Once they completed their story cloths, they wrote about the meaning of their story cloths. Chamiya (age 7) wrote:

My Story Cloth

I feel like an Ashanti Princess when I wear my story cloth. Each of the colors mean different things to me. Brown is "happy" to me. Blue is "real". Green means "special" to me and black is my hair. I like pink. This is my story cloth.

Children also continued to write about events in their lives, just as they had done with their winter poems. For example, as spring was approaching, I brought in several bouquets of flowers for children to observe. After they used their observation skills to talk about the different flowers, I had them complete webs, which built on the five senses—smelling, touching, feeling, seeing, and hearing—about the flowers. Once the webs were completed, the preservice teachers and children used these words to compose poems. Jamil and Dominique composed the following poems:

Spring Flowers

I hear them twinkle like the stars in the sky
When I hear them rhyme, they sweeten my heart
down and low
They make me sing very slow
Flowers smell so beautiful to me

Just how they are
Yellow and green
Sometimes they can be purple and yellow
But the most beautiful color on a flower to me is
green and yellow.
Dominique, Age 8

Spring Flowers
I think they smell beautiful like the wind in the sky
The way they bloom they smell so fresh—like stars that
twinkle
They feel so light
And they are pretty and tall like God in the sky
And they look so, so sweet
I love pretty flowers
They are fresh
They are yellow and green like my mom's perfume
They feel so funny
They are moist and dry
They feel small and soft like a baby's feet
Flowers are nice and cute
I am going to have a garden
Oh, I love flowers
Jamil, Age 9

Then in April, children wrote poems about Easter. To help preservice teachers and students to brainstorm their ideas and thoughts about Easter, they formed lists of words, ideas, and events related to Easter on their paper. Following this prewriting activity, Melvin and Conswala wrote the following poems about Easter:

Easter
Easter looks like a sunny day.
Easter sounds like birds chirping!
Easter smells like boiled eggs.
Easter tastes like chocolate.
Easter.
Melvin, Age 7

Easter
Easter looks like women dressed up in dresses and hats.

Easter sounds like kids playing, singing choirs, and church songs.
Easter smells like barbecue and dinner cooking.
Easter tastes like jelly beans and chocolate eggs.
Easter feels like warm sunny breezes and furry stuffed animals.
Easter
Gemeke, Age 8

Thus, the interactive reading and writing activities followed the suggestions of Kirk (2001), Fairbanks (1998), and Daisey (1997). They were authentic reading and writing situations that evolved from students' family history; life circumstances; their cultural roots, traditions, beliefs, or values; or cultural models such as scientists, mathematicians, or leaders.

Assessing Project Literacy and Its Impact on Preservice and Student Learning

My efforts to evaluate the Project drew on qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Using these procedures, I hoped to gain insights into preservice teachers' learning experiences within culturally diverse settings and tutees' reading and writing performances when they emerge from their family histories, life experiences, and cultural roots.

Throughout the duration of the project, I was a participant-observer, recording events and interactions among preservice teachers and students through the use of field notes. Additional data included written artifacts, preservice teacher and student questionnaires, preservice teacher and student interviews, and preservice observational notes. Specifically, the preservice questionnaires provided insight into their views about the tutoring experience, what they learned from the experience, how the experience benefited them and the children, and what suggestions they had for the program. The children's questionnaires provided insight into their feelings about the program, reading and writing; how the program helped them; and what new things they learned as a result of the tutoring experience. In order to monitor the tutoring program and its impact on the children's reading and writing, I also had preservice teachers record their observations at the conclusion of each session. The format for their observations included at least one successful experience during the session, observations of their tutees' reading and writing performance, and suggestions or questions they might have. To provide a more in-

depth perspective, a graduate student also interviewed five preservice teachers and three children in April. The open-ended, structured interviews gave preservice teachers and children opportunities to talk about the experience and its benefits/strengths/weaknesses in greater detail. These interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed. Responses from the questionnaires and interviews were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Miles & Huberman, 1984). Patterns and themes related to teaching and learning were noted and compiled.

What I Learned from the Observations

Close analysis of the interactions between the preservice teachers and the African American children revealed that bonds were developing between the tutees and tutors. Whenever one looked about the room, one saw smiling faces and children desiring to learn. If a preservice teacher or student was absent, their partner immediately wanted to know where they were and if they would be back the following week. Even though I placed the children with new partners on these rare occasions, they appeared disappointed and would inquire about their partner two or three times during the session. Similarly, preservice teachers were discontented if their tutees did not show.

Although many of the European-American preservice teachers shared that they had few prior experiences working with African American children, they became very comfortable with their partners in a short time. Andrea's comment illustrates how this experience has influenced her, "I learned a lot about the students and the families, especially in the African-American culture. I've seen how what we are doing makes a difference in the children's lives and the families they come from, the community as a whole." Similarly, Jennifer's comment shows how her feelings about culturally diverse people changed, "I've become more understanding [of people] with different backgrounds because in my school ... I never had anybody different but white kids."

The observations also revealed animated conversations between the tutor and tutees. At the beginning of each session, the two talked about informal experiences, things that were happening in their lives, or things

that happened in school or at home that day. Once the pairs began reading, they dialogued about the story they were reading, sharing their own personal experiences or feelings about the characters in the story. Frequently, the conversation revolved around the story's meaning through questioning or discussing the meaning of new vocabulary words.

Observations further demonstrated increased confidence and continuous growth in preservice teachers' use of effective teaching strategies. Before long, they became more comfortable with the "shared reading experience" as they took turns with their partner reading single words, sentences, paragraphs, or pages together. Some preservice teachers even became creative with the approach. For example, one preservice teacher became a character in the story she was reading with her tutee; her tutee became another character. These shared reading experiences repeatedly provided children a model of effective reading strategies, expression, and phrasing. With practice, their own fluency improved as they imitated their tutors' expression or phrasing.

In addition, preservice teachers began to talk more about the story and its meaning with their partners, asking higher level questions about the story, and discussing the meanings of words unfamiliar to the children. Many of the preservice teachers also began to try various strategies they were learning in their reading methods classes. For example, some tried the KWL strategy, the Venn Diagram, or the use of graphic organizers before reading. Others tried language experience stories with the younger children or journal writing. Still others made games or used hands-on learning materials such as magnetic letters or letter tiles to reinforce letter knowledge or symbol sound relationships. Several preservice teachers also began to bring some of their favorite books to the tutoring session to share with their tutees.

During the interactive reading and writing portion of the session, the preservice teachers also explained the strategies they used when taking notes, webbing, or drafting their ideas to the children. This provided scaffolding for the children as they began to attempt the same strategies with their own notetaking, prewriting, or drafting activities. The preservice teachers' model of writing also helped the children realize how to do the various genres of writing more easily. Importantly,

preservice teachers guided the children's writing through praise, encouragement, and more praise, following the model I gave them. The children's faces beamed with pride; their confidence in their own ability to read and write grew steadily.

Observations of the children's interest and motivation in the stories read aloud during this portion of the tutoring session illustrated the power of reading multicultural works that present cultures in an authentic manner. Students were motivated to read the books independently later. As they continued to read these books and stories, which were readily available for them in the Project Literacy library, children's reading performance, especially their fluency, seemed to be increasing.

The books further became catalysts for writing and valuing their own life experiences. Consistent with Kirk (2001) and Fairbanks (1998), students wrote insightful pieces that revealed significant events and experiences in their lives. For example, Dewayne discovered that children in Africa attend school just like him, and they, too, ride bikes. Shakisha realized the importance of courage, freedom, education, and love in her life from writing her poem about George Washington Carver. Others discovered the joys of imagination in their lives or the magic that each new season brings to our lives. Importantly, the writing further revealed the students' values and beliefs in their lives. For example, Gemeke and Jamil's poems illustrate the importance of God and religion in their lives. As children listened to their peers share their writings, their own experiences, beliefs, and values became validated.

As time went on, the number of children attending the sessions grew. Word had spread among the children and parents. New tutees who came to the sessions were eager to have something published in the monthly newsletters, too. They were motivated to join their peers as they interactively read, wrote poems or stories, and shared their writing together. Tracy, a preservice teacher, in fact, shared that her tutee, Ashley, did not want to quit writing when it was time to go home. Others reported that their tutees were writing two or three pieces each session.

What We Learned From the Preservice Questionnaires, Interviews, and Observations

Preservice teachers' feelings about the tutoring experience. All preservice teachers reported that the tutoring experience was an enjoyable, rewarding experience (Question 1). Examples of their comments about the tutoring experience include:

- "I really enjoyed the experience. I liked working with the children and I learned a lot."
- "Great! What an experience!"

This represented a change for many of the preservice teachers, who were initially frightened of the experience due to Project Literacy's location in a low-income neighborhood within an urban community. As the semester continued, they were no longer concerned about the project's location. They discovered the rewards of helping others as shown by their comments:

- "I felt my time was being used for a good cause."
- "I felt children were having fun while learning to read. It was a very positive experience."
- "I realize it is very easy to make a positive influence on the lives of children."

Perhaps the experience became empowering due to the "powerful experience" that engaged them actively while simultaneously drawing upon their mental and emotional attention. These comments illustrate their feelings:

- "I'm glad I had an opportunity to volunteer."
- "I felt great helping the children—a very rewarding experience."
- "I enjoyed getting to know the children and knowing that I helped them learn."

Interestingly, some of the preservice teachers became more committed to volunteerism. For example, one preservice teacher commented, "People should volunteer their time to serve their

community, whether it be helping the kids, the homeless. I mean whatever, just anything where you're doing something to help other people instead of thinking about yourself." Similarly, Sean commented, "My attitude hasn't changed, but I just feel that I've become more aware. I always felt that community service was very important but now I just think it's really, really important. Just in more depth." Importantly, another preservice teacher shared that the experience inspired her to work in an urban setting. She shared, "I plan to continue with community service. Before I thought I'd like to work in an urban setting, but now I'm almost positive I want to work in an urban setting."

Preservice teachers' understanding of multicultural education. Regarding their understanding of multicultural education (Question 2), preservice teachers gained new insights into their own understanding of multiculturalism. For many, this was their first culturally diverse encounter. They had attended schools located in monocultural suburban settings. Others had only had limited experiences with culturally diverse children. These preservice teachers explained that they were more aware of cultural differences and more open to different lifestyles of children as a result of the experience.

- "This experience should really help me since I have not had an experience with multicultural children."
- "I have become more open to different lifestyles of children."
- "It gives me more of an understanding of kids' needs/wants. I'm more open."
- "It has exposed me to a wide variety of individuals and helped me to better interact with others who are different from me."

Many preservice teachers also shared that they gained more knowledge about and insight into children of differing ages and backgrounds through the experience. Others became more confident in their abilities to work with diverse children.

- "This experience will help me understand the different living arrangements and communities that my students will be a part of."
- "I've worked with a lot of kids from diverse settings. I learned a lot about them, how to work with them."

- “I feel more confident in my abilities to work with children from diverse backgrounds. I realized how much I have to offer children.”

Several preservice teachers explained that they learned a variety of teaching strategies to use with culturally and linguistically different children.

- “I learned that every child has to be reached in a different way.”
- “I have gained many new strategies to help children learn to read and write.”
- “I learned to be more patient and give help when they want it rather than every time a minor mistake is made.”
- “It made me aware of different resources children have to learn and how to use them effectively.”

Still others added that they learned about the importance of community centers for children living in poverty, and they realized the importance of helping make a difference in the lives of these children.

- “I learned that these children won’t have the extra help if we don’t volunteer and most of them haven’t experienced much outside of their neighborhood.”
- “I learned it is important to keep working on issues of poverty.”
- “I’m a little less scared to do [community service]. I feel better about it now. I’ve gotten good by myself...a little more comfortable.”
- “I learned how to alleviate the social problems through community service and the community centers.”

Preservice teachers’ perceptions about children’s reading and writing performance. Regarding children’s reading and writing performance (Question 4), preservice teachers shared that the children improved their reading and writing performance, got more opportunities to practice their reading and writing, received additional support with their homework and reading, and enjoyed the support and attention they received during the session. According to the preservice teachers’ questionnaires and interviews, they felt children were improving their reading and writing:

- “It was great to see the children’s reading and writing skills improve over the 10 weeks. The children who come more often have benefited the most.”
- “The children had extra practice with reading and writing.”
- “This experience will benefit them forever.”

The preservice teachers believed that the one-on-one attention was very important. They also noticed that they were a caring adult with whom the children could experience the joy of reading and writing.

- “The children liked the one-on-one attention. They developed relationships with us and reading and writing was fun.”
- “The children have someone to read with them.”
- “The children learned that school and learning can be fun and that there are adults who care.”

Importantly, some realized they became role models for the children. For example one preservice teacher shared, “The children have role models.” Most preservice teachers added, “The children loved it!”

Preservice teachers’ observations provided additional insight into how the program specifically benefited the children. In particular, they noted that their tutees were reading with more fluency and expression through practice and role modeling. Examples of observations include:

- DeWayne is reading with more fluency and expression.
- Nikkeya is gradually improving her reading.
- Andrea is reading better than she was at the beginning.

Others noted that tutees were recognizing more words or sounding out words more easily while reading:

- Dominique is sounding out words she didn’t know before.
- Edward is sounding out the beginning and endings sounds of words easier.

A few preservice teachers also reported differences in children’s comprehension. For example, one student shared, “My tutee is asking numerous questions as she reads.”

Many observed differences in the ways children were writing. For example, several preservice teachers commented that their tutees were sounding out words, using temporary spelling more easily, and spelling more words independently. They also noted that the children were able to web or take notes more easily with practice. As time went on, preservice teachers also reported that many students were writing longer pieces, writing more notes, and writing more than one writing piece. For example, tutors commented:

- Demario is using webbing to gather his ideas for writing.
- Voneshia is sounding out her words and using temporary spelling more easily.
- Chamiya is focusing more on her reading and writing.
- Angelica is writing two and three stories or poems each session.

What We Learned From the Student Questionnaires and Interviews

Children's feelings about the tutoring experience. Just as the preservice questionnaires and interviews revealed that the preservice teachers found Project Literacy to be a rewarding and enjoyable experience, the student questionnaires and interviews similarly indicated that all students found the tutoring experience to be lots of fun (Research Question 3). Almost all of the children explained that they come to the tutoring sessions because it's fun:

- "I feel happy!"
- "I feel very good about coming."
- "It's fun and we do lots of activities."

Many specifically stated that they came to the tutoring program because they liked reading or writing:

- "I like coming to tutoring. I like to read. I like to write."
- "I have fun! Reading is fun. Writing is fun."

Others shared that they were learning to read and write better:

- "I like to come to tutoring because I get help when I come here."

- “I feel good about learning to read.”

Still others noted that they were getting help with their reading and writing, and they were learning:

- “I feel great about coming to tutoring. I like to read about black history. I love to write.”
- “I learned a lot of things like to read better and to listen to stories.”
- “I like to learn everything.”
- “This is a good place to learn things.”

A few also reported they liked doing their homework here or they got help with their homework here. For example, Demario shared, “I learned how to do my homework.” Most of the children further commented that they loved their tutors because they helped them learn to read and write better.

Children’s perceptions about their reading and writing performance. When asked how the tutoring experience helped their reading and writing (Question 4), many children explained that their reading and writing was changing. They shared:

- “I can read more. I can write stories.”
- “I can read more faster and stop at the period. I know my [exclamation] marks.”
- “I can really read now. I can read a lot of words, and I couldn’t read a lot of words before.”

Others shared that they were practicing more and that helps them become better readers and writers:

- “Practicing reading has helped me read better.”

Many explained that they were getting help from their tutors and this was helping them read or write better:

- “Reading is better for me because I read better. I know more words because of the tutor.”
- “My tutor helped me to read and write.”

- “My tutor helps me with my writing.”
- “I am becoming a better reader and writer because I get help when I come here.”
- “My tutor teaches me words I don’t know. She helps me take my time.”

Several children reported that they were improving in their school work or their study habits:

- “I am doing better in school.”
- “I learned to work hard. That leads to success.”
- “I am learning and studying.”

Importantly, these responses are consistent with the observations made by preservice teachers. The children were discovering the joys of reading and writing in a nurturing environment.

What We Learned from Students’ Thank You Letters

Additional insight into the children’s perceptions about Project Literacy came from letters the children wrote to their donors, thanking them for the program. These letters reveal the close bond between the tutor and tutee, ways the children are improving their reading and writing, and what they enjoy about the program. Importantly, these letters further corroborate the findings from preservice and student observations, questionnaires, and interviews. Examples of quotes that show the bond between the tutor and tutee include:

- “The tutors are very helpful to us kids. They are very nice and help us with our homework at all times.”
- “The tutors are my friends.”
- “I make friends with the tutors by talking things out with them.”
- “The tutors are like a sister or brother to kids who don’t have a brother or sister.”
- “I like the tutors. They help me with my homework. They give me a lot of attention.”
- “I like to work with my tutor.”

Examples of comments that suggest the children feel their reading or

writing is improving include:

- “I get good grades on my spelling now.”
- “I learn a lot.”
- “My tutor helps me read.”
- “I get to practice my reading.”

Importantly, the following comments show what the children enjoy about the program and how much they enjoy reading and writing:

- “My favorite things are reading books and playing games with the tutors.”
- “I like to read many different kinds of books like I Spy and Author books.”
- “We also have snacks and do fun activities.”
- “I am a better person by acting normal and courteous.”
- “The tutors are also a lot of fun to help with homework.”
- “I like that tutors help me with my homework.”
- “It is very nice that we have a place like this where we can come and spend quality time.”

Concluding Remarks and Thoughts

Certainly, the findings illustrate that the efforts of the tutors were making a difference in the lives of these children. Children were learning to read and write in a supportive environment, a place where they could learn to enjoy reading and writing. This supportive environment further provided children one-on-one assistance and scaffolding from their tutors. This scaffolding helped them acquire the strategies that effective readers and writers use. The supportive environment further gave them the opportunity to practice their reading. According to Stanovich (1986), future problems in reading frequently result from the secondary effects of not practicing reading in school and outside school. Just as good readers get better because they take advantage of opportunities to read, the tutees were reading better because they were reading with their tutors.

Reports from the principals and teachers in the children’s schools validate the importance of this caring, supportive environment. They shared that many of the students were beginning to improve their reading and writing. Perhaps Project Literacy helped support the reading and

writing performance of these children, reinforcing what they were learning in school, helping them to improve their reading and writing through practice. However, what's most important, according to tutor Sandi, is that the children know there are people who care about them.

The Literacy Project is also a way to help preservice teachers develop and extend their understanding of multicultural education while receiving a model for their learning. If we want preservice teachers to become culturally sensitive and to apply their multicultural knowledge while teaching within classrooms, they will need multiple experiences in a variety of field settings to practice these strategies. According to Sleeter and Grant (1994), multicultural education is not an end in itself, but rather a way to strive toward more social justice. This can only happen through change, and change takes time. Just as "one shot" inservices do not foster instructional changes for inservice teachers (Diamond & Moore, 1995), one field experience will do little to promote cultural understanding and its application through instructional changes or curricula transformations. As preservice teachers participate in multiple experiences within a variety of settings, they will become more culturally sensitive and learn how to apply their knowledge and experiences over time. Through these experiences, they might form an evolving identity with culture and its influences on teaching and learning. These emerging understandings might influence how they encode the world around them and interpret information (Purcell-Gates, 1995). Tutoring experiences similar to Project Literacy can become one of these experiences.

Having teacher educators direct the tutoring program is also consequential. Having teacher educators model culturally responsive teaching strategies and genuine cultural learning events that evolve from students' cultural backgrounds and experiences may further facilitate preservice teachers' application of multicultural practices within their teaching in the classroom. As preservice teachers see authentic reading and writing situations that evolve from students' family histories, life circumstances, and cultural roots modeled; perhaps they will begin to create similar literacy experiences within their own teaching. The importance of modeling is emphasized by Smith (1981), who claims that the first essential component of learning is seeing how something is

done. He further adds that preservice teachers need to see appropriate instruction in practice.

Preservice teachers also need coaching and feedback as they explore implementing these literacy events. Having teacher educators continuously provide guidance and assistance might transform the way preservice teachers conceptualize and practice literacy in plural societies (Hoffman, 1996). As they see these children's responses to challenging literacy events, perhaps they will have higher expectations for all students in their classrooms.

There is also a great deal of advocacy work to do within the field of multiculturalism. We need to ensure equitable funding for children who reside within culturally diverse settings, particularly those who live in low-income areas. In their recent study, Neuman and Celano (2001) report differential access to reading and writing materials by these children early in life, suggesting the need for a number of important accommodations for improving these children's achievements. One important accommodation includes the collaboration of educators and community organizations. Through their combined efforts, we can create real, authentic literacy opportunities that are connected to real-life experiences and students' cultural, social, and personal backgrounds (Au, 1998; Neuman & Celano, 2001). Project literacy represents one model for fostering collaboration between the university and community organizations in urban settings.

Another important accommodation includes a larger number of preservice teachers willing to work in culturally diverse settings, especially in urban low-income areas. Perhaps the "powerful experiences" Shaw (1993) advocates will make this a reality. The findings from the questionnaires and interviews indicate that a few preservice teachers were beginning to consider teaching in these settings. If preservice teachers have multiple experiences within these settings, perhaps more will decide to begin their teaching careers in similar settings.

Importantly, participation in the program might further help them to become more proactive agents within their own communities, designing programs to make society more just and humane (Banks, 2001;

Potthoff et al, 2000). The impact of such efforts is illustrated in the following preservice teacher's comment: "I think we're really a positive impact and a force in the community. I know we are because the community liaison police officer will come and tell us statistics like crime has dropped since our program started and the kids are definitely excited and they keep coming!"

After reading this article, I hope that others will consider beginning a similar tutoring program within their own community. I know that this was a "powerful experience" for me, one that I will continue to pursue in the future. However, as I think about the tutoring program, I know I would like to include more time for the preservice teachers to reflect on their experiences as they work with the children. Perhaps this could be accomplished by adding another thirty minutes to the program. This way the preservice teachers and I could dialogue and reflect upon multiculturalism and teaching and learning in culturally diverse settings, either before the tutoring program begins or just after the children leave. We will have more time to consider additional teaching strategies or materials that will connect with children's cultural and personal life experiences. This will also give us more opportunities to trouble shoot and to help one another see alternative ways of helping children who are struggling with reading or writing.

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Accelerating ESL Students' Reading Progress With Accelerated Reader

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This study examines the benefits of the Accelerated Reader program on ESL fourth and fifth grade students in a school in rural Western North Carolina. The study involved ten ESL fourth and fifth graders who had approximately forty-five minutes of time for free reading daily. The Accelerated Reader program was encouraged through the use of incentives. Monthly test reports were analyzed to determine increase in students' reading level and increase in quantity of students' reading. Anecdotal records provided evidence of improvement in students' reading behaviors and attitudes toward reading. While there was only a moderate overall increase in students' reading level, quantity of students' reading increased and attitudes toward reading improved.

A STUDENT'S HEAD BURIED in a book is a source of satisfaction for any teacher who believes that reading makes better readers. However, to see an English as a Second Language (ESL) learner avidly reading is perhaps twice the satisfaction. English language learners are often reluctant readers since reading does not always come easily or naturally, and teachers are constantly faced with the challenge of finding ways to encourage ESL students to read. Recently we observed ESL students in two different elementary schools with Accelerated Reader (AR) programs which led us to question how AR works as an incentive to frequent reading and whether it improves the reading of ESL students.

At one school, a large number of ESL students checked out numerous books each week. It was a common sight at this school to see almost all children walking down the hall with a book in their hands; some even reading as they walked. Students often talked about book tests, "ZPD," and the points and level of a book--all buzzwords from AR. Accelerated Reader is a computer-based program that tests basic reading comprehension with students receiving points for the tests they pass on selected books. Books are "leveled" according to number of words and complexity of words and sentence structures. The STAR test tells students their zone of proximal development (ZPD), or what level books they should read. Students set individual goals with the teacher, deciding on a number of books they plan to read, and they receive shirts, banners, and badges for achieving points. All students who make their monthly goal are treated to various programs such as visiting storytellers or cheerleader exhibitions. Students who meet their goals all year are awarded with activities like a lock-in in the gym or a trip to a local amusement park.

The second school had an AR program but weak incentives. Students were supposed to accumulate a certain number of points (a relatively low number compared to the goals set at the other school) to achieve a certain grade in their classes, but ESL students usually did not try to achieve the points. These students did not seem to care that their course grade would be lowered because of failing to make AR points. Also there was little encouragement and guidance to help students choose books at their level. ESL students were choosing

fourth or fifth grade level chapter books for independent reading even though they were reading around a first or second grade level. The STAR test, which assigns the ZPD, was not a part of the school's program, and only some students had been assigned to a certain level. Since these ESL students had very different reactions to the AR programs in their schools, we wanted to study how AR motivates students to read and the affects of their reading development.

The Power of Independent Reading

Free voluntary reading is one of the essential factors in language acquisition. Krashen (1993, 1994) cites several studies of ESL students in long-term voluntary reading projects and various independent reading programs that outperform students in traditional ESL classes. Mason and Krashen's (1997) three experiments in university-level programs in Japan showed that students in extensive free reading programs had better reading skills. Cho and Krashen (1994) studied four adult ESL students who read the popular Sweet Valley Kids series and found that all four women made significant gains in vocabulary and improvements in their speaking and understanding, even improving grammatical accuracy.

Krashen (1994) recommends that free reading programs for ESL students have these essential ingredients: access to books, a comfortable and quiet place to read, modeling of good reading, reading aloud to students, variety of reading materials, and opportunities for literature study. Students need lots of opportunity to read and to be read. Gee (1999) considers competence as one of the most important factors to improve reading. Successful readers feel good about their reading, read more, acquire a larger vocabulary and better comprehension of syntactical structures, and are therefore able to read increasingly more difficult books. ESL students who are competent become avid readers who become more competent readers and simultaneously better speakers. All types of books should be available, especially easy books, which contain new vocabulary but are at a level that promotes reading fluency. Teachers can model reading and enjoying "easy books" and motivate readers by having them read to younger siblings or less-able readers. Krashen (1994) describes the ideal type of reading material to develop readers as I+1, which is

similar to Vygotsky's (1978) "zone of proximal development." Language learners need to have input which is just one step higher than what they completely comprehend. With this type of material, anxiety is at a low level and students are better able to acquire language.

Effectiveness of the Accelerated Reader Program

There are mixed reports on the effectiveness of Accelerated Reader as an influence on reading practice, reading achievement, and reading attitudes. Rosenheck, Caldwell, Calkins, and Perez (1996) found that despite the use of AR in two of the three comparable elementary schools in Lee County, Florida, there was no difference in fifth graders' attitudes toward reading or frequency of library use. Likewise, Mathis (1996) found no significant difference in standardized test scores after sixth graders had been introduced to and involved in the AR program for a year. Carter (1996) complains that AR devalues reading because children become too interested in extrinsic awards and the choice of books is too limited. Children never learn to choose books on their own, and the program tests, and hence, promotes lower-order thinking skills. Chenoweth (2001) and Howard (2001) question whether AR promotes long term reading growth or the motivation to read if rewards are taken away.

On the other hand, studies have shown that Accelerated Reader can be a great asset in school reading programs. Goodman (1999) found that in one Arizona middle school where the AR program was implemented for one year, the school showed significant improvement in reading test scores. McKnight (1992) used AR along with other strategies to increase reading and improve student attitudes toward reading in a group of fifth graders who were unmotivated and uninterested in reading. Peak and Dewalt (1993) compared two junior high schools in Gaston County North Carolina, where the same language arts curriculum was in place, but one school had used AR for five consecutive years. AR students had higher average yearly gains and reported reading five to six hours a week on average. Vollands, Topping, and Evans (1999) found that AR, even though not fully implemented in two Scottish schools (because of lack of books and training for teachers), had positive effects on the quantity of reading

practice and engagement with literature. Two large-scale studies, Topping and Paul (1999) and Paul, VanderZee, Rue, and Swanson (1996) showed that AR promoted better reading practice and improved performance on standardized tests. (Judith and Terrance Paul created AR in the 1980s.)

Several studies show that AR has a positive impact on students with reading difficulties. Scott (1999) found that learning disabled AR students experienced an increase in reading level on the STAR test and improved reading attitude. Hamilton (1997) reports that extrinsic rewards worked at first to encourage ESL students who later reported actually learning to enjoy reading.

Using Accelerated Reader with Elementary ESL Students

Given this research on the positive impact of independent reading on ESL students and the ability of the AR to increase reading levels and improve attitudes toward reading, we decided to investigate the use of AR with elementary ESL students in fourth and fifth grades in a rural elementary school in western North Carolina. Ten fourth and fifth grade students were identified as limited English proficient through the Language Assessment Scales test (LAS). The range of these students' experiences in English-speaking environments and English proficiency varied considerably, as shown in Table 1 (names are changed).

Table 1. ESL Students' Range of English Proficiency

Name	Grade	Sex	Age	L1	Time in U.S. Schools	Learning Disabilities Identified
Juni	4	M	9	Hungarian/but English none	Romanian	Instruction for 4 yrs. in Romania
Cynthia	4	F	10	Spanish	4 yrs.	Reading/Writing
Ana	4	F	11	Spanish	5 yrs.	Reading/Writing
Francisco	4	M	10	Spanish	1 yr.	None
Lucas	4	M	9	Spanish	10 mos.	None
Oscar	4	M	9	Spanish	1 yr.	None
Abe	5	M	11	Spanish	6 yrs.	Written Expression
Cris	5	M	11	Spanish	4 yrs.	None
Angelo	5	M	10	Spanish	1 yr. 1 h	None
Isidro	5	M	10	Spanish	3 yrs.	None

Nine of the students had emigrated from Mexico; one was from Romania. Three of the students had been diagnosed with specific learning disabilities in reading and/or written expression. Four of the students had only attended U.S. schools for one year or less at the beginning of the study, but three of those students had already developed a communicative, although limited, oral vocabulary in English. One eleven year-old student had been in U.S. schools since age seven, yet as a child of a migrant family, had spent three to four months of every school year in Mexico. Two other students entered U.S. schools at kindergarten, one in first grade, and one in second grade.

These ESL students participated in the Accelerated Reader program at their school for approximately three months. For 45 to 90 minutes a day, students read self-selected books (independently, with a buddy or with the teacher) at their appropriate levels (.9 to 4.5). The teacher conferenced at least three times a week with every student, checking to make sure they were choosing appropriate level books, reading with them or to them, and checking for and helping with comprehension. When students finished a book, they took an AR test, and if they scored 80 percent or above, they recorded the book on a class chart. When the class chart was full, students celebrated with an ice cream or popcorn party.

Monthly test reports measured their growth in average reading level, average percent correct on a test, and number of books read. By comparing the students' average reading levels in the books they'd chosen over the time of the study, average test scores, and amount of books read, the researchers charted growth in students' reading abilities. The STAR tests were administered at the end of the study in order to diagnose the students' reading level. The ESL teacher also kept anecdotal records to track individual changes in behavior and attitude toward reading.

Increase in Average Reading Level

At the beginning of the study students' reading levels were determined in a conference with the teacher according to how well they demonstrated comprehension. At the end of the project, the average

reading level was the level of books they were reading. The researchers considered that reading level increased only if students were able to increase their average reading level while maintaining their accuracy (percentage correct on tests) at, very near, or above 80 percent or if they were maintaining it at the same level throughout the project. If their accuracy (percentage correct) dropped significantly while their average level of books read increased, they did not increase in reading level because even though reading more difficult books, their comprehension was not improving.

Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the change in reading level according to the AR monthly reports.

Figure 1

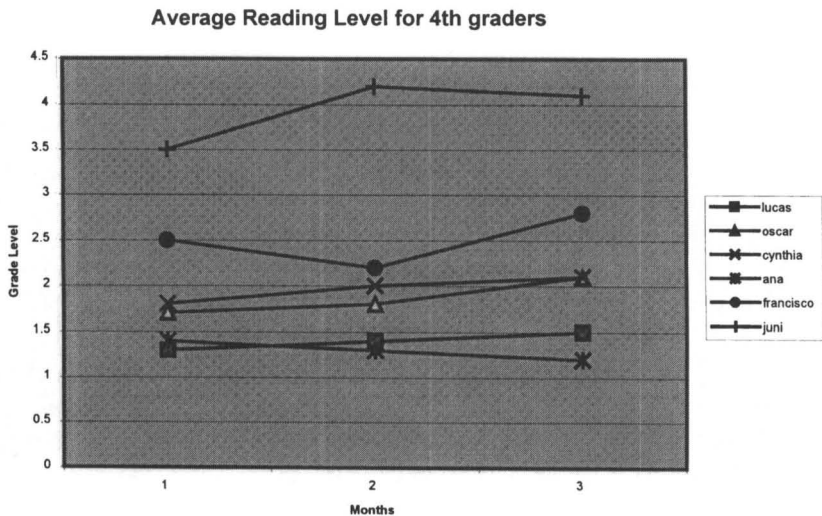
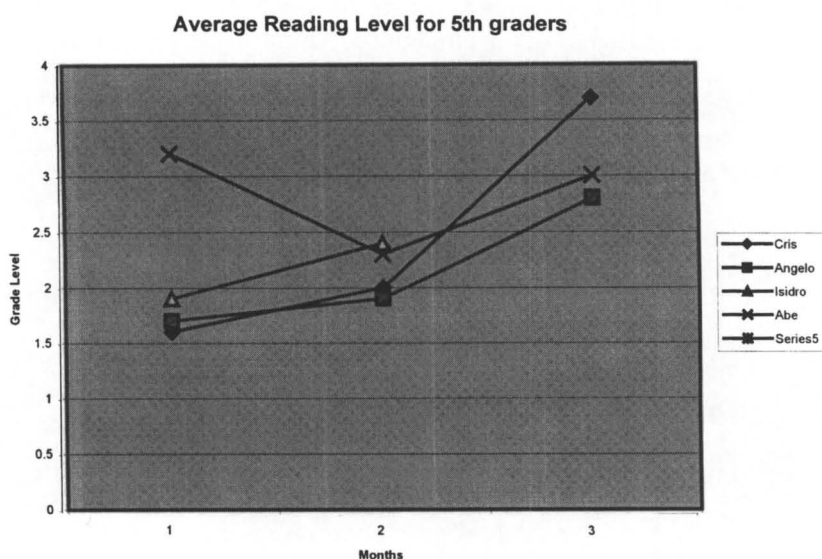


Figure 2



Five of the ten students showed an increase in the average level of AR books that they were reading. In the three-month time period of the study, students made gains of approximately 1.9, 1.4, .7, .6, and .4. The five students who did not have gains remained the same or increased their average reading level while decreasing their accuracy.

The STAR test, which was administered to students at the end of the study, assigned each student a grade equivalent score that could be compared with the average level on which each student was reading at the end of the study, as shown in Table 2.

This data shows that two students were reading on average on a lower level than their ZPD, two students were reading on a slightly higher level, and five of the students were reading in their ZPD. The

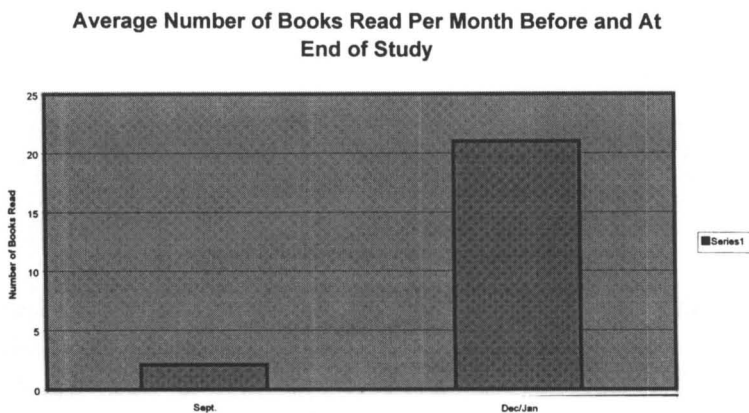
average reading level at which students were reading at the end of the study was, for most students, an appropriate level.

Table 2. Comparison of Students' STAR-Grade Level to Average Reading Level

Name	Avg. Level	STAR-Grade Level/ZPD
Cris	3.7	2.5/2.3-3.3
Angelo	2.8	1.6/1.6-2.6
Isidro	2.4	2.4/2.2-3.2
Abe	3	4.1/3.2-4.4
Juni	4.1	5.9/4.2-5.8
Ana	1.2	0.9/9-1.9
Oscar	2.1	1.9/1.9-2.9
Francisco	2.8	2.1/2.1-3.1
Cynthia	2.1	2.2/2.1-3.1
Lucas	1.5	NA

Increase in Quantity of Reading

There was an increase in the amount of reading, as shown in this chart.



The AR monthly reports revealed that in September, at the beginning of the project, 8 of the 10 students had read only 0 to 3

books (Isidro was not there at that time, and Juni read 7 books). Students read an average of 2.1 AR books for the month of September. By the end of the study, the average number of AR books read was 21, an average increase of 18.9 books a month read by each student.

Students Who Improved Reading Levels

Five of the ten students improved their reading level with increases from .4 to 1.9 grade levels. None of these students were identified with any learning problems and all possessed at least intermediate fluency in English. Only one of the five students, Oscar who increased .4 from a 1.7 grade level to a 2.1, was receiving specialized small group reading instruction through Title I at the time. Angelo and Oscar had both been in the country for a little over a year and were communicating fairly well, although not with a great deal of confidence. Cris, a migrant student who had spent several months every year in Mexico since first coming to the U.S. at age seven, was communicating with intermediate fluency. His gain was the most significant, at a 1.9 grade level increase, from 1.6 average reading level in his test scores in October to 3.6 average reading level in December. Isidro, a fifth grader who had been in the U.S. almost three years, was communicating very well. Juni, the student from Romania who had received instruction in English for the past four years, was a good reader and successful student in his own language. It was predictable that with practice he would make significant gains in his English reading. He increased .7 according to AR monthly reports. However, the grade equivalent score assigned to him by the STAR test in early December was 5.9, while his last month's average reading level was 4.1.

Students Who Maintained Reading Levels

Four students did not show progress in average reading levels of books. Learning disabilities, lack of English oral proficiency, and lack of attention to guidance were the factors that caused these students to stay at the same grade level in reading. Two students were identified as learning disabled in reading and writing. Ana's STAR test in December reported her grade equivalent score was .9; her reading skills were comparable to that of a kindergartener after the ninth month

of school. She was learning to identify simple word parts (such as -at, -op, -et, etc.). With her limited decoding skills, she was not ready for the type of reading comprehension required in AR tests. Abe was newly identified as learning disabled. Time in resource class cut into his time in the ESL class, so the number of AR books he read per month barely increased.

Lucas was in the early production stage of language acquisition. Even at the end of the project his LAS oral score was still 1 on a scale of 1-5. He was not ready for tested free reading because he lacked a basic communicative vocabulary. Francisco, on the other hand, was very enthusiastic about reading, but he did not accept guidance about his choice of books or his habits of reading. He continued to test on high-level books without really knowing what they were about, and he often tested after having barely skimmed a book. He made passing scores on only about half of the books he read, sometimes because a book was on too high of a level for him but most often because he hurried to take the test. His behavior in general always tended to be a little impulsive and impatient, and his habits of reading tended to match his disposition. When he did take the time to read a book with the teacher or a buddy, he did much better on the tests. At these times, he was very engaged with the text, often laughing out loud and commenting on different events in the text as he went along.

Changes in Reading Habits and Attitudes towards Reading

The ESL students posted an average increase of 18.9 AR books per month which reflects a profound change in their reading habits and attitudes. Ana and Cynthia, who did not improve in reading level, demonstrated real engagement with the texts they read. Although it was difficult to find many books on her level of .9, Ana increased her attempts to read, especially when books were at her level and she could buddy-read with a friend. All the students, with the exception of Abe, greatly enjoyed in-class reading. They talked about books, often making jokes or laughing at funny parts. Even Francisco, who frequently failed tests because he was skimming through books, would throw back his head in laughter when he took the time to read carefully. Lucas, whose English was so limited that comprehension

was difficult, liked trying to read the books. Frequent free reading got him in the habit of reading and gave him practice with English text.

The most significant changes in reading attitudes were evident in students who improved their reading levels. Both Angelo and Oscar, who were not reading independently at the beginning of the year, increased the amount that they read. Angelo, who struggled with comprehension and often chose too difficult books, became more interested in reading and especially enjoyed reading with a buddy. Oscar more clearly understood his own reading level and was able to pick out appropriate books, commenting, "No, that one's too easy" or "That one's too hard for me." Finally, Cris, who made the 1.9 grade level gain, showed the greatest improvement in his reading attitudes. When he first started reading first grade level books, he would say, "I can't read this. I don't read very well," and never volunteered to read aloud in class. After participating in the AR program, he was eager to try third and fourth grade level books, volunteered often to read in class, and at times helped other students with difficult words in reading groups.

Recommendations for Using Accelerated Reader with ESL Students

AR can be used successfully with ESL students. Although changes in reading levels did not occur for all the students, there was an increase in number of books read, as well as strong anecdotal evidence that reading was a positive experience for many of the students. AR is most effective for students with a basic communicative vocabulary and intermediate proficiency. Students without basic communicative vocabulary need more practice acquiring basic oral patterns of the language to be able to understand the books to take the comprehension test, but frequent free reading can help them see the patterns of written language. AR should be only one of the components of the reading program for students with learning disabilities since they often benefit from a combination of direct instruction and guided reading. However, encouraging reading, which is the goal of the AR program, benefits all students by getting them in the habit of reading.

The STAR test should be administered at the beginning of the year so that a ZPD, the optimal range for a student's reading, is

assigned. It helps students identify the level of books to read--both books at a level they can already comprehend as well as books that are a step above (their $I + 1$, as Krashen (1994) would call it). Students tend to be very interested to know their reading level and usually check the levels of books they choose to read.

Students benefit from individualized goal setting. Although the teacher set classroom goals on which incentives were based, it would help to set specific goals for the individual student based on what level they should be reading, what accuracy they should try to achieve, and how many books they should read each week. Rewards would then be based on each student meeting individual goals.

ESL students can benefit from a school-wide implementation of AR. When AR is strongly encouraged across the school and all students are engaged in free reading, the ESL teacher can spend more time doing guided reading with students to build comprehension, or doing more hands-on activities and language experience stories which build both oral and written language. Given the limited time students are in the ESL class, students need to be engaged in free reading throughout the school day, which can be accomplished when AR is implemented in all subjects.

In schools with an AR program, ESL teachers should take special care to insure that ESL students are participating fully. They can use the STAR test to assign a ZPD for students and set goals for students' reading. They should confer with classroom teachers who may not be aware that ESL students can participate successfully in the program. In every way ESL teachers should encourage independent reading. AR just may be the tool that has a powerful impact on beginning English learners.

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Gender, Epistemology, and Education: An Exploration of the Knowledge Construction of Female and Male Pupils

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This study explores gender differences in the knowledge constructed about World War II by 11- and 12-year-old Scottish pupils. Data collected over seven months included field notes, interviews, students' reading and writing, and audiotapes of discussions. Examination revealed the young women's work showcased individuals while the young men framed World War II information using a world view. The findings illustrate the epistemological differences that can exist between our male and female students as they construct their own understanding of topics.

DURING THE PROCESS of a seven-month naturalistic study we examined Scottish primary students' uses of reading, writing, and research processes as they were involved in studying World War II (WWII) (Many, Fyfe, Lewis, & Mitchelle, 1996). As patterns were identified in the data, the first author noted distinct differences in the processes and content evident in the work of the male and female pupils. Working hypotheses emerged regarding whether differences in the students' work might reflect different epistemological stances toward what was deemed valuable knowledge.

These initial indications caused us to turn to the literature to examine issues related to epistemology. The study of epistemology addresses three primary concerns: (a) what counts as knowledge, (b) where knowledge is located, and (c) how one increases a knowledge base (Cunningham & Fitzgerald, 1996; Fitzgerald, 1993). Cunningham and Fitzgerald (1996) contend that because education deals with knowledge, epistemology can be thought of as education's most basic and central concern.

Recent educational research has recognized the importance the epistemology of teachers plays in the classroom (Fitzgerald, 1993; Lyons, 1994). Teachers hold both implicit and explicit assumptions about knowledge and about their own roles in students' knowledge construction. Further, teachers' views of the nature of knowledge in their subject areas shape the learning tasks they orchestrate in their classrooms (Anders & Evans, 1994). However, research is needed which systematically explores the epistemological perspectives not just of teachers, but also of students (Lyons, 1994).

Prior to conducting this study, we were familiar with research examining the ways in which men and women construct knowledge (Anyon, 1978; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Luttrell, 1989; Perry, 1981). This literature, in part, prompted us to consider whether the work of these young female and male students might reflect gendered ways of knowing. Examination of early work by Perry (1981) provides a description of the epistemological growth experienced by male students. Across their college career, male students in Perry's research shifted from dualism, to multiplicity, and finally to relativism and to commitments to ideas within a relativistic perspective. In contrast,

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule's (1986) research (which including college-age individuals) provided descriptions of women's varied epistemological perspectives toward knowledge and knowing. Their research indicated some women operate from a received knowledge perspective where authorities outside themselves were considered as conveying truth. Others are more subjective, paying attention to their inner feelings as a source of knowledge. Still others operate from a procedural knowledge perspective in which they learn by adopting a method of analyzing information or by connecting to another's perspective in order to understand another's view. Finally, some women integrate reason, intuition, and the expertise of others to construct their own knowledge.

Our investigation of the literature indicated little work had been done examining young students' epistemological perspectives on what counts as knowledge. Consequently, the purpose of this study was to describe the knowledge constructed about World War II by these male and female pupils. We were particularly interested in what the students felt 'counted as knowledge' as illustrated in what they chose to emphasize in their self-selected research projects and whether there were differences in the processes students used to construct their knowledge.

Method

Context of the Study

This study took place in Aberdeen, Scotland, with the cooperation of colleagues at Northern College and administrators, teachers, and students of Glashieburn School. From November to June, the first author became a participant-observer in a primary 7 class (11 and 12 year-olds) in order to explore the reading and writing processes of the students. Each twelve-week term, students focused on a specific project or topic of study, with the project during the primary phase of data collection focused on World War II. Sources of information for the World War II project study included approximately 30 books in a classroom library, newspapers, photographs, and other artifacts from the time period, video tapes (both fictional and informational), computer programs, play scripts,

art work, wall charts, and teacher-made or commercial information sheets or activity sheets. The students' engagements in reading and writing described here focused on their efforts to investigate a self-selected topic related to the overall class project on WWII.

Data Sources and Analysis

Data collection occurred across a seven-month period of time. Two months prior to the WWII project work, the first author conducted preliminary interviews with all students and observed in the classroom on the average of 2-3 times a week. Data was collected on a daily basis during the twelve weeks the students focused on WWII project work, and on an average of 2-3 times weekly during the following two months as some students extended their research into the following term and to allow for continued debriefing and member checks with all students.

Data was in the form of structured and unstructured field notes, debriefing interviews, audio, and videotapes of group discussions. The first author, using a notebook computer, gathered all field notes and interview information. Students' personal research booklets on World War II, copies of the source texts used (when available), and other pertinent artifacts produced with respect to the unit of study were photocopied. Analysis followed the naturalistic procedures set out by Lincoln and Guba (1985) beginning with the first day of data collection. Patterns and themes in the data identified in the on-going analyses focused inquiry on subsequent days. Using an emergent sampling design, we began data collection through a serial selection of participants. We initially touched base with all students, but as we began to glimpse patterns in students' approaches to project research and variations in strategies used for reading and writing from texts, we targeted specific students as "key informants" for in-depth analysis. The number of key informants emerged across the data collection and was based on the degree to which a given student's process or strategies were redundant in light of the participants we had previously interviewed.

Data collected from all sources previously mentioned were organized into files for the seventeen key informants (11 females and 6 males). Analysis proceeded inductively using a constant comparative

method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Throughout the data collection, peer debriefing occurred between the first author, the fourth author, and two other colleagues at Northern College in Aberdeen in order to discuss the first author's working hypotheses and ongoing analysis of the data.

Subsequently, the co-authors for this study collaborated in additional inductive analysis of the data focusing specifically on the content of the young women's and men's personal projects. The projects were in the form of 15-20 page booklets sharing the results of the students' investigations into their self-selected topics. To analyze this data, we first created data reduction charts that captured the content of the projects (Huberman & Miles, 1993). Next, categories were created and refined using a constant comparative approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to describe themes evident in the males' and females' projects. Finally, attention moved from the personal projects to the field notes and interview information to triangulate patterns and to identify possible gendered ways of working during the research process as well as in the content of the reports. In the section below, we will first provide a brief overview of the broad differences in the males' and females' World War II personal projects and then we will focus in depth on the patterns which emerged in the content of the young men's and young women's work and in their processes of constructing that information.

Results

A gendered perspective on wartime topics was evident in our data from even a cursory glance at the topics chosen by the students in this class. As illustrated in Table 1, the males concentrated on objects, events, and historical figures, while the young women chose topics that allowed them to focus on children and on the lives of everyday women and men.

Close examination of the content of the students' personal projects revealed the young women's work showcased individuals, their experiences and feelings, and the environments in which the people lived. In contrast, the males' primary concentration was on understanding World War II from a perspective, which framed the events using a worldview. In the sections that follow, we will present specific themes of the students' work.

Table 1. Personal Research Topics Chosen by Male and Female Pupils

Females	Males
Children at War	Army
Wartime Children	Aircraft
Make Do and Mend	Weapons and Artillery
Anne Frank and the Jews	The Royal Air Force
The Holocaust	WWII Aircraft
Posters – Propaganda	Hitler and World Leaders
Aberdeen at War	
How Women Coped	
Wartime Children	
Growing Up at War	
The Royal Air Force	

The Young Men's Views of World War II

Examination of the male pupils' project work indicated three themes which were salient in the males' attention to the war: (a) a focus on the military, (b) an identification with power and authority, and (c) an exploration of world-wide involvement in the war.

A focus on the military. The primary emphasis throughout the young men's projects was a focus on the equipment used by the military. A young boy named "Ron" completed the most detailed project with this focus. In an early interview, Ron described his choice of "World War II Aircraft" for his personal research, "I like aircraft - I think it is the most exciting of the topics. I already know quite a lot. I am always digging into books and putting two and two together. I have some information already. I am writing up a chart with information about the different types and then I am going to write a chapter on each." Ron did compile chapters on each of the types of aircraft he identified on his planning web, "fighters, bombers, seaplanes and flying boats, reconnaissance, prototypes, and jets." In his coverage of information, Ron provided visual images through hand-drawn silhouettes or photocopies, charts of technical data, and descriptive passages. His descriptions often included his personal judgments. For instance, on a two-page spread of pictures

with hand-written captions “A typical dog fight”, “A spitfire pilot lining up a BF109 in his sights” and “The P-51 Mustang,” Ron wrote:

Dogfighting

When you were dogfighting you only had one chance to get your opponent and you had to take it. It was a lot of dodging, twisting and turning and firing. You had your enemies in your sights for less than four seconds, but with machine guns firing 160 rounds per second it wasn't a problem.

Escort Fighters

Any fighter could be an escort, but there had to be one flight of planes at the least. All escort fighters were built for long range but the Mustang was the probably the best because it had a large fuel tank and packed a mean punch because it was armed with six machine guns, rockets and bombs. (Ron's personal project, pp. 7-8)

In researching his topic, Ron gleaned information from across books, movies, posters, exhibits, and video games and he loved to share. His excitement about his topic is glimpsed in the excerpt from the field notes below, which were typed during a debriefing session in the third week of the students' project work:

Many: I asked him about his web - if he came up with it all at once or if he added to it over time.

Ron: Well 1[fighters] and 2 [bombers] I thought of right off and then I came up with 3 [seaplanes and flying boats]. Cause I got a book at home I bought on holiday. I am going to do a lot from that on it. 4 [reconnaissance] there is just one problem, I have a book on German fighters and equipment but there is not enough on Allied fighters. 5 [prototypes] that is aircraft that were invented by British but never got into production. Dad got a book at home - I know mainly from books that a lot of them didn't get into production. (He already knew this information.)

Many: What is the difference between jets and fighters?

Ron: Jets are rockets and the fighters are piston engines. (His explanation covered about a paragraph and was filled with technical language - I can't keep up with him when he is excited about a topic and he lives and breathes this topic!) 6) There are a lot bombers that do reconnaissance.

Many: What is that?

Ron: They run forward take photos and retreat before they are shot down.

Many: How do you know about that?

Ron: My dad has a game at home and it's a lot like chess and it has a lot of reconnaissance planes in it and I said, 'What is that?' So I dug into it and found out everything I could about it.

Many: What do you mean you dug into it? What did you do?

Ron: I found a book and just read it. ... (Taken from field notes, Jan. 22, pp 2-3)

Ron's project and his developing knowledge base was more extensive than most of the other students in the class. However, his enthusiasm for his topic was fairly characteristic of all the males who had chosen similar topics. The young men's projects were replete with: photocopies; drawings; lists and descriptions of cockpits, fighters, spitfires, and bombers (including British, American, German, Japanese, and French planes); the battles that the planes were used in; technical information; signs and symbols used on aircraft; and the roles of ground crew and mechanics.

Coverage of the military effort in the young men's report also included attention to other equipment such as tanks, automobiles, ships, and artillery. Two of the projects included drawings of a pilot and of a flight lieutenant, officer pilot, and sergeant of the Royal Air Force and a photocopy of a German soldier. In addition, some students described or created lists of battles that were fought or important wartime events. Finally, as illustrated by Ron's comments above, the males in this class

drew heavily on books related to their topics as resources for increasing their knowledge base.

Identification with power and authority. A second theme in the young men's projects was an identification with power and authority as seen in a focus on world leaders. The young men included extensive information on both political and military leaders. The most comprehensive coverage was found in Ian's project, "Hitler and World Leaders," which provided detailed discussion of the careers of Hitler, Mussolini, Churchill, Roosevelt, Chiang Kai Shek, Hirohito, and Stalin. For each leader, Ian included a historical description of their rise to power and their success as a "warlord". For example, in writing about Churchill, Ian noted:

After three years of Winston Churchill becoming Prime Minister he told the commons that he could only offer blood, toll, tears, and sweat. In that he promised victory however hard it was. That was the first of a few speeches that inspired the country. ... The whole of Britain loved the voice of Churchill on the wireless sets. They loved his two-fingered V which was for victory. Winston had a no nonsense suit, the massive cigars and the bulldog look. Winston Churchill made himself the Minister of Defense and thereby became an effective warlord. Some of his judgments were seldom wrong and brought his government such architects of victory as Montgomery, Cunningham, and Alexander.

The emphasis on world leaders was also apparent in the work of Ian's classmate, Geoff. Geoff's project included passages on General Bernard Montgomery, Benito Mussolini, Chiang Kai Shek, and a comparison – contrast section on Hitler and Churchill. Like Ian, Geoff also described the leaders' roles during the war, their decision-making processes, and their victories or defeats. The emphasis on leaders' power and authority was further illustrated in such work as Robert's poster illustrating Hitler being strangled by Allies, Ron's discussion of Benito Mussolini as a political leader, and Dugald's description of Chief Air Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding's discussion of the difficulty of protecting

British shipping in home waters.

A world view of World War II. Overall, the male pupils' treatment of World War II was conducted from a world view. This was a natural inclusion in Ian's project on Hitler and the world leaders, but the emphasis was also evident in the other boys' projects that focused on the army, aircraft, and weapons and artillery. For instance, Geoff's project on the army included army commanders and leaders from multiple countries. His work showcased pictures and descriptions of German and Italian aircraft alongside examples from the Royal Air Force. In addition, he outlined each of the countries involved with Allies or with the Axis power, he included a death tally for nine countries, and he charted the amount of funds spent by not only Britain but also the United States, Germany, Russia, Italy, and Japan. Similarly, Ron's work on weapons and artillery included propaganda posters from other countries, drawings of the flags of various countries, and a survey of classmates on which country they felt did the most damage to Germany. Each young man's report included information that indicated they had expanded their lens from the home front to the war on an international scale.

The Young Women's Views of World War II

Although both the young men and the young women included attention to basic wartime events and historical figures, three themes emerged in the young women's content which were not present in the male's projects. The first was an emphasis on empathizing with the experiences of wartime individuals. The second was attention to the restrictions on freedom that were apparent during the war (as evident in the evacuation of millions of children from the larger cities to the country, in the stripping away of individuality which occurred across numerous contexts, and in the treatment experienced by the Jews). Finally, it was only in the young women's projects that we found attention to how women were treated during war and critiques of that treatment.

Empathy with the individual. One strong thread running through the young women's reports was a focus on how it would have felt to have actually lived through the war. One way this was apparent was in

the strong focus on what it would have been like to have been a child during World War II. The young women emphasized the experiences of children as the children donned gas masks and went to bomb shelters, as they were evacuated to the country, and as they lived through or died as a result of wartime experiences. For example in the section below, Victoria described the evacuation program, a topic common to many of the young women's reports:

In 1939 a World War started. The government could not decide what to do with there children because the parents and the government did not want them killed by the Germans. So they thought of sending them to the country. This was called evacuation. Over a million children were evacuated. They would go even a hundred miles away from home. The only children who were evacuated were the ones who lived in industrial cities. Children who were lucky enough to have relatives in the country went to stay with them, but most of them went by the government. The children who were not old enough for school went with their mums, but the children who were old enough for school went with the school. (Victoria's personal project, *Children at War*)

Victoria introduces her section on evacuation by giving an overview explaining the government's evacuation program; however, in a later paragraph she proceeds to relate the emotional impact the parting must have had on the families, "The parents and the children must have been very sad when they had to say goodbye to each other. Some children had never been so far from home with strangers." Victoria then went into depth explaining the evacuation process the young children experienced. She accounts how children lined up on the playgrounds, gas masks in hand, and boarded trains for unknown destinations. Her concern for the children's feelings was again evident as she criticized the process of country people meeting the evacuees in the town halls and then selecting the children they wanted. She wrote:

...Some people would go to the station to pick up the children they wanted. It was not a good way of finding

homes for the children. The bonny clothed or cute children were chosen first and the children who were left until last were very upset.

The ways in which young women positioned themselves to understand the experiences of individuals and particularly to understand the lives of the children took other forms besides empathizing with the individuals' emotions. These students also visualized experiences and imaginatively considered what they would have done in certain situations. Drawings of houses to which they might have been evacuated, surveys of their peer's preferences as to where they would have like to have gone if they had been evacuated, and illustrations of experiences evacuees' might have encountered, all gave an indication of the degree to which the young women imagined the realities of the war as it might have been for children like themselves. Another key informant, Christine, portrayed these images in a particularly effective manner, creating a section in her research booklet titled, "The War Through the Lens of a Camera." In this section Christine photocopied graphic images of children and war, as illustrated by the following captions found underneath the pictures:

"Many families built their own Anderson Shelters in readiness for bombing raids. Here a toy dog, in regulation gas mask, stands guard over the entrance."

"Anxious watchers at the station barrier wait for their parents' arrival on the first 'evacuation special' from London."

"Children being evacuated during the Blitz on to waiting trains. Metropolitan Police women help to keep their spirits up."

"During the Warsaw Uprising these young boys, like Jan, acted as secret messengers for the Resistance Movement."

"Londoners take shelter in the Underground during the Blitz."

“When you had your gas mask on you looked like a cross between a rubber pig and a man from outer space.”

The emphasis on understanding the war from the perspective of the individual was also seen in other focuses in the young women’s projects. For instance, it was the young women, who, when writing about Hitler, chose to include personal aspects such as the death of Hitler’s father when he was only 13 years old, his mother’s death when he was 18, the denial of his application to study at the Vienna’s Academy of Art, his work as a postcard painter, Hitler’s shooting of his dog prior to committing suicide, and the notion that when Hitler’s followers praised him it made him “think that what he did was good.”

Another type of entry that strongly indicated how much the young women identified with wartime individuals were the surveys they conducted with their classmates. Six of the eleven girls chose to do surveys requiring respondents to respond to wartime experience through highly personal and involved ways. For instance, survey questions about evacuation, such as Louise’s “What would you have taken with you?” and Rachael’s “Where would you like to be evacuated to?” reveal that the students were consciously relating to the problems of children like themselves during the war. Samantha’s survey asked, “What would you have missed most during the war?” While the majority of students stated that they would miss holidays, a typical response perhaps of children who were inexperienced with war, the next highest vote, over food and games was that the students would miss their parents.

A final example of how female students identified personally with what they learned about World War II was their frequent references to loss of life. Christine explained that she had included a death toll list in her project because “When people die in your family - that is pretty emotional isn’t it? And so that is one of the most important things to list.” Similarly, Claudia stated that she included the “sad memorial” of a tombstone of five children killed by the enemy because “I thought it was good to show that young children got killed as well as adults.” A clue as to how Elizabeth responded to what she had learned in her project is that along with the words “plane, London, and enemy” that were found on her word search, Elizabeth also included “suffering.” This affective word

gave a clear indication that she empathized with what the bombing of London and loss of life meant to the people of World War II. Finally, Morag's ending for her project seemed to capture how the young women felt, "some of the stories I've heard are horrible. I just hope there will never be a WWII.".

Restrictions on Freedom

A second theme running through the girls' foci on individuals, their experiences, and their environment, was an emphasis on restrictions on freedom. These restrictions fell into several broad categories: restrictions that affected everyone; those related to the evacuation process; restrictions imposed on the Jewish people and people in concentration camps and prisons; and voluntary restrictions adopted by the Jewish people.

Restrictions which affected everyone and had to do with everyday life during the war included attention to aspects such as rationing, identity cards, black outs, and gas masks. Mhairi and Claudia both made the point that everyone had to register for ration books. Mhairi also mentioned the national registration identity card that "...had to be carried around wherever you went." Elizabeth noted that clothes were also rationed and that housewives had to spend long hours queuing for food. She included the fact that newspapers could only be six pages long due to lack of paper indicating a kind of rationing or restriction of news.

Five of the girls included the black out as part of their project. They emphasized that cars and trains were not allowed to put on their lights, houses had to have shutters or shades to prevent any light from escaping at night, and that people were prosecuted for breaking black out restrictions. As Jean said, "They was not aloud [sic] any light on at all." Four of the girls included sections on gas masks. Everyone was required by law to carry their gas mask everywhere they went. Claudia explained her choice of this emphasis by noting, "Because they always had to take their gas masks with them when they went outside in the war...My Grandad told me about it and he always had to carry his in a cardboard box before he could go outside" (Taken from field notes, January 13).

The second category in the girls' projects focusing on restrictions was the evacuation of individuals from cities, which affected primarily mothers and children. While the initial evacuation in 1939 was voluntary, the government ordered the evacuation of all children from the industrialized cities when the blitz began. In Mhairi's project on posters and propaganda, the explicit message concerning evacuation was that if you took your child back to the city, he/she would die. While the restrictions within the realm of everyday life were reported in a matter of fact way, this was not the case with the evacuation. In speaking of the children who were evacuated, Elizabeth said, "It must of been dreadful for some children even as young as five, being separated from their parents. Sometimes children did not get reunited with their families for up to five or six years later." Similarly, Linda asserted, "Imagine how it would feel, if you were taken away from your family, at a point as confusing as wartime, when you need support the most," and Victoria imagined, "The parents and the children must have been very sad when they had to say goodbye to each other. Some children had never been so far from home with strangers." The girls also spoke of the lack of choice as to where the children would be placed as well as restriction of parental visits due to the expense of the long trips. In Louise's project on growing up at war, she drew a series of cartoons about the way the war changed the lives of the children. Within the changes, she included the loss of parents and friends due to evacuation, the abuse of some children by the people they were placed with, as well as having to share parents, friends, and toys by the children already in the homes where the evacuees were placed. Implicit in the above changes was the resulting restriction of personal freedom, which often occurred at a high cost to the emotional well being of both parents and children.

A third category in our data can be described as restrictions on the Jewish people and on people in concentration camps and prisons. Four of the girls included sections on Anne Frank and her family. Their focus was primarily on the restricted life the Franks lived in the secret annex. The girls noted the Franks had to avoid all windows, could not flush the toilet during the day, and had to walk quietly during the day when people were downstairs in the building. Danielle stated, "In the annex eight people lived for over two years within five small rooms most of the time. They had to tip toe around. It soon settled down to a routine. They were

not allowed to go to the toilet so they had to go before the warehouse opens at six forty five."

Concerning restriction on Jewish people, Mary noted that they could not go out in the evening, use the parks, swimming pools or public transportation. They were also made to wear a badge, a yellow star with the word 'Jew' on it. Allison reported that concentration camps were prisons and that some became extermination camps where people were murdered or worked to death. She wrote, "Concentration camps were little cold places. Everybody was crammed together with not a lot to keep them warm." Similarly, Linda maintained, "Life was exceedingly tough for Jewish children as you can imagine. They were taken away from their homes, separated from their families and forced to live in appalling condition." Once again the affective element was apparent as they reported on these restrictions of freedom. In writing about the concentration camps, Mary included a particularly emotive account of the French spy, Odette Churchill, who spent eight weeks in Karlruhe prison and after that had to spend three months and eleven days "in complete and utter darkness." Mary ended this part of her project with a quote from Odette, "In solitary confinement 24 hours a day are endless. Sometimes I felt that there was no difference between 24 hours and 24 months. The only way to escape is with your mind. After all no one can control our minds if we don't want them to."

The fourth and final category of restrictions of freedom addressed in the girls' research projects concerned those restrictions that bound the Jewish people together. Allison wrote about the Jewish dietary restrictions, the restrictions on what they could do on the Sabbath, and the separation of men and women in the synagogue. These kind of restrictions, which affirmed group identity, stand in opposition to those in the other categories which focus on limitations of personal freedom.

Women's wartime experiences. The earlier themes of empathizing with the experiences of individuals, and of restrictions on freedom cannot be arbitrarily divided from the final theme evident in the young women's projects, a focus on women's wartime experiences. The three themes intertwine and mingle in both the content and the comments made by the students about their work. At the same time the awareness

of the roles women played during the war was a clear pattern in the young girls' work that was not present in the boys' reports.

As the young women constructed their understanding of the war, they captured an understanding also of the treatment of the women during the war and they envisioned the difficulty of the roles that the women had to assume during this time. Although a survey by one female key informant, Evelyn, revealed that a majority of both females and males in the classroom believed that women had a harder time during the war, it was only the girls' projects that documented the fact that women were expected to assume the jobs left vacated by the men while they simultaneously fulfilled their roles as mothers. Linda wrote:

The jobs for the young ladies or just ladies were W.V.S. (Women's Voluntary Services) ladies. Nursing jobs, factory jobs, Women's Land Army, almost everything the male race did the females had to take over. The farming, the factories, in America the women even had to take over the baseball! On top of that they had the cooking, the cleaning, the ironing, and worrying about their children.

Other young girls similarly addressed the roles women played both at home and abroad. The following descriptions of topics addressed in the girls' projects paint portraits of women's wartime experiences that the girls recognized as valuable information to be included in their work:

- women spies languishing in "utter darkness" in prisons on the continent;
- women factory workers maintaining aircraft engines;
- women building the electric circuitry for bombs;
- women as housewives balancing the family rations for food and clothing;
- women donating their pots and pans to be turned into Spitfires to bomb the German forces;
- women as builders of bomb shelters;
- women as concerned mothers grabbing their children's gas masks and rushing to the shelters whenever the warnings sounded;

- women sending their children off on evacuation trains with buckets and spades as if they were going on a holiday;
- women as growers of vegetables to keep their children healthy and allow the farmers to grow for soldiers;
- women pilots ferrying the airplanes from the factories to the pick-up points for battle; and women as instructors training men to fly;
- women relegated to a secondary or lesser status when the men returned home as heroes;
- women as victims of the Nazi concentration camps;
- women dreading the telegram about their husbands' or sons' deaths or missing in action status;
- women afraid to speak for fear that their comments could relay information about their loved ones to a German spy;
- women learning to make do and mend; to do without new clothes and fresh fruits for themselves and their families;
- women queuing up for long hours to get little food.

One particularly original contribution to the reports focusing on women's experiences was Elizabeth's inclusion in her Poems and Songs section entitled, "Women's Work Song." It is a cumulative verse which demonstrates that the tasks done by the women kept the machines running -- even though they do not know what machine the parts they are crafting will keep working. And through their work the machines do keep running, the engines keep roaring, and enough food is grown to keep the nation fit. Through the song Elizabeth underscores that the women's tasks permeate not only all aspects of the home front but the war front as well.

Finally, it was clear from the artifacts the young women chose to incorporate into their projects that they had a deep understanding of and appreciation for the myriad tasks placed upon the women and the emotions they dealt with during this trying time. They also critically reflected on the women's plight, noting that the women were not accorded the prestige that they deserved after the war, when the heroes--the men--returned home.

The case of Morag. Although these three patterns were evident across the female key informants, one young girl, "Morag," initially

seemed to represent an anomaly in our data because of her selection of what was in this class a more male-oriented topic. Her work will be described below.

While the other girls in the class had chosen topics focusing on children's experiences during the war, the fate of the Jews during the holocaust, propaganda, and Anne Frank, Morag decided on "The Royal Air Force." Morag knew her choice was different, in fact she wanted to choose the Royal Air Force (RAF) for that reason and because then she would not be competing with friends (taken from field notes Jan. 20, May 12). Many of Morag's male classmates did end up also focusing on the RAF, however, as Morag noted in our final interview, the boys' approaches to the topic differed considerably from her own. Morag remarked, "I think they have probably done more on weapons and planes and I have done more on heroes and people in the war. Cause I wanted to find out what people had done and what people had done a lot of things in the war and the boys probably know a lot about weapons but they are presenting the same things but just in different ways. I wanted mine to be different."

In-depth analysis revealed that while Morag's topic differed from the other girls, strong similarities did exist between Morag and the other young women in terms of the thematic foci and ways of approaching the research topic. Like other female students, both Morag's product (her personal project booklet) and her process consistently portrayed her sense of the importance of people and their lives. Throughout Morag's process of investigating the Royal Air Force, she continually noted information gained from conversations with her mum and from family friends, the Smiths. When reflecting on her own questions regarding information she had come across concerning the wartime period, it was to her living sources that Morag turned for clarification. Morag noted that through these conversations she had learned of mistakes in books and had found out information she had never seen referenced in books.

Not only were people seen as valuable sources for information, it was people and their lives that also held Morag's attention as she constructed her sense of the Royal Air Force. This fact was evident first in the strong visual statement made by the pictures Morag chose to

include. The boys focusing on this topic incorporated drawings and photocopies of guns, bomb shelters, flags, planes, and submarines, but only one picture of a person, a drawing of a pilot. In contrast, every picture in Morag's report depicted people. Portraits of women pilots, artists, heroes, and women members of the auxiliary air force forcefully spoke to Morag's belief that wars were about people and their lives. Morag's written text also delineated her personal and experiential focus. Her chapters aptly illustrate this concern including titles such as "Women Pilots", "Escape from Hell Camp" (about Warrant Officer Richard Pope), "No Flying Allowed" (about the women's auxiliary air force), "Noor Ingyat Khan" (a female POW), and "Who was known as the Legless Ace?" In addition, Morag ended her report with a collection of newspaper articles focusing on the experiences of individuals during the war, explaining that they were all stories about people and what happened to them (taken from field notes, April 21). And finally, as was mentioned earlier, it was Morag who wrote on the final page of her project, "Some of the stories I've heard are horrible, I just hope there will never be a WW3" and then she signed her name. As a postscript she added, "Thanks to: Mr. and Mrs. Smith." (Taken from field notes, May 5).

Discussion

In summary, we suggest that gendered ways of knowing may impact students as they construct their own perceptions of the world through the content they study in school. The work of the young women implied a different ethical imperative from the males' research. The young women's foci were on individuals, their experiences and feelings, and the environments in which they lived. This emphasis is consistent with Gilligan's contention (1982, 1993) that women develop an ethic of care and connectedness that compels them to be contextual, to be involved in relationships and to be influenced by feelings. Males, according to Gilligan (1982, 1993), focus on the principles, the letter of the law and the hierarchy of the situation. An emphasis consistent with the data from our study indicating the young men focused on power and authority.

The young women's content and processes were also reflective of varying stages of the work of Belenky et al. (1986). First, the female

pupils relied not only on texts but also on individuals as sources for information. This process is consistent with patterns portrayed by Belenky's et al. (1986) women in the stage of received knowing. Both relied on outside authorities for information. The female pupils in our study were open to learning by listening. Although the males also sought out individuals to interview, they did not choose to incorporate any of the information they learned into their final projects. In addition, elements found in the Belenky et al. (1986) stage of subjective knowing were also evident in the girls' foci on first hand experiences as sources of knowledge. While the nature of the historical topic precluded the girls from drawing on their own experiences, it was the personal narratives of others (both oral and written) that they validated in their reports. Finally, elements of our female pupils' approaches were also consistent with the attributes noted in women operating within the category of procedural knowing. Women at this stage who are connected knowers show an orientation toward relationships and develop procedures for gaining access to other people's knowledge. They also have a capacity for empathy. The girls in our study employed interviewing strategies in order to gain information about their topics. They foregrounded people's emotions and their inquiries led them to wish dramatically that no one need ever experience such horrible wartime events again. Such patterns are clearly indicative of the types of knowledge construction representative of connected knowers in the procedural knowing stage.

Our female pupils are much younger than the women in the study by Belenky et al. (1986) and they did not demonstrate consistent patterns of any one stage described in their study. However, traces of our students' processes indicate fine threads that may provide the pattern for expanding these young women's ways of viewing truth, facts, and experience throughout their lives. Their underlying emphases on experience and their ability to value individual's accounts may provide the fertile grounding for them to move into relying on their own subjective/constructive knowing as they grow and gain in experience.

In looking at the young men's perspectives, one might consider the degree to which the female-dominated context of school may have played a role in their emphases. Young's (1999) work with preadolescent males indicates that within the societal context, hegemonic discourses of

masculinity can support boys' heterosexist display of gender within local contexts. Given that the teacher's overall thematic study was viewed through the feminine lens of children's experiences during the war, it is possible that the males may have been trying to overstate their case or perhaps trying to be different as they felt they could not compete.

From a classroom perspective, these gendered patterns in our data raise issues regarding curriculum and assessment. In this Scottish classroom, both the males' and the females' topics and approaches were accepted and validated. The self-directed nature of the project work empowered them to decide what was significant content. Learning was not defined as a set body of teacher-determined information on which students were to be tested; instead, individual students shaped learning in idiosyncratic ways as they constructed their own reality of World War II. Understanding the experiences of individuals and acquiring a body of factual information on events, weapons and artillery, were both seen as appropriate ways of knowing about a topic. Teachers wishing to honor multiple ways of knowing, then, would need to follow an approach that included participatory experiences that honored individuals' explorations and moved away from teaching texts as information to be memorized (Alvermann, 2001). In addition, from a critical literacy perspective, teachers might also wish to explore with students' notions of masculinity and femininity (Swarts, 1992; Young, 2001). Young's (2001) work with adolescent males underscores that for gender equity to ever exist, teachers must be willing to challenge existing practices of gender.

The findings from this study created for all of us a richer understanding of the epistemological differences that can exist between our male and female students as they construct their own beliefs. Thus, this work confirms the importance of recognizing the unique perspectives students may bring to knowledge construction. Through greater understanding of the relationships that exist between gender and literacy and what counts as "knowledge," we can provide the impetus for challenging our selves, our schools, and our society to value multiple ways of knowing.

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Enhancing Poetry Writing Through Technology: The Yin and the Yang

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This paper describes the outcome of an innovative mentoring program at a midwestern university that paired technology faculty and methods faculty in order to form partnerships to facilitate the modeling of technology for preservice teachers. Both faculty members concluded that topics in seeming juxtaposition such as poetry and technology could provide successful models of integration. Prior applications within poetry instruction mostly included incorporating visuals or using electronic postings. These applications treat technology as an addition rather than a true partner reaching into the actual writing of poetry. Conversely, this paper describes the creation of useful applications for enhancing poetry writing through technology for elementary school students.

AS PART OF AN INNOVATIVE mentoring program at a midwestern university, faculty members and technology faculty or doctoral students are paired together to create partnerships that would facilitate modeling technology for preservice teachers (Merkley & Schmidt, 1996; Thompson, Schmidt & Hadjiyianni, 1995; Zachariades & Roberts, 1996). The technology half of our partnership is the Associate Director of the Center for Technology in Learning and Teaching while the other half is a faculty member in reading and language arts methods. This paper is a slice of our story and concerns the mentoring experience which led to the creation of some useful applications for enhancing poetry writing through technology for elementary school students.

For some, the mere thought of combining technology and poetry is an abomination because of the historical contexts preceding these entities. Stereotypically, many educators envision technology with hard descriptors. As the partnership grew between the language arts instructor and the technology director, we generated Table 1 to show how historically our two fields have been labeled in completely opposite terms. By referring to Table 1, with these labels side by side, one sees the discrepancies rather than the possibility of poetry and technology becoming harmonious partners. Hence, we forged the idea of our seemingly opposite fields creating positive energy in the combination or the yin and yang.

Seeing the power of technology as a tool in our methods courses can be elusive to some teacher educators. Papert and Solomon (1971) noted early on that it is not technology's lack of relevancy, but our own prejudices and shortsightedness, which cause difficulty in seeing its many applications. These stereotypes result in technology and poetry being seen as apparent opposites. However, our mentoring partnership overcame the initial stereotypes and in the process uncovered a strong rationale for applications using technology and poetry writing for elementary school students.

Poetry Writing with Children

Some feel poetry is not genuine poetry unless it emanates from the soul and is placed on the blank page (Kreuzer, 1955; Rosenthal, 1987;

Simpson, 1988; Zillman, 1966). However, our experiences with elementary students, and even adults, reveal that the blank page often intimidates. Consequently, providing a starting place by using formulae allows students to begin poetry writing in a non-threatening structure (Grossman, 1991). Likewise, Tompkins (1998, p. 451) instructs preservice teachers that “students can have successful experiences writing poetry if they use poetic formulas.” Therefore, a respected and supportive route for teachers concerned about poetry writing is to introduce a poetry formula, share examples, review the formula, create a collaborative poem, and allow students to continue individually by following the writing process (Tompkins, 2000).

Table 1. Stereotypic Descriptors of Technology and Poetry

Technology: the yin	Poetry: the yang
Scientific / Hard	Unscientific / Soft
Objective / Analytical	Subjective
Impersonal	Personal
From the head	From the heart
Formulaic	Serendipitous
Without emotion	A distillation of emotion
Computational	Interpretative / Creative
Inflexible	Flexible
Artificial	Art
Functional	Traditional
Practical	Disconnected from practicality
Progressive / Forward thinking	Humanistic / Reflective in nature

One assumption throughout this paper is that providing formula poems and teacher support allows students to explore and succeed in poetry writing. Tompkins (2000) notes that formulae are not meant to be rigidly adhered to, but rather to create a scaffold or organization for

enhancing meaning. Additionally, she adds that because of the formulae, many students experience success in poetry writing. Many, including Kenneth Koch, author of Wishes, Lies, and Dreams (1970) and Rose, Where Did You Get that Red? (1973), advocate using formulae which provide some structure, yet are open-ended and divergent enough to allow for a personal "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquility." This quote is attributed to the famous poet, William Wordsworth, in (Brussell, 1988, p. 444). Therefore, many of the current technological applications discussed in this paper employ options, which include poetry formulae.

Technology Applications within Poetry

While many have made worthy technological applications within poetry instruction, most of these applications are related to visual presentations with poetry, such as laserdisc technology (Schneider, 1993); multimedia projects (Armstrong & Yetter-Vassot, 1994; Schneider, 1993); tele-conferencing (Polin, 1990; Krebs, 1994); electronic postings (Reiss, 1996), and distance education to write and edit poetry (Taylor, 1989). These applications treat technology as an addition rather than a true partner which reaches into the actual writing of poetry.

In contrast, Preckshot (1985) found that technological advances had not compromised the creation or production of modern poetry. She concluded that real poets had not lost the originality of expression that is a key component of poetry. Another researcher, Madian (1993), notes that student poets could discover their personal strengths using inquiry-based approaches such as an "I-search" in a model study of combining poetry with technology in a true partnership. Its singularity highlights the paucity of research reports of such collaborations.

Poetry Writing, Technology, and the Writing Process

When applying the stages of the writing process, the prewriting stage is often a recursive one. Never linear, prewriting becomes a way of gathering and ruminating ideas. Surely, paper and pencil allow for great prewriting experiences, but technology offers unique nonlinear links that are motivating and also enhance and support the way students think

about poetry. Technological applications abound that will create nonlinear databases and allow the author to collect writing ideas and elaborate on them in ways that will energize the drafting process. Student poets may use *Inspiration* to brainstorm ideas. Some teachers may prefer *Kidspiration*, which is specifically for K-3 use, and has pre-formed webs to use with the creation of story maps or character development. (See <http://www.inspiration.com>).

Likewise, *PowerPoint* may be used as a motivational sieve to catch great poetry ideas. Student poets can walk through a short *PowerPoint* presentation created by their teacher with empty text boxes designed to generate lots of ideas. For example, the major headings from the classic Wishes, Lies, and Dreams (Koch, 1970) can be used so that student poets can document all of their ideas.

Spreadsheets, such as *Excel*, can be used similarly to idea gathering formats for prewriting. For example, our students create sense charts prior to drafting using *Excel*. Using sense charts, students can start to recreate the particular subject or scene of the poem. Without even requiring them to do so, phrases and ideas from this chart find their way into their rough draft. We gave this example of a sense chart, which was from a family going through a divorce, putting away the Christmas decorations, and knowing they had had their last Christmas totally together. Prewriting activities such as these allow student poets to "step into" the scene as well as to use appeals to the senses throughout the first draft of their poems. (See Appendix A)

Another beneficial tool we have used with students has been *Filemaker Pro*. With *Filemaker Pro*, students can store and organize any number of configurations of information. The teacher or the user can create a template that will allow them to later sort and access the information. The language arts methods instructor had always kept an "author's idea file" using index cards, but the technology mentor shared some ways to store these ideas on *Filemaker Pro*. We created these headings: female names, male names, scenarios or subjects to write about, catchy phrases, thought-provoking quotations, and possible titles. Keeping a "technological" author's notebook (Roberts, 1999-2000) and

utilizing *Filemaker Pro* sorting function puts ideas for writing in a much more accessible and useable form.

One tool application that continues to attract many students and one that we found to help preservice teachers see the beauty and flexibility of poetry utilizes *HyperStudio 4*. By creating a HyperStudio stack with tutorial examples of poetry forms (Examples: haiku, diamante, biopoems, etc), students are extended invitations to both read and write original poems. Once students interact with the *HyperStudio 4* program by including some of their original poems, the final product consisting of various stacks can serve the same purpose as a class book. Previously, software formats such as *PowerPoint* and *KidPix* did not allow the kind of linking capabilities of *HyperStudio*, but newer versions offer the production of a slide show. *KidPix Deluxe 3* can produce a slide show with still or moving pictures and *PowerPoint* now has linking capabilities that allow students and teachers to use this software as their presentation medium.

Software Applications for Use in the Writing Process and Poetry

Cochran-Smith (1991) reported that, keyboarding and computer expertise alone does not appear to be significant factors influencing students' writing or strategies for thinking and writing. In much the same fashion, Russell (1991) cautioned that the relationship between technology and writing is complex. By performing a meta-analysis of 21 related studies, Russell (1991) noted that whatever increases in the quality of writing may very well be due to social interactions within computer labs rather than the actual word processing technology. Another study (Bangert-Drowns, 1993) reported small increases in writing quality with word processing and students using word processing generally wrote longer compositions than those pen and paper students. Also, less skilled writers tended to benefit more from word processing technologies than did either the medium or high skilled writers (Bangert-Drowns, 1993).

Judging from the benefits of using various word processors with writing in general, we were confident that word processors could successfully and specifically be used for poetry writing. We found that

various software packages were equipped to support students in their poetry writing. In general, software such as *Microsoft Word*, *AppleWorks*, and *The Student Writing Center* offer an appealing and friendly vehicle for children's writing. Both *Kidworks2* and *KidPix Deluxe 3* can be even more motivating particularly for the primary grades because they not only offer standard word processing that is accessible to children, but they include options for stamps and rebus as well. While preservice teachers may choose a variety of software, many were drawn to the specific supports for poetry writing in *Amazing Writing Machine*. Originally produced by Broderbund, but now in publishers' limbo, *Amazing Writing Machine's* main menu presents options for several different genres of writing; including essays, stories, letters, and, of course, poetry. Once a student has chosen the genre of poetry, the option of either writing with or without prompts is selected. As one might expect, students also have the means available to enhance their poem with paintbox capabilities or with imported graphics. Should students decide to request prompts or aids in writing a poem, a variety of ideas (such as quotations, random ideas, synonyms, and antonyms) as well as formulae (such as haiku, cinquain, and limerick) are available. No doubt, these software packages allow for drafting as well as revising and editing capabilities in order to support the complete writing process.

Using CD-ROM and DVD Sources with Poetry Writing

Not only do various software packages offer support for poetry writing with children, but also we found that CD-ROM resources often invite students to integrate poetry writing across curricular areas. For example, the CD of Jack Prelutsky's *New Kid on the Block* visually presents poems to students who can then create similar innovations. Prelutsky's poem, "When Dracula Went to the Blood Bank," goes like this:

When Dracula went to the blood bank,
He thoroughly flustered the staff
For rather than make a donation,
He drew out a pint and a half.

By using Prelutsky's poem, preservice teachers in methods courses are inspired to create model poems such as the following:

When the librarian went to the bookstore,
She smugly looked at hundreds of books.
She browsed and perused and lifted
Interesting titles from their nooks.
Even though she promptly replaced them,
She felt a bit like a crook.
Writing down the names of her favorites,
Knowing that she will always have
Access to wonderful and FREE books.

With its huge storage capabilities, CD-ROM and DVD technologies can store and search voluminous anthologies of work that give both our preservice teachers and their elementary school students access to a plethora of knowledge. Electronic encyclopedias, such as *Compton's Encyclopedia 2000 Deluxe Edition* CD-ROM or *Encarta Reference Suite 2001*, open up worlds of information for creating accurate poems that span the curriculum. *Encarta Reference Suite 2001* DVD edition holds seven CDs' worth of information on one DVD disk and has one hundred and five percent more videos than the CD version for display. Many teachers show their students how to write biopoems about themselves or classmates, but with the easy access of information in CDs or DVDs, students may research various animals, places, or notable people to create a biopoem. The language arts instructor supplied preservice teachers with information about skunks from *Encarta* online [<http://beta.encarta.msn.com/find/Concise.asp?z=1&pg=2&ti=76157719>] as well as additional links to skunk myths, skunks as pets, and a *QuickTime* video with an appropriately gross visual of a genuine skunk spray sure to enamor any school age kid [<http://granicus.if.org/~firmiss/m-d.html>]. *Encarta's* search even provided a link to a poem about a skunk at night read by poet, Robert Lowell [<http://beta.encarta.msn.com/find/MediaMax.asp?pg=3&ti=761560988&idx=461544775>]. The model biopoem that follows, written by the language arts instructor (Roberts), was used to show preservice teachers how poetry writing fully utilized information on the web as well as integrated content, such as life sciences.

Mephitis,
 Stinky, striped, black and white, musk spraying,
 Relative of the otter, weasel, and badger.
 You love to eat insects, rodents, and bees with your honey.
 You feel alone, threatened by suburbia, and misunderstood.
 You need nocturnal walks and lots of personal space.
 You fear humans, cat food, and unhealthy leftovers.
 You give life to a litter and a strong warning shot to stay away.
 Roaming in the night, you would like to see moonlit nights, your
 Ecosystem restored, and the safety of your nest.
 Mephitidae

Other CD-ROMs that have proven helpful to us in integrating poetry throughout subject areas have been the *Imagination Express* series including *Ocean's Below*, and The Learning Company's (formerly Broderbund's) *Living Book* series. One CD that always inspires and motivates upper elementary students, as well as intermediate students, is entitled *In My Own Voice* from Sunburst Technologies. This CD is aesthetically unique, in that it includes great poetry written and read by people of color. The CD also provides the special treat of hearing and viewing interviews with the poets themselves.

Internet Sources and Poetry Writing: A Powerful Partnership

Just as CD and DVD technologies provide a wealth of information for teachers and students, so does the World Wide Web. Iannone (1998) noted that websites in general should be categorized into teacher/student resources, interactive writing sources, and student publishing. As our partnership and our preservice teachers explored the synergy between poetry and technology, we categorized the use of poetry websites into three categories: informational power, inspirational power, and publishing power.

First, using websites for informational purposes to verify ideas or concepts necessary to capture in our poems was stimulating and easy. For example, after a visit to the Grand Canyon, one wanted to write a poem about the mysteries and the majesties of the Grand Canyon in the spotlight of the full moon. Questions arose such as "Just how grand is the

likely, elementary students will enjoy the freedom that magnetic poetry allows [<http://members.aol.com/Bvsangl/pocket.html>] and will yield positive results such as the following poem made by moving the magnetic words by clicking and dragging.

The following annotated chart provides additional websites for the purposes of reading and interacting with poetry before drafting or for creating innovations on similar poetry. (See Appendix B)

Third and likely the most powerful, the Internet gives our student poets a perfect outlet for creating quality work that can be published on the web. Having the capacity to reach an interested audience certainly satisfies the notion that authenticity increases the quality of work (Graves, 1994). Grandparents and friends across the nation and the world can read and show off the works of student poets. Indeed the partnership between the Internet and poetry writing is strong when one considers the publishing power generated from having so many websites specifically for children to post and publish their works. No doubt, the wide readership of these poems enhances the quality of the poems submitted and stimulates students to do a professional job of revising and editing their work. An annotated listing of websites that publish children's poems follows. (See Appendix C)

Conclusions

Technology and poetry are dissimilar partners, but when technology is used to support poetry writing, the results are exciting and authentic. Research generally supports the notion that technology can improve the quality and length of the writing product (Bangert-Drowns, 1993). From our experience with preservice teachers, CDs, DVDs, software, and Internet resources can intervene at all stages of the writing process in poetry writing. The technology half of our partnership was knowledgeable enough to provide technology options; the language arts methods instructor was able to narrow the selections to find the most apropos technology that could influence elementary students in constructive ways to produce their own poetry.

Indeed, through a technology-mentoring program, the original partnership formed by a language arts methods instructor and technology faculty member pushed beyond the notion that technology and poetry are stereotypic opposites. In fact, one might consider them opposites in the same way that yin and yang are opposites. That is, Taoism notes that from the existence (Tao) of any one of ten thousand things, form two powers, yin and yang, which are both opposite of each other, yet are always filling each other (Lao Tze: *Tao Te Chiang*) [<http://www.religioustolerance.org/taoism.htm>]. Without overdoing this powerful analogy of the yin and the yang, our mentoring partnership found that synergy occurred as these two dissimilar backgrounds came together. Sheingold's (1991) article in the *Kappan* discusses the potential for synergy when technology becomes an ingredient. Just as Taoism notes that the opposite powers of yin and yang bring a power and a fullness to the process, so our partnership found that technology and poetry were able to create a useful, motivating, nonlinear, and synergistic model of technology integration to preservice teachers.

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- Encarta Reference Suite 2001* [DVD computer software]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation.
- Excel* [computer software]. Microsoft Office. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation.
- Filemaker Pro* [computer software]. Santa Clara, CA: Filemaker Inc.
- HyperStudio 4* [computer software]. Torrance, CA: Havas Interactive and Knowledge Adventure.
- Imagination Express* series [computer software]. Redmond, WA: EdMark.
- In My Own Voice* [computer software]. Pleasantville, NY: Sunburst Technology.
- Inspiration* [computer software]. Portland, OR: Inspiration Software Inc.
- KidPix Deluxe 3rd Edition* [computer software]. Novato, CA: The Learning Company.
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- Ocean's Below* [computer software part of *Imagination Express*] Redmond, WA: EdMark.
- PowerPoint* [computer software]. Microsoft Office. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation.
- Prelutsky's New Kid on the Block* [computer software]. Part of *Living Books* series formerly of Broderbund. Novato, CA: The Learning Company.
- QuickTime video* [computer software]. Cupertino, CA: Apple Publishing.
- Storybook Weaver Deluxe* [computer software]. Novato, CA: The Learning Company.
- The Student Writing Center* [computer software]. Novato, CA: The Learning Company.

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Appendix A

Excel example

OUR LAST CHRISTMAS

SMELL	fast food; stale Christmas smells; full ashtrays
SIGHT	dead pine needles; no one want to take down the Christmas tree; disorganization
HEARING	very quiet; no conversations; short bursts of yelling; muffled crying
TOUCH	the slam of doors and cabinets; mom's cat; the sticky kitchen floor b/c Mom's on strike
TASTE	cold cereal; Kentucky Fried Chicken or frozen lasagna; any fast food eaten alone

Appendix B

Websites to inspire poetry writing

Poetry Pals http://www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/5165/index1.html	Poetry categorized by form for you to enjoy.
Children's Haiku Garden http://www.tecnet.or.jp/~haiku/	Haikus written and illustrated by kids around the world.
Semantic Rhyming Dictionary http://rhyme.lycos.com	Thesaurus, other word references, and finds rhyming words.
Poetry for Kids http://www.poetry4kids.com/poems.html	Poems with illustrations. Links to poets and "how to" write poems.
KidzPage http://www.veeceed.com	Award winning site has links to famous poets' works, such as Ogden Nash.
Dr. Seuss http://www.randomhouse.com/seussville/	If you want to use Dr. Seuss's work as an example of poetry, this website is for you.
Kristine O'Connell George Poetry http://www.kristinegeorge.com	Comprehensive site with fantastic writing hints and inspiration. Includes help for teachers.
Fun Poetry http://www.fizzyfunnyfuzzy.com/forKids	Loaded with humorous poetry. Students sign in a guest book and rate poems from 1 to 5. This creates a top ten list of fun poems.
Autumn Poems http://comsewoguke.k12.ny.us/~ssliverman/autumn/index.html	Poems by student poets around the U.S. and Canada. Click acrostic or couplet poems which can be very inspiring for beginning students.
Magnetic Poetry http://www.magneticpoetry.com	Commercial magnetic poetry kits that lets you play online.
Magnetic Poetry http://home.freeuk.net/elloughton13/scramble2.htm	Children can rearrange words to make poetry, just like magnets.
Giggle Poetry http://www.gigglepoetry.com	Collection of funny poetry and poetry contests for children to enter.
Teachers' Guide to Poetry	Guide to poetry with Jack Prelutsky is for

http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/poetwrit/tguide.htm	grade levels 2-6.
Grandpa's Rhymes and Tales http://www.night.net/tucker/	Grandpa Tucker shares with us some of his own rhymes.
Bruce Lansky's Website http://www.poetryteachers.com/index.html	Lansky models and walks student poets through the process of writing great poems.
Haiku Writer http://www.familygames.com/feature/humor/haiku.html	Computer-generated website offers a wide variety of haikus.
Magnetic Poetry Bat Board http://members.aol.com/bats4kids/magnet/magpoem1.htm	Allows students to create poetry about bats over and over again.
A Pocketful of Rhymes http://members.aol.com/bats4kids/magnet/magpoem1.htm Bvsangl/pocket.html	Different poetry activities, such as writing the last line of a given poem or guessing the topic of a riddle poem.
Kid News http://www.kidnews.com/creative.html	Publishing site with lots of great poems. Click on My Sister or Tigers and other poems.

Appendix C

Useful sites for publishing children's poetry

Young Writers Clubhouse http://www.realkids.com/club.shtml/	Publish children's stories and poetry.
Zuzu http://www.zuzu.org/	Directions on what to send to publish.
Kids' Corner by Oasis http://kids.ot.com/yourturn	Publishes poems, stories, and art as well as offering puzzles and games.
Poetry Pals http://www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/5165/	Each month a different form of poetry is high-lighted. Individual or class sets of the featured form of poetry may be submitted.
Cyberkids http://www.cyberkids.com/	Children 13 and under may submit poems and stories.
Kidstuff http://www.kidstuff.org	Writing for children including poetry written by children.
Kid Pub http://www.kidpub.com	Great site for teachers and students. Publishes students' work including poetry.
Midlink Magazine http://www.ncsu.edu/midlink/poetry.goals.htm	Includes an International Poetry Exchange, aims to involve children 8-18 in writing. Submissions are e-mailed to the site.
KidzPage http://www.veeceed.com	Children's poems with eye-catching graphics. Submissions are e-mailed to the site.
Positively Poetry http://home.HiWAAY.net/~emedia/kv/poetry1.html	Created by a 15 year old and designed for kids 5 -15 to share poetry. Accepts poetry for publication each summer.

BACK ISSUES: While available, back issues may be purchased from *Reading Horizons* at \$5.00 per copy. Microfilm copies are available from University Microfilm International, 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor MI 48108.

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