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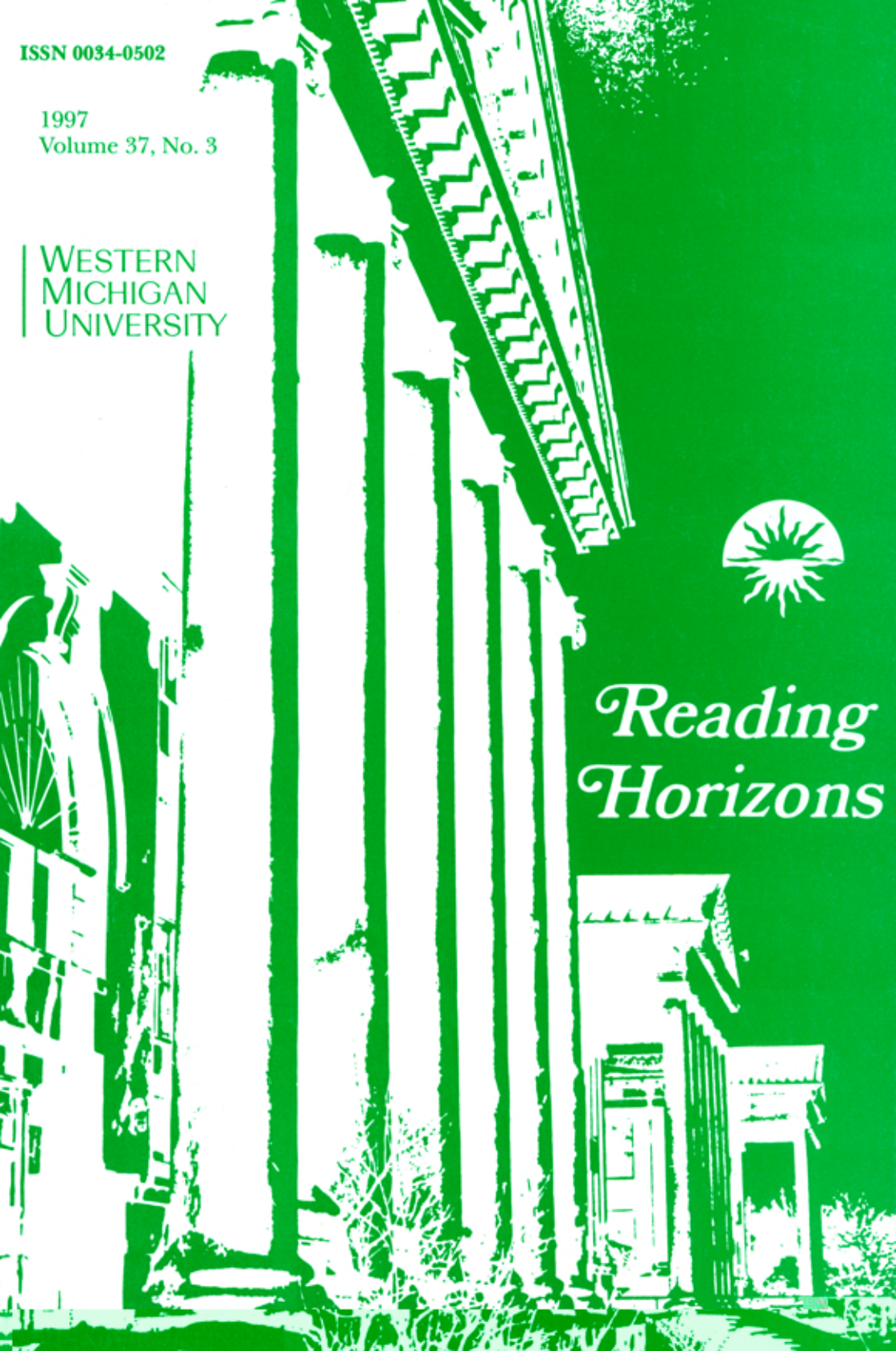
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Reading Horizons





READING HORIZONS

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Earning by Learning: Changing Attitudes and Habits in Reading

George W. McNinch

Parents and teachers are constantly striving to find ways to motivate children to read. Teachers (Veenman, 1984) ranked the motivation of students as one of their overriding concerns when asked about improving reading. *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (Anderson, et al., 1985), a truly seminal work on how to build a literate society, suggests that building motivation is an essential step in developing children who will turn into readers. The key question facing parents and teachers is how to motivate youngsters, especially at-risk children, to become active engaged readers. One answer to this question of motivation is a national program that pays children to read (Meyer, 1995).

Earning by Learning (EBL) (Johnson, 1995) is a unique program designed to increase the reading attitudes of academically at-risk children by combining two strong motivational factors: cash rewards and adult attention and approval. Children are encouraged and guided to read. For each book read, a cash award is given. These awards are typically made at the end of the program and the amounts earned vary with each individual based upon the number of books read.

Using rewards is a common educational practice to enhance motivation and thus keep children persevering at a task. While intrinsic rewards are usually argued as the best means for increasing involvement in reading, extrinsic rewards are sometimes more important and useful for groups whose inward motivation decreases with age or academic frustration (Oldfather, 1995). Schunk (1983) found that offering children a tangible, extrinsic reward promotes motivation and task performance. When tied to actual accomplishments, rewards can also enhance self-efficacy more than a no reward situation. As children work and succeed, motivation is increased and a cycle of support is sustained (Schunk, 1984).

External rewards can also supplement and build students' intrinsic motivation if the message of the extrinsic events is perceived as having personal value. Competence, or successful task completion, is one type of school activity that can make children feel good about themselves and increase feelings of self-esteem (Terrell and Rendulic, 1996). Higher motivation is achieved when children experience these positive feelings of self-esteem (Terrell & Rendulic, 1996). Accordingly, it appears that external rewards may be useful in increasing the frequency of reading because they increase the likelihood of successful task completion, i.e., finishing more books.

Questions

While there is logic and research to support the idea that motivation to read can be improved by offering at-risk children extrinsic rewards to supplement intrinsic motivation, specific questions must be asked about Earning by Learning: 1) Will the cash rewards of the EBL program motivate children to read? 2) Will the cash rewards of the EBL program change children's attitudes toward reading? 3) Will the cash rewards

of the EBL program change children's school behaviors in a positive direction?

Methods

To answer the questions about the success of the EBL program, one program site in a western Georgia small town was chosen for study and analysis. The EBL program was a daily half-day summer school experience located in a cooperating elementary school that provided rooms and volunteer adult support and supervision. The EBL program extended through six weeks of the summer vacation period and was staffed with a volunteer teacher and other adult volunteers who helped in book selection, reading attempts, discussions, and reports. Both school and local libraries were accessible to the program children. Volunteers drove the children to the local library on an almost daily basis. During the school day, children read books and completed informal activities such as retelling and dramatizing to demonstrate their mastery. EBL activities included not only these reading and discussion activities, but time for play, snacks, and other nonacademic school experiences where the EBL pupils mixed with other summer school children. Children were also encouraged to continue their reading at home and to share their at-home, independent reading experiences with the volunteers. Records were kept by the volunteers as to books read and the children's earning charts were posted and kept current in the rooms.

Selection for the summer program was completed in the spring prior to the formal end of the school year. At-risk second and third grade children were nominated by their teachers who considered erratic school attendance, low grades, low family income, little sibling success, and low rates of school library use as at-risk indicators. Twenty children participated in the summer program and were used as the study subjects. All

selected pupils had been in a kindergarten program. Nine of the pupils lived in two parent households while 11 lived in other arrangements. The mean reading percentile of the sample on a system administered standardized reading test was 19.45. Two of the students had been previously retained in a grade. The socioeconomic status of the represented families was in the bottom third. In summary, the sample chosen was at-risk and judged by their teachers as not likely to participate in recreational reading activities at home during the summer vacation.

Results

Question 1: Will the cash rewards of the EBL program motivate children to read? During the six weeks of the voluntary summer reading program, even though some children had several absences, the 20 children read a total of 829 books. All children read multiple books with the top reader completing a total of 56 books (a total award of \$112). The least number of books read by a child was 15 (an earned award of \$30). The EBL reward, a cash award of \$2.00 per book, for the group was \$1,658 divided among the summer readers. The children did appear to be influenced by the extrinsic motivation and were truly earning by learning. On the basis of the number of books completed, the EBL program was successful in getting at-risk children, not usually thought of as readers, to read and read continuously during the summer program.

Question 2: Will the cash rewards of the EBL program change children's attitudes toward reading? Reading attitude was measured by the *Elementary Reading Attitude Survey* (McKenna and Kear, 1990) employed in a pre/post test situation. The attitude scale is a self reporting questionnaire of 20 questions in a Likert format using Garfield faces ranging from 4 (very happy) to 1 (very upset). The first 10 items on the scale reflect attitudes toward recreational reading while the final 10

items focus on attitudes toward academic reading. These two scores are added to produce a total.

Overall change in attitude was evaluated by comparing the total pretest with the total post test results on the attitude survey. The mean response on the attitude pretest was 2.8 (neutral) at the beginning of the summer program. After the completion of the voluntary summer reading program and its financial cash rewards for reading, the mean response to the attitude survey was 3.1 (mildly excited). The dependent one-tailed t -test ratio ($t = 1.8$, $p < .05$) indicated that the pretest and post test attitude scores were significantly different from each other. The pupils' total attitude toward reading changed positively during the cash incentive program. A voluntary summer reading program for at-risk elementary pupils that uses cash rewards as extrinsic motivators seems to be effective in changing overall attitude toward reading.

Recreational reading attitude as represented by the first 10 items on the *Elementary Reading Attitude Survey* was also compared. The mean recreational reading response was 3.0 (mildly positive) at the beginning of the program. The post test mean recreational response from the end of the summer program was 3.1 (mildly positive), a slight but significant increase. The dependent one-tailed t -test ratio ($t = -1.9$, $p < .05$) indicated that these means were significantly different. The children's measured attitude toward recreational reading changed positively during the summer program that rewarded book reading with cash rewards. EBL may be useful in changing attitude toward recreational reading in at-risk groups of young children.

Academic reading attitude, comprising the last 10 items on the *Elementary Reading Attitude Survey*, was the research variable in the third analysis. Mean academic reading attitude

was 2.8 (neutral) at the beginning of the summer EBL program. This mean response was the lowest of all the measured variables and indicated that pupils had a low attitude toward reading in the school situation. After the voluntary summer reading program and its rewards for recreational reading, the mean response toward academic reading changed to 3.0 (mildly positive). However, this difference was not statistically significant ($t = -1.7$, $p = .06$), due to the degree of variance in the scores. Pupils' attitude did move toward a higher level and ended with a moderately positive response to the academic items on the survey. Some at-risk students need a different, perhaps more intensive, program to enhance change in attitude toward academic reading. Perhaps academic attitudes might also be improved more if the monetary rewards were extended for a longer time period and implemented in the regular school setting.

Question 3: Will the cash rewards of the EBL program change children's school behaviors in a positive direction? This question was investigated during the school year following the summer program. Teachers of EBL participants completed a performance assessment four months into the school year focusing on the school and reading habits of the EBL pupils in their classes. The teacher survey of pupil habits addressed the following areas: improved self-esteem, rise in overall school grades, rise in reading levels, and improved school attitude. The percentages in the following table indicate that the teachers perceived that the EBL program impacted the children in a most positive manner. Rewarding children for reading changed both their literacy performance and their general school habits.

<u>Observed Characteristic</u>	<u>% of Teachers</u> <u>Noticing Change</u>
improved self-esteem	84%
rise in overall school grades	72%
rise in reading levels	63%
improved school attitude	86%

Discussion

Extrinsic motivational techniques are important to any reading program. They are useful in increasing reading participation and encouraging at-risk children to read. The Earning by Learning approach to motivation, using cash awards at the end of a voluntary program, appears to be successful in increasing the quantity of books that at-risk children read. The answer to the question posed by Sax and Kohn (1996) then, "Should we pay children to learn," appears to be a supportive "Yes." The frequency and amount of reading, as well as the attitudes toward recreational reading, of at-risk elementary pupils challenged in a summer program can be significantly increased by incentives based on financial gain. The EBL program, like other successful summer enrichment programs, immerses the children in a school based supportive, success filled environment well stocked with books and other reading materials. Books are read, shared, discussed, and traded in the context of friendly, structured events. Even though the intrinsic rewards that grow out of success and achievement obviously play a part in the success of the EBL program, it does appear that cash awards may be strong extrinsic motivators for encouraging frequent and sustained reading.

In at-risk populations, the keys to encouraging an optimal student response to literature and reading are self-selection and the use of extrinsic motivators (White and Greenwood, 1995). EBL seems to satisfy both of these policy

recommendations. The EBL program, in its short summer duration, was successful in significantly changing attitudes in two (total and recreational) of the three affective areas measured by the *Elementary Reading Attitude Survey*. EBL's success in recreational reading attitude is straightforward as this measured skill is reflective of the successful program. Total change toward reading, a more positive attitude, was also expected as the program and its rewards placed a high, positive value on books and book reading in a supportive adult guided environment. However, unlike the positive changes in overall and recreational reading attitude, no significant changes were noted in academic reading attitude. The very negative attitudes of two at-risk pupils on the attitude survey may have been enough to depress the entire sample in this area. Perhaps students with very negative self-reported attitudes toward school and reading may need a longer more supportive program, more than just rewards, to effect change.

Frequent book reading, increased attitude, and increased positive school behaviors, the three successes of the program, seem to paint a positive, endorsing portrait of Earning by Learning. Immersing children in a book rich environment, staffed by caring volunteers, and rewarding reading with cash incentives seems at least in the short run to make readers and more successful students out of at-risk children.

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The Role of Children's Literature in One Rural Town's Elementary School: A Case Study

Jennifer L. Altieri

Although researchers and theorists have shown the value of using literature in the curriculum (Huck, Hepler, and Hickman, 1987; Norton, 1993), studies show that the use of children's literature in the classroom is not as common as one might think (Blass and Jurenka, 1989-1990; Morrow, 1982). One study suggests that teacher location may be related to the use of literature-based instruction (Lehman, Allen, and Freeman 1990). This study found that teachers in rural areas were less confident about teaching with literature without the benefit of a published reading program than urban and suburban teachers. Rural teachers were also much more likely to feel that lists of recommended children's books for each grade level were important.

Although nearly 2/3 of the 15,600 public school districts in the United States are in areas designated rural (Trusock, 1994), most research focuses on urban or suburban areas. With one-third of our teachers in teaching in rural schools today (Erickson, 1995), literacy issues in rural areas cannot continue to be ignored. After conducting a review of rural research, DeYoung (1987) believes that research focused on rural

schools is rarely at the same level of sophistication as research published in mainstream educational journals.

While the condition of America's rural communities is assumed by many to be idyllic, the situation is far worse than generally recognized (Davidson, 1990). According to the 1980 census, rural residents comprise only 28% of the U.S. population, yet they make up 42% of the functionally illiterate (Bailey, Daisey, Maes, & Spears, 1992). Often lower test scores and an increased failure rate are evident (Schoppmeyer, 1986). Since illiteracy is such a prevalent problem, more research needs to be conducted in rural areas.

The present study takes a closer look at one rural setting in order to determine the complexities surrounding the use of literature in that school. The following questions guide the study: (1) What is the extent to which teachers in one rural elementary school use literature in their classrooms? (2) How do the teachers perceive the role of literature in their classrooms? (3) What influences their decision on whether or not to use literature in the curriculum?

Method

Participants. The context of this study was a school located in a small, rural community in the Mid-South. The school contained kindergarten through fourth grade classes. There were 181 students at the school, and it was the only elementary school in a town of 711. Approximately half of the parents were involved in agriculture (soybean, rice, cotton) while the other half worked at nearby factories.

The socio-economic make up of the school was lower-middle class. Approximately 50% of the students were White and 50% African-American. There were only two children that possessed a different ethnic background. Half of the

students were served free lunch, and breakfast was also provided at the school.

All teachers at the school (N-11) agreed to participate including the Chapter I teacher. Their years of teaching experience ranged from three years to twenty-eight years. Although three of the teachers occasionally took college courses, none of the teachers had attained an advanced degree. Most of the teachers were originally from the area, and many of them were related to each other.

Data Source. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 1988) with each teacher at the school. Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes. All notes were taken during the interviews by the researcher and later transcribed. Member checks were held with many of the respondents in order to clarify any questions that the researcher had pertaining to responses (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Questions during the semi-structured interview began with a grand tour question (Spradley, 1979) and then focused on each teacher's use of literature in the classroom. This included looking at the extent to which trade books were used by the teacher, criteria for materials selection, and constraints felt by the teacher on the use of literature.

All data were broken down into individual thought units on index cards. The cards were sorted multiple times and put into data-driven categories utilizing the constant comparative method.

Results and discussion

It became readily apparent during the interviews that the basal played a predominant role in many classrooms. Only one teacher, the Chapter I teacher, used literature during

reading. The teachers in this study were well aware of their lack of knowledge about how to integrate literature into the curriculum. Many teachers referred to themselves as a "skills teacher" and a "traditionalist." They remembered learning how to teach with the basal when they were in college and continued to do so in that manner, placing a heavy emphasis on skills. Those who used the published reading series stated that they followed the teacher's manual explicitly. Two of the teachers even stated that they would not want to teach reading with literature because "reading is skills." These teachers were uncomfortable with the idea that reading could be taught without the basal because they were concerned that they would miss skills they perceived as necessary in order to learn to read.

When the teachers were asked if they used trade books during any other part of the day, the answer was much the same. Although two teachers did state that they might use trade books in other content areas, they also said that the trade books were used with the text and not as a replacement. Clearly textbooks in general were important to the teachers. It was only during story time that many teachers used literature. Even then some were quick to clarify that it was ONLY used during story time because they were "traditionalists," teaching classes in a historically traditional manner which relies heavily on textbooks, worksheets, and standardized tests. For the most part trade books were seen as an "extra" in classes and thus were reserved for use when "extra" time was available.

The most common ways to obtain trade books were student book clubs and trade books which were left in their classroom by previous teachers. One teacher admitted that the books which she used she had had for twenty years. This is not surprising in that the nearest bookstore is in a large city located about 1-1/2 hours away. One teacher even stated that

she illegally Xeroxed books and another one said she checked books out of the school library and just never returned them.

Libraries were rarely mentioned as a source of support for teachers but that could be due to several factors. The school library, which is rather small, is only staffed part time by a retired librarian. The closest public library is in a nearby city and charges people outside the city limits a \$25 fee to use their facilities. This was mentioned often in interviews. Many teachers stated that they, their students, and their students' parents had used the library before the fee was imposed, and now residents of the small town could not afford to use the library. A kindergarten teacher also mentioned that the library had a yearly sale where books could be bought by the inch. Now she could no longer buy those books because she does not live within the city limits or pay a fee.

Recommendations

While teachers in suburban areas have reported a limited knowledge about literature (Scharer, 1992), it is obvious that teachers in a rural school may face even more obstacles in developing relevant knowledge. Rural areas often have more limited resources. The town may not have a local university where a course can be taken or even access to trade books through a library or bookstore.

Taking into consideration the needs of rural areas, "on site" workshops may be part of the answer. It was evident in the interviews that workshops were a powerful source of gaining new knowledge. One kindergarten teacher said her students like to predict with trade books. She added, "It was a strategy I learned during a workshop." A first-grade teacher, Gloria, mentioned that she became aware of the whole language trend three years ago when she attended a workshop. She also began her own class library after attending a

workshop four years ago. Carol, a second grade teacher, attended a summer workshop the previous year and learned for the first time that some teachers did not use basals. Statements such as these help to illustrate the isolation of some teachers, and the importance of workshops in keeping rural teachers current on literacy issues. When one considers the isolation of some small, rural towns, it is easy to see why teachers often experience difficulty with commuting to a university on a regular basis to take classes. Yet workshops, when properly planned, can meet the specific needs of the teachers involved.

Distance education may also provide opportunities for such areas which might otherwise find a great deal of resources inaccessible. Often people in the area can be used to serve as site coordinators and university courses can be offered. Not only would this benefit the university, by allowing professors to keep in touch with the needs of teachers in rural areas but more teachers might be encouraged to take courses and perhaps pursue advanced degrees.

One teacher felt that the literature class she took in college taught about books but not how to use them. However she remembered learning how to use the basal. Thus she taught using the basal reader. The one teacher who used literature in her reading classroom attributed it to her college experience. She felt that the university she attended taught the students not only how to use the literature but gave students ample opportunity to practice using it in schools. In her eyes this experience in the schools was invaluable. According to her, "Nobody was ever afraid to make mistakes because you were given plenty of support." Unfortunately only one teacher had an experience like this to report. Most of the teachers stated that they didn't know how to use literature and had never been taught how to do so.

Teachers who have not recently graduated from a teacher education program may not know how to use literature in their classrooms. While inservice education may be used with teachers to provide a support system for implementing literature-based instruction in the classroom, it is difficult when the teachers are living in isolated areas. Although research has shown that support systems are an essential part of changes in programs (Scharer, 1992), rural teachers often are professionally isolated (Erickson, 1995) and left to themselves to find a solution to their problems (Killian and Byrd, 1988). However, research has shown that teachers learn a great deal from each other (Altieri, 1994; Roberts, 1982). Small discussion groups facilitated by literacy experts "on site" might help these teachers to realize that by working collaboratively they can realize the full potential of their knowledge.

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A Kindergarten Writing Workshop: How Kindergarten Students Grow as Writers

**Marjorie Hertz
Warren Heydenberk**

The emergence of process writing and the advent of whole language during the 1980's challenged the 50 year practice of focusing on reading before teaching writing to young children. Today, writing as well as reading is clearly of great interest from the earliest stages of literacy development.

Kindergarten children are clearly ready to benefit from a program that builds on their emerging language abilities (Calkins, 1994). Studies have investigated short intervals of writing in kindergarten (Teale and Martinez, 1986), the development and impact of invented spelling (Gentry, 1987; Temple, Nathan, Burris and Temple, 1988) and such perceptual issues as phonemic awareness (Adams, 1990; Griffith and Olson, 1992), all vital concerns in the kindergarten classroom.

Absent, however, have been investigations of systematic instruction at the kindergarten level which embody extended treatment times and instructional paradigms such as writing workshop (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1994; Graves, 1983). This study focuses on the performance, processes and attitudes of kindergarten students who participated in one semester of

process writing instructional activities and addresses the following questions. Can kindergarten students effectively engage in a writing workshop on a sustained basis? How do kindergarten children grow as writers when they are given the opportunity to participate in regularly scheduled process writing activities? Do these kindergarten children maintain favorable attitudes about writing and school? What effects does long term process writing instruction have on reading readiness test scores?

Operationally defined, process writing is an approach to teaching writing that encourages students to view themselves as "real" writers who follow the same process as professional writers. Students participate in one or more of the following activities: prewriting, writing, responding, revising, editing, and publishing. During this instructional period students take part in what is often referred to as a "writing workshop," a time in which they feel they are members of a community of writers.

Research method

Subjects: The study was conducted in a suburban-rural Pennsylvania school district of 5400 students located in the eastern part of the state. A half-day kindergarten class of 19 children participated in process writing activities during a 5 month time period. The students were from middle class families and represented a typical range of ability levels. The kindergarten teacher was a 15-year veteran whose exposure to process writing consisted of two years of involvement with the school district's process writing staff development program.

Qualitative Research: The first author was an observer in a kindergarten classroom during all process writing instructional activities. She triangulated her data (Lincoln and

Guba, 1985) and used multiple sources (subjects, parents and teacher) and methods (informal and formal assessments, observations of students' writing process behaviors, and parent, teacher, and student interviews) to obtain indicators of how students grew as writers. She maintained a field journal divided into two parts: a log of day to day activities and a personal log that contained introspective notations including ongoing hypotheses, questions and comments.

Quantitative Research: Using a pre-test post-test approach, students were measured on invented spelling, writing vocabulary, and characteristics of their writing. They were also assessed on readiness for reading instruction. A 14 word invented spelling test (Mann, Tobin and Wilson, 1987) was used to evaluate the students' spelling strategies. The scoring system evaluated phonetic-orthographic accuracy, assigning a point value to words that were spelled at different levels of accuracy. The Inventory of Writing Vocabulary for Rating Progress (Robinson, 1973) was used to measure writing vocabulary. The test was a simple measure of how many words children could spell correctly when asked to write all the words they knew. A modified version of Clay's (1979) Rating Technique for Observing Early Writing Progress was used to evaluate the students' writing according to language level, message quality and directional principles. Language level referred to the highest level of linguistic organization, ranging from the student's using no recognizable alphabet letters to writing a story of two or more sentences. Message quality referred to the student's understanding that he had written a meaningful message and knowing what that message said. Directional principles referred to the student's using correct directional patterns (e.g., writes from left to right) in his writing. The Metropolitan Readiness Tests Level II, Form P were used to assess the reading readiness of the process writers.

Results of the study

In reporting our results, we will first describe the writing program as observed, then summarize the quantitative findings, and move on to findings that emerged directly from the observations.

Description of the Writing Program: The kindergarten students participated in the writing workshop during regularly scheduled class periods held three times per week for approximately 45 minutes per session. The workshops adhered to the format of a mini-lesson, writing time and group sharing sessions. During these workshops the students chose their own topics, wrote stories and received feedback about their writing.

The mini-lessons of the writing workshops were generally restricted to no more than 15 minutes. During each mini-lesson (after a skill was introduced or a piece of literature was shared) the classroom teacher "modeled" invented spelling for words that students wanted to use in their stories. He asked students what letters were used to represent the sounds they heard in a particular word. As the teacher wrote the word on the chalkboard, he used the letters that the students suggested. When talking with the students the teacher was careful to differentiate between invented spelling and what he referred to as book spelling. He explained the concept of book spelling by saying, "If we were looking at words in published books they would be spelled this way."

During the mini-lesson the teacher sometimes led a "warm-up" activity to help students brainstorm ideas. During this group discussion he showed the students a variety of ways to plan their stories by drawing or writing their ideas on a "think note." The students were given several questions they could ask each other to help generate ideas.

During other mini-lesson sessions the students learned ways to respond to each other's stories. For example, students were shown how to "receive" (Graves, 1983) each other's writing by listening carefully and repeating what they just heard. Students were also shown how to use the phrases, "I liked the part where ..." and "I don't understand ...".

As the students gained skill in responding to each other's writing, they learned how to participate in short peer conferences. The conferences proceeded as follows: When two students finished their stories they requested a "talk sign" from their teacher; then they had a short conference in which they reacted to each other's story by using the techniques that they had practiced during earlier mini-lessons.

Toward the end of the experimental semester some students began to engage in rudimentary revision and editing of their writing. During the mini-lessons the teacher had explained these concepts and had shown the student how to use "fix notes" to help with the revision and editing processes. On side 1 of the fix note the students indicated what words or pictures they wanted to add or delete. The students also learned how to "fix" the mechanical errors in their stories by using side 2 of the fix note to check that they had included their name, date, pictures and words.

The group sharing sessions at the end of the writing workshop provided an opportunity to reinforce the mini-lesson skill as well as to give selected students the chance to sit in the "author's chair" (Graves and Hansen, 1983) and share their stories with the class. On occasion all students were directed to sit in a circle and read a short portion of their own story aloud. At times, the teacher asked students to find partners so they could share their stories in a more personal

manner. This allowed the teacher to circulate and monitor selected conferences.

The following areas of the kindergarten students' writing were evaluated: a) spelling strategies, b) written vocabulary, and c) language level, directional principles and message quality of their stories. Paired t tests were used at the beginning and end of the study to investigate whether there were significant differences (at the .05 level of significance) between the students' mean pre-test and post-test scores on the spelling and vocabulary assessments and on their writing samples. The study also compared the Metropolitan Readiness Test scores of the process writing kindergarten class to the scores of comparable groups of students taught several years later by the same teacher using a skill-oriented language curriculum.

Appreciable Writing Gains: The class of 19 kindergarten writers made appreciable gains in writing, demonstrating significant improvement at the .05 level in all writing skill areas. The Mann, Tobin and Wilson (1987) invented spelling test was used to evaluate the students' spelling strategies. By the end of the program the paired t test ($t = -5.51$, $p < 0.05$), revealed significant growth in students' spelling ability. All but one student could give at least two letters to capture part of each spelling word phonetically.

On the Inventory of Writing Vocabulary for Rating Progress (Robinson, 1973), the students showed significant improvement in their ability to write more words using the paired t test ($t = -5.17$, $p < 0.05$). The mean number of words written on the vocabulary pretest and posttest (Robinson, 1973) were 7.42 and 13.47, respectively. It is notable that students wrote more words than they were given credit for on

The Inventory of Writing Vocabulary for Rating Progress. This test demanded conventional spelling to award credit.

On the modified version of Clay's (1979) Rating Technique for Observing Early Writing Progress, there was significant growth in the students' ability to use written language, to express a meaningful message and to write stories in correct directional form. (Language Level: $t = -7.71$, $p < 0.05$; Message Quality: $t = -8.99$, $p < 0.05$; Directional Principles: $t = -6.96$, $p < 0.05$). By the end of the five month treatment, more than three-fourths of the students were able to write stories using at least two-word phrases and explain their written messages. Furthermore, 13 of the 19 students were able to write at least two lines of print using correct directional patterns.

Readiness Scores Hold Steady: The Metropolitan Readiness Tests Level II, Form P were used to assess the reading readiness of the process writers. Upon completion of the five month treatment the tests were administered to all students in the class. A one-way analysis of variance was also used to determine whether there were significant differences in the mean prereading skills composite test scores received by comparable control groups of kindergarten students. While the process writing kindergarten students had not participated in a traditional skill-focused reading readiness program, they performed as well on the Metropolitan Readiness Tests as the earlier control classes. No statistically significant differences were found in their Metropolitan Readiness Test mean skills composite scores using a one-way analysis of variance: $F = .4144$, $p > 0.05$.

Qualitative Observations: Although we had some trepidation about the maturity of kindergarten children to function in structured writing situations, by the conclusion of the

treatment interval we could see that these students benefited by participating in regularly scheduled writing workshops. Their academic progress and their zeal for writing were apparent. The teacher acknowledged that kindergarten students should have time to socialize. He stated, "Frankly, during the first few weeks I was slightly concerned as to whether we were putting too much pressure on the students." However, while reflecting at the end of the year, the teacher felt that the writing workshop had allowed him to provide a challenge to every child regardless of his initial skills. He stated, "I've not had any program in my 10 years of teaching kindergarten that has done that."

In addition to offering an academic challenge, the writing workshop provided an interactive environment for learning which enhanced the students' motivation to write. The short peer conferences provided students with a ready-made audience in the form of another student who appeared to be interested in what was being expressed. Indeed, what better testimony to motivation is there than the 393 multi-page stories produced by the students over the five month period?

The modeling of invented spelling by the teacher gave students the opportunity to apply the phonetic skills to which they had been introduced. We observed that the teacher found it necessary to go "one step" beyond modeling invented spelling in order to motivate his students to use this technique in their stories. As the students wrote he frequently stopped to read their pieces aloud. Then, speaking so that the others in the class could hear, the teacher praised them for writing stories that he was able to read. The teacher remarked, "The child suddenly realized, 'Somebody can read what I wrote!'"

We observed that students were able to carry out the writing workshop procedures. Most students were able to use think notes on their own. All enjoyed using the talk signs and conferencing with each other. However, their ability to give specific feedback to each other was limited. Nevertheless, we felt that, through conferencing, the students gained a greater awareness of the need to give and receive feedback. As the teacher pointed out, "When the children talk with each other they have the chance to step away from their actual writing. It gives them another purpose for writing."

The kindergarten students did not show interest in rewriting once they finished their stories. The teacher noted, "It would be nice to think that when the students are finished with a story we can get them to go back and reread it. Most simply don't have that level of interest in their own writing." While the students generally did not want to revise finished stories, we noted that many made revisions as they were writing their pieces. The teacher suggested that future kindergarten students be made more aware of the changes that students often make very naturally to their own writing.

While it was important to celebrate students as authors of the finished stories, we felt that publishing stories in the conventional sense would be too time consuming. The teacher employed such options as placing finished stories on a class bookshelf and having the entire class participate in a teacher-directed bookmaking activity. Throughout the writing workshops the classroom teacher conducted a number of activities that helped students make reading-writing connections and encouraged their sense of being authors. For example, students were recognized as "authors of the hour," allowing the opportunity to share their "story-in-progress." As students described their stories, the teacher pointed out features

of good writing by saying, "This is a good beginning. Authors try to write good beginnings in their stories."

The kindergarten teacher tried to help his students see relationships between the professional stories he read and stories they were writing. For example, after reading a particular story with a problem, he asked, "Do any of your stories have a problem? How did you fix it?" He wondered if more than a handful of students had used ideas from the professional literature that was read to them. Yet, he pointed out, "Everything in kindergarten is building an awareness and exposure." At the very least, all students in the class were made aware of a variety of ideas that they could write about.

Conclusions and recommendations

Despite the range of abilities of the kindergarten students, process writing instruction allowed them to show appreciable, measurable gains in their writing skills. Furthermore, since the students participated in regularly scheduled writing workshops, as opposed to more casual participation in a writing center, they gained a rich awareness of the steps involved in composing stories and were able to verbalize writing process procedures when questioned. The students clearly demonstrated the maturity needed to work within the writing workshop format. In addition, the writing workshop provided an interactive environment for learning. It appeared to be an effective means to develop the students' language skills. While not all students were developmentally ready to conference correctly, the peer sharing provided an opportunity for them to receive feedback, however general it may have been.

The interactive format, including comments from both peers and teacher, also appeared to enhance the students' motivation. When students viewed themselves as authors they

realized that what they had to say was important. Their self-concept as writers and as learners was undoubtedly enhanced.

The findings from this study support the following recommendations which will enhance the literacy environment in kindergarten classrooms:

1) Kindergarten students should be encouraged to write frequently as they engage in process writing activities. The classroom teacher should hold writing workshops on a regular basis, a minimum of twice weekly. At these times the teacher should model a variety of procedures that correspond to each stage of the writing process. He should provide students with alternatives (e.g., think notes) rather than expecting every writer to follow a set format.

2) Writing workshops in kindergarten should continue to emphasize reading-writing connections. An emphasis should be placed on helping kindergarten students to develop the content of their stories by using literature as a springboard for writing.

3) Kindergarten students can be encouraged to participate in such activities as peer conferences or revising.

4) School districts can replace traditional skill-oriented readiness programs with a writing workshop approach. Standardized readiness scores should remain favorable, despite the lack of content congruence between the writing workshop and the substance of readiness tests.

The kindergarten writing workshop has distinct advantages for early literacy development. Although the kindergarten writing workshop follows a structured format, it can remain open-ended in terms of the written product expected of the students. While the teacher we worked with hoped that students would use the skills to which they had been exposed during class mini-lessons, he accepted and celebrated all approximations of their written language. Thus he allowed

his students to progress at their own rate and to grow as true writers.

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Literacy Development in an Appalachian Kindergarten

Connie R. Green

"Grizzly Bear runned around the forest," Billy read to me from a paper on which he had written the letters in his name and drawn a picture of a tall, brown bear. Like many of Billy's stories, this one seemed to be grounded in his love of animals and interest in the natural world. Billy's home, located in a rural, mountainous area of North Carolina, provided a conducive setting for learning and imagining about creatures living in the wilderness. His literacy development reflected his interest in the natural world, as well as his community's dialect and storytelling tradition.

"They were sitting on a bank and Willdo fell off and bumped his head. They called the doctor. The doctor said, 'No more sitting on the bank.'" Amber's story combines her awareness of nature with her knowledge of a children's chant. Amber, who lived in the same community as Billy, included references to the outdoors, as well as both Appalachian dialect and standard English.

Both of these children were well on their way to becoming readers and writers when they entered kindergarten. They showed an interest in books and use of graphic symbols to represent their thoughts. While both children exhibited

great promise in literacy development, their approaches to the written word were very different.

As a teacher and researcher in a kindergarten classroom, I was interested in documenting the literacy development of several of the children in my class to determine the impact of the social and cultural environment. In the early 1980's, Heath (1983) researched the language and literacy development of three cultural groups in the Piedmont Carolinas. Her work revealed distinct differences in approaches to language and literacy among working class Anglo-Americans, working class African-Americans, and middle class Anglo-Americans. The observations discussed in this paper seek to ascertain whether there are unique approaches to early literacy among children reared in a rural Appalachian culture.

The reading and writing development of two children, Billy and Amber, will be described in this article. Throughout the study, I sought answers to the following questions:

1. How did these two children develop as readers and writers during the kindergarten year?
2. How did the physical environment, social context and rural setting of the children's homes and school influence their literacy development? (Heath, 1983)
3. How did family and cultural background influence the children's literacy development? (Heath, 1983)
4. How did the materials and structure of the kindergarten classroom affect the literacy development of these two children? (Morrow, 1993).

Appalachian culture is characterized by a love of the land and a strong sense of kinship (Klein, 1995). Family traditions, intergenerational ties, and the importance of place are valued in Appalachian communities. Successful school experiences for Appalachian children build on the traditions of

families and communities, unique language characteristics, and personal strengths of each child. Therefore, I will first describe Billy and Amber's community, then their family backgrounds, and finally the kindergarten classroom environment. This will be followed by an in-depth look at each child's literacy development and suggested strategies educators might use to acknowledge and support the distinctive reading and writing development of rural Appalachian children.

Community and cultural contexts

Billy and Amber live in a small rural community in the Appalachian mountains of North Carolina. The families in this community represent a range of economic backgrounds, but often share similar religious and cultural experiences. Traditional country music, dance, storytelling, and crafts, such as quilting and weaving, are familiar to most of the children and families through participation in community events.

Farming is a common occupation in this area and children frequently see cows, goats, horses, sheep, and wild turkeys as they are riding to and from school and while they are playing outdoors. Most children in the class have had pets, including horses, goats, dogs, cats, and gerbils. Children have many opportunities to feed, pet, and observe a variety of domesticated animals. Vegetable gardening, preserving, and canning food are also familiar family activities.

Many children in this community have the freedom to investigate the woods and creeks around their homes. This environment fosters many hands-on experiences with the outdoors and opportunities for observing, classifying, and communicating about the natural world. Upon entering kindergarten, Billy and Amber brought many experiences

from nature and from their families and cultural backgrounds.

Family background

Billy, an only child, lived with both of his parents in a mobile home in a remote hollow where his father's family had lived for several generations. Other members of the extended family, including Billy's cousin Jason, lived in mobile homes on the same property. Both boys spent quite a bit of time outdoors exploring the woods, creeks, and nearby farms and playing with the animals on the property. Jason and Billy, who were born two weeks apart, were constant companions before they began school and continued as friends in the same kindergarten class.

Billy's father was a mechanic and played in a country music band. His mother was employed in a factory. Both parents worked seasonally in the local Christmas tree industry, his mother making roping and his father driving truck loads of trees to the northern United States.

Amber lived with her mother, father and younger brother in a large house overlooking one of the family's Christmas tree farms. Her father was a grower and her mother worked part-time in the family business. After school, Amber joined her mother and brother in the office of the tree nursery.

Amber's extended family had lived in the same county for several generations, and visited frequently. Amber's mother and grandmothers gardened, canned some of the family's food, and enjoyed craft activities. In the fall, one of Amber's grandmothers helped the kindergarten class make apple butter. Religion played an important role in the life of Amber's family. Amber attended Bible study classes one day a

week, and once shared her memorized verse with the class during show and tell.

The classroom environment

The kindergarten classroom was organized around constructivist principles. An emphasis was placed on children's active exploration, experimentation, and decision-making. Children were encouraged to choose materials and activities, and solve their own social problems with adults in the classroom as facilitators. During large group times, the children and teacher discussed "personal news," weather, the lunch menu, and upcoming special events.

This was also a time for introducing new topics, shared book experiences, singing and movement, or introducing classroom guests. Weekly themes were planned to include community resources, families, and culturally relevant experiences. The themes included grandparents, families at work, farm animals, folk tales, and people with special needs. The theme content included self, family, neighborhood, and community, and supplied a developmental framework for the curriculum (Derman-Sparks, 1989). Children's literature served as a focal point for most of the themes.

The teacher, assistant, and classroom volunteers read to children individually or in small groups at various times of the day. Children always had access to a small library, consisting of about 200 books, housed in the classroom. In addition, 20-30 library books related to the themes of the week were rotated on a regular basis. There were many opportunities for children to explore books independently or with a friend. During center time children could also tell stories using flannel board or magnet board characters, or "write" stories using magnetic letters.

A writing center was located at one end of the room, near a chalkboard, which children sometimes chose for writing activities. The standard materials at the center included different sizes and colors of paper, envelopes, blank books, stamp pads, and felt tip markers.

Throughout the second semester, short periods of time twice a week were devoted to total group writing. The teacher occasionally modeled invented spelling to groups of children by taking a word a child suggested as a topic for writing and asking the group to suggest a way the word might be spelled.

For example, if the suggested topic was 'dinosaurs,' the teacher would pronounce the word slowly and then call on the children to offer letters. The children might call out the letters D-N-S-R-S. This encouraged the children to take risks with their own spelling. The teacher and assistant talked with children before and during the writing to show support of children's topics and writing processes.

Twice a week, the children read with their sixth grade buddies from the same school. Sometimes the older children read to the younger ones and other times the younger ones read or shared ongoing projects. The two groups corresponded with each other on several occasions during the year.

Billy: Connecting literacy to the world of nature

Billy was very quiet and observant at the beginning of the school year, waiting for the teacher and assistant to facilitate his choice of centers and to encourage him to participate in groups and work independently. He often requested one-on-one lap reading and enjoyed a variety of books. He was familiar with many of the classroom books and library books including folk tales and Mother Goose rhymes. One day he

told the teacher that he knew about *Corduroy* (Freeman, 1968) because he had that book at home.

Billy seemed to connect with reading and writing in several ways. One way was through his interest in copying favorite stories. A second way was rewriting familiar stories using invented spelling. A third literacy connection was his interest in animals and nature. Through these interests, Billy was moving from an oral language mode into the world of print.

A fascination with maps and globes led Billy to learn that Africa was a place on the globe and that water was represented by the color blue. One day, while looking at the globe, he pointed and said, "That says Pacific Ocean and I'll show you where they're fighting." On another occasion, he copied words from a globe. Apparently, this interest had been sparked at home.

Billy looked at books alone or with Jason for long periods of time. His interest in animals and nature was reflected in drawings, writings, and reading materials. Snakes, grizzly bears, dinosaurs, and turtles were among his favorite topics. After checking out a library book on turtles, Billy drew a picture of a turtle and wrote, "He's going to the water to take a swim," in pre-phonetic spelling (Figure 1).

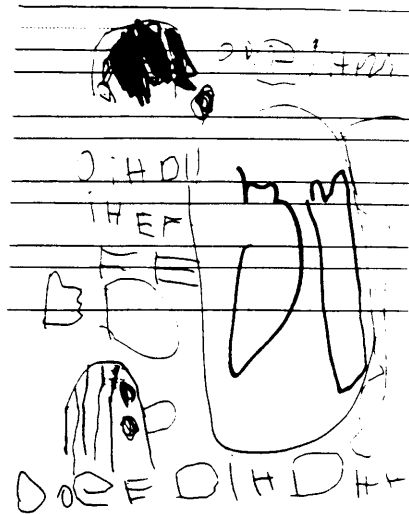
During a unit on wild animals, Billy brought a set of animal picture information cards to school. At center time, he sat alone for thirty minutes studying and naming the pictures. He protected his cards by lying on top of them and shared them with others only when he was nearby to supervise. Early in the year, Billy drew large shapes and figures, typically centering his drawings on the paper and sometimes adding a

few letters. For most of the year, he wrote at the pre-phonetic spelling stage, using random letters to represent words.

Billy's artwork became more representational as his writing developed. By the second semester, he wrote pages of capital letters — sometimes copied and sometimes random letters — to represent the stories he was composing and writing. His art and writing often flowed together as he designed elaborate 'frames' and designs to border his stories.

Figure 1

Sample of Billy's writing and drawing early in the kindergarten year



During our second semester folk tale unit Billy decided to write a book about Rumpelstiltskin. He started around 8:00 a.m. and continued to write for over an hour during large group time and center time. Billy propped a copy of the book up on the rocking chair and proceeded to get up and down from the writing table to look at the pictures. When he

independently for longer periods while continuing his interest in copying from books and in writing familiar stories.

Billy brought books to school and often chose to look at books in the library center. He and Jason got together, often hiding behind a bookshelf or the piano, to pore over books, especially those about maps, dinosaurs and animals. One day, Billy checked out a library book on snakes. Instead of asking the teacher to read the book to him, he showed her the pictures, named the snakes, and pointed to the ones which were poisonous. Another day, the assistant asked what kind of animal he was painting. Billy said, "You know, you've seen it — it starts with 'H'."

Storytelling, a well-known mountain art form, was also a popular activity in Billy's kindergarten class. The following story told by Billy includes characteristics of the oral storytelling tradition, such as repetition of phrases, surprise, and the use of animal classifications as names ("Elephant", rather than "the elephant")

The Tiger and the Elephant

A tiger went for a walk and met up with an elephant. Elephant eat the tiger with his big long nose; eat him up. And the tiger scratched the elephant and the elephant died. And the tiger eat the elephant. The tiger took it home and share it with his cubs and friends.

In stories and conversations during play, Billy demonstrated other common characteristics of Appalachian dialect, including 'a' prefixing on such words as a-runnin' (Christian, Wolfram, and Dube, 1984) and double modals, such as "liketa" and "supposeta" (Wolfram and Christian, 1976).

Amber: Connecting home and school literacy

From the start of the school year, Amber easily selected from among the activities in the classroom, appearing very confident in her choices. Her most frequently chosen activities were art, sociodramatic play, reading, and writing. Amber was often chosen as a playmate by her peers and she played easily and cooperatively with many children in the class. During play, Amber demonstrated leadership skills and creativity.

Amber started the year using writing for many purposes. She wrote telephone messages in the housekeeping area, grocery lists, letters to friends, lists of names, and long imaginative stories. During the fall, Amber's writing included a combination of mock cursive and pre-phonetic spelling (Figure 3). She drew small detailed pictures and her letter formation was well-controlled.

Amber used pre-phonetic spelling when she wrote the Humpty Dumpty rhyme in her Mother Goose book. Amber wrote the rhyme in random letters, then read it back to her teacher. When she came to the end of the writing before she finished saying her rhyme aloud, she realized that her writing did not match the oral rhyme. She added more letters to the end of the rhyme. Then she reread the rhyme four more times, following the letters with her marker, and adding letters to the end each time until she was satisfied that the written and oral versions matched. This process took approximately twenty minutes.

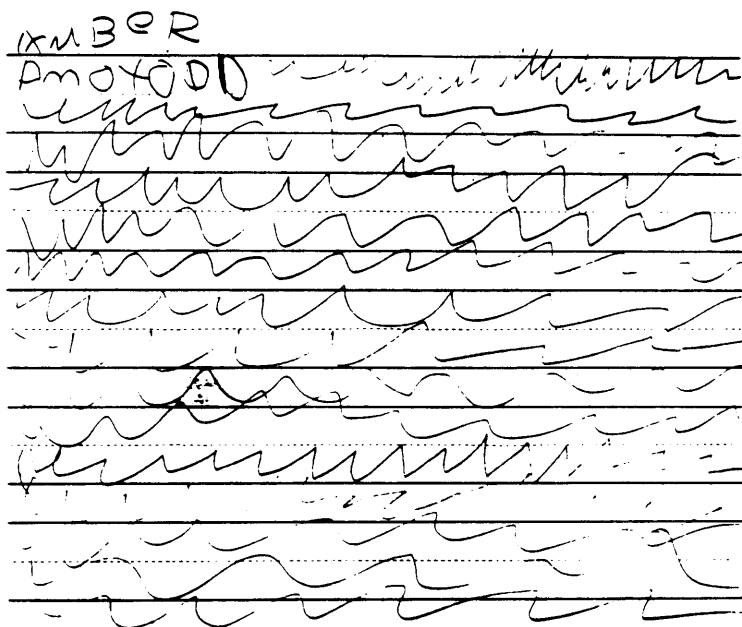
Amber often wrote titles for her stories, or a first line in phonetic spelling, then the rest of the story in mock cursive. It seemed that, although she was capable of sounding out words and knew the sound-letter relationships, this process was too time-consuming to use for an entire story. By spring

her phonetic spellings included all salient sound features in words. Examples were: TRANSORS RX for Tyrannosaurus Rex, SMR for summer, and TLEPO for Tailypo.

Amber was frequently read to at home and school. In kindergarten she began to read first through memorization, then by recognizing initial letters and sight words. She identified alphabet letters and knew most sound-letter relationships before coming to school. Using this knowledge, along with her sense of story structure, Amber eagerly engaged in new reading experiences. Within the first few weeks of school she learned to read the names of all class members.

Figure 3

Sample of Amber's writing from early kindergarten year



During the pet unit, Amber arranged words the teacher had written on strips of paper and read sentences such as

"Cats have cat food. Cats have fur. Horses have four legs. Dogs have bones." She read poems and sentences from chart paper, pointing to words as she said them. In early April, Amber read the poem *Boa Constrictor* (Silverstein, 1974) to herself, asking for very little help from her teacher.

A verbally fluent child, Amber told long stories using the language of books and imaginative expression. She used familiar book themes and characters when composing and telling her own stories. Amber often adapted book language in her storytelling, as she did in the following story, "The Little Train," written in January.

Once there was a little baby train. She couldn't move her wheels so fast. She would have to have training for herself and the little train said chug-chugga and that was because she was a little train. And she knowed that every train of her family hated her and laughed at her. And she sung a song, Chugga, chugga, chug and she cried and she cried.

Later in the year she wrote a series of Cinderella stories based on the Disney movie and printed versions of the fairy tale (Figure 4). The following is an example of one of Amber's Cinderella stories, as read to the teaching assistant.

Cinderella was a really sad girl because she didn't like her sisters or her mother. Cinderella was very, very, very mad because she was the oldest and her sisters thought she was a mean, mean little girl. She went to the palace that night. She was going to the palace 'til her mother saw her. Then her sisters saw that she had Anastasia's beads and Druzella's ribbons. And the two sisters thought that the two mean little mice got the ribbons. And Cinderella started to cry and met this Fairy Godmother. The Fairy Godmother said, "I will

*turn you into a very pretty girl. Bibbity, Bobbity, Boo.
Clock one, Clock two, sang."*

Although by spring she was competent as a beginning reader, Amber read word-by-word and did not use much expression. She seemed to concentrate on matching written and oral words and page turning. When reading *Bears on Wheels* (Berenstein, 1969), she paused between words and did not make comments about the story or pictures.

Figure 4

Amber's Cinderella Story



In contrast to her beginning reading, Amber's storytelling was vibrant and expressive. Her lengthy stories included characteristics of Appalachian dialect, such as drawing out some words and repeating others. She developed plots which included dilemmas and elements of surprise in a logical sequence. Family characters, religious themes, and fairy tale motifs such as death of a parent, kidnapping or desertion,

were prevalent in her storytelling. Here is an excerpt from her story of Picky the Whale.

And the whale always, always, always got in trouble. But his momma, Marilyn, knowed a lot of things about Picky. "Picky, Picky," said Marilyn, "Where are you?" "Here I am, Mother. I went to see out, to explore the sea. Oh and it was fun but up ahead was something terrible happened. There was killer whales in front of me, and millions of them! God, I couldn't believe how many killer whales that I ran and got some friends of mine! . . ."

And one day some killer whales came up to the house, of Marilyn's house, and they captured Picky's mother. "Picky, Picky, Picky!" hollered Marilyn. But they wouldn't let her talk. She talked for a minute, but they wouldn't let her talk. The killer whales took Marilyn to the killer whales' boss. The killer whales' boss said "If you don't come in to me, I will blast off your head!" And she didn't and they blasted up her head. And Picky went and got some of his friends. Sixty, I mean, a hundred and hundreds of million and millions. Except Picky always wanted to explore but he couldn't; he knew he had to save his mother . . . Then they got to the cave and they knocked on the door and the killer whales' boss said, "Let me in before I blast up the door!" "No!", said the boss of the killer whales. "I'll blast up the door with one hour." So they blast up the door in one hour. They found their mother dead. So, that was the end of her.

Said Picky, "I guess I don't have no more mother. I'll have to live with one of my friends." Then he lived with one of this friends. Oh, it was fun! And next week it was church time. And on Saturday they buried Picky's mother. And it was too hard for Picky to get along by hisself.

In telling this story Amber demonstrated several characteristics of Appalachian grammatical structure: adding the suffix -ed to a regular verb form to make it past tense (knowed, rather than knew or known), using "done" as an assertion ("I done it"), and irregular pronoun forms (hisself) (Wolfram and Christian, 1976).

Conclusions

By the end of kindergarten, Billy and Amber were both enthusiastic about their beginning reading and writing abilities. They had developed unique styles and approaches to literacy, stemming from home and cultural influences, as well as a kindergarten environment, which supported their personal approaches to reading, writing, and storytelling.

Amber was encouraged in her oral fluency and storytelling when both the teacher and assistant took time to listen to her, videotape her stories and encourage her to share her stories with others. Her invented spellings were supported by the teachers who helped her by slowly sounding out words and modeling invented spellings for the class. Amber's dialect and storytelling style were honored as her authentic approaches to literacy.

The approach with Billy was different. He seemed to need more time to bring important pieces of information from home and connect his interests with the kindergarten curriculum. Billy's chosen topics for literacy expression (nature, animals) and the settings of some of his stories conveyed the impact of the Appalachian culture on his literacy development. The adults in the classroom encouraged his sharing of items from home and incorporated his books and picture cards within the daily routine. Billy's copying style was also supported with plenty of paper, writing implements, and time for writing in various places about the room. His

needs for privacy and extended time for writing were respected.

Both Billy and Amber progressed well in a flexible, supportive kindergarten environment. Through their creativity and imaginations they were making sense of their literary worlds. As they joined literacy activities with play, they made meaningful connections and developed their understanding of the purposes of reading and writing (Newman and Roskos, 1990).

Within a constructivist, whole language classroom, these children were able to build their own language using adults and other children as assistants in their learning processes. The adults who worked with the two children at school tried to take into account the dynamics of their home and cultural contexts, as well as their understanding of story and print (Pellegrini, 1991). Billy was not forced to come to the rug for group time when he was immersed in writing *Rumpelstiltskin*, nor was he told to use standard English in his storytelling. Amber was encouraged to take time she needed to complete her writing of *Humpty Dumpty* without being pressured to move on to another activity.

The gifts of time and adult interest encouraged Billy and Amber to pursue their individual approaches to literacy. Both children applied their experiences, cultural backgrounds, and knowledge of the world to literacy events, interpreting those events in ways that were understandable to them.

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Revisiting the K-W-L: What we Knew; What we Wanted to Know; What we Learned

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Linda Hyder
Nina Ledford
Paula Patterson**

Good teachers are always searching for ways to enhance learning in their classrooms. Researchers and practitioners alike continue to develop and refine strategies which improve comprehension and increase retention while nourishing students' ability to learn independently. The K-W-L strategy (What-we know; what we want to know; what we learned), first described by Ogle (1986), is such a strategy. Though there is research to support the effectiveness of the K-W-L, any strategy may need to be modified and refined to improve its effectiveness in promoting learning. We five teachers collaborated to study how the implementation of the K-W-L can be varied in different classroom settings in order to ensure that it has the desired effect on the reading comprehension and learning of elementary and middle school students.

Considering the research

Current research on learning indicates that good learners make connections between prior knowledge and new

knowledge and in the process, construct their own meanings (Anderson, 1984). Strategies that facilitate the construction of meaning therefore improve learning. The K-W-L strategy, designed in a three column format, requires students first to list what they already know about a topic (calling attention to prior knowledge); second, to write what they would like to know about a topic (tapping student interest and providing purpose for reading); and third, after reading and discussion, to list what they learned and would still like to learn (making connections between questions asked and information encountered). In a further refinement of the K-W-L, Carr and Ogle (1987) also recommend asking students to categorize and summarize the information they gathered. By design, the K-W-L requires students to make connections between prior knowledge and new knowledge thereby constructing meaning.

Writing for a content area reading text, Ogle (1992) proposes the K-W-L as a general framework for instruction and describes the use of the strategy in secondary schools in Kansas City, MO. Through extensive staff development, teachers were provided alternatives, including the K-W-L, for moving low achieving students into learning that was more strategic and interactive. Ogle notes how teachers adapted and modified the K-W-L strategy to maximize its effectiveness with their students who, in turn, became more active learners and higher achievers.

Farell (1991) describes the use of the K-W-L in her classroom and applauds its effectiveness particularly when combined with mapping and summary writing. Van Sledright (1992) found the K-W-L helpful in teaching social studies to fifth graders. Piper (1992) reports using K-W-L as one of five metacognitive strategies which successfully

enhanced the reading comprehension of sixth graders in the area of social studies.

These studies show that to simply introduce the K-W-L strategy to students is ineffective. True, students may successfully use the strategy with direct supervision during the initial introduction but unless required to use the strategy repeatedly, both in a group setting and independently, just introducing the strategy will have little lasting impact on reading comprehension and learning. The goal is for students to internalize the strategy and to transfer its use to a variety of settings. Carr and Ogle (1987) have addressed the issue of transfer of learning, noting that, "Students develop the ability to transfer, and thus to become independent learners, through instruction that gradually shifts the responsibility for initiating the strategy from the teacher to the student" (p. 630).

Our implementations of the K-W-L

Linda and Becky, both elementary teachers, and Paula and Nina, a middle and junior high teacher respectively, used the K-W-L strategy once a week for eight weeks in teaching science, social studies, health, or language arts. The goal was to facilitate students' becoming independent readers and learners with increased ability to comprehend, select, and retain important information. Teachers introduced and completed the K-W-L as a whole group activity during the first week of the study. In the ensuing weeks, teachers diminished the amount of scaffolding provided, next having students complete the K-W-L activity in small groups, and finally having students use the strategy independently.

As teachers worked with the K-W-L over a period of eight weeks, they modified the strategy as needed to increase its effectiveness with their particular students. The most basic, but very helpful modifications, were for Linda's third

grade children, the youngest in the study. The standard unlined, three vertical column format of the K-W-L proved frustrating for these children.

Beginning with the second week, Linda provided her students with a lined form that allowed them to write horizontally across their papers. Since some of her students were emergent readers and writers, Linda paired developmentally delayed, learning disabled, and attention deficit disorder children with more accomplished readers and writers. She spread each K-W-L activity over two or more class days and asked students to share after each step of the K-W-L even when children completed the activity independently; responses were routinely recorded on the chalkboard.

Becky, a fourth grade teacher, found that asking children to use the K-W-L when beginning a new unit of material for which they had little or no prior knowledge was frustrating. Consequently, rather than asking children to factstorm in the "K" column, the teacher provided specific questions to focus the children's thinking. For example, when using a social studies article on "Earning A Living," the teacher asked students to list in the "K" column "some ways that people here (in the Southeastern US) make a living."

Later, when using a social studies text that incorporated graphic organizers as study guides, Becky effectively combined the use of the K-W-L and the graphic organizer, a procedure recommended by Carr and Ogle (1987). Early in the week, after students skimmed a section of material in their texts, Becky had students complete the "K" and the "W" columns of the K-W-L activity. She then collected their papers. For the following two or three days, students read and discussed the material and completed the partially constructed graphic organizer provided by the text. Finally, the K-W-L papers

were returned and students completed the "L" column of the activity.

Students' learning of the material was impressive. Becky also directly intervened in her fourth graders' construction of questions in the "W" column. Noticing that the vast majority of questions were "what" questions, Becky helped students vary these items. As a group, the class generated and Becky recorded on the board a variety of question starters such as: Why? Where? How? Does? How does? and Who?

Paula, a former math teacher, worked with a seventh grade social studies class for the duration of the study. She found the K-W-L to function well as a whole group activity. However, when making the transition to a small group setting, students were less focused. Paula noted that had she first established smoothly functioning cooperative groups, the K-W-L procedure would have been more effective.

Nina, a seventh grade language arts teacher, explored varying levels of success with the K-W-L depending on the background knowledge of her students. She found that prior knowledge affected students' ability to complete the "K" column and to generate appropriate questions in the "W" column as well as students' attitudes and enthusiasm for the activity. Using biographical passages, Nina manipulated prior knowledge in two ways. First she used as her text for two successive weeks, articles on Robert E. Lee thinking that initially students would have some limited knowledge of the Civil War general. This proved to be true, and the second week, the information gained from the previous week's lesson was very apparent as students fact stormed in the "K" column and generated questions in the "W" column.

On another occasion, Nina asked students to gather background information in preparation for a biographical piece on Louis Armstrong. This approach had an interesting result. A low-achieving student, one of the few in the class who really did the research, stepped into the spotlight as he offered facts for the "K" column during the group brainstorming activity.

Responses from the teachers

Our first important finding is that the K-W-L strategy works better when students have some prior knowledge of the topic. An introductory activity, video, discussion, or brief lecture will facilitate the completion of the "K" column when students' knowledge is very limited. Nina discovered that the material studied one week can provide positive support for engaging in the K-W-L the next week. Becky found that giving students a specific question to respond to in the "K" column (What are some ways that people here earn a living?) could be an effective modification when students are unable to elaborate spontaneously on limited background knowledge.

All four teachers concluded that the K-W-L is especially effective for structuring review. Paula, the former math teacher, focused especially on using the K-W-L as a study tool. Referring to the article by Ogle (1992) which recommends using the K-W-L to structure math review, Paula mused about how she might use the K-W-L to strengthen the thinking process of her students where mathematical operations are concerned. For example, she noted, a student might write in the "K" column, "I know in adding decimals I need to start on the right side and add the column from right to left." Then as the student asked questions about adding decimals in the "W" column, Paula would be better able to focus her instruction to meet the particular needs of the student. Having students use the K-W-L format to explain their understanding of a

mathematical operation functions as a kind of assessment allowing the teacher to monitor both process and product.

Similarly, McAllister (1994) notes the usefulness of the K-W-L in keeping track of the quantity and quality of participation of primary level compensatory students. Further, having students articulate their thoughts when solving a problem using the K-W-L format emphasizes that process is as important as product.

Both Linda and Nina suggested using the K-W-L to structure the investigation of a topic. For third graders, as well as others, this might be a group project necessitating the use of multilevel materials for responding to questions proposed in the "W" column. For older students, the K-W-L might provide structure for an independent research paper particularly in the formulation of research questions. Linda, Becky, Paula, and Nina also found the K-W-L helpful in developing vocabulary as students used and reused terms related to the current topic. When formulating questions on material relating to states of matter, Linda's third grade students drew from the K-W-L of the previous week using terms such as particles, solids, liquids, and gases.

Responses from the students

Students' responses were also revealing. It was not surprising that students approached the strategy more seriously when the material was relevant and interesting. Some students noted that they preferred using the K-W-L strategy to taking notes. Several testified that the strategy helped them retain information, and that they found the procedure useful in studying for tests. Paula had several students whose grades improved in social studies; they claimed, and she corroborated their claim, that their grades also improved in science as a result of applying the K-W-L process by choice. A number of

students did comment that using the strategy too often would be boring. One of Paula's colleagues, who uses the K-W-L in teaching science, echoed these students' concerns noting that using the K-W-L once every ten to fourteen days seems most effective.

A number of students improved in their ability to express complete ideas by using the K-W-L procedure. Joey, one of Paula's students, when stating what he knew about the Middle East, simply wrote "long and latt" meaning longitude and latitude. Obviously Joey had not formulated clearly in his own mind what he knew about longitude and latitude in relation to the Middle East nor did this give the teacher much insight concerning the student's prior knowledge.

After five weeks of instruction using the K-W-L, Joey wrote in the "K" column, "I know that small towns in the Middle East do not have as much money as large towns" — a decided improvement over "long and latt." Nina noted that her seventh graders, over the course of the study, asked more thoughtful and better focused questions in the "W" column. She taught her students that initially skimming the text facilitates generating questions for this column. The first week Trey asked only one question in the "W" column; during the final weeks of the study, by first skimming the material, he easily produced five or six questions for this same column.

Cameron, another of Paula's students, made positive strides in attitude as a result of experience with the K-W-L. Initially Cameron refused to read his text or participate in class discussion. He was an expert in shooting paper wads. As the class engaged in the K-W-L procedure over the course of the study, Cameron became more positive about social studies, participating willingly in the K-W-L activities and

subsequently completing one of the best projects (a shoe box diorama) in the class. The strongest testimony for the effectiveness of the K-W-L came from a high achieving student who complained initially that she didn't understand social studies when she read it; however, by the conclusion of the K-W-L project, she noted that the strategy helped her to understand social studies better.

Conclusion

It is true that teachers today are encouraged to use a variety of materials in their classrooms in order to better accommodate the individual needs, interests, and abilities of their students. However, this trend does not negate the value of traditional textbooks. Helping our students learn to use textbooks effectively provides them with a tool for independent learning. The K-W-L is one strategy, among others, that should be taught and should be taught thoroughly. The K-W-L helps to make textbooks as well as other materials meaningful. It encourages students to make connections between prior knowledge and new information thus facilitating the construction of meaning. In this paper, we have provided some insight into the factors that may require some fine tuning of the K-W-L procedures in the classroom, particularly taking into consideration the students' sometimes limited background knowledge. Considering these and other relevant factors, any teacher can engage in effective implementation of the K-W-L.

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A Role for Bibliotherapy in Teacher Education

Cynthia M. Morawski

In order to engage effectively in their ongoing decision-making about classroom management, learning difficulties, parental concerns, language instruction and curriculum design, teachers not only need to acquire relevant practical and theoretical knowledge. They must also learn to critically examine and reconstruct their perceptions of their own performance. The process of self-examination needs to be actively acknowledged and addressed in the development and implementation of the teacher education curriculum.

Bibliotherapy, viewed here as the guided reading of written materials to help the reader grow in self-awareness (Harris and Hodges, 1995) can play an instrumental role in helping both beginning and experienced teachers think about their professional practice through critical inquiry. The purpose of this paper is to present an approach to integrating bibliotherapy into teacher education courses at both the preservice and inservice levels. The paper includes theory relevant to bibliotherapy, while emphasizing practical applications for engaging teachers in self-actualization through bibliotherapy. Recommended readings for teacher education bibliotherapeutic experiences are included in the appendices.

Bibliotherapy for teachers

When used in concert with other forms of support, bibliotherapy can play an instrumental role in both personal and professional development. Bibliotherapy has been successfully applied to a variety of educational areas such as family counseling (Sheridan, Baker, and de Lissovoy, 1984; Manning and Manning, 1984), social skills development (Nickolai-Mays, 1987; Lenkowsky and Lenkowsky, 1978), and curriculum planning for the gifted (Hebert, 1991; Adderholt-Elliott and Eller, 1989). Teacher education is another important area where the instructional potential of bibliotherapy has been recognized.

Employing a phenomenological framework for viewing teacher education, Hunsburger (1985) recommended the use of novels to understand what children experience as they learn to read. "Authors, by whatever mixture of memory, insight and imagination, allow us to see through the eyes of others, and since all authors were once children, revelations of child life abound" (p. 11). The various instructional situations that Scout Finch encounters in *To Kill a Mockingbird* were used by Hunsburger to illustrate the insights about children's literacy development that teachers can gain from this practice.

The use of juvenile literature for educating mainstream teachers about students with special needs was advocated by Hildreth (1992). She stated that, "Books written about children and adolescents with learning disabilities examine the cause of the learning disability, experiences of academic failure, remediation, affective development, and family reaction." (p. 25) Such information can complement and reinforce other forms of related knowledge regarding special education that teachers obtain from inservice support.

In her content area reading course, Daisey (1993) "provided opportunities for [her] preservice students to consider reading as therapeutic by comparing the comfort provided by reading and students' content area experiences." (p. 438) Reading aloud selected content area passages, and sharing personal feelings and reactions to special books were two specific procedures that she employed to engage students in the process of bibliotherapy.

Colvin (1994) introduced an activity in which she used images from literature to guide new teachers through various stages of composing a more formal teaching philosophy. In particular, this activity "enabled the... teachers to reflect often on the basis for their practice and the ways in which their actions are influenced in the classroom" (p. 683).

As part of an affective component for developing the instructional potential of teachers in the content areas, Morawski (1995) proposed the use of bibliotherapy. Through vicarious involvement with books and other written materials, teachers can gain significant knowledge about their students as well as themselves. "In particular, bibliotherapy can not only help teachers contend with the demands of teaching reading-disabled students, but it can also provide assistance to teachers who are coping with their own insecurities related to the reading process" (Morawski, 1995, p. 338).

This paper proposes an approach to bibliotherapy that will develop further its application to teacher education at both the preservice and inservice levels. The approach takes into account both the most relevant psychological theory and the recognized stages of bibliotherapy. It includes reading aloud, instructor-initiated readings, teacher-initiated readings, guided independent reading, and collaborative inquiry. Each of these elements is described along with guidelines for

engaging teachers in critical self-exploration and action within the context of bibliotherapy.

Psychological theory supporting bibliotherapy

According to Adler's Individual Psychology, individuals are indivisible, social, decision-making beings whose behavior is goal-oriented and purposive (Corsini, 1973). Although people all exist in the same world, each person (for a variety of reasons) tends to perceive it differently (Adler, 1930, p. 6). In particular, individuals' perceptions, based on their subjective interpretations of life events, affect the choices they make. In the case of teachers, these perceptions are bound to influence participation in teaching and learning.

For example, one teacher who misperceived herself as an ineffective reader avoided the use of content area reading strategies for instructional purposes. Another teacher who mistakenly viewed himself as incapable of meeting the needs of students with kinesthetic learning styles, resisted the notion of mainstreaming for his class.

In essence, behavior is a function of perception (Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer, 1979, p. 15). Critical examination of personal and professional perceptions within a supportive social context such as an inservice course, can help teachers to reach a more conscious understanding of their actions in the educational setting. As a result, they will be in a better position to identify and consider alternate points of view and behaviors needed to contend with the many challenges of teaching.

Stages of self development in bibliotherapy

Three interdependent stages of self development, (i) identification, (ii) catharsis, and (iii) insight, have been consistently associated with the bibliotherapeutic process

(Adderholdt-Elliott and Eller, 1989; Cianciolo, 1965, Hebert, 1991, Hoaglund, 1972; Lenkowsky and Lenkowsky, 1978; Manning and Manning, 1984; Russell and Russell, 1979). These stages can provide some structure for the basic issues to be addressed to participants in bibliotherapeutic discussions.

Identification. "Affiliating some real or fictional character with oneself or associates" (Cianciolo, 1965, p. 898) would be an important step in confronting a personal or professional issue by way of a written work. "Most of our actions are the consequences of thinking processes that we don't recognize and often prefer not to know but that, nevertheless, have a definite influence on our actions" (Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer, p. 27). Examining the behaviors and related motives of another individual can act as a transition into the exploration of one's own perceptions and actions. To facilitate identification, teachers should be encouraged to recall relevant incidents from their own lives such as early recollections of learning to read (Morawski and Brunhuber, 1995).

Catharsis. "A valuable help in self-examination, which may be mainly intellectual but may also strike at a deep emotional level, is the reading of books [and other works] written by compassionate people who have made some progress in their own painful struggle to know themselves," (Jersild, p. 83) and others. As the character, "works through a problem and releases emotional tension," (Cianciolo, 1965, p. 898) identification becomes further established. Consequently, teachers are more receptive to profit from the emotional content of a reading. Addressing the feelings associated with their relevant incidents recalled during the identification stage would help them to experience and benefit from catharsis in relation to their own personal and professional lives. For example, many teachers may associate feelings of satisfaction with their

early literacy experiences while some others may recall apprehension and anxiety (Morawski and Brunhuber, 1995).

Insight. After having been freed from some of their own emotional tension, individuals are more open to approach a problem on an intellectual level (Cianciolo, 1965). "Through empathizing with a character, the plot, the relationship, or a piece of information of the readings, [they] come to a better understanding of [their] own motivations or achieve an awareness of something applicable to [their] own life." (Hoaglund, 1972, p. 391) The reasons behind attitudes and behaviors, including the history of their formation, can then be addressed.

In the case of teachers, seeming opposition to recent or renewed educational practices, such as literature-based instruction and inclusive education, can be examined. A lack of exposure to children's classics or misperceived inequality in early sibling relationships are some specific examples of explanations that could be uncovered here. When this level of self-understanding has been reached, teachers are better prepared to respond consciously and productively to educational changes such as the introduction of new practices and theories.

Reading aloud

For many years, recognition has been given to the importance of reading aloud to children and adolescents (Butler, 1982; Robinson, 1992; Trelease, 1995). More recently, the value of reading aloud to adults, particularly teachers, has been acknowledged (Richardson, 1994; Wood, 1994). Various aspects of teachers' ongoing literacy development, such as awareness of textual rhythm and knowledge of symbolic meaning, can be enriched by listening to different kinds of fictional and nonfictional pieces. "In particular, when a written work is shared

aloud, it begins to live in ... [people's] lives and extends beyond the bounds of the book. In the outside world, we notice things that we hadn't noticed before." (Wood, 1994, p. 348) Routine oral reading of relevant works to teachers, then, would be an important practice for involving them in the three stages of bibliotherapy.

Instructor-initiated readings

In order to facilitate self-actualization, instructor-initiated readings need to be pertinent, consistent and efficient. Selected works, related directly to the topics of study, should be included at specific times on a regular basis. In general, reading by the instructor should be limited to one or two brief selections such as a children's picture book on sibling relationships or an individual's early memories of learning to write. It is crucial that works represent a variety of perspectives. For example, a class on compulsive-hyperactive behavior could begin with a poem by a child with ADHD and end with a one-page excerpt from a book by a school psychologist.

Instructor-initiated reading should be a time for quiet reflection and critical discussion. Teachers need to be provided with different options for responding to the material and sharing their thoughts and feelings. These options can take such forms as active listening, journal writing, and discussions. For example, at the conclusion of each reading, teachers can write about their reactions in a journal, which they maintain throughout the course. These responses can be used as the working material for periodic small-group discussions. At other times, simply listening to a moving piece is sufficient. More structured practices such as "the reader as problem-maker (Leggo, 1991) and "student-made questions (Ash, 1992) can assist teachers to develop further their repertoire of responses.

Instructor-initiated reading is especially effective for introducing teaches to the bibliotherapeutic process. During the early stages, the instructor can act as a role-model, sharing the reasons for selecting a work as well as conveying her or his own related responses.

Teacher-initiated reading

After they have experienced the benefits of bibliotherapy, teachers can be invited to take more responsibility for its implementation in the course. It is important to note that many teachers approach reading tasks with confidence while others may not feel comfortable participating in the process (Morawski and Brunhuber, 1995). Therefore, teachers should be provided with a variety of possible activities to encourage their active involvement in the bibliotherapeutic component of the course. Examples of such activities can range from the selection and reading of an essay to the compilation of an annotated bibliography of relevant works. Even showing an animated version of a children's classic or sharing a self-made or commercial audio cassette of a story would be appropriate choices, especially for a reluctant reader.

One major advantage of teacher-initiated reading is the alternative role-modeling that it provides. Seeing their classmates actively involved in bibliotherapy may give some teachers the courage to take a more visible role in the process. Further motivation can emanate from the support offered by collaborating with a classmate. For example, one teacher could read a pertinent excerpt while another could subsequently guide his/her classmates through a short debriefing session that focuses on the examination of their responses and related meanings.

Guided independent reading

In addition to including shorter pieces of reading aloud, assigning longer works such as novels, short stories and autobiographies for independent reading would be valuable for engaging teachers in critical self-exploration by way of bibliotherapy. Longer works are particularly useful because they provide a more-in-depth investigation of specific problems over a longer period of time. "Freedom to linger, or hurry, as we choose, to pause and reflect if we wish, makes a distinct difference from listening to oral language in which the speaker sets the pace" (Hunsburger, 1985, p. 11).

Guiding questions. Providing teachers with a list of guiding questions at the outset of their reading would greatly assist them to explore critically the significance of the work for their own personal and professional development. "What is important about this list is not the specific questions on it, but the nature of the questions, the attitude about literature that is fostered by the questions" (Myers, 1988, p. 65). Specific questions would be aimed at clarifying the teachers' thoughts, examining their emotions, and encouraging their consideration and eventual use of alternative actions. Once teachers become familiar with this procedure, they can then begin to formulate their own questions as they respond to future readings.

To exemplify the kinds of questions that can be used to stimulate critical self-inquiry, the following set has been included. These questions, which are intended to facilitate the study of *Somebody Else's Kids* (Hayden, 1982) in a graduate education course, were developed in consultation with existing recommendations (Cianciolo, 1965; Reid, 1972) for discussing books.

- 1) Identify at least three critical incidents (positive or negative) that occurred in this book and explain the

significance of each one. Consider the emotions, images, and thoughts that you associated with each incident. Explain.

2) Within the context of each incident, address your current perceptions and practices related to learning and teaching. Did they change? Did they remain the same? Explain.

3) If you could change one incident in this book, what would it be? Explain how this change would have affected the characters and events in the book.

4) Many important issues related to different kinds of learning and teaching practices are addressed throughout the book. Examine one of these issues in relation to different contexts in your own life (e.g., your teaching situation, your current and earlier learning experiences). Consider class discussions, presentations, and recommended readings.

5) What was your general reaction to reading this book?

Collaborative inquiry

"Each reader brings individual experience and understanding to the story and takes away what seems significant" (Hunsburger, 1985, p. 16). However, discussion must take place within a community of learners if teachers are to derive the full benefits from their guided independent reading. "The group setting offers members the opportunity to develop new perceptions of their approach to the basic tasks of life" (Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer, Jr., 1979, p. 142). Within this forum, an ongoing interchange of thoughts and emotions encourages teachers to re-examine their current perspectives as well as modify their related actions.

For example, hearing a classmate struggle with her own self-doubts about being a teacher of autistic children helped another classmate to face his own fears about working with learning disabled students. With the support of his group members, he came to realize that his constant striving for perfection was limiting his options for growth as an educator. In

response to his realization, he decided to volunteer in the school's resource program, which was intended to assist those students who were experiencing various academic difficulties.

Although many teachers may welcome the chance to learn from the self-exploration of others, they may not always feel comfortable with revealing their own thoughts and feelings in the presence of peers. Therefore, it is essential that different forms of collaborative groupings, specifically whole class, small group, and dyads, are used for critical discussion of a book or other longer work. A larger group may be appropriate and necessary for addressing issues of a more general nature. However, a small group provides "repeated opportunities for ... individuals to share ideas actively as they question, answer, elaborate, and revise informally (Reid, 1972, p. 26). Addressing the assigned questions with a partner or several other classmates before the beginning of a whole class discussion could provide teachers with the courage to express themselves in such a larger situation.

Groups can be formed and maintained throughout the course in a number of ways. For instance, at the time that a novel is assigned to the whole class, small groups can be established for the purpose of discussing the novel on a periodic basis. Toward the end of the course, a full-class discussion could then take place. Alternatively, class members can be given the option of selecting one of several novels, the number of which will depend on the class size. Membership for groupings will be based on the chosen novel with two or more sub-groups for each novel. Sub-groups, which will meet individually to discuss the novel at specific intervals throughout the duration of the course, will later combine for more extensive verbal interaction at the course's conclusion.

Of course, other possibilities exist for the exploration of novels and longer works. For example, a teacher who has an interest in familial relationships that involve siblings and learning difficulties may want to read and react to a book as part of her or his investigation of this subject. Although the valuable learning that could take place in a community of learners would not be available, the course instructor could dialogue with the teacher using brief conferences and journal entries.

Before using a work, it is imperative that the instructor knows the selection well and has decided "that it provides a fair picture of the problem (Lehr, 1981, p. 77). The particular needs of the teachers in the course must be determined as well. Administering a brief questionnaire at the beginning of the course would help to ascertain this information. This questionnaire could contain open-ended and/or specific questions which would depend on the specific course and its intended learning outcomes. For example, the questions used for a methods course on reading could range in focus from the teachers previous coursework in reading education to their own perceptions of themselves as readers. Lehr (1981) and Davison (1983) offer additional guidelines on selecting proper books and related materials for bibliotherapy.

Considerations for implementation

Effective implementation of a bibliotherapeutic component involves the use of theoretical and practical knowledge related to a variety of areas such as counseling and library science. Therefore it is important that instructors take advantage of the resources and expertise that are associated with the education of preservice and inservice teachers. For example, selection of materials can be supported by the education librarian or bookstore associate who can identify appropriate works and suggest specific sources for further consultation.

Information about group process and self-actualization can be obtained from a counseling instructor who could also "act as a guest facilitator for a session on bibliotherapy" (Morawski, 1995, p. 342). Assistance can even be found among the class members who would very likely possess different levels and types of relevant skills. For instance, a teacher librarian can give book talks on pertinent novels while a practicing guidance counselor can act as a co-facilitator for a whole class discussion.

For those instructors who are considering the use of bibliotherapy for the first time, it is best that they integrate the practice into their courses on a gradual basis. Concentrating on one course and selecting only shorter works to read aloud at specific times throughout its duration would be one way of initiating the process. Assigning a short story as part of a unit on a particular topic such as giftedness would be another means by which bibliotherapy could be incorporated into a course on a smaller scale.

Providing time for observation and active reflection would be essential, especially for refining and expanding the usage of bibliotherapy in the teacher education classroom. The analysis of various outcomes, including a teacher's unfavorable reaction to a story or the large amount of debate that was sparked by a poem, would provide invaluable material for the revision of future implementations such as the guided independent readings of autobiographies.

Conclusion

"A teacher is a human being with needs, abilities, beliefs, goals and a heart. Teachers must be able to use their own personality and talents to help their students as well as themselves grow" (Thorpe, 1987, p. 247). Hence, personal and professional transformation is a critical factor in teacher

education, where intrapersonal awareness and growth need to become an integral part of the ongoing construction of knowledge and practice. In particular, teachers need to gain an understanding of their perceptions as well as the influence that these perceptions can have on their attitudes and actions in the educational setting. The approach presented in this article can provide preservice and inservice teacher educators with specific theoretical and practical means by which this goal could be actively and consciously achieved through the integration of bibliotherapy into their courses.

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Appendix *Recommended Readings about Teaching*

Cooper, S. (1995). Sarah's story. *The Reading Teacher*, 48, 633. A kindergarten teacher's reflection on her response to a Downs syndrome girl's membership in her class, from initial reluctance to personal growth as an educator. Teacher self-awareness and development. Oral reading.

DeJong, M. (1954). *The wheel on the school*. NY: Harper Trophy. A Newbery Award book about an elementary school teacher who, inspired by one of his students, eventually involves the whole fishing village in significant learning experiences surrounding collaborative efforts of attracting a crane to a rooftop. Curriculum innovation. For silent reading.

Hayden, T. (1980). *One child*. NY: Avon. Hayden presents an insightful account of her personal and professional struggle to reach one of her students — a six-year-old gifted girl whose background, filled with neglect, abuse, and desertion, thwarted the realization and actualization of her full learning potential. Child abuse. Silent reading.

Hayden, T. (1995). *The tiger's child*. NY: Avon. In the sequel to *One child*, Hayden initiates contact again after seven years and recounts the continuing struggle to reach this girl as an adolescent with definite interests, values, and memories of her past. Self-acceptance via identity formation. Hayden's other books address children of war, mutism, autism, cult victimization, and teenage pregnancy. Silent reading.

Landau, E., Epstein, S., and Stone, A. (Eds.). (1972). *Child development through literature*. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall. This book is divided into ten thematic sections, each with introductory essays, fictional pieces, and discussion questions concerning relevant topics such as jealousy, death, truth, and discipline. Child development. Silent reading.

Landau, E., Epstein, S., and Stone, A. (Eds.). (1978). *The exceptional child through literature*. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall. Similar to the previous text, this book concentrates on aspects of exceptionality such as

- learning disabilities, behavior difficulties, giftedness, and familial interactions. Exploring exceptionalities. Silent reading.
- Natchez, G. (1975). *Gideon: A boy who hates learning in school*. NY: Basic Books. The complexities of a challenged reader's daily struggle to perform and maintain a positive self-image in a third-grade setting, is sensitively portrayed in this fictional work that addresses testing, parental collaboration, alternative education, and professional self-introspection. Reading assessment and intervention. Silent reading.
- Paley, V. (1990). *The boy who would be a helicopter*. Cambridge MS: Harvard University Press. The integral role that storytelling played in the development of a pre-schooler's self-expression and interpersonal communication is critically examined in this book — his teacher's reflective diary. Story as a learning vehicle. Silent reading.
- Robinson, L. (1992). My father. *English Journal*, 81, 70-71. A high school English teacher's recollection about her father and the influence that he had on the development of her teaching practices, particularly the regular use of reading aloud to students. Reflective teacher education. Oral reading.
- Rothenberg, M. (1978). *Children with emerald eyes*. NY: Pocket Books. Case studies of children exhibiting severe behavior and communication difficulties are thoughtfully presented by their teacher, a very gifted and reflective practitioner. Critical inquiry. Silent reading.
- Ungerleider, D. (1996). *Reading, writing, and rage*. Encino CA: RWR. In this book a reading consultant chronicles a young man's lifelong battle with reading and writing difficulties, focusing on his endless day-to-day challenges such as parent-child relationships, remedial cures, and de-meaning remarks. Multidimensional causes of literacy difficulties. Silent reading.
- Vail, P. (1987). *Smart kids with school problems*. NY: E.P. Dutton. A very informative book containing personal stories and a wealth of theoretical and practical information concerning intelligent students who experience difficulty in learning. Learning disabled and gifted. Oral reading.

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