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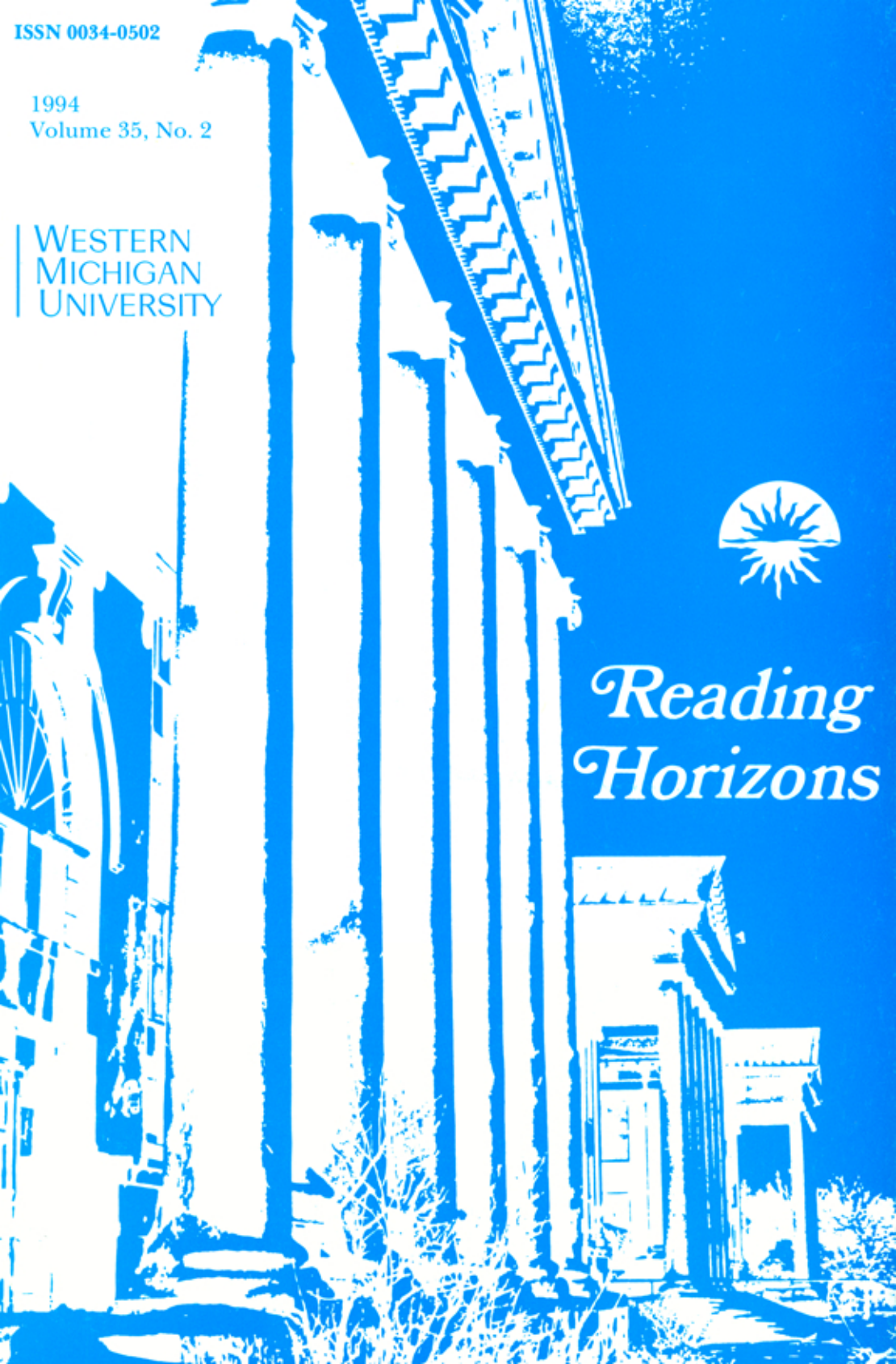
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Reading Horizons





READING HORIZONS

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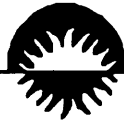
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Oral Participation In Shared Reading and Writing By Limited English Proficient Students in a Multiethnic Class Setting

**Kathryn Laframboise
Margie Wynn**

Meeting the educational needs of students with limited English proficiency is a challenge that is changing and will continue to change the direction of educational programs. There has been a huge influx of limited English proficient (LEP) students across all geographic regions of the United States (United States Department of Education, 1992). Of the 25 largest school districts in the country, 23 have a majority of minority students (Multicultural Education Review Task Force, 1991). The impact of this increase in LEP students has resulted in individual states and school districts examining their resources, priorities, and curricula to meet their needs.

Five states — California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois — account for 73 percent of the nation's LEP students. Two states, California and Florida, gained over 50 percent of all LEP students who entered the school system in 1992 (United States Department of Education, 1992). The challenges confronting these states may be unique because the demographics of their school populations are changing more

rapidly than those of other states, but efforts made to examine, revise, and adapt curriculum in a meaningful way may become prototypes for other states who will be faced with large-scale changes in the future.

The Multicultural Education Review Task Force in Florida (1991) is examining pedagogical approaches to meet the needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse population within the state. The 38 percent of the school population identified as culturally diverse represents 100 countries of origin outside of the United States and 49 languages of origin. Within certain broad categories or umbrella terms, there is great ethnic and language diversity. For instance, students in the Hispanic group come from 20 different countries. Many countries, particularly Asian countries, are comprised of regional groups who also have their specific dialects and cultures. Therefore, the diversity within groups is sometimes as great as the diversity between groups.

While nearly 40 percent of the student population in Florida (as of 1990) are members of cultural groups other than the white mainstream, less than 20 percent of the instructional staff come from similar backgrounds (Multicultural Education Review Task Force, 1991). There are multiple reasons for these differences. For instance, the number of LEP school-age children immigrating to the United States is growing much faster than is the number of bilingual teachers needed to teach them. There is also a disproportionate number of school drop-outs from minority groups, but at the same time an intense effort is being made by some professions to recruit successful minority students into professions other than teaching. While the number of LEP students increases, there is a limited pool of students from which professional educators originate.

Given the status of minority students in the schools, Florida and other school systems nation-wide recognize the necessity of finding ways to make instruction culturally responsive to the needs of diverse students. A statement on the role of bilingual education by the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) recommends that students from linguistically and culturally diverse communities be placed with teachers who are proficient in both the home and second languages of their students (TESOL Bilingual Education Interest Section Task Force, 1992). Increasing the number of bilingual educators is, therefore, a basic goal. To achieve this goal, all teachers, particularly those from the mainstream culture, must be knowledgeable in ways to make the classroom a place where all children can be successful. Culturally and linguistically diverse students are going to be taught by teachers who do not share their language or cultural background. We designed this study to examine classroom interactions within the context of literacy tasks and describe them for the preservice and inservice teachers with whom we work. The audience for this research project is also the many teachers who have taught classes where children who share their language and mainstream backgrounds are successful, but may be exploring whole language strategies as a way to meet a wide range of learning needs for more diverse classes. This study was designed, therefore, to answer the following questions: 1) What are some patterns of oral participation that LEP students use during shared reading and writing experiences?; and 2) What types of language and cognitive support enable LEP students to participate in group discussions and interactions?

Context of the study

Students. For purposes of the study, two groups of students were created from kindergarten, first, and second grade classes in a K-5 elementary school in which the second author

works regularly with intern teachers. Group 1 included seven kindergarten and two first grade students. Students' ethnic backgrounds were Hispanic, Vietnamese, and white mainstream. Group 2 was made up of second graders, including African-American, Hispanic, Arabic, and white mainstream students. The groups were microcosms of classrooms in many areas. This research studied two groups of students who were varied linguistically, and there was not a dominant second language group. The groups created for this study reflected the situation faced by many teachers in the classroom. The teachers did not speak the languages of all the students, and the students could not always communicate with each other, at least not in traditional ways.

During the class sessions, targeted observations and field notes were made of four LEP students. In Group 1, Carlos had immigrated to the United States from Puerto Rico and had been in school for three months. No English was spoken at home. Dao had come from Vietnam 19 months earlier, lived in a home where little English was spoken, and had been in school for eight months. In the second group, Yusef came from Jordan, lived in a family with limited English, and had attended school in the United States for six months. Marisol came from Puerto Rico 26 months earlier and lived in a family where some English was spoken.

Instruction. Each group met for a one hour session two mornings a week for four weeks. We planned the lessons jointly, but each of us took the major responsibility for teaching one of the groups. Predictable books, books with language patterns including repetitive wording, rhythm, rhyme, sequence, and familiar plot structure provided meaningful, dependable contextual support for emergent readers. The books were in Big Book format with enlarged text that enabled students to view and follow the text easily. Illustrations

provided visual clues for predictions. Students choral read the stories repeatedly, at first memorizing repetitive refrains but gradually making the transition from memorizing text to reading.

A natural progression was made from choral reading of predictable books to story innovations such as writing parallel stories using a given patterned text. After repeated reading of *Good Night, Owl!* (Hutchins, 1972), students brainstormed and wrote *Good Night, Elephant! The Wheels on the Bus* (Zelinsky, 1991) became *The Tires on the Bike*. *Peanut Butter and Jelly* (Westcott, 1987) evolved into *Chocolate Chip Cookies*.

Shared singing experiences used predictable songs with repetitive rhythm, rhyme, tune, and lyrics. Students enthusiastically sang *Old Macdonald Had a Farm* (Adams, 1990) and *I Went Walking* (Williams, 1989) to the tune of "Row, row, row your boat." *The Three Little Pigs* (Resnick, 1991) and *The Wheels on the Bus* (Zelinsky, 1991) adapted to *The Tires on the Bike*. The melody support appeared to be especially effective for our LEP students. We found, as did Wynn (1993), that students progressed from listening to singing to reading to composing.

The basis of instruction was concrete, motivational, and meaningful experiences for both groups of students (Au, 1993). After reading *Peanut Butter and Jelly* (Westcott, 1987), the younger students developed a list of ingredients and sequential directions for making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. They choral read the directions to the teachers and supervised the making of sandwiches that they enthusiastically consumed. Before composing *Chocolate Chip Cookies*, a parallel story to *Peanut Butter and Jelly*, the older group had concrete experiences with chocolate chip cookies. They

examined ingredients, discussed cooking utensils and terms, and made cookie dough.

Ethnographic procedures. The study was not experimental research in which treatments were compared. We used a microethnographic approach to collect data and interpret student and teacher behaviors. This approach has been successful in studies with goals of describing lessons and providing detailed behavioral interactions in specific contexts (Mehan, 1979; Au, 1980; Moll, Diaz, Estrada, and Lopes, 1992; Trueba and Wright, 1992). Moll, et al. (1992) recommend microethnography as a principled way to construct the classroom context for analysis. They state that microethnography is particularly well-suited for studying classrooms where teachers and students differ ethnically and where more than one language is spoken. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) recommend descriptive research be used to improve teacher effectiveness by allowing the teacher, using qualitative data gathering techniques, to step away from the classroom situation. Teachers can then reflect on the immediate conflicts and challenges revealed in the data and gain a broader perspective.

In order to make systematic observations of the interactions among the students and the teachers in this study, data was collected by using audiotapes and videotapes of all lessons, making field notes during and after each session, examining original student work and videotapes of student work, and reviewing lesson plans. Field notes made during the lessons were made by the researcher who was not teaching the lesson. The videotapes were made by a member of the university support staff. Interviews of the teachers and assistant principal provided background information and descriptions of classroom performance.

Lesson plans were made jointly and used to guide the implementation of various teaching strategies. They were reviewed to recreate the purposes and structures of the lessons. Audiotapes were reviewed at the end of each day to evaluate the sessions and make adjustments. The audiotapes provided information on the teaching of the lesson and group interactions, but were not used to make transcripts of individual student's participation. We reviewed the videotapes individually and made transcripts. After finishing the notes on the complete set of tapes, we discussed and synthesized the information. Samples of student work were examined. Students dictated and illustrated stories and made books. Videotapes showed student demonstrations of their work.

Observations

Focused interactions. When teaching and initially observing the sessions, it seemed to both of us that the students were very noisy and made many call-outs. At times there was a high noise level with many side conversations during the lessons. In observing the tapes, however, we noticed the talk among students was almost all topic-related. At those times when the class followed procedures of hand raising and waiting to be called on, there was very little connected oral language in the class except for the teacher's talking. Further examination of the students' oral participation in the discussions revealed a pattern of interaction in which the children participated in the discussions on a variety of levels. Some talked to the teacher, some chose to let others answer questions for them, others talked simultaneously, and others carried on parallel but related talk with students nearby. The many levels of conversation were at first difficult to monitor, but the field notes and videotapes documented the types of language actually occurring in the class. We continually adjusted our teaching styles to facilitate more oral language.

Not all students participated in the oral interactions comfortably. Carlos, one of our kindergarten target students, did not volunteer and answered questions only when given a lot of support. When asked a question, he usually shrugged his shoulders and rubbed his eyes with his fists. Even though he was not orally participating on the level of the other students, he remained focused. He watched the teacher and other students intensely. At first he appeared to be easily distracted. He sat on the edge of his chair. He squirmed and twisted and swung his arms and legs. Nevertheless, he continued to watch carefully. After an intense period of concentration, Carlos frequently moved around in some way, such as going to the restroom or water fountain, both of which were located in the room.

Yusef appeared to be less focused during class. Yusef watched the other boys in class. Of the four targeted students, Yusef was the least fluent in English. However, he displayed social behaviors appropriate to the group. He laughed at the other boys' comments and clowning and frequently participated. During one class session Charlie, who is monolingual English, and Yusef were engaged in a pretend conversation. Each student appeared to be easily conversing with the other using all of the facial expressions and other body language that indicated a real conversation was going on. When asked why he did this, Charlie said "because it makes him [Yusef] laugh." Yusef understood and participated in the game of pretend. They both pretended so well the casual observer might mistake them for actual conversationalists, but neither boy could actually speak the other's language.

Silent and shyness. Yusef and Carlos were both in the "silent period," but demonstrated their understanding of English. The silent period refers to the time in learning a new

language during which the second language learner is able to understand some of the oral language of the new language but is not yet comfortable enough to speak it (Asher, 1972; Krashen and Terrell, 1983; Urzua, 1980). Both boys clearly demonstrated that although they did not orally participate in activities, especially ones that drew attention to their limited English proficiency, they could understand some of the spoken English in their environment. For instance, they responded to some questions, particularly ones requiring a yes/no answer or questions for which careful scaffolding and cognitive support had been provided. Yusef was also accurate in selecting activities at which he could be successful. He did not volunteer to answer unless he knew he could answer correctly.

Carlos sometimes raised his hand when he could not answer or he may have decided not to answer after he was spotlighted — that is, made the focus of attention. Body language such as shrugging, rubbing eyes, and squirming indicated shyness. When asked a question to which other students had already offered several possible answers, Carlos was able to select an appropriate answer for his own response. He, therefore, understood and accepted the types of cognitive support or scaffolding that were offered by the teacher and other students. Another behavior indicating comprehension revealed by the videotapes was echo reading/singing. Carlos quietly watched the group readings of the Big Books for several days. When the activities switched to choral singing, Carlos was able to sing along, but in an innovative way. His singing was almost always one syllable behind the rest of the group. Once we detected this behavior in Carlos, we were able to observe Dao echo singing also. They evidently echoed the words of the rest of the group and used the music as an aid for participation.

Marisol and Dao were able to select activities, answer questions, and contribute ideas. During certain types of interactions both were quite fluent in English. In whole group interactions, Marisol was very quiet. When working in small groups, she was more talkative. She exhibited what Malcolm (1989) called the "shyness syndrome." In a situation where she would be the focus of attention of the larger group, Marisol acted very shy. In smaller groups and one-to-one, she showed a more outgoing personality.

Codeswitching. Marisol did some codeswitching. She talked to herself while drawing pictures for illustrations. She described the pictures to no one in particular and switched from English to Spanish depending on what she was describing. Frequently she needed the Spanish words for everyday objects that were not part of her school-acquired vocabulary. Marisol was comfortable acting as a translator for other students and seemed able to adjust to her audience. Marisol was also willing to translate terms for the first author who had limited Spanish fluency. When working with Carmen, both girls switched back and forth from Spanish to English.

In group work, we observed the Spanish-dominant and Vietnamese students using codeswitching frequently. During the cooking activity, Marisol translated some terms into Spanish for the other students. When drawing, students often only had vocabulary of their home languages for describing pictures. This occurred even with the Spanish-dominant students who seemed fluent in English.

Discussion of the questions

What are some patterns of oral participation that LEP students use during shared reading and writing experiences? We observed many behaviors during oral activities that indicated the true level of understanding of English of the four

targeted students. Students' silence and shyness may initially lead to an underestimation of the students' comprehension of English. Behaviors that are better indicators were more difficult to distinguish. For example, Carlos' and Dao's echo singing were noticed only during the analysis of the videotapes. Carlos was so quiet and so serious compared to some other students, one could easily miss this wonderful strategy for participation.

We observed students who showed their comprehension by answering yes/no questions, selecting responses from several choices offered by the teacher or other students, and choosing not to volunteer unless they knew they could be successful. The kindergarten students were less able to select opportunities for participation than the older students; however, we have found this to be the case with younger English-dominant students, too.

Marisol was a student who exhibited shyness rather than silence. Her levels of oral participation were much different in large group and small group settings. In small groups, she blossomed. She chatted with us and with other students. She comfortably acted as a translator during book illustration sessions and during concrete experiences used for background for story innovations. Perhaps she was empathetic to the struggles the first author was having with translating some of the terms. She frequently sat with Carmen, a girl who had been in school in the United States longer but spoke English less fluently. Both girls could have conversed entirely in Spanish; however, they always engaged in codeswitching during their conversations. They frequently lacked vocabulary for everyday concepts and used the Spanish equivalents. On the other hand, they had only English vocabulary for concepts learned in school if they were not part of their home experiences. Loc was observed providing the same assistance for Dao.

What types of language and cognitive support enable LEP students to participate in group discussions and interactions? Vygotsky (1986) describes scaffolding as aid that leads the learner into levels of task difficulty beyond what can be done independently and provides as much cognitive support as needed for success. Scaffolding is given in various ways — through, for example, concrete experiences, questioning, and various cues. Gradually the support is withdrawn as the learner acquires independence in the task. In our group activities we offered several kinds of scaffolding to enable children to participate orally in discussions and activities.

Before writing story innovations, we reread the selected stories frequently and made concepts of the new story as concrete as possible. The baking experience is an example. A few of the children were unfamiliar with chocolate chip cookies; most were unfamiliar with the ingredients and procedures. Examining the raw ingredients was a lively process. Not surprisingly, the children reacted unfavorably to the offer to taste the dough after smelling, touching and tasting the individual ingredients. Scaffolding was built by the experience and also by the translations provided by peers.

Background for *Goodnight Elephant!* was more challenging. Books with vivid illustrations and photographs were needed. Also we read stories that provided the language for animal names, verbs for the animal sounds, and onomatopoeia. During the composing stage, we frequently referred to the books. Students hunted words, spelled words for prewriting charts, and made their own adaptations of spellings.

Besides building scaffolding for the group, we found a number of ways to offer helpful support for individual

students. In addition to the yes/no questions, which were the easiest for the LEP students to answer, asking several students open-ended questions allowed the LEP students to hear the language for possible answers from other students before they responded. Referring to books previously read with the group modeled literacy behaviors for the students. LEP students were often able to use vocabulary that had been discussed and to find and spell words in the text for collaborative writing efforts. Interactions with books with clear pictures and illustrations were beneficial.

We also observed students who selected opportunities for Yusef to participate in group discussions. They would tell us to ask Yusef a particular question when they believed he could answer it correctly. For instance, when writing *Goodnight, Elephant!* three students told us to have Yusef spell words for the prewriting chart we were developing. He was able to select an appropriate word from a book of animal sounds and even innovated a spelling of one of the animal sounds. Yusef willingly participated in this interaction.

Summary

This research offered us an opportunity for critical examination of the instructional behaviors and strategies we teach our preservice and inservice teachers for interacting with children and structuring literacy tasks. The two groups of students were a microcosm of the regular classroom. Students included monolingual English speakers, non-English speaking students, as well as other LEP students. Furthermore, the LEP students did not all have the same home language. The teachers were only able to converse fluently in English. This is indeed the situation in many classrooms.

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A Critical Course For Literacy Education

Andrea Bartlett

During a recent update of our Literacy Education program, the introductory graduate-level course was renamed Critical Literacy. While the term *critical* is used extensively in the professional literature, I found as instructor of the course that I needed to research the term in order to present my students with a clear picture of what it means to be critical. This paper presents the results of that research, including implications for literacy education courses. My research began with a reexamination of critical theorists. Represented by the writings of Marcuse (1960; 1964) and Habermas (1970; 1975) among others, the goal of critical theory is to "reestablish the meaning of freedom based on human values, just social relations, and equality by illuminating the past and current social relations, documenting their consequences, and analyzing dialectically the society's contradictions as opportunities for change toward more just relations" (Shannon, 1990b, p. 148).

Grounded in critical theory, advocates of critical literacy view knowledge as socially constructed and, therefore, subject to scrutiny. A concept which applies to the use of language in all disciplines, critical literacy requires that students *and* teachers question, reflect, and consider action. According to Ira Shor (1987):

Critical literacy goes beneath the surface to understand the origin, structure and consequences of any body of knowledge, technical process, or object under study. This model of literacy establishes teaching and learning as forms of research and experimentation, testing hypotheses, examining items, questioning what we know (p. 24).

An example of the application of critical literacy at the high school level was described by Bigelow (1989), a teacher whose students analyzed the impact of Columbus' voyages. By contrasting their textbooks with other materials about Columbus, students learned that history was distorted by those in power and that "facts" must be challenged. Connections were made between this use of power and other societal conditions, and students' reactions in their journals hinted at future social action. In an example of critical literacy with university students, Shannon (1990a) described a graduate class in which students investigated equity in schooling. His students, all practicing teachers and administrators, were challenged to critique their own work in schools. In their critical projects, students were required to address the following questions: "How do we wish to live together, who benefits and who loses under current social conditions at school and in society, how were these conditions developed and how are they maintained, and what changes are desirable and possible" (Shannon, 1990a, pp. 379-380). My readings helped me to understand that the goal of critical pedagogy is a new, more equitable, social order and that the creation of this new order would begin with a critique of knowledge and process toward action. Therefore, my next step was to select critical approaches suitable for literacy education courses.

Implications for literacy education courses

In literacy education courses based on critical pedagogy, the traditional roles of teacher and student are transformed.

Instead of just presenting information, the teacher uses questioning to help students organize and present their thoughts. Topics come primarily from students' interests, and students pose problems instead of solving problems posed by others (Wallerstein, 1987). Furthermore, students' recommendations for optimal learning experiences are solicited and implemented.

Giroux (1987) provided four specific implications of critical pedagogy: 1) different student voices are heard and appreciated as the basis for critical dialogue; 2) curriculum materials are analyzed critically; 3) students learn a "language of morality" through which society is evaluated (p. 179); and 4) students come to believe that their actions have an effect on the world. In the sections that follow, these implications will be explained, and teaching approaches congruent with critical pedagogy will be presented.

Encouraging different student voices

Giroux's first condition of critical pedagogy is that different student voices are heard and appreciated as the basis for critical dialogue. According to this view, voice is the means by which we "make ourselves understood and listened to, and define ourselves as active participants in the world" (Giroux and McLaren, 1986, p. 235). The role of the critical pedagogue, then, is to make it possible for students — particularly minority students whose voices often go unheard — to participate in classroom discourse. One way to ensure that all students' voices are heard is through the use of collaborative activities. The power of group learning experiences and their relationship to critical literacy were expressed by Wilson (1988):

Most of the real learning that occurs in classrooms results from the intellectual and emotional excitement generated from the group learning experience.

Collaborative learning bests reflects the concepts of critical literacy. Ideas do not develop, become modified or solidify in a vacuum. Readers/thinkers need one another for those ideas to bloom (p. 548).

To make collaborative activities successful, teachers must develop risk-free environments in which students feel free to express their ideas on wide-ranging topics. Team definitions, writing response groups and expressive writing are collaborative activities that contribute to such an environment. With team definitions, students write their definitions of an important course concept — such as educational equity — independently (Kagan, 1990). Students then meet in small groups of four or five students to create a team definition. Finally, the groups report to the class, and their statements are written on the blackboard or overhead projector. The major benefit of this approach is that team definitions are invariably of higher quality than the individual efforts, demonstrating the synergy within the groups.

Writing response groups are another way to encourage student collaboration and discourse. An assignment such as an *I Search* paper (Macrorie, 1988) is a good starting point for writing response groups. With the *I Search* paper, students write a paper on a self-selected topic. Drafts of the paper may be shared through either unstructured or structured writing response groups. Unstructured groups may follow the writing workshop format in which students write drafts and collaborate freely with peers (Atwell, 1987).

Structured groups may take the form of Elbow groups. Following Elbow's (1973) guidelines, students read their drafts aloud to a small group twice. During the first reading, other group members listen without writing. When drafts are read a second time, listeners respond by pointing to the most

effective part, summarizing the main idea, and describing the writing with a metaphor. In these writing response groups, listeners share "movies" of how they received the piece of writing (Elbow, 1973, p. 85). In both structured and unstructured writing response groups, students hear their peers' opinions on topics related to literacy while they learn approaches to teaching writing.

Related to writing response groups is the use of expressive writing to respond to controversial issues, particularly issues brought forward by voices outside the mainstream. For example, students could respond to Delpit's (1986) contention that progressive methods may put minority children at even greater risk of school failure. Or students could respond to authors who believe that school reading lists should represent the experiences of all children, and not only the dominant culture (Aoki, 1992; Barrera, Liguori and Salas, 1992; Bishop, 1992). Writing could also be used to encourage students to express their own experiences and personal histories. During such an activity, one of my students wrote the poem shown in the box on the next page.

As shown in this poem, students are often willing to share their personal histories when teachers develop an atmosphere in which all students' voices are heard and valued. By sharing their writing in either small groups or with the whole class, students hear the voices of their peers and come to interpret their own experiences in new ways. As students collaborate on activities such as those described above, they have many opportunities to express opinions and to hear the opinions of others.

Critiquing curriculum materials

Giroux's (1987) second condition of critical pedagogy involves the critical analysis of curriculum materials (p. 179). Such analyzes would have the dual purposes of clarifying the

*White(ness)
is the starting point,
the norm,
the standard,
against which all other "colors" are compared.*

*He
(white male from South Africa, come to America to
escape the ugliness)
said,
"You speak so well (for a Filipino girl)."*

*I said,
"Yes, sometimes I feel like I should have been born
white."
(Feeling uneasy, offended, embarrassed, confused)*

*He
said,
"No, if you were born white you would be just normal."*

*Why did I say yes?
Years later I understand
White(ness)
is the starting point,
the norm,
the standard, against which all other "colors" are
compared.
--Alma R. Alonzo*

relationship between knowledge and reality and, also, helping students to understand their own histories. In describing his high school students' attitudes toward text, Bigelow (1989) observed:

Most of my students have trouble with the idea that a book — especially a textbook — can lie. When I tell them that I want them to argue with, not just read, the printed word they're not sure what I mean (p. 635).

For students who have not been challenged by a critical educator such as Bigelow, teacher education may be their first opportunity to critique the viewpoints presented in textbooks and other class readings. Students should be encouraged to apply their personal experiences and read multiple sources in order to evaluate the truthfulness of printed materials.

One way to model text critique is through a comparison of books written on the same topic, such as Columbus (Bigelow, 1989; Taxel, 1992). Literacy education students could read or listen to children's books and textbooks about Columbus that provide a range of attitudes toward indigenous peoples. Discussion should focus on "how school knowledge is produced, where it comes from, whose interest it serves, (and) how it might function to privilege some groups over others" (Giroux, 1987, p. 176). Through such demonstrations, students learn that books are written to serve the interests of specific groups, most often the dominant culture.

Reading response groups also provide students with opportunities to critique curriculum materials. For example, each group of four or five students could select a book for supplemental reading. During class, the groups meet to critique this outside reading, focusing on the sources and effects of the knowledge presented. Summaries of each group's responses are kept in group journals, with the instructor contributing probing questions to enhance future discussions.

A third way to encourage students to critique curriculum materials is through the use of dialogue journals. Andrasick (1990) suggests that students keep a double entry notebook with sections labeled, "What the Book Says" and "What I Say." Students critique interesting textual passages by reflecting on personal experiences and other readings. Then, other students and/or the instructor respond to their ideas.

All of these approaches provide models of the critical stance that prospective and inservice teachers are being encouraged to take, particularly concerning their own teaching. Beyond teacher reflection, teachers who have this critical stance are more likely to ask their own students to critique curriculum materials.

A language of morality and hope

To meet Giroux's (1987) third condition of critical pedagogy, students are introduced to a "language of morality" through which society is evaluated (p. 179). This moral language allows students to consider how communities should be structured. The fourth condition adds a "language of hope" through which students learn that they affect the world through their actions (Shannon, 1990b, p. 149). To this end, students develop curriculum, school and community projects in preparation for their future roles as "active community participants" (Giroux and McLaren, 1986, p. 237).

To acquire a language of morality, issues discussed in literacy education courses are evaluated in terms of equity and fairness. In other words, students consider the effects of the present situation on disempowered individuals and groups. Concurrently, the dialogue presents a "language of hope" in which students discuss possible plans for action. Morality and hope can be emphasized during both whole-class and small-group discussions. During whole-class discussions, the

instructor guides rather than controls students' consideration of important topics. Open-ended questions challenge students to control the direction of the dialogue. The instructor's role is to lead students to question what the present situation is, why, and what can be done to improve the status quo.

This same emphasis on morality and hope can be established during small group activities. In one such activity, "value lines" (Kagan, 1990), students mark a continuum according to their personal opinions of a statement related to the course. For example, students could mark a continuum ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* for a statement such as "Grouping children by ability maintains societal inequities." After marking their value lines, students discuss their opinions in small groups. Then, they mark a second, identical continuum to see whether their opinions have been changed by this dialogue. The group processes as well as opinion changes are then discussed. Another way to encourage students to examine their opinions is through structured academic controversy (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, 1987). This approach uses a debate format to encourage dialogue among students. Given a controversial topic within the course, groups of four students are formed, with one pair of students preparing an argument for and the other against the statement. The pairs present their arguments on a topic such as whether standardized tests should be used to assess literacy. Then the pairs switch sides and prepare the opposing argument. After the second debate, the group attempts to reach consensus on the issue.

Whole-class discussions and problem-solving formats such as value lines and structured academic controversy allow students to examine their own positions as well as those of their peers. Through dialogues on controversial issues, students evaluate the present situation and suggest possible

changes. To truly develop a language of hope, however, additional steps would be necessary. Students would need to take action by developing curriculum projects that address societal inequities. Students could also implement these projects in the schools and communities for which they were developed.

The approaches described above encourage different student voices, critique of curriculum materials, and a language of morality and hope (Giroux, 1987). Will teacher education students be more empowered if their instructors use approaches such as the ones described in this article? Not necessarily. By maintaining strict control over classroom events, an instructor would obviously fall short of creating a democratic classroom. By becoming critical, teacher educators make a political statement. Ideas will be challenged, students and instructors will be empowered, and action will be considered that could change both education and society (Wilson, 1988). These goals are worth pursuing.

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Read It Again!: A Study of Young Children and Poetry

Barbara J. Sepura

She sells sea shells by the seashore. This little tongue twister came back to me recently as I first experienced collecting little shells along the shores of the Atlantic. It wasn't too surprising that my mind rambled so. Little meaningful rhymes and verses have always had a habit of popping into my head in a variety of situations. I recall having learned most of these from my mother in the early years of life. In her natural way she gave me a heritage rich in rhyme, verse and song that has supported me in daily living.

As a classroom teacher and observer of young children, I have noted a lack of poetic verse in many of my young students' literary repertoires. Instinct (and my own rich experience) told me that a conscientiously planned and implemented program of poetry might arouse children's natural interest in verse while enriching their literary backgrounds. Perhaps others had made a similar prediction. I began to peruse recent articles about young children and poetry. This research revealed that when poetry is an integral part of young children's literary environment, they are empowered with rich language and beguiled by the beauty of poetry (Brown and Laminack, 1989). This empowerment can be brought about by sharing a great deal of poetry in a natural setting on a daily basis (Lukasevich, 1984).

During further exploration I came across a study that piqued my interest. Michael Ford (1987) had done research concerning young children's concepts and attitudes about poetry in his doctoral thesis. In that study Ford looked at young children's poetry concepts and attitudes and developed his own pre- and post-survey instrument to monitor changes in a treatment group in comparison to a control group of children. He also developed the poetry program used by teachers of the treatment group. Both the instrument and poetry program were field tested over a four week interval. One preselected poem a day was read aloud to the students by their classroom teachers, following a specific order and procedure laid out by Ford. The children listened to the poem and sometimes had a follow-up activity assigned at the option of the classroom teacher. A summary of his findings revealed a few, limited improvements in young children's attitudes and concepts about poetry through his program of Daily Oral Poetry. Most noteworthy of these was the "impact on young children's abilities to define a poem, identify a poem, and identify a poet" (Ford, 1987, p. 36).

As I read the study, Ford's findings raised some questions for me. While I supported his hypothesis, I questioned the validity of the results he reported based on only four weeks of intervention. In my opinion, the choice of methodology was also problematic. I wondered whether an objective survey instrument would tell enough about children's change in behavior and attitudes about poetry. Might a longer study yield quite different results when measured using Ford's instrument? I felt that these were important questions. Thus stimulated, I began a year long study in my classroom concerning the concepts and attitudes of young children about poetry.

The students

Involved in this study were 23 seven and eight year olds in my second grade classroom. These 13 boys and 10 girls were part of a primary, suburban elementary school. The students came from mixed socio-economic backgrounds ranging from lower class to upper middle class incomes. Thirty percent of the students qualified for the free and reduced breakfast and lunch program. Our school also qualified for Chapter 1 funding. Forty percent of the students in my class were from single parent families. The class had one identified gifted student, six students receiving reading support, four learning disabled students and one emotionally impaired student. The latter five students spent all day in my room as part of an inclusion program. Documented reading levels ranged from kindergarten to high school level.

Eighteen of my students attended first grade at our school and had been exposed to poetry at an average rate of one poem per week. These poems were teacher selected and went along with holidays, famous people's birthdays, seasons and weather. Each month was begun by using a month poem from *Chicken Soup With Rice* (Sendak, 1962). Poetry exposure also occurred when incidentally found in the literature program. The other five students transferred from other schools and their prior experience with poetry was unknown.

Procedures

The main framework adhered to during the poetry program was as follows. Each day one poem was read in a shared reading format. These poems were handwritten on chart paper for whole class presentation. Each poem was read aloud by the teacher as a model and then by the whole class, using a variety of choral reading techniques. The poem for the day remained on the chart stand throughout that day and into the next until the new day's poem was shared. Current chart

poems as well as previous ones were available for student use. A bulletin board near the large group area held recent poems.

When removing poems from this display area to make room for newer ones, the children frequently would request to keep the old poem in view so they could go back and read it individually. We began tacking up poems in any available space we could find. Soon poems could be found throughout the room and in the adjacent hallway where they could be easily referred to as students chose. Sources for the poems were shared with the children and those sources (poetry books, magazines, clippings, etc.) were placed in the classroom library. Poems were always presented in the context of themes, activities or special occasions that affected the lives of this particular group of students in some way.

Every effort was made to make poetry feel like a natural (albeit special) part of the school day. Hence, the decision was made to base poetry selection on themes, current activities and events that could be termed emergent curriculum, as well as on student interest and reactions to specific poets or kinds of poems. Initially, poetry was teacher selected. As the year progressed, children sometimes suggested poems found in books or brought in from home. These requests were always honored.

Survey instruments for determining changes in attitudes and concepts about poetry in young children were administered during the first week of school and just before the end of the school term. The attitude survey was once again given to children in small groups of four to five students and was read aloud to them. The concepts questionnaire was given individually by me or my classroom assistant. Observational data was also collected at weekly intervals.

Although Ford's approach was used as a basis for this study, some modifications were made. Like Ford, I read one poem each day and administered pre- and post-surveys. To obtain further information about how the children felt about poetry I designed an original attitude survey and adapted his poetry concepts and attitudes questionnaire (see Appendixes A and B).

Other distinctions between this study and Ford's included the time interval. I wanted to see if there would be more significant change over time (9 months rather than 4 weeks) concerning attitudes and concepts about poetry for young children. I also felt a need to present the poems in more than just an auditory modality, since not all children learn equally well in this way. I felt children needed to see, read, and write poetry in addition to listening to it. Third, I wanted to see the effects of exposure to poetry in a natural, integrated format as part of the on-going thematic curriculum of my classroom. Finally, I felt a need to make a conscientious effort to provide children with a variety of poetry as an available option when self-selecting literature.

Results and analysis

Poetry became a natural part of our daily school lives. Rose Fyleman's "Mice" (De Regniers and Brown, 1988, p. 71) was read as an introduction to a new read aloud book, Beverly Cleary's *The Mouse and the Motorcycle* (Cleary, 1965). Likewise, "The Pickety Fence" by David McCord (1921, p. 7) was used in harmony with a toothpick patterning activity for math. Dorothy Aldis' "Crunch and Lick" (Prelutsky, 1986, p. 67) was an addition to a display of giant ice cream cone pictures the children had brought back from a session with the art teacher. After an overnight snowstorm, "It Fell In The City" by Eve Merriam (Prelutsky, 1986, p. 75) became a class

writing springboard from which we created "It Fell In Ferrysburg." As the year concluded I was feeling very positive about the experiences with poetry and the reactions I had observed in the children throughout the school year. Confidently, I began to compile data from the pre- and post-surveys. The results were not at all what I had predicted. What the surveys were saying and what my eyes and ears told me on a daily basis were very different.

Most surprising were the negligible numerical differences on the items on the attitude survey. While some variations in mean scores showed up in items on that survey, such as an increase in liking to read poems to the family and a decrease in liking to sign out poetry books in the library, overall composite scores remained the same (see Appendix C).

The poetry concepts questionnaire showed positive growth over the year for most of the items. Most notably, an increased number of children were able to recognize poems by rhyming sounds and visual format. In addition a greater percentage of children were able to name a poem and a poet from memory (see Appendix D).

The more I reviewed these findings, the more I began to question the usefulness of the survey instruments in determining information about the children's response to poetry. Frustrated, I looked to the observational data I had kept during the year. I reviewed my journals, the student interviews, and parent comments. There were numerous indications that the attitudes as well as the concepts about poetry held by my students had indeed been altered significantly throughout the year. Many observable changes in behavior suggested that most students were now choosing to read, write, and share poetry amongst themselves and with significant adults.

The first such indicator occurred when Shel Silverstein's poem, "Slithergedee" (Prelutsky, 1983, p. 209), appeared on the chart one morning complete with a colorful picture of the fictitious monster. Pure enjoyment ensued as the children reread the poem with me, laughing at the end and crying out spontaneously "read it again!" even after we had read it together three times. I made a mental note to add more humorous poems to the selections. Soon after, four copies of Shel Silverstein's (1974 and 1981) poetry books were added to the classroom library and became the first books selected (and hoarded) at choice reading time.

My next enlightenment came when using "Broom Balancing" by Kathleen Fraser (Prelutsky, 1983, p. 122). This led to a small discussion on how we, too, have special talents of our own. Spontaneously, students began to tell about talents that they had. One student suggested that we could write our own poem about things we could do well, so we did. Children waited eagerly while their peers listed their talents, and then added one of their own. By class vote the poem was entitled "Special Talents." It was illustrated by the children and became one of the classroom favorites. I made another mental note: Children respond actively to poems that are personally important to them.

In the fall we linked our learning around a unit on insects. "I Like Bugs" by Margaret Wise Brown (1988) was a natural concluding poem for the unit. Later, we used this poem as a frame for a class poem about trees. It was made into a book and placed in the classroom library, becoming another popular selection for independent reading. In January a student asked if she could use the book as a pattern to write a "book poem" about birds during Writing Workshop. Several other children liked her idea. We ended up with published

books entitled "I Like Birds"; "I Like Dogs"; and "I Like Clowns," all based on the poem by Margaret Wise Brown.

To celebrate March as reading month the children wore hats with writing on them to school. A student said, "I think we should write a poem about hats!" Another chimed in, "We could do it like the one about trees." We drafted, published, and illustrated the poster poem, "I Like Hats." Mental note number three: Familiar formats are effective aids when children are starting to write poetry on their own.

As the year progressed spontaneous writing of poetry appeared at varied times. Students wrote poems to me and slipped them on my desk when I wasn't looking. When making cards to welcome a new baby into one of our classroom families, two children composed poetic verses. During Writing Workshop some children chose to write poems. One boy decided to write and publish his own original book of animal poems, focusing on animals that live in different environments.

Children who found a poem especially pleasing might go up to the chart stand and make a personal copy of the poem by copying it on a piece of paper. Some children used blank books to enter their collections of favorite poems. It was this kind of spontaneous behavior that had led me to believe that the children's attitudes and concepts were indeed growing and changing.

I watched for indications that a selected poem attracted the children's interest. I noted smiles, laughter, spontaneous reading along, clapping, or rhythmic body movements. The poem might be remembered the next day, reread independently or copied down by the children to add to a personal collection of favorites. I would see children flipping the

poetry chart pages back in search of a particular poem to read with a friend. I might hear "Read it again!"

Similarly, the message from the children was clear if a poem was not meaningful to them. The chart poem might be ignored the rest of the day. Whole class rereading would be less than enthusiastic. Some poems did not seem to lend themselves as readily to interaction or natural rhythm in reading. The length of a poem alone could be enough to generate disinterest. Poems that did not seem to be "kid grabbers" will not be used again next year.

Parents began to comment about the poetry we were doing in school. During the year one of the parents told me that her son had requested a book of poetry for a birthday gift. Another mentioned that her daughter repeated classroom poems at home. A third parent shared that his child was writing little poems at home on his own time. One day a parent came in to return a "borrowed" poetry anthology that her child had brought home. I had been missing that favorite book for several days.

When reviewing behaviors such as those described above, it was clear that significant development in attitudes and concepts about poetry had taken place during the one year planned poem-a-day program.

Summary

Using poetry in a planned program in the classroom began for me as an instinct based on my own experience. I had hoped to validate my ideas by using the concepts and attitudes questionnaires as evidence of change and growth after a year of a poem-a-day exposure. When the results of those surveys showed minor evidence of the growth I had witnessed, I sought other documentation that change had indeed

occurred. It became evident that I needed to look directly at what the behaviors of the children were telling me to get a true picture of their attitudinal and conceptual progress in poetry.

In the end, I became certain that convincing evidence can be gained when looking at what young children *do* over time. By watching the children I could observe self-selection of poetry at reading time. I could witness friends together rereading chart poems, poetry books, or class written poems. I could watch children sign out poetry books in the library, or conversely, bring in poems they had found at home. I could hear the laughter over a funny poem, or feel the silence when a poem was sad. I could note rhythmic clapping and spontaneous body movements. "Read it again!" still rings in my ears. I could observe budding poets struggling to find just the right word to fit into their own original poems. This documentation underlines the worth young children themselves put on the richness poetry adds to their own lives.

Where will I go from here with poetry? I had let the students guide me throughout the year. Why not get their opinions about what was effective in the poetry program? Children were interviewed as to what they might do with poetry if they were the teacher. Here are some of their comments:

I would use the funny ones, like "Slithergedee" by Shel Silverstein. I like the ending. I like how he didn't finish the sentence." -- 8 year old boy

Some children chose poems for their rhythmic, musical qualities. Others liked special characteristics in the poetic style as exemplified by the seven year old girl who liked:

...poems that turn things around like "Keep a Poem in Your Pocket." I liked how it began with "Keep a poem in your pocket and a picture in your head," and then at the end it said, "Keep a picture in your pocket and a poem in your head."

Another seven year old boy suggested:

If I were the teacher, I'd find poems that were very hard to find, and ones that don't make sense (nonsense poems). Then, if you're bored, you could sit and think about them and about how they might make sense.

An eight year old girl recommended:

If I were the teacher I would make poems by adding more pictures... so some people could see what the pictures are and you don't have to make them up in your head. Like when we did "It Fell In Ferrysburg." We made the poem and put it in the hall. We made pictures and made it beautiful.

Visual representations seemed very important. Repeatedly I heard suggestions like "draw pictures," "do torn paper pictures," "make them colorful," "do water color paintings," "make them in potato (potato prints) like I did in Cub Scouts," and "I'd like to do crafts and stuff to go with poems." The children had ideas on how to improve poetry time. One child asserted poetry time could be better if we:

used more poems with surprise endings. I also liked poems that started and ended with about the same line, like "I think mice are nice."

Others suggested:

*...use more funny poems
I like the silly ones
Have the class write more poems*

Another seven year old boy complained:

I don't have any poem books at home, but I wish I did. (We should) get more poetry books in the room so kids could read them and sign them out.

Students also discussed what they liked about poetry. One boy said someone else would like:

doing things (body movements) with poems like tick-tocking when we did "Hickory Dickory Dock."

Another said:

Someone else might like to copy down their favorite poems in a little book of their own. So they could read them when they wanted to. I liked doing that.

An eight year old girl insisted:

Writing our own poems is fun. Someone else might like to write their own poems. They should have a choice. Like, they could do it during Writing Workshop or something.

One student stated:

In the beginning I thought that poems were just kind of drama ones, but then I found out that there were lots of different kinds. Other kids can learn that, too.

I have my mandate. All children deserve opportunities to enjoy poetry as the special genre that it is. Through a

carefully planned daily poetry program children's attitudes and concepts about poetry have been and can continue to be positively affected for a lifetime.

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APPENDIX A
Poetry Attitudinal Survey

Name _____ Date _____

Show how you feel about each statement below by circling the stars. Four stars mean *most of the time*, three stars mean *quite often*, two stars mean *sometimes*, and one star means *not very often*.

1.

I like to hear poems:

**

*
2.

I like to read poems:

**

*
3.

I like to write poems:

**

*
4.

I like to read poems during independent reading time:

**

*
5.

I like to sign out poetry books in the library:

**

*
6.

I like copying poems in my personal poetry book:

**

*
7.

I like reading poems to my family:

**

*

APPENDIX B
Poetry Concepts Questionnaire

Name _____ Date _____

1. Tell me what a poem is.
2. How is a poem different from a story?
3. How is a poem the same as a story?
4. Is this more like a poem or a story? (Read a short rhymed verse.)
Why?
5. Is this more like a poem or a story? (Read a short unrhymed verse.)
Why?
6. Is this more like a poem or a story? (Read a short narrative story.)
Why?
7. Does this look more like a poem or a story? (Show a page from a narrative story.) Why?
8. Does this look more like a poem or a story? (Show a page from a multi-stanza poem.) Why?
9. Tell me the name of a poem.
10. Tell me the name of a poet.
11. What kind of people are poets?

ADAPTED FROM MICHAEL FORD'S *POETRY CONCEPTS AND ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE*, APPENDIX A (FORD, 1989).

APPENDIX C
Pre- and post-test poetry attitude survey
*Data summary**

	<u>Pre</u>	<u>Post</u>
1. I like to hear poems.	2.9	3.0
2. I like to read poems.	2.8	2.8
3. I like to write poems.	2.7	2.7
4. I like to read poems during independent reading time.	2.6	2.7
5. I like to sign out poetry books in the library.	3.1	2.4
6. I like copying poems in my personal poetry book.	2.8	2.8
7. I like reading poems to my family.	2.8	3.4
Composite score:	2.8	2.8

*For ease of comparison, figures are given in mean scores. Scores are on a scale of 4 (most of the time) to 1 (not very often).

APPENDIX D
Poetry Concepts Questionnaire
Data summary

	<u>Pre</u>	<u>Post</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
1. A poem is		
rhyming words	21	40
short story	14	25
something written	21	3
about feelings	14	22
something you hear/say	4	3
like a song	0	3
don't know	11	3

2. Poems are different from stories

shorter	39	45
rhyme	15	28
look different	19	11
sound different when read	15	10
convey feelings	8	0
poems are not true	0	3
don't know	4	3

3. Poems are the same as stories

words/meanings	59	61
read both	15	11
pictures/no pictures	11	0
people write them	7	7
characters/title	4	7
length (poems as stories)	4	4
can sound alike	0	7
can have rhyming words	0	3

4. Recognized a rhyming poem by sound 76 78

5. Recognized unrhymed poem by sound 52 39

6. Recognized story excerpt by sound 78 96

7. Recognized story format by sight 48 58

8. Recognized poetry format by sight 78 96

9. Could name a poem from memory 83 91

10. Could name a poet from memory 57 65

Knew what a poet was 52 96

11. Stated people who write poems are

writers	74	78
illustrators	9	9
any person	9	12
creative people	0	8
don't know	8	3



Using Storybooks To Teach Science Themes

Sandra Moser

Be nice to spiders! You should be nice to spiders because they did not do anything to you, did they? You should be nice to spiders. That means no spiders should be killed or electrocuted by humans unless you did it on accident. -- Britany, age 7.

Sympathy, empathy, respect, admiration, affection: These are not words normally found in the science texts of primary level classrooms, and the emotions they name are not ordinarily associated with the teaching of science. Yet the young writer quoted above communicates an involvement with small creatures — even an urgency — that was learned through literature. And this emotional involvement was gained right along with a knowledge of spider anatomy, web building and feeding habits. Through literature — storybooks — this student learned science content intertwined with values.

Educators and researchers are recognizing the role of children's literature in classroom instruction (Armbruster, 1991). No longer limited to the inclusion of real stories in basal readers, children's literature has found its way into the teaching of science, social studies and other content areas in the form of nonfiction tradebooks and storybooks (Stewart and Cross, 1993). Several educators have recommended the

use of fiction as well as nonfiction children's literature for content area teaching, and have made extensive lists of suggested titles (Butzow and Butzow, 1989; Armbruster, 1991; Olson and Gee, 1991; Galda and MacGregor, 1993; Stewart and Cross, 1993).

An increasing recognition of the need to communicate values of caring and concern for nature have brought literature into the area of general classroom instruction. This attention to the importance of the student's emotional needs and the need for emotional involvement warrants a look at the techniques of bibliotherapy, which enable a student to use dilemmas and conflicts experienced by storybook characters to help put real-life conflicts into perspective (Afolayan, 1992). Children wrestling with concerns about the environment, the uses for technology, human/nonhuman interactions, and other science-related issues may find valuable insights in storybooks addressing these concerns. The use of children's literature dealing with science issues can contribute to a whole-person approach to science that gives attention to values as well as knowledge.

Storybooks provide a unique tool for engaging students in the active formation of the values of caring and concern. When used to teach science content, storybooks may have several advantages over nonfiction tradebooks and content area textbooks. When attempting to read expository texts, students may have difficulties stemming from limited prior knowledge, lack of motivation and involvement with the text, and mystifying text structures (Butzow and Butzow, 1989; Olson and Gee, 1991). Where an expository text may present an unfamiliar science concept, a storybook can couch that science concept in a fictional setting that is familiar to the reader. This familiarity born of prior knowledge enhances emotional involvement and the motivation to keep reading and

thinking about the problem presented in the story (Butzow and Butzow, 1989; Moser and Perez, 1992). Aiding the reader is a familiar textual structure with a character working through problems to meet a goal and find a resolution; such a story structure carries the reader along and allows the comfort of predictability that enhances rather than hampers the reading process.

Choosing storybooks for science themes

The classroom teacher at any grade level will keep some important factors in mind when choosing storybooks for science themes. An early consideration should be the suitability of the book's topic to the science theme: Does the book address an important concept of the theme? Next, the teacher needs to decide how accessible the material is to the students, whether the readability level will enable most of the students to read the book independently, with guidance, or if the book must be read to the students. Linked to the book's readability level are the reading skills that can be taught using the book. The key to determining the appropriateness of the storybook in these areas is to plan and list the important science concepts to be presented through the theme, and to identify the reading skills and strategies to be taught during the theme.

Of critical importance in the selection of a storybook for science instruction are the quality, accuracy and timeliness of the book's content. While the copyright date need not be current, the science concepts presented must be accurate. To encourage students to revise misconceptions about science and nature, those misconceptions must be directly addressed and refuted (Anderson and Smith, 1987; Butzow and Butzow, 1989). The teacher must decide if the storybook itself directly addresses students' misconceptions or if the information presented, while not direct, can be used by the teacher to confront and challenge students' inaccurate notions.

The teacher will need to look closely at writing style when choosing a science theme storybook, with particular attention to the use of anthropomorphism in the presentation of animal characters (Butzow and Butzow, 1989; Sutherland and Arbuthnot, 1991). While ascribing human speech, traits and motives to animals can enhance reader involvement and empathy, the teacher should determine if this way of portraying animals overwhelms the factual content of the book: Are realistic aspects of animal life obscured or ignored in favor of an anthropomorphic view? If so, the opportunity to engage in meaningful learning, especially the revision of misconceptions, may be lost.

However, a teacher can choose a storybook *because* of its anthropomorphic approach and directly address its inaccuracies, leading students toward conceptual change. Another challenge involved in the choice of a storybook with an anthropomorphic view of nature is to guard against the notion that animals and plants have value only to the degree that they resemble (or can be portrayed resembling) humans. Since one goal of science teaching can be to promote an attitude of caring, concern and responsibility, the use of anthropomorphism in storybooks must be directly confronted during instruction with such questions as "Should humans care more for slugs or pandas? For centipedes or gorillas? Do we value animals that are more similar to us?" An animal's ability to entertain, look like, or act like humans should not be a criterion in the decision to safeguard its existence. This message should be made clear in any science instruction that aims for the development of caring and concern in students.

Other criteria for storybook selection are length and genre; type, quality and realism of illustrations; and level of scientific terminology. Variations in all of these areas may be

appropriate depending on the teacher's purpose, the breadth and depth of information sought in the storybook, and the ages and ability levels of the students.

Finally, the selection of the storybook may be influenced by the availability of other materials and resources. For example, if field trips to an aquarium are planned, a book featuring the animals there may be an appropriate choice. Classroom exhibits of plant life and activities involving seeds and plants may prompt the use of a book describing the same kinds of plants. When these factors lead to the selection of a storybook, the teacher will want to be sure that the book meets the criteria involving readability, accuracy and style discussed above.

Using storybooks to teach science themes

Two science themes in which second graders have developed values of and decision making skills are the themes of spiders and of whales. The themes share a common format, featuring identification of important concepts, relevant concrete experiences, vocabulary and reading instruction, active listening and reading, and extension (post-reading) activities.

Spiders. Margaret Bloy Graham's *Be Nice To Spiders* (1967) is the first text read during a theme of "Spiders." In this book, a spider named Helen builds webs and catches flies in a zoo, contributing to the animals' comfort, but presenting a problem to the zoo keeper. The zoo keeper feels that all the spider webs around the zoo make the place "look a mess."

Identification of concepts. Using a concept mapping approach, the teacher first elicits and lists the students' ideas about spiders (Butzow and Butzow, 1989). Correct notions as well as misconceptions are listed in clusters of connected

ideas. One misconception commonly held by children is that spiders eat their prey. This misconception, along with any others presented by the students, will be addressed and challenged during this oral activity, and during the concrete activities to follow.

Concrete experiences. The concrete experiences designed for this theme serve many functions. They provide discrepant events meant to reveal, address, challenge and replace incorrect concepts students have about the topic. They provide and enhance background knowledge relevant to *Be Nice To Spiders*. In addition, they lend immediacy to the theme and invite motivation and emotional involvement.

One concrete experience in the theme is the location and observation of spiders in their webs around the school yard. During this activity, students have the opportunity to watch a spider trap and wrap its prey; they also can see that the bodies of flies and other insects caught in a spider's web are actually dry shells. These observations can be used to enable the students to confront their erroneous ideas about spiders eating insects. A follow-up activity involves bringing a spider into the classroom and allowing it to make its web in a corner or terrarium and observe the spider's trapping and feeding behavior over several days' time. Students can keep journals on the spider's actions, noting each new victim and its appearance after being drained of its bodily fluids. This ongoing record of observations may be used during discussions to reinforce the new, correct concept that spiders drain their prey of fluids.

Other concrete experiences relevant to *Be Nice To Spiders* may include a visit to an animal barn where spiders have spun webs. Children may be asked to consider how the webs benefit the animals that live in the barn.

Vocabulary and reading skills instruction. Before reading each episode of *Be Nice To Spiders*, vocabulary for the episode is taught. Science vocabulary such as insects, prey, predator, and fluids can be taught along with the reading vocabulary because although these words do not appear in the story, students can benefit by learning and applying their meanings to the story. Decoding strategies such as cloze and phonetic analysis may be used at this point.

To help students with comprehension and critical reading of the story, the teacher may encourage an ongoing critique of the author's anthropomorphic view of Helen, the spider who comes to live in the zoo. To balance this portrayal, the students are asked to evaluate elements and events in the story that are helpful or harmful to Helen, the zoo animals and the humans in the story. The goal of such a critique is to lead students to see that in real life, spiders' insect trapping behavior, while beneficial to humans, has value apart from its effect on humans, and that all animal life is valuable regardless of its usefulness to people.

Extension activities. Postreading activities reinforce the acquisition of correct science concepts and skills, and enable students to apply values of caring and concern. Students may form reading clubs, in which they get together to enjoy other books related to spiders. They may adopt a spider that has spun a web on the playground, making its safety and security their responsibility. Students may write and dramatize a play in which a spider's life or web has been threatened. Student-made posters can alert others in school to be careful of spiders, to avoid harming them, and to respect their webs.

Students involved in this theme have often taken their thoughts about spiders beyond schoolroom walls. From at-

home observations of spider behavior to journal writings, they have expressed interest and caring for these small creatures. One student wrote on his family word processor this concern about the human treatment of spiders:

We should be nice to spiders.

We should leave them alone.

Spiders should be left alone. -- Tyson, age 8

Reading Graham's story of Helen has caused many second graders to look down, think small, and be more careful.

Whales. A theme of whales can be highlighted by the reading of *Ibis* by John Himmelman (1990). This story, based on the life of a real humpback whale, shows students what can happen to whales tangled in fishing nets.

Identification of concepts. To orient students to the study of marine life and to find out how much background knowledge they have, the teacher may organize sea life stations around the classroom and invite the students to explore them. Working collaboratively, small groups answer specific questions at the stations, which contain tidal and ocean plants and animals as well as sea shore litter. Questions include *Where did it come from?*; *Was it made by nature or by humans?*; and *How is it dangerous to sea animals?* Discussions and sharing after the station activity can give the teacher and students an idea of conceptions and misconceptions held by the class. All ideas are recorded and will receive focus as the theme progresses.

Concrete experiences. One common second-grade level misconception about whales is that they are fish and get their oxygen from the water. This notion will conflict with the ideas presented in *Ibis* about the danger of the title character's

situation, so it is a misconception worth addressing. Providing discrepant events to challenge the mistaken idea should be followed by direct instruction during which the misconception is presented and refuted.

Appropriate discrepant events include films, or first-hand experiences in which students see whales out of water for extended periods. Whale-watch tours or visits to marinas are such first-hand experiences. The teacher or a visiting expert may show and explain pictures that demonstrate how the whale's lungs and blowhole work, contrasting the whale's anatomy with that of a fish.

Having confronted and corrected their initial ideas about the necessity for whales to be able to breathe air, the students will be invited to read about the real-life situation of Ibis the whale. Ibis' life depends upon being able to get to the surface for air, and the whale is threatened with starvation, suffocation and death when tangled in a drift net. The process of revising a misconception, begun during participation in discrepant events and direct instruction, will continue through the application of the correct science concept in a real-life, emotionally involving story.

Vocabulary and reading skills instruction. During the reading of *Ibis* the students learn far more than the meanings of vocabulary such as *pod*, *blowhole*, and *calf*. Through Himmelman's very subjective telling of Ibis' story, they come to identify with the whale's attachments to its mother and the other whales in the family group. The sense of danger the children feel as Ibis swims too near a fishing net gives meaning to new reading vocabulary words *panic* and *struggled*. The story's level of suspense leads the children to search the text and illustrations for clues about Ibis' dangerous situation and her responses to the humans who help her. In short, the

story and its characters give life to vocabulary and concepts that might otherwise be one-dimensional. The desire to know more about this whale's life lends an immediacy to the pursuit of facts about whales.

The skill of identifying story elements is a natural part of the study of *Ibis*. As students follow the story to learn more about how whales survive encounters with people, they also learn to name characters and settings, to understand the goals and problems of the characters, and to see how each episode advances the story. A chart of these story elements can be kept for students to fill in after the reading of each episode. This chart may be used to compare and contrast the structure of *Ibis* with books the class will read later in the theme.

Extension activities. Several unplanned, student-initiated activities have occurred after reading *Ibis*. Students have become interested in joining a whale adoption program and have decided to recycle aluminum cans as a way of earning money to adopt a whale. Friends have formed earth clubs outside of class; one student issued this invitation to a group of like-minded second grade environmentalists:

I'm making an Earth Club. Instead of bringing dues money we bring something to recycle. Like cans, newspaper. It's a club that saves whales, rainforests, stuff like that. --Teri, age 7.

Children have been observed searching out, reading and sharing books about whales during their free time. Throughout the school year the students made frequent, spontaneous references to *Ibis*' life. Her character had become real to the class, and her problem became for them a real concern. Activities such as whale adoptions, recycling, shoreline cleanup, reading clubs and earth clubs may be initiated by the

teacher or by students. They are meaningful ways of translating concern about a storybook character into real-life action.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Animals

Aardema, V. (1978). *Why mosquitoes buzz in people's ears*. NY: Dial.

Arkhurst, J.C. (1986). *The adventures of spider*. NY: Scholastic.

Atwater, R. (1938). *Mr. Popper's penguins*. NY: Dell.

Bonnors, S. (1978). *Panda*. NY: Dell.

Carle, E. (1969; 1984; 1986; 1987). *The very hungry caterpillar; The very busy spider; The grouchy ladybug; House for a hermit crab*. NY: Putnam, Philomel Books, and Harper Junior Books respectively.

Davis, B. (1975). *King snake*. NY: Scholastic.

Graham, M.B. (1967). *Be nice to spiders*. NY: Harper & Row.

Himmelman, J. (1990). *Ibis*. NY: Scholastic.

Korchunow, I. (1982). *The foundling fox*. NY: Scholastic.

Lexau, J. (1979). *The spider makes a web*. NY: Scholastic.

Martin, B. (1974). The digger wasp. In B. Martin, & P. Brogan, (Eds.), *Sounds in the wind*. NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

McCloskey, R. (1976). *Make way for ducklings*. NY: Penguin.

White, E.B. (1952). *Charlotte's web*. NY: Harper.

Wilhelm, H. (1985). *I'll always love you*. NY: Scholastic.

The World Around Us

Aardema, V. (1981). *Bringing the rain to Kapiti Plain*. NY: Dial Press.

Cole, J. (1987; 1990). *The magic school bus inside the earth; The magic school bus lost in the solar system*. NY: Scholastic.

Tresselt, A. (1947). *White snow bright snow*. NY: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard.

Zolotow, C. (1952). *The storm book*. NY: Harper & Row.

Evaluating storybook use in science themes

If storybooks are used in science themes to make content learning more meaningful as well as to enable children to grow in the areas of caring and concern, then there must be ways to measure that growth or at least to see evidence of it. Teachers attempting to communicate the value of sympathetic involvement with nature through storybooks can be alert to student behaviors during and after reading that show evidence of emotional growth.

Children may begin to use trash bins instead of littering, and exhort their friends to do the same. Students who were used to stepping on insects may become very careful where they walk. Parents may report that their children are actively watching nature programs on television, becoming interested in recycling, or showing concern about pollution. A common element among these behaviors is spontaneity. Teachers and parents need to be watching to help children make the most of them.

Conclusion

As children grow in knowledge of science content, they need also to be equipped with decision making skills grounded in the qualities of caring and concern. Perhaps the development of emotional involvement will be the crucial, protective barrier between scientific knowledge and the destruction of nature. Storybooks have identifiable ways of developing children's involvement and empathy. Let's use them to direct children's attention toward a nature that needs protecting.

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Priority of Reading Instruction Revisited: Evidence From a Regression Analysis of Adult ESL Learners' Reading Ability

Zhihui Fang

Historically, there has been an intense debate over the most effective approach to instruction: bottom-up versus top-down (Adams, 1990; Chall, 1967; Grabe, 1991; McCarthy, 1991; Swaffar, 1988). With the increasing emphasis on the role of context in literacy activities (Anderson and Pearson, 1984; Lave, 1988; Steffensen, Joag-dev, and Anderson, 1979), reading research in English as a second language (ESL) has in the recent past focused on the effects of prior knowledge, or schemata, on comprehension (Carrell, 1984, 1987; Dubin and Bycina, 1991; Lee, 1986). Most of these studies generally reported significant effects of background knowledge on reading performance. Concomitantly, the proliferation of recent instructional approaches also reflected a clear tendency to over-emphasize the role of background knowledge and devalue the role linguistic knowledge plays in the comprehension process (Fang, 1993; Yule, 1986). Mitchell (1982) and Perfetti (1989) pointed out that the experimental manipulations in such studies often tilted the balance in favor of the kind of processing that is guided by top-down effects. Therefore, caution needs to be exercised in the interpretation of their findings.

However, in ESL reading instruction, the trend towards a more holistic or whole language approach continues. Reading is seen by many teachers as simply providing background knowledge through schemata-activation sessions such as brainstorming or questioning prior to the reading task (Anderson and Pearson, 1984; Fang, 1993). Meanwhile, many teacher education programs throughout the nation have witnessed a renewed emphasis on equipping preservice or inservice language teachers with techniques and methods for organizing schemata-prompting activities, with decreased attention to the linguistic symbols (e.g., grammar) in the text (Yule, 1986). As a result, even the so-called advanced ESL learners are not linguistically well-equipped to read both proficiently and independently (Evans, 1988). This poses the question of whether reading instruction should focus on fostering ESL learners' linguistic ability or on increasing their storage of background knowledge. The purpose of this study is to address this enduring dilemma.

The study

Subjects. Participants in this study are all adult students enrolled in an Intensive English Language Training Program (IELTP) at a large university in southern China. The program has three language proficiency levels and offers courses (listening, reading, writing, grammar, and conversation) aimed at helping its students pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) from level one (low) to level three (advanced). The size of each class varies from 15 to 20. Incoming students are placed at their current respective levels based on their total scores on the Michigan Placement Test administered at the beginning of each semester. Instructors in IELTP include graduate students in English, as well as faculty with master degrees in English or Applied Linguistics.

Thirty students were sampled using a stratified sampling technique. Ten students were randomly selected from each of the three levels. The age of these subjects ranged from 20 to 46. There were 19 males and 11 females in the sample, from all walks of life and with diverse educational backgrounds (e.g., factory workers, business owners or managers, high school students and teachers, college students and professors, government employees, doctors).

Materials. Texts used in the study are four passages of approximately 500 words each. They were taken from a reading packet designed by the IELTP staff. Passages one and two, dealing with evolution and earthquake respectively, were familiar to the subjects because these two topics had been covered in their previous reading materials. Passages three and four dealt with cubism (an art movement) in the west and the American judicial system, and both were unfamiliar to the subjects. Each passage is followed by 15 multiple choice questions testing main ideas, inference, and other skills. In addition, a 40-item comprehensive grammar test, developed by the IELTP staff, was used to assess the subjects' language proficiency level.

Administrative procedures. In a regular IELTP classroom, the thirty subjects were tested on reading comprehension. Seats were randomly assigned. The test is made up of two forms: form A contains passages 1 and 2 and form B includes passages 3 and 4. Both forms were printed on 8.5 x 11" white paper and were randomly distributed so that half of the subjects received form A and the other half received form B. Every subject read either form A or B and completed 30 multiple choice questions that followed. Sufficient time was allowed for this task. The subjects were told by their instructor (who administered the test) that they were doing a simulated TOEFL on the reading portion. However, they were not told

that they would be given a grammar test later. Two days later in the same classroom, the 30 subjects were asked to complete a 40-item comprehensive grammar test (multiple choice). This test lasted about 30 minutes. In both tests, standard answer sheets were provided.

Scoring procedures. Both tests were window-scored (Borg and Gall, 1989). The total number of correct answers for each test was calculated separately for each individual. Each item has only one correct answer out of four possible choices so that the total possible score is 30 for the reading test and 40 for the grammar test.

Data analysis. To achieve the objective of this study, a multiple regression analysis was employed. Specifically, the reading comprehension score (COMP: Y) was used as the dependent variable and the language proficiency test score (LANP: $X[1]$) was used as an independent variable. In addition, an indicator variable, text familiarity (TYPE: $X[2]$), was used also as an independent variable (e.g., familiar 0 versus unfamiliar 1). The interaction between LANP and TYPE is treated as the third independent variable and an SAS computer program was used.

Results and discussion

The normal probability plot of residuals, which is not shown here, does not indicate any systematic departure of error terms from normality. Therefore, the following full regression model is deemed appropriate: $COMP = B[0] + B[1] LANP + B[2] LANP * TYPE + E$ [$E \sim iid N(0, 1)$] — (1). The results in Table 1 show that the regression coefficients for both LANP and TYPE are significant ($T[b1] = 7.09, p = 0.0001$; $T[b2] = 3.96, p = 0.0005$). This suggests that both language proficiency and text familiarity make significant contributions to reading comprehension.

Table 1
Parameter estimates

<u>Parameter</u>	<u>Estimates</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>PR./T/</u>	<u>Standard error</u>
INTERCEPT	8.7977099	4.25	.0002	2.06966628
X[1]: LANP	.50715649	7.09	.0001	.07156949
X[2]: TYPE	-11.8237873	-3.96	.0005	2.98680454
X[1] * X[2]: LANP*TYPE	.27777351	2.65	.0136	.10495856

The negative value of [b2] (= -11.824) indicates that when reading unfamiliar text, reading performance is likely to decrease as compared to when reading familiar text. Additionally, the interaction between language proficiency (LANP) and text familiarity (TYPE) is highly significant ($T = 2.65$, $p = 0.0136$). Notice that in Tables II and III, LANP (X[1]) alone accounts for approximately 68 percent of the variation in reading comprehension ($R[2] = 0.675473$). Adding the variable TYPE (X[2]) to the model significantly increased $R[2]$ to 0.860257 ($F = 43.64$, $p = .0001$). Further, LANP * TYPE (X[1] X[2]) also accounts for much of the variation in reading performance ($F = 7.00$, $p = .0136$), given that both LANP and TYPE are already in the model. These suggest that the full model (1) containing the three independent variables is a good predictor of reading ability explaining nearly 89 percent of the variation in comprehension ($R[2] = .889913$).

Fitting regression function to model (1), it can be obtained that the slope ($b = .7849$) of the unfamiliar text type (X[2] = 1) is greater than that ($b = .5072$) of the familiar text type (X[2] = 0). The difference in the regression function for the two text types means that as the language proficiency increases,

reading performance on unfamiliar text improves more than that on familiar text. In other words, when text is difficult (or unfamiliar), contributions of linguistic knowledge to comprehension are greater than when text is easier (e.g., familiar).

Table 2
Comparison of three regression models

<u>Model</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>PR.F</u>	<u>R²</u>	<u>Root MSE</u>
LANP	58.28	.0001	.675473	2.799453
LANP TYPE	83.11	.0001	.860257	1.870722
LANP TYPE				
LANP*TYPE	70.06	.0001	.889913	1.692030

The above findings have important implications for ESL reading educators. This study demonstrates that both linguistic knowledge (as is manifested in the mastery of grammar) and prior knowledge (as is manifested in text familiarity) contribute significantly to reading comprehension, which affirms the traditional notion that comprehending texts requires complex processes involving essentially two kinds of knowledge — prior knowledge and linguistic knowledge (Cox, Shanahan and Sulzby, 1990; Hammadou, 1991; Langer, 1993). It follows that, as Yule (1986) and Spiegel (1992) have argued, an integrative approach to reading instruction is necessary — one that not only provides learners with cultural information and expectation-creating background knowledge — but fosters their linguistic competence as well. More importantly, this study reveals the relationship between language proficiency level and familiarity with text. That is, when reading unfamiliar texts, language proficiency is a more important contributor to comprehension than test familiarity. The critical role of language competency in reading performance is also noted

in some earlier studies (Berman, 1984; Clarke, 1980; Hammadou, 1991; Perfetti, 1986; Perfetti and Lesgold, 1979; Phillips, 1990). Cognitive explanations for this are that low language ability readers need to spend a lot of effort on lexical processing and propositional encoding, whereas high language ability readers can focus on text modeling because of verbal efficiency (Perfetti, 1985; 1989). This suggests that an instructional emphasis could be placed on cultivating the learner's language ability.

Table 3
Sequential sum of square

<u>Source</u>	<u>DF</u>	<u>Type 1 SS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>PR.F</u>
LANP	1	456.7324143	159.53	.0001
TYPE/LANP	1	124.9449990	43.64	.0001
LANP*TYPE				
LANP TYPE	1	20.0521917	7.00	.0136

The goal of instruction is, according to Greenfield (1984), to enable the learner to do what formerly could be done only in collaboration with the teacher. In the second language context, rather than trying to impart volumes of background knowledge, instruction should perhaps focus more on fostering general, productive abilities such as linguistic ability that will ultimately facilitate learning through life and in variable settings (Resnick, 1989). Given that most ESL readers are language learners (Higgs and Adams, 1980), that there is a growing need to process unfamiliar information in this information age (Gayle, 1992), and that most reading takes place outside the school classroom where no teachers are available to help activate the learners' schemata, it appears appropriate for ESL teachers and researchers to work towards an integrative

approach that combines holistic and analytic interpretations of text with an emphasis on the latter (Yule, 1986). It is true that activating the right formal schemata will not necessarily guarantee success in comprehension if the right prior knowledge is lacking. However, as McCarthy (1991) noted, if a teacher's job becomes one of supplying the appropriate content schemata for a possibly vast number of textual encounters, then that teacher is out of the world of discourse and firmly in the realm of the teaching of culture, and is not necessarily teaching the learner any skill that will subsequently be productive. An integrative approach with an emphasis on fostering the learner's linguistic ability can, on the one hand, help ESL teachers truly accomplish "gradual release of responsibility" (Pearson and Fielding, 1991), or "gradual diminished assistance" (Pearson, Roehler, Dole, and Duffy, 1992) in instruction and, on the other hand, help ESL learners shift from "other-directed" or "self-directed" stages of understanding text (Vygotsky, 1978). In so doing, teachers can help their learners become "learners" rather than "knowers" (Gayle, 1992). In sum, this integrative approach should enable teachers to help every learner reach full literacy potential (Spiegel, 1992) and, in the end, enable — to borrow from Wardhaugh (1969) — "future generations both to read more proficiently and enjoyably and to use their language in its full vigor and richness" (p. 150).

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Bibliotherapeutic Literature: A Key Facet of Whole Language Instruction For The At-Risk Student

Dan T. Ouzts

Literature is the creative product of the minds of creative people. As a painting serves to fire the imagination, so does a fine story, a well-composed poem, or a good book (Smith, 1975). Literature is not a subject that should be taught but one that should be read and enjoyed. It is through literature that children develop interests and pleasure in reading. Moreover, literature stirs the imagination and creativity of children instead of destroying their interests. These are the basic foundations of lifelong learning (McMillan and Gentile, 1988).

Literature reflects the society, culture, and views of those authors who write the literature. The 1970s brought the first ripples of the tidal wave of literature in reading and writing instruction in schools and the wave began to peak in the 1980s (Savage, 1994). Educators began to critically examine skill development approaches to literacy and the appeal of using real books by real authors. Children's literature began to achieve a greater prominence as part of literacy instruction. In today's literature a movement away from the traditional fairy tales has occurred and more real-life situations are being presented (Ouzts, 1991). Contemporary trends are presented in much of

the literature and one needs only to examine the content of many concept books to find issues such as adoption, AIDS, alcoholism, Alzheimer's disease, blindness, day care, divorce, Downs Syndrome, latchkey children, and even nuclear war (Whitman, 1993). It appears that the field of literature is reflecting societal changes in that many books are now concentrating on various issues and these same issues are introspective-based. If one were to pinpoint the birth of the new realism in young adult literature, the year would be 1967 (Nilsen and Donelson, 1993). Nine books (see Figure 1) appear to be the groundbreaking novels which brought a new realism to literature and the teaching of literature.

Caring, competent and knowledgeable educators fully appreciate how authentic interactions with literature can contribute to overall cognitive and affective growth (Jalongo, 1983). The reading teacher occupies a strategic position in the development of emotions of children, and it is through this development that the teacher is able to help shape the future of children who are experiencing stress and crises in their lives. As educators we must sensitize children to themselves and to others through books. Books may offer possible solutions to problems or even present the solution that could lessen a person's inner turmoil and thus break many attitudinal barriers to learning. This therapy through a literature approach is bibliotherapy.

The word *bibliotherapy* first appeared in 1930 in an article by G.O. Ireland. Another term applied to this type of therapy was *therapeutic reading*. In the United States, Drs. Will and Karl Menninger were among the first to foster an interest in this type of aid to healing (O'Bruba and Camplesse, 1983). The strategy of bibliotherapy can serve as an adjunct to learning for many children and concomitantly serve as an adjunct to teaching for the reading educator or reading teacher. It

appears that bibliotherapy is emerging as a discipline in the reading field, as evidenced by research being conducted (Ouzts, 1991).

Figure 1

Early bibliotherapeutic novels for middle-graders

Armstrong, W. (1969). *Souder*. An historical novel about a poverty-stricken black family of tenant farmers. NY: Harper and Row.

Bradford, R. (1968). *Red Sky at Morning*. Southerner Josh Arnold and his mother go to a little town in New Mexico where they wait out the Second World War and Josh gains an understanding of himself. NY: Pocket Books.

Cleaver, R., & Cleaver, B. (1969). *Where the Lilies Bloom*. Set in the Tennessee mountains, 14 year-old Mary Call struggles to keep her orphaned brothers and sisters together after they have secretly buried their father. Philadelphia PA: Lippincott.

Cormier, R. (1974). *The Chocolate War*. With the advent of this novel in 1974, it appears that the problem novel has arisen. NY: Dell.

Donovan, J. (1969). *I'll Get There, It Better Be Worth the Trip*. Davy, who has lived with his grandmother, has to move to New York to live with an alcoholic mother that he hardly knows and certainly does not understand. NY: Harper.

Head, A. (1967). *Mr. and Mrs. Bo Jo Jones*. An unmarried girl who gets pregnant. NY: New American Library.

Hinton, S.E. (1967). *The Outsiders*. A story about non-white lower socioeconomic children who did not fit the typical society model. NY: Viking.

Thompson, J. (1967). *House of Tomorrow*. An unmarried girl goes into a home for unwed mothers. NY: Harper and Row.

Zindel, P. (1968). *The Pigman*. An alienated boy and girl make friends with a lonely old man who can't admit that his wife has died. NY: Bantam.

Tillman (1984) reviewed nine research studies on bibliotherapy and concluded that careful planning for length of treatment is required and that the identification, catharsis, and insight explanation of how bibliotherapy works needs to be verified. More recently, the concept of bibliotherapy has encompassed everything from literature used in counseling prisoners to sharing a picture book on peer acceptance with preschoolers (Jalongo, 1983).

Affective learning is one of the most important and controversial purposes of education (Beane, 1986). According to Beane, *affect* refers to those aspects of human nature and conduct having to do with emotions, feelings, values, attitudes, predisposition, and morals. Beane believes that basic issues over affective education need to be resolved if this essential aspect of schooling is to rise above ambiguity and ambivalence. It appears that the basic issue in the use of bibliotherapy is one of whether or not children should read books about crises which they may be experiencing and whether or not reading about these crises will influence attitudinal and motivational adjustment. Although teachers may be reluctant to become involved and may even feel uncomfortable in supplying books which could be termed controversial, it would appear that sensitivity to others' needs will be recognized and even enhanced. Perhaps this sensitivity will make the needed difference in children's motivations and attitudes, if and when crises arise. Although research data on bibliotherapy are inconclusive, the mere fact of the reading teacher knowing that children are experiencing some type of stress and crisis and that adjustment in instruction may need to be made may make a difference in further motivational and attitudinal problems for many children. Intervention through a book's approach may make the difference between an emotionally well-adjusted person and one who may later develop mental anguish.

Many recent books for children deal with serious issues and the number of books appropriate for bibliotherapy has grown rapidly. *The Book Finder: A Guide to Children's Literature About the Needs and Problems of Youth Aged 2-15* by Dreyer (1989) is an excellent source of information. *The Book Finder* consists of four volumes and lists books by subject or problem area, author, and title. Another source is *A Guidebook for Bibliotherapy* (Schultheis, 1972). Selected readings in this book include those of the problems of appearance, physical handicaps, sibling rivalry, broken and unhappy homes, economic insecurity, and many others. Also recommended are the Children's Choices, Young Adult Choices, and Teachers' Choices published by the International Reading Association. Results of an examination of the 1990-1993 choices are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
International Reading Association
Books published for middle readers

	# of titles	# of titles that can be used for bibliotherapy
1990		
Children's choices	111	17
Young adult choices	29	10
Teachers' choices	30	11
1991		
Children's choices	111	17
Young adult choices	28	11
Teachers' choices	30	8
1992		
Children's choices	124	10
Young adult choices	30	15
Teachers' choices	36	7
1993		
Children's choices	100	2
Young adult choices	32	8
Teachers' choices	36	3

It is evident that society has changed. And, too, so have the children and the teachers. Educators are recognizing the critical need for delivering literacy instruction to at-risk and homeless children and their families (IRA, 1990). Four books which may be used for homeless children and their families are *Fly Away Home* (Bunting, 1991), *The Polka Dot Horse* (Thiel, 1992), *Homelessness* (Seymour-Jones, 1993), and *Changing Places — A Kid's View of Shelter Living* (Chalofsky, Finland, and Wallace, 1992). The role of the reading teacher cannot be ignored in terms of crisis intervention, and the amelioration of attitudes can be a legitimate cause in using bibliotherapy. The role of the reading teacher should be viewed as that very special person who can break emotional barriers to learning when crises arise.

Manning and Manning (1984) have stated that bibliotherapy has been found to be an effective therapeutic device for young readers confronting various personal problems. They state that an estimated 15 million school-aged youngsters have a parent who suffers from alcoholism. While most children of alcoholics usually experience difficulties admitting they need help, a teacher's intervention through an objective, non-threatening book may be more successful than a direct personal approach. Four books which can be used for children of alcoholics are *Sometimes My Mom Drinks Too Much* (Kenny and Krull, 1980), *Laughter in the Background* (Dorman, 1980), *Cages of Glass, Flowers of Time* (Culin, 1979), and *Now is Not Too Late* (Howland, 1980).

Child abuse is currently receiving much attention at the national, state, and local levels. Even though children may be abused and neglected and may not even know they are victims, they tend to remain silent among their peers and teachers. Many teachers may even avoid getting involved with departments of social services for legal reasons if they suspect

abuse or neglect. Watson (1979) suggests that fiction and literature can affect to some degree the coping behavior of children and effective teachers can involve students with literature which may be similar in content to their actual experiences. From reading the material students may gain insight into personal problems and may perhaps find a remedy for their problem. In a study conducted by Carter and Harris (1982) those characteristics which make a book popular were analyzed and students gave their reasons for favoring a certain title. Characterization was mentioned most as that quality of a book which made it popular. The students frequently asserted that a character in a book was "just like me." This suggests that self-identification is of paramount importance in providing books to children who have emotional barriers to learning.

Another problem which may affect children's attitudes and reading achievement in our classrooms is divorce. An estimated 12 million American children have been affected by divorce and Monteith (1981) suggests that teachers need to watch for specific kinds of stress as nervousness, weariness, moodiness, declining grades, physical complaints, and acting out. When children view themselves as failures, they develop irrational ideas about their worth and abilities. In addition to important tasks they have been unable to perform, they self talk themselves into a corner of ugliness, ineptitude, and unpopularity on many dimensions. These negative self-statements become a broken record that plays over and over. Anxiety sets in and the affected individuals become their worst enemies. Growth and development have ended for these children.

While affective education continues to be viewed as part of the soft side of the curriculum, it is theoretically and practically worthwhile for us to understand that *affective*

education is a necessary condition for *effective* education (Beane, 1986). While accountability in education is important, it seems that we need to satisfy the goals of educators who value the equally important and subjective reasons of breaking emotional barriers to learning. Growth through reading is the ultimate goal of reading instruction while growth in reading is a means to that end. America's social maladies — deprivation, crime, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy — cannot be wished away nor lectured away (Goldstein, 1989). Much of our literature is reflecting social issues and problems which are introspective-based and real. We now read about real people who have real problems and often these problems are ones which impede learning, adjustment, social interaction, and possibly academic achievement. The problems of divorce, drug abuse, AIDS, homelessness, and alcoholism are problems which are receiving much emphasis in the bibliotherapeutic literature. These problems will continue to be real issues in the classrooms.

Reading teachers are in strategic positions to break many emotional barriers to learning. It is important that the reading teacher be aware of the literature which can be used in the classroom. Fifty-five topics with related bibliotherapeutic literature are presented to assist the classroom teacher (see Appendix). It would appear that to the teacher who is willing to work within the framework of a normal classroom to develop character, attitudes, and self-worth, bibliotherapy would be worth a try. Bibliotherapeutic literature should be a component of any reading program for at-risk students.

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APPENDIX

Abandonment

Voigt, C. *Dicey's song*.

Hermes, P. *Mama, let's dance*

Abuse

Byars, B. *Cracker Johnson; The pinballs*

Adolescents in charge

LaFarge, P. *Abby takes over*

Sachs, M. *The bears' house*

Cleaver, V. *The mimosa tree*

Clymer, E. *My brother Stevie*

Adoption

Okimoto, J.D. *Molly by any other name*

Girard, L. *Adoption is for always; We adopted you, Benjamin Koo*

AIDS

White, R. *Ryan White: My own story*

Jordan, M.K. *Losing Uncle Tim*

Girard, L. *Alex, the kid with AIDS*

Alcoholism

Vigna, J. *I wish Daddy didn't drink so much*

Krull, K.K., & Krull, H. *Sometimes my mom drinks too much*

Allergies

Delton, J. *I'll never love anything ever again*

Alzheimer's Disease

Delton, J., & Tucker, D. *My Grandma's in a nursing home*

Asthma

Ostrow, W., & Ostrow, V. *All about asthma*

Attitude adjustment

Isami, I. *The fox's egg*

Birth

Girard, L. *You were born on your very first birthday*

Blindness

Martin, B., Jr. *Knots on a counting rope*

Ford, P. *Redbird* (in Braille)

Litchfield, A. *A cane in her hand*

Bullies

Mayer, M. *Just a daydream*
 Naylor, P. *King of the playground*
 Jamar, E. *It happened at Cecilia's*
 Shura, M. *Polly panic*

Cancer

Grant, C. *Phoenix rising*
 Lancaster, M. *Hang tough*
 Vigna, J. *When Eric's mom fought cancer*

Cerebral palsy

Fassler, J. *Howie helps himself*
 Emmert, M. *I'm the big sister now*

Child abuse

Stanek, M. *Don't hurt me, mama*

Day care

Simon, N. *I'm busy too*
 Tompert, A. *Will you come back for me?*

Deafness

Guccione, L. *Tell me how the wind sounds*
 Booth, B. *Mandy*
 Litchfield, A. *A button in her ear; Words in our hands*
 Aseltine, L. *I'm deaf and it's okay*

Death/Dying

Smith, D. *A taste of blackberries*
 Lowry, L. *A summer to die*
 Green, C. *Beat the turtle drum*
 Lee, V. *The magic moth*
 Clover, V. *Grover*
 Simon, N. *The saddest time*
 Blume, J. *Tiger eyes*

Disabilities

Hamm, D. *Grandma drives a motor bed*
 Henriod, L. *Grandma's wheelchair*
 Lasker, J. *He's my brother*
 Fassler, J. *Howie helps himself*
 Lasker, J. *Nick joins in*
 Powers, M. *Our teacher's in a wheelchair*
 Muldoon, K. *Princess pooh*

Divorce

- Pascal, F. *The big camp secret*
Danziger, P. *The divorce express*
Wood, P. *Win me and you lose*
Girard, L. *At daddy's on Saturdays*
Cleary, B. *Dear Mr. Henshaw*
Blume, J. *It's not the end of the world*

Down's Syndrome

- Rabe, B. *Where's chimpy?*
Litchfield, A. *Making room for Uncle Joe*

Dreams

- Aylesworth, J. *The bad dream*

Drugs

- Hahn, M. *The dead man in Indian Creek*

DUI

- Strasser, T. *The accident*
Deaver, J. *Say goodnight, Gracie*

Emotions/Feelings

- Hazen, B. *The knight who was afraid of the dark*
Simon, N. *How do I feel?; I am not a crybaby*
Stanton, E., & Stanton, H. *Sometimes I like to cry*

Emotional illness

- Greenberg, H. *Emotional illness in your family: Helping your relative, helping yourself*

Failing a grade

- Aseltine, L. *First grade can wait*

Families

- Simon, N. *All kinds of families; Wedding days*
Delton, J. *My mom hates me in January*

Friendship

- O'Conner, J., & O'Conner, J. *Slime time*
Singer, M. *Twenty ways to lose your best friend*

Homelessness

- Bunting, E. *Fly away home*
Sauer, J. *Hank*

Grove, V. *The fastest friend in the west*

Seymour-Jones, C. *Homelessness*

Chalofsky, F., Finland, G., & Wallace, J. *Changing places — a kid's view of shelter living*

Thiel, E. *The polka dot horse*

Hahn, M. *December stillness*

Illiteracy

Bunting, E. *The Wednesday surprise*

Stanek, M. *My mom can't read*

Inadequacy

Roos, S. *My horrible secret*

Latchkey children

Stanek, M. *All alone after school*

Learning disabilities

Lasker, J. *He's my brother*

Loneliness

Byars, B. *The TV kid*

Greene, C. *The unmaking of rabbit*

Rinkoff, B. *The watchers*

Maturation

Peck, R. *A day no pigs would die*

Lee, M. *The skating rink*

Medical conditions

Krementz, J. *How it feels to fight for your life*

Moving

Rabe, B. *A smooth move*

New parents

MacLachlan, P. *Sarah, plain and tall*

New siblings

Bogart, J.E. *Daniel's dog*

Wittman, S. *Jessie's wishes*

Lowry, L. *Anastasia Krupnic*

L'Engle, M. *Meet the Austins*

Nuclear war

Vigna, J. *Nobody wants a nuclear war*

Peer pressure

Spinelli, J. *Fourth grade rats*

Poverty

Pfeffer, S. *Kid power*

Stolz, M. *Noonday friends*

Clear, V. *Where the lilies bloom*

Protection and safety

Stanek, M. *All alone after school; Don't hurt me, mama*

Girard, L. *My body is private*

Racial issues

Neufield, J. *Edgar Allen*

Rinkoff, B. *Member of the gang*

Taylor, M. *Roll of thunder, hear my cry*

Relationships

Leverich, K. *Best enemies*

Betancourt, J. *Not just partygirls*

Religious differences

Lowry, L. *Number the stars*

Friedman, I. *The other victims: First person stories of non-Jews persecuted by the Nazis*

Sachs, M. *Peter and Veronica*

Retarded siblings

Friis-Baastad, B. *Don't take Teddy*

Cleaver, B. *Me, too*

Byars, B. *Summer of the swans*

Self-esteem

DeFelice, C. *Weasel*

Mendez, P. *The black snowman*

Simon, N. *Why am I different?*

Self-identification

Rathman, P. *Ruby the copycat*

Coryell, S. *Eaglebait*

Ferris, J. *Looking for home*

Sex role

Zolotow, C. *William's doll*

Shyness

Martin, A. *Stage fright*

Pfeffer, S. *What do you do when your mouth won't open*

Sibling rivalry

Blume, J. *The pain and the great one*

Kropff, P. *Moonkid and liberty*

Bulla, C. *The Christmas coat*

Lowry, L. *A summer to die*

Values

Pfeffer, S. *Courage, Dana*

Hinton, S.E. *The outsiders*



**Call for Manuscripts for the 1995 Themed Issue:
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The 1995 themed issue of Reading Horizons will be devoted to efforts that link literacy practices with multicultural education. Articles relating to excellent practice, theory, and research, which relate reading, writing, speaking and listening to the theme of multicultural education should be sent to Dr. Jeanne M. Jacobson, Editor, Reading Horizons, WMU, Kalamazoo MI 49008.

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For years, teachers have been admonished not to "teach to the test," advice which has been difficult to follow because of pressures to document student achievement. As political and educational decision makers demand greater accountability, tests increasingly influence how and what students are taught. Since escaping the influence of tests is unlikely, developing good tests — instruments that assess authentic outcomes of instruction — has become more important. Classroom teachers wishing to develop authentic assessments will find *Portfolio and Performance Assessment* by Roger Farr and Bruce Tone to be a practical guidebook.

Farr and Tone believe that portfolios and performance assessments are best viewed as important parts of an overall assessment program that also includes norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests. No single assessment can provide adequate information to every legitimate audience (decision makers, parents, teachers, and students). The authors view portfolios as wonderful tools for developing student self-assessment, with the additional benefit of helping teachers set

meaningful instructional goals. The use of working portfolios, as opposed to show portfolios, is strongly encouraged. Performance writing assessments, which typically ask students to respond in writing to a preselected text, provide information most useful to teachers and parents. Because the task is uniform, standards for student performance can be more reliably set, an especially helpful feature for teachers who must assign grades.

Portfolio and Performance Assessment is primarily a "how to" book for teachers who would like to use portfolios and/or performance assessments. The book does not need to be read cover to cover; extensive cross-referencing and a useful repetition of key points allow the reader to choose only those sections of interest. Helpful features include meaningful headings, teacher tips and checklists, student samples, and reproducible record forms, letters, and announcements. The authors are very practical in orientation. They make no extravagant claims for authentic assessments; instead they prepare the teacher for both the pitfalls and the promise of portfolio and performance assessment.



Children's Books

The Eyes of Kid Midas. Written by Neal Shusterman.
Tor Books, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10019. 1994.
ISBN: 0-8125-3460-3 (paperback). US\$3.99.

Steven L. Layne
Brook Forest School, Oak Brook IL

At the conclusion of this thought provoking novel, the discerning reader will undoubtedly hear the familiar phrase "absolute power corrupts absolutely" echoing from somewhere deep inside. *The Eyes of Kid Midas*, as with many of Shusterman's works, brings the reader face to face with a realistic picture of human nature. When Kevin Midas, the teenage protagonist of the story, discovers a pair of glasses that will grant his every wish the reader is instantly absorbed in the storyline. Who among us has not entertained the fantasy of being granted wishes? Kevin's discovery is veiled in the mystery of an ancient legend related by his teacher on a class camping expedition. This initial setting also allows for the introduction of Kevin's best friend Josh and the principal antagonist, Bertram. Shusterman is to be praised for his handling of the character of Josh. This African-American boy is shown to be resourceful and courageous throughout the events of the story, and the friendship he and Kevin share makes a powerful statement.

It naturally follows that Kevin abuses the power of the glasses. What is unnatural and what makes the story so exceptional is the extent of that abuse. Shusterman boldly forces the reader to a realistic, albeit uncomfortable, look at

what absolute power would surely do. Another striking facet of the storyline lies in the sickness Kevin begins to feel whenever he is not wearing the glasses and using their power. His need to use them becomes a powerful analogy to drug addiction that will be painfully clear to the reader.

In the tightly-woven conclusion both present and past are altered by Kevin's final choice. *The Eyes of Kid Midas* is a masterpiece of young adult fiction which is not only entertaining, but promotes serious thought. Neal Shusterman has used his writing to bring to light some critical issues; teachers may use his book as a vehicle for imparting some of life's greatest lessons.

Materials appearing in the review section of this journal are not endorsed by *Reading Horizons* or Western Michigan University. The content of the reviews reflects the opinion of the reviewers whose names or initials appear. To submit an item for potential review, send to Kathryn Kinnucan-Welsch, Department of Education, 205A Best Hall, Tri-State University, Angola IN 46703.

The Nursery Collection. Written and illustrated by Shirley Hughes. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10019. 1994. ISBN: 0-688-13583-5. 54 pp. US\$17.00.

Previously published in 1985 and 1986 as separate small books, the five nursery stories in *The Nursery Collection* by Shirley Hughes explore opposites, the joy of a daily adventure, colors, shapes and sizes, and sound. As with other Shirley Hughes' stories, each is illustrated with casual, colorful examples of family life and carefree children. Written for a pre-school audience, this collection is bound to become a lap-time favorite. (SDC)

AESOPIA

The Fables of Aesop. Retold by Frances Barnes-Murphy; illustrated by Rowan Barnes-Murphy. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10019. 1994. ISBN: 0-688-07051-5. 96 pp. US\$19.95.

Frances Barnes-Murphy and Rowan Barnes-Murphy have collaborated with Aesop, perhaps the world's most famous storyteller, to create a surpassingly entertaining collection of more than a hundred of his fables. Space is used elegantly and with great variety, so that some facing pages present a single fable illustrated by a full-color painting, while other paired pages contain as many as four fables, with pen-and-ink animals leaping and prancing around them. In a departure from the typical format for the fables, the stories stand alone, without concluding one-line homilies, which, according to an introductory "Collector's Note," probably were added during the middle ages. This is a wholly enchanting book for readers and those being read to, of all ages. One can envision Aesop himself, stirring from centuries-long sleep to settle comfortably on a cloud, turning these pages and chuckling with delight. (JMJ)

Bird-watching

Backyard Birds of Winter. Written by Carol Lerner. Morrow Junior Books, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10019. 1994. ISBN: 0-688-12819. 48 pp. US\$16.00.

Carol Lerner's learning and artistry are once again shared in this handsome book showing birds which can be seen — especially by families with backyard bird feeders — during the winter months. (Lerner's earlier books, *A Forest Year* and *A Desert Year* are award-winning science tradebooks familiar to many young readers. Birds are shown in full color, drawn to 3/4 scale (except for the largest birds, whose

length is given beside their pictures), with small inset maps of the United States and Canada showing the areas which are each bird's winter habitat. The book includes a final section on bird food and bird feeders, a page of suggestions for further reading on bird identification and bird feeding, and a detailed Index. This is a handsome giftbook for all the family to learn from and enjoy. (JMJ)

Rejoicing in Diversity

All the Colors of the Earth. Written by Sheila Hamanaka. Morrow Junior Books, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10019. 1994. ISBN: 0-688-11131-9. 32 pp. US\$15.00.

Appropriately, every page of this beautiful book is in full color, and the text ripples joyously through the paintings of children at play, children embracing, children asleep. "Children come in all the colors of love, in endless shades of you and me." A wonderful book to go to sleep by, dream about, and wake up to hear and see again. (JMJ)

Pullet Surprise Winner!

Otter Nonsense. Written by Norton Juster. Illustrated by Michael Witte. Morrow Junior Books, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10019. 1994. ISBN: 0-688-12282-5. Unpaginated. US\$9.95.

Everyone will find a favorite illustration and punning phrase - such as the terrified inner-tubed porpoise about to be submerged by a brightly suited ox doing a cannonball from the diving board ("Oxidentially on porpoise"). But each favorite will be transient, because new jollies appear with each turned page. (Try imagining "an aardvark and an even aarder vark taking a vark.") Norton Juster has been justly famous as a punster ever since the publication of *The Phantom Tollbooth*. This pocketsize treasury, here to cheer us all up, is a popular choice. (JMJ)

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

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