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AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP

BETWEEN READING AND DRAMA IN EDUCATION

M. Ed. Degree

DURHAM UNIVERSITY

December 1, 1978

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the theories of drama in education and of developmental reading in order to determine the relationship between drama and reading in the cognitive and affective development of children and to document that relationship through an empirical study carried out with students in Canada and Great Britain.

For the empirical study, the students read three stories that were chosen from children's literature appropriate to the two cultures and accommodating a wide range of reading levels. The students were divided into three test groups, one reading the story silently followed by a questionnaire, one reading the story silently followed by discussion and then a questionnaire, and one reading the story silently, followed by dramatic activity based on the story, and then a questionnaire. The questions were designed to measure recalled details, inferred literary concepts, and creative analogy. The information was transferred to a computer and the results tabulated.

The hypothesis of this thesis was supported by the empirical study, especially in the areas of critical and creative responding. There was no significant difference in the response to the factual comprehension questions.

This study concluded that drama and reading are related in that they both concern the development of perception and of experience. The print that the child reads serves as stimuli for the recall of meanings that have been built up through past experience, and dramatic interaction allows the reader to examine the ideas in the text and facilitates the reciprocal exchange between participants and eventually between reader and author.

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CORRECTIONS

Page 45, Line 19 - Krolers - should be Kolers

Page 64, Fourth line from the bottom - commication - should be communication

Page 140, Line 120 - Briton - should be Britton

PREFACE

As if there were a basic difference between the fairy tale that a child made up himself and one that was created for him by imaginative folk or by a good writer!

It makes no difference whether or not the child is offered fairy tales for, if he is not, he becomes his own Anderson, Grimm, Ershoo. Moreover, all his playing is a dramatization of a fairy tale which he creates on the spot, animating, according to his fancy, all objects - converting any stool into a train, into a house, into an airplane, or into a camel.

Chukovsky, 1963, p. 118

I. INTRODUCTION

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the theories of drama in education and developmental reading, in order to determine the relationship between drama and reading in the cognitive and affective development of children, aged eight to eleven, and to measure the responses of a test group of children participating in an experimental model.

Background Information

There is a lack of specific information for teachers on the effect of drama in education on the development of reading ability. The term "creative drama" appears in manuals used in reading series, and in reading texts, but the actual dramatic activity suggested is often an introduction to the reading selection, a follow-up activity, or an outgrowth of the reading lesson. At best, drama is seen as peripheral to the reading program. What is meant by drama in such materials is not clear; often it is simply a word game or a physical activity to release tension. Tucker (1971) has examined such activities in detail. As well, what is meant by reading skills is unclear; most reading texts written for children at the junior level refer to general reading comprehension, while measuring only factual, literal understanding. How drama influences the child's reading comprehension has seldom been examined. This thesis will attempt to show that the true relationship between drama and reading is much deeper than just the former being an adjunct to the latter.

It is interesting to note that educational authorities are beginning to place great emphasis on dramatic programs as part of the school curriculum. Such publications as Primary/Junior Guidelines, commissioned by the Ontario Ministry of Education (see Appendix A), include drama and reading together in the language arts program. In Great Britain, the importance of drama in the school has been stressed in the comments by the Bullock Report on drama and reading in the curriculum. What is unclear in these writings is the relationship between drama and reading in the development of language and thought. Is drama more than a language activity? Is talk a preface to print? What place do social interaction and role-playing have in developing an understanding of print? This thesis will examine the relationship between drama and reading through a review of the literature in both fields, and through an empirical study.

Hypothesis

I shall argue that the relationship between the two learning areas of drama and reading lies in the world of meaning; it is the idea of symbolization and its role in the discovery and the communication of meaning that connects drama and reading. Both areas are concerned with interaction: in drama, the student enters into a dialogue with other students, modifying and exploring the symbols used by changing and challenging the contributions of each other; when reading, the student enters at first into a dialogue with the author, and then with other students, where, through discussion and analysis, he modifies and develops his understanding of the author's meaning, as well as absorbing the diversity of meanings his classmates have taken from the text. In both cases, the student is negotiating at the symbolic level.

Methodology

In this thesis I will examine the theories that experts in drama in education and in reading have formulated over the years, and attempt to integrate these theories into my hypothesis of the relationship between drama and reading.

The initial phase of this investigation will be to survey many historical and contemporary theories on the use of drama in education. Subsequently, those writers whose expertise is in the field of using drama with print sources will be examined in some detail.

The reading research will be in the area of developmental reading; the children with which this thesis is concerned will have dealt already with initial reading concepts, and will have reached some level of independence with the reading operations.

The three selections from contemporary fiction, folklore and poetry, on which I have based my empirical study, have been determined by my research using authorities from children's literature.

The information presented in the empirical study will include the chronological age, intellectual and reading abilities, nationality, and sex of the test group of children, along with illustrations of the differences in comprehension and creativity demonstrated by the test group.

This thesis, then, is based on a survey of the writings and research of experts in the fields of drama, reading, and children's

literature, as well as on empirical verification from a test group of children in a controlled situation.

II. A SURVEY OF DRAMA IN EDUCATION

Introduction

This chapter surveys the evolution of drama in education, from the beginning work of Cook and Ward, who based drama on improvising from dramatic literature, through the developmental aspects of Slade and Way, to the social interaction goals of Heathcote and Bolton. The relationship of child play and drama in education is examined through the writings of Courtney, Davison, and Allen. Bolton and Witkin are concerned with the importance of understanding the emotional response in drama. McGregor and Watkins examine drama as an art form, and the controversy concerning drama as a subject or system is considered in light of its use in the teaching of reading. This chapter concludes with a comparison of four reports on the use of drama in education.

I will attempt to relate the various goals of drama, as seen by those working and writing in this field, to the central educational issue of assisting students in the search of meaning.

The Early Pioneers

For the last half century, the literature concerning the teaching of drama in education during the twentieth century demonstrates the basic differences in the philosophies of the writers:

Winifred Ward's work, seminal in the United States, she herself acknowledged was based on Dewey's pragmatic idealism; on the other hand, Slade has a romantic base in the style of Rousseau,

while Burton and Way relate closely to modern forms of existentialism.

Understandings of psychology can differ. Whereas Slade and Weathered assume the work of Jung, Witkin bases his work upon Piaget. Many of Heathcote's assumptions have similarities with those of Rogers and Maslow, while G.T. Jones has a basis in behavioural psychology.

Sociological assumptions can differ from writer to writer. Adland, for example, tends towards group theory, Hunt towards Marxism, while Burton, Heathcote and Way proclaim the dignity of the individual interacting with society. (Courtney, 1977, p. 5)

In the past, Speech and Drama was taught as a subject by specialists apart from the basic subjects. The work that took place was determined by the personalities of the early pioneers in the field. "The charisma of the individual was all important, and this was allowed full reign because of the lack of any coherent training programme for drama teachers" (Clegg, 1973, p. 33). Before World War 1, Henry Caldwell Cook published his book, The Play Way, in England. He developed in his school a large room rebuilt on the principles of the Elizabethan theatre, where his students could act out their own improvised plays, based on poetic narrative and dramatic literature. Cook was a teacher of English, who felt that the dramatic approach was one of the liveliest and most helpful to his students, yet he saw his approach as having implications for the whole of education:

In his playmaking process, the first step was to find the story and to have it read and told, and reread and retold, until it was thoroughly familiar to everyone who was to participate in the playmaking. Discussion then followed:

A whole lesson at a time can profitably be given up to an informal discussion and exchange of views among the boys. Many talk at the

same time. There is, so far as I can see, no reason why six or seven persons should not be speaking their views all at once, provided that it is not necessary for every one to hear every speaker. There is so much to be said that the boys soon split up into little groups according as their chief interests lies in the adaptation of the story, or the working out of the characters, or the allotment of the parts, or the staging, or the provision of make-shift costume and properties, or the actual writing of provisional parts in the form of notes giving cues and a rough suggestion of the dialogue. The class at this stage of the playmaking has in fact resolved itself into a number of sub-committees "sitting" all in the same room. That is why there is such a noise. (p. 148-150)

The emphasis in the use of drama was at a 'cultural-artistic' level. Cook emphasized those skills which were assumed to be the result of acting experience, such as self-confidence, verbal and physical fluency, and the techniques of stage performance.

In 1925, Winifred Ward began working in the public schools of Evanston, Illinois, where she explored the connections between dramatic play and learning. Her work met with such success and enthusiasm that she incorporated her findings into a teacher training course. It was from this early work in the schools and with teachers that Ward's theories about what she termed "creative dramatics" grew. In 1947, she wrote Playmaking With Children, an exploration of the relationships between playmaking and education.

According to Ward, creative drama has its beginnings in the imaginative play of the young child. As he grows older, however, this dramatic play gradually becomes more structured, evolving into a type of art form. Creative drama can also be based on literature and other subjects in the school curriculum. As well, Ward was deeply concerned with the values-education concept of learning.

The content of the story should have potentialities for giving children meaningful experiences and true-to-life values. This does not mean it should be profound. It may be light and beautiful, or humorous. It need not concern morals or ethics. The important thing is that it should concern values in life. (1963, p.34)

Ward felt that schools should give children many opportunities to practice democratic ideas, and that children should learn through meaningful experiences. She believed that the whole child should be educated physically, intellectually and emotionally, and that he should be encouraged to think creatively. Creative drama was the mode that she felt would best facilitate these goals.

What children learn should have real meaning for them. Most children promptly forget facts which do not seem important to them; when they can use what they learn, they seem more likely to retain it. (1947, p. 18)

Peter Slade, one of England's first drama advisors, changed the direction of drama in education when he published Child Drama in 1954. Based on experimental work that he had been doing for twenty years, his thesis was that there was an art form called Child Drama. That is, each stage of spontaneous experience in dramatic play has its own aesthetic qualities. He considered child drama to be an art form in its own right. To Slade, drama could also take its place in the curriculum, along with music, art and literature. Dramatic activity was not to be used as a method of teaching other things; it was a separate subject, with its own place in the school timetable. As well, he believed there was a catharsis for the child's tensions in child drama, and an encouragement of language flow.

Slade saw the child as having within himself the potential for ultimate good as he grows and develops. He stressed the need to recognize the naturalness of the child, and to avoid forcing him to respond according to adult needs or stereotypes.

[Slade's] interpretation is typical of the romantic tradition of progressive education in England, with its emphasis on beauty, brotherly love, and the universal goodness in mankind. (Clegg, 1973, p. 34)

Slade's major contribution, however, was to focus attention on the relationship between drama and the child's natural play activity. He felt that drama must be based on the natural development of the child through his play activity, rather than on criteria that are only appropriate to the conventions of the adult theatre. In a later work, Experience of Spontaneity, (1978) Slade continued his examination of play and child drama.

Just as in life there are two main activities of personal and projected play, so in the personality there are the upper and outer qualities and the inner and deeper ones. Both are linked and to some extent interdependent. In other words, there is the practical everyday life on the one side and the inner dream world on the other....(p. 228).

The predominant technique in Slade's concept of child drama is improvisation; he saw a close link between improvisation and the child's natural development - spontaneity could be developed and guided. He felt that the emotional intensity arising from this inner creativity was hampered when the young child was introduced to the scripts too early.

Colleges of Education in the past were concerned primarily with literature and literacy. This has led us to an over-predominance

of theatre courses in colleges of education, and in some colleges, I have heard people openly brag, "We are not running a course for teachers here, we are running an extended university course on theatre and literature". (Slade, 1975, p. 90)

Brian Way carried on Slade's approach in many educational areas, stressing the complete development of the child socially, intellectually and emotionally. Like Slade, he is opposed to the theatrical exploitation of child actors, and he feels that drama has validity as a subject. Way views drama as an activity that develops the student's potential. He considers that dramatic activity is more important for developing people than for developing specific theatre skills. To him, dramatic action represents the life experience in many ways that are very close to, but not the same as, life and, thus, "experience in one enhances the other."

In his book Development Through Drama (1967), Brian Way denies that communication is a part of drama work. His philosophy and writings were part of a bitter dispute between teachers on the one hand, who saw drama in education as an extension of theatre training, and teachers on the other hand, who believed in drama in education as a developmental technique. Drama came to mean an experiential group process, the object being to help the child to become a whole person, better fitted for his daily situations.

Brian Way also suggests that during later adolescence, drama in education should be "social drama". He feels that it should be concerned with the development of manners, the appropriate behaviour in various social situations, and the development of a broader social awareness of other people's points of view.

For Way, the ultimate purpose of drama in education is to open children's minds, stimulate their imaginations and language abilities, and spark their enthusiasm for continued personal development and discovery. He believes that, regardless of the purpose to which drama is put in a given situation, the experience can only succeed for a child when the child has acquired some basic drama skills, and has learned how to use the dramatic process with confidence and understanding.

Drama is useful for teaching other subjects....but only after drama exists within its own right. We cannot use number to solve interesting problems until we have experienced and, to some extent, mastered number itself: no more can we use drama to understand or experience history or Bible stories or literature until we have experienced and mastered certain basic aspects of drama itself. Ultimately, drama is a valuable tool, but first the tool itself must be fashioned. (1967, p. 7)

Geraldine Siks was working in the United States on a method for creating a curriculum in creative drama. She writes that the primary aim of the process-concept structural approach is the same as the ultimate goal of drama in education: namely, to foster each child's self-development and learning. In an effective drama program, the developing child becomes involved with the many elements, processes, and forms of drama.

She feels that learning experiences in drama, as in any other subject, must be thoughtfully planned, structured and guided. They must also be cumulative in effect, so that through them, children gain the necessary skills and attitudes to express and communicate, using a variety of drama forms. The process-concept structure is intended to make the entire teaching-learning process in drama more certain, more efficient, and more predictable, in fostering each child's self-development and learning.

This approach to drama does not, however, attempt to teach children to become professional actors and actresses, any more than mathematics and science classes in elementary schools train professional mathematicians or scientists. (1977, p. 11).

To Siks, learning means involvement on all levels: intellectual, physical, and intuitive. Of the three, she feels that the intuitive, most vital to the learning situation, is neglected.

At the same time in California, Viola Spolin was applying her concept of theatre games to child drama. In her work Improvisation for the Theatre, (1963) she states that when response to experience takes place at this intuitive level, a person functions beyond a constricted intellectual plane; he is then open for learning.

Spontaneity is the moment of personal freedom when we are faced with a reality and see it, explore it, and act accordingly. In this reality, the bits and pieces of ourselves function as an organic whole. It is the time of discovery, of experiencing, of creative impression. (p. 4)

The Relationship of Child Play and Drama in Education

In Canada, the philosophies of Slade and Way were having impact. Drama was beginning to appear on school timetables as a subject, and Richard Courtney was instrumental in creating an educational atmosphere for the development of drama in education. He examines the relationship of play and child drama in his book Play, Drama and Thought (1968):

This way of looking at education is comparatively new, yet has evolved naturally and slowly and is in the mainstream of modern European thought. Its origins go back to Plato and Aristotle, Rabelais and Rousseau in philosophy. It is based as much on social anthropology and social psychology as on psychoanalysis

and child psychotherapy. It partially stems from modern theories of cognition, from behaviourist theories of imitation, from psycholinguistics and the developmental psychology of Piaget. In this context, it is the centre of modern creative education: all arts spring from it and all scientific methods evolve through it. If the process of social learning is inherently dramatic, and if through the impersonation of roles we adjust to society, the whole process of thought itself is related to the dramatic imagination. Thought is built up out of concept, and human beings use concepts in two main ways: for creative thinking and memory learning. Both processes utilise dramatic play, overtly if we are children, and covertly if we are adults. (p. 3)

Courtney feels that drama in education begins with an awareness of the child, recognizing that the creative imagination of the child is dramatic in character. He states that play is an entity in itself, with its own value, embracing all dramatic approaches to education; it is the method whereby the child grows up and matures. To Courtney, drama is the basis of all creative education that is child-centered; it provides meaning and purpose for the child. It is important that a child can express himself through creative movement and spontaneous speech and language and, also, use these to relate himself to his environment. Further, Courtney says that theatrical disciplines enable the adolescent and the adult, under certain conditions, to grow and develop in the same way that dramatic play assists the younger child.

Courtney's basis of drama is that children learn through play, testing out their perceptions of reality, seeing whether those perceptions are accurate, whether they fit with one another in a moving, working model. Children play with adult roles in order to "try them on for size".

The dramatic imagination lies behind all human learning, both social learning and "academic" learning. It is the way in which man relates himself to life, the infant dramatically in his external play, and the adult internally in his imagination. This is what Freud means

when he says that dramatic play enables the child to "master" his environment, and what Burton means when he says that drama is an experiment with life here and now. It teaches us to think, to examine and explore, to test hypotheses and discover "truth". Thus it is the basis of science as well as art. But, also, because it relates us dramatically to knowledge, providing us with a significant and realisable relationship to "content", Dramatic Education uses the method which enables us when we are young to learn "academically" -- a method we retain when we are adults even though we may not know it. (1977, p. 12)

From working with young people in London, Alec Davison (1975) discovered that the needs of play do not end with childhood but, in fact, are lifelong. "Cultural experience begins with creative living, first manifested in play" (p. 55). This statement is reflected in the period of the adolescent-identity crisis, where the group encounter in creative exploration and social experimentation can be a vital focus. Davison notes that Erikson's research showed how the "thirty-year follow-up of children studied has confirmed that the ones with the most interesting and fulfilling lives were the ones who had managed to keep a sense of playfulness at the centre of things" (Davison, 1975, p. 56).

Davison says that drama is more accessible to a child than verbal narration. In narration, an event has to be verbalized if it is to be important; in dramatic play, the situation and the actions within it are themselves represented, and the speech remains embedded in context. Davison feels that a dramatic situation could propel the members of a group out of their own perceptions into an understanding of the perceptions of others more powerfully than any other form of representation.

What is being manipulated in dramatic play is human behaviour; and at the other end of a continuum, that is the medium in which the dramatist creates his work of art. In dramatic play as it develops in the primary school, author, players and audience are one: with the dramatist's stage play, they are three. (p. 55)

It is interesting to note the description of play, as recorded in the observations by the Department of Education and Science Report Drama II, and to realize the link between play and drama as suggested by the role-playing of the children:

Most of the play-corners that were seen were equipped with tables, chairs, dresser, often a cooking stove, a bed, and so on. The setting is usually structured towards domesticity..... In a Yorkshire school a boy dressed up as a girl had just married a girl dressed up as a boy and the whole class had participated in a dramatic reconstruction of a wedding. When (the boys) begin to play in groups they use bricks, boxes, packing cases, anything that comes to hand that will enable them to build trains, ships, fire-engines, locomotives. In a school in the south-west the boys and girls were playing, as so often, apart. The boys who were sailors in a splendidly built ship joined the girls in their domestic play-corner only when they were invited to tea.....In a school in the north-west an infant had made a boat out of a corn-flake packet and two toilet rolls--"and may God bless her and all who sail in her", he added. (Allen, 1967, p. 4.)

Learning Through Social Interaction

The major influence on drama in education in the last decade is the work of Dorothy Heathcote, who teaches at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne. Her philosophy has spread to North America, to Australia and New Zealand. She defines drama in education as:

Anything which involves persons in active role-taking situations in which attitudes, not characters, are the chief concern, lived at life-rate (i.e. discovery at this moment, not memory-based) and obeying the natural laws of the medium. The medium of drama necessitates a willing suspension of disbelief, an agreement to pretence, an employing of all past experiences available to the group at the present moment, and any conjecture of imagination they are capable of, in an attempt to create a living, moving picture of life, which aims at surprise and discovery for the participants, rather than for any onlookers. The scope of this is to be defined by story-line and theme, so that the problem

with which they grapple is clearly defined. I maintain that problem-solving is the basis of learning and maturation. (1971, p. 43)

Dorothy Heathcote feels drama to be sociologically based, with individuals interacting within groups. To her, improvisation is an elaboration procedure which employs all relevant factual and emotional information. The attitudes in the group provide the spectrum for problem solving. She is concerned with meaning, and uses drama to expand the students' awareness and enable them to look at reality through fantasy, thus seeing below the surface of actions to the meaning of those actions. She allows the students to make as many of the decisions about what the drama is going to be about as is possible; she makes only those decisions that have to be made if what the students choose to do is to happen in the most dramatic mode. She enables the children to use what they already know.

Heathcote will often let children decide what a play is to be about, when it is to take place, where the scene is to be, and in most cases, roughly what happens. What she will not let the children decide is whether to try to believe; she insists that students work at believing so they don't ruin it for others. She won't allow them to give up or laugh at the whole situation; they must try to be serious about and committed to the drama. (Wagner, 1976, p. 20)

Heathcote's goal in drama is to help the student use his experience to understand other people's experience. She sees no point in drama unless the student can see the universal implications necessary to all human beings, and therefore tries to get at what is fundamental and human in the situation being explored in drama.

What happens must be experienced in reality - I do not ask them to pretend. Something must occur to which they can respond AND YET REMAIN THEMSELVES. (Heathcote, 1978, p. 63)

Two of Heathcote's students have taken Heathcote's methodology and have developed special interests in the use of historical resources in training teachers. John Fines and Raymond Verrier, in their book, The Drama of History (1974), discuss the result of their application of the Heathcote philosophy.

For her, drama is a tool for the interpretation and enlargement of experience, a tool that serves the promotion and development of intellect just as much as of emotion. Whilst her work is highly disciplined, it is not a discipline in itself. It has many aspects; but for the educationalist, one of the most exciting is that it can serve other disciplines of the curriculum in a way that few of the much-promoted "methods" really do. (P. 81)

Fines and Verrier claim that drama in education works from what the pupils bring with them to the classroom. The pupils will start to explore reality with their knowledge and understanding of the world and how it works, their feelings and emotions, discovering in action in the same way that they discover what happens by living their own lives. Abstractions, real and concrete, can be tested out and refined in the light of new understanding. It is necessary that the individual work in collaboration with others to clarify his own thoughts and perceptions. Fines and Verrier state that the children need to share a common experience and must accept the conventions which that common experience will impose. A common experience also gives the teacher a chance to find the central problem that is to be explored with the children, rather than just accept a story which progresses from one event to another.

Within such a disciplined framework children can then bring to bear their own experiences, and take real decisions. It is important that they should be free to do this, for their

vision of their experience is much more crisp and defined than ours, and on a very different level. Just as children physically see the world from a lower level than an adult, so emotionally they have a different angle of view. (p. 83)

John O'Toole, in Theatre in Education (1976), supports these views, and says that social reality only exists in people's perception of it; that each individual's perception will be different according to his upbringing and the status and positions he holds in society, and that these perceptions are capable of alteration. Open-ended education can develop powers of critical judgment, and a sense of personal responsibility in the individual where he

is able to assess a situation, develop his own personal response, rather than rely on a traditional pattern of behavior, and reflectively assess the consequences in the context of the social interaction as he understands it, instead of merely reacting to it, instead of merely reacting to it. (p. 35)

The instructor can try to develop the self-control and systematic, imaginative thinking which allow self-directed and co-operative learning, instead of authoritative teaching and competitive assimilation. O'Toole feels the child needs the immediate satisfaction of recognising that the situation in the drama lesson in some way ties in with his perception and knowledge of his world. If he is suddenly presented with an experience which completely disorients him, he will usually react with an inappropriate emotional response.

Gray and Mager are concerned with using drama as an aid to developing better social health in the individual and in the group. In Liberating Education (1973), they state that drama has enormous potential for "freeing people to develop capacities they might not have

known they had and teaching them to relate honestly and intimately to other people" (p. 87).

To Gray and Mager, improvisational drama provides a versatile set of tools for exploring many kinds of subject matter. However, use of drama and movement will be most effective if students have first developed these tools through a course lasting a few weeks or months. They feel that improvisational drama can be used to help students learn procedures with which they can begin to free themselves from inhibitions and from anti-social behaviour, better understanding themselves and others. Such learning is usually called affective, but it includes skills of perception, understanding, communication and personal effectiveness.

Within the improvisational drama structure, students learn to practise an experiential way of thinking. Gray and Mager state that the perpetual question for the student is, "What do I do with this experience?" An experience strikes a chord of meaning within a person; this is an internal process. The teacher structures the external situation in which the experience can occur and encourages freedom and helpfulness among the students, but he does not interpret the experience for the students or evaluate the content the student brings to the activity.

From the point of view of the social phenomenologist, improvisational drama students learn from inter-experience. In moments of intense awareness, insights about the experiences of the group seem to leap out at the members of the group. Our inquiry into relationships is concrete, and we hope that improvisational drama will help the students gain experience in seeing other people as people rather than as objects bearing labels for such superficial abstractions as skin colour, popularity, unpopularity, social class, clothes, usefulness, or nonusefulness. (p. 196)

Understanding the Emotional Response to Drama

Gavin Bolton of Durham University is interested in the child's emotional response to drama. He sets up a dramatic situation so that the children can find out how and why other people behave as they do. Then, he has the children reflect on their behaviour. He believes that when drama is a group-sharing of a dramatic situation, it is more powerful than any other medium in education. Bolton feels pupils learn far more from group experience than just the group experiences of sharing and caring. One of Bolton's aims is to help the student know how and when to adapt to the world he lives in. He hypothesises that central to any make-believe experience is the recall of past experience. The students do not necessarily recall the actual events; rather, it is the relevant feeling that is triggered. The child does not necessarily see all the precise images to do with incidents in the past; he evokes the kind of feeling and consequently the meaning that belongs to those events. Whatever surfaces as a result of touching on these past experiences is a representation of past events, and any new thinking or feeling will be affected by this representation.

The meaning is created from an oscillation between some feature or features of the actual present and the memory bank of feelings, which as we have seen, are both personal and universal. (1976, p. 47)

Bolton says the task for the teacher is to find a way of helping the child to tap his store of past feelings and to use physical resources as symbols. This area of 'finding many meanings' can most usefully be explored in drama situations.

He has suggested that dramatic activity is concerned with creating meaning that is both dependent on and independent of the physical environment. When dramatic activity becomes drama as an art form, it is characterised by three significant features:

a special sense of time; a special quality of meaning; a special quality of feeling.

The meanings must accrue for the children, not for the teacher. The teacher, however, seeing all kinds of possibilities in things and actions, will anticipate and structure the drama sensitively so that symbolic opportunities are made available to the children. (1977, p. 7)

Bolton says that dramatic activity is not a normal stimulus-response behaviour. As objects and actions take on symbolic overtones, different qualities of feeling are tapped. Bolton feels that drama requires a different order of emotions, and that children should experience true emotion, a deep concern, or a genuine elation, providing the response is to the symbolic situation. All the emotions that are part of man are the essence of the drama experience. As well, reflection time must be built into the drama if the emotional experience is to be made available for future reference.

If the emotional experience has been exciting, then time and opportunity after the make-believe experience for containing, reordering, re-channeling or reflecting on the experience must be allowed for. The form this period of emotional adjustment takes may vary from discussion of individual feelings to deliberately talking about something else, from sitting quietly saying nothing to changing one's shoes, and in terms of time from half-an-hour or more to a couple of minutes. (p. 6)

In The Intelligence of Feeling (1974), Robert Witkin discusses the importance of self-expression and its relationship to the emotional response. He says that, by definition, educational drama concerns self-expression and direct emotional engagement. "As one might expect, the drama teachers interviewed all recognized the importance of sensate engagement in the situation" (p. 77). He reports that the most typical form of drama lesson is one in which the pupils live out a sequence of events. Witkin feels that without direct expression, the exercise has no meaning in drama terms; therefore the design of situations in drama lessons is of critical importance. It is comparatively easy to set off a "gross emotional response," and Witkin wonders if learning and reflexive possibilities get lost "in the bathos". He feels that the teacher needs satisfaction in being able to facilitate the group to go deeper, and not always to be making beginnings. "We need to know the qualities of the core we are fashioning so that we can bring it under conscious control and shape it tellingly" (p. 79). In discussing emotion, Witkin says that crisis situations are often of limited value in encouraging an emotional grasp of the situation, since the situation itself demands an immediate emotional response and the individual has little opportunity to respond reflexively to the impact that the situation makes upon him.

The intelligence of feeling involves the organization of sensate experience as feeling-form, as distinct from emotion as the subjective experience accompanying a gross response of the whole individual to a situation. Since feeling arises from responding (subject) reflexively to sensations wrought within one, either the situation must itself be such as to permit the individual to concern himself with responding reflexively to the sensory disturbances wrought within him, in which case it cannot

be a crisis situation that demands gross emotional response; or if the teacher does use such a crisis situation, then he must control its development in a way that introduces artificially the necessary space between the impact of the situation and the action demanded in respect of it so that the process of reflexive abstraction can take place. (p. 79)

Witkin's thesis is that for social health, the child must not just come to grips with the objective world, which is traditionally the subject matter of education, but, also with the subjective world, from which he relates to the objective world.

David Davis (1976) claims that educational drama can be defined as actively taking on a role which involves identifying intellectually and emotionally with a character in a fictitious situation in an educational context. As well, he says that deepened drama affords chances of insight into the human condition through a process of first-hand emotional experiencing.

This cannot of course be isolated from the process of intellectual identification, but it is the emotional component I am seeking to isolate at the moment, because this is the area that seems to me to be central to and unique to drama of this type as a learning medium. (p. 42)

Drama As An Art Form

Lynn McGregor is concerned with the communication aspects of drama, as they relate to the arts. In Developments in Drama Teaching (1976), she complements the theories of Bolton and Witkin in seeing drama as an art form. McGregor says that drama, along with the teaching of other arts, must be considered relevant in schools today. "However,

although there is some support for drama teaching in schools, the subject is not yet fully recognised. Figures published in the Bullock Report support this view" (p. 106).

To McGregor, drama is essentially an arts process. She feels that experience in the arts gives children the opportunity to explore and make sense of the world of feelings and ideas, and to learn to express their interpretation of that world in symbolic forms; the arts are a way of finding "meaning in experience." Drama has a vital part to play in children's social development, as they learn to find common points of reference in understanding people and their situations. Development can happen simultaneously on two levels; the symbolic, through represented roles and situations, and the real level, through the actual social relationships in the class. When children are able to work effectively at the symbolic level, they explore through role and character the underlying meanings. One of the main aims of drama teachers should be to work towards this level.

This kind of achievement cannot be guaranteed and depends on a number of factors including the pupils' states of development and the teacher's ability to use the process. (p. 107)

Brian Watkins (1976) is also interested in drama as an art form. He believes drama to be a mode that employs the processes of communication, but in a fictitious context. Operating within the constraints of theatre, drama gives back to the individual, and to groups, an understanding of how the needs of both the individual and

the group may be reconciled. Not only does the drama assist the reaffirmation of common meanings, but it also serves to identify what is meaningful in people's lives. The recognition of this vision of what is meaningful happens because of the group dynamics of an audience.

For our very social survival, may be it is vital that we repair any breach in our understanding of the dramatic art. For it may be that its wholeness is one of the few things that stands between us and the threat of fragmentation - a means of creating order out of the chaos of our everyday experience. (p. 112)

In his report, Drama: Education Survey 2 (1967), John Allen reports his concern for the individual in society and the value of the arts on that individual's life. He quotes the philosopher of the arts, Susanne Langer, who, he says, has taken the definition of art further by arguing that the arts are "the creation of forms symbolic of human feeling" (p 108). To Allen, the real power of language derives not only from its ability to represent or describe the real world fairly accurately, but in the definition of meaning, where it suggests the

richer work of human imagery, experience and sensibility. Form as the embodiment of feeling is the very process by which the creative impulses of the children are released and given coherence, and without a certain coherence it is doubtful whether the sheer release of emotion, unshaped and undirected, either satisfies the children or can be held to have educational validity at all. (p. 109)

Drama and the Curriculum

The Times Educational Supplement, in an article entitled "A Special Way of Learning," quotes the Prime Minister's speech at

Ruskin College, 18th October, 1976:

In the debate about the content and functions of the curriculum, a lot of attention has been given to the Government's comments on numeracy and literacy. But it has also emphasized that children require the understanding of how to love and work together, respect for others, and respect for the individual.

The article then says that in view of these commands, the value of drama in education cannot be ignored or denied to children of all ages and abilities.

Many teachers use drama to assist the child's physical, emotional and intellectual development, as well as to integrate social and factual learning in a lively and meaningful way. However, they are not concerned with teaching drama simply as a subject.

By the nature of their tasks, primary teachers seem to be more concerned with the child's general development and his total education than with the promotion and teaching of a particular subject. "I teach children, not subjects is a familiar catch-phrase used by primary teachers to explain and justify their role. (Deverall, 1975, p. 5)

Drama teachers have, for a long time, debated whether drama is an approach to learning or a subject. In the same way, they have discussed the differences between drama and theatre.

Meanwhile the real work is being done in schools and halls with real people applying their perceptions and communication skills to each other's particular real or imagined needs. What is learnt in these situations is so basic to our knowledge of people, their tears, motives, relationships, vulnerability, beliefs, vocabulary and aspirations that it has been accepted as part of drama. (Cranston, 1975, p. 112)

Chris Day (1977) says that the process of 'acting out' means that the participants in the drama must place themselves in 'as if' situations. These situations may be characterised as representing man in symbolic conflict, regardless of subject areas.

When drama takes place in a theatre it is usually for the purpose of presenting its audience with one more of these situations, viewed from one or another point of view. When drama takes place in a school it is usually for the purpose of investigating one or more of these situations. There is not usually an audience. In the theatre the actors are the vehicles for communicating the author's (or their own) ideas. In the school the children are usually both actors and authors. The 'plays' they create are the vehicles for their learning. The process of the investigation is of greater importance than the communication of what has been investigated. The emphasis is therefore placed by drama teachers on teaching skills of co-operative inquiry rather than those of communication with an unknown audience. (p. 26)

Day says that teachers who use drama as a teaching method are concerned with the pupil's knowledge, and with ways of helping him build on it. The drama teacher discovers what the learner has learned by helping him apply this new knowledge to other situations --"by making it operative."

Brian Wilks argues that drama is a study of the way that imagined people behave in given situations. From the simplest of improvisations to the most sophisticated of theatrical events, drama seeks to present the outcomes of tensions the interaction and modifications of behaviour, that are similar to those experienced in everyday lives. To Wilks, drama is unique in the opportunity it offers for the sharing of ideas and feelings, for drama cannot take

place without sharing. Of all the subjects offered in schools he feels it is one of the few that begins and ends with social interaction. Drama can therefore be a means of understanding various aspects of behaviour, including interpersonal relations, feelings and the exploration of social issues.

McGregor (1976) states that because educational drama involves working with other people, it allows groups of children to work together creatively. For example, they are often given ideas to work on and expected to come up with some dramatic statement about these ideas, and they are sometimes expected to communicate their work to others. This process of creative problem solving is more important than the actual results.

Verrier and Fines (1974) believe that drama is useful in all teaching that concerns itself with enquiry. Drama helps focus down into one area of study, refining questions that will reveal that area more thoroughly, requiring that hypotheses be tested and results be examined. They claim that in much of the present-day curriculum, children are denied initiative, accepting answers without challenging the results. Drama helps the child to initiate his own learning.

We would hold that the stirring of the imagination in this context of reality is one of the finest contributions that history or drama can make to the curriculum at large, for it shows to a child the relationship of what he is learning to what he is experiencing, and gives him the key to use his learning in real life. As fantasy escapes from real life, so imagination clings to and enhances it, making it not only comprehensible but also richer and more satisfying.
(p. 91)

The authors of Drama Guidelines (1976) state that particular subject areas can be explored and illuminated through drama, since drama provides access to another perspective on the material, and should extend pupils in their thinking beyond what they already know.

After surveying the literature, Richard Courtney (1978) writes that drama is seen as providing transfer to all learning situations and to the development of personality.

Burton (1949, 1952) and Slade (1954) both assume drama can transfer to all subjects in the curriculum. They also, together with Way (1968) and Allen (1968), assume that the very activity in drama transfers learning to the development of personality itself. Way, indeed, indicates that drama in schools has little to do with the development of drama per se, but has everything to do with the development of persons. (p. 1)

James Moffett contends that drama and speech are central to a language curriculum, not peripheral. He sees drama as the matrix of all language activities, including speech and encouraging the varieties of writing and reading. His thesis rests on the assumption that dramatic interaction is the primary vehicle for developing thought and language.

In A Proposed Humanities Framework by the California State Department of Education, the authors recommend integrating drama, the language arts, and the other arts:

Drama and the language arts can be taught in an environment where the other arts are practised, because children do better at reading and writing in a classroom where they are doing other interesting things as well. Even though more and more silent reading will be done as the children mature, the social and public side of the arts of communication are not given the attention they deserve. Language itself may have begun when our distant ancestors sat with a circle of family and friends around a fire and taught themselves how to reach out to one another in speech; literature probably began with the recitations of story-tellers to just such small, attentive audiences; western drama began in religious rituals enacted in public; systems of symbolic notation just as obviously satisfied a social need for expression, precision, recollection, and continuity. Adapted to the realities of modern public schooling, these methods of education in the arts of spoken, written and gestural language will have their place in the education of the young. (p. 357)

David Clegg (1973) attacks the supposed developmental aspects of drama. He claims that most drama courses contain some kind of 'developmental' element - some kind of personal development is assumed to take place in the student. How it happens, why it happens, if indeed it ever does happen, remains a myth to Clegg. "And yet it's a myth we cling to because, without it, drama in any kind of educational context might as well be bricklaying" (p. 37).

He feels that although students can study concepts of dramatic criticism or production techniques, and that although their bodies and voices can be 'trained', the drama student emerges from the drama class knowing "more about theatre history, the exercises he engaged in during voice or movement work or how to operate a switchboard" (p. 38), but

Clegg questions if the student knows any more about himself, other than the extent of his success or failure in the activities he pursued during the course.

Drama teachers may construct a mythology of drama in education in such a way that it is almost impossible to discover what they mean. And their very persuasive myths have presumably held the floor for so long because they are not only difficult to check, but also because any drama teacher who attempts to refute them is faced with the imminent collapse of his rationale, his standing amongst his colleagues, and perhaps even his job. He was, after all, trained according to the myths, and his own "personal development" might be invalidated if he begins to doubt them. (p. 38)

Clegg claims the acceptance of drama into the educational system has depended on an underlying assumption that its practice will lead to better citizens. He suggests that institutionalized schooling has an innate conservatism built into it, and that drama is no different from the other subjects:

If our concern is with the development of people, there is no guarantee I know of that such development can be necessarily equated with the learning of any kind of theatre form or convention. It might be, but again the assumption needs checking. Improvised work that looks untidy and shapeless to the outsider, that seems to lack absorption and many of the theatrical qualities he is looking for, may in fact be facilitating some aspects of the development of the individual which it ceases doing once it is transformed into a tidy form with a beginning, middle and end. (p. 40)

Dorothy Heathcote (1971) says that drama is both subject and system. To her, problem-solving is the basis of learning and maturation, since it uses past experience to predict what may happen if and when certain acts are carried out in the given conditions. "By means of conscious problem solving, conscious men increase the range and depth of their conscious knowing of creation's shaping" (p. 43).

For the purpose of this thesis, it is important that drama in education be considered a system of teaching, so that its application to the process of reading can be examined and understood.

Three Reports on Drama in Education

I will compare the work of three different committees investigating drama in education, stressing the recommendations at the junior levels of education, as a review of the development of drama in education thus far discussed in this thesis. (There is a fourth report, Learning Through Drama, that will be considered separately).

The Plowden Report suggests that drama bridges English and movement. In junior schools, the committee was impressed with the dramatic work where children re-enacted and reshaped experiences from literary, Biblical and historical sources. The report mentions that the improvisations are discussed, revised and rehearsed until a coherent play is formed, from which the children involved may grow to understand dramatic form. As well, the report suggests that scripted plays be left for later years.

A survey group led by John Allen (1967), exploring the use of drama in education, visited a sample of many different kinds of schools to observe and assess what was being done. It is of interest to compare the conclusions of Allen's report to those of the Plowden Report, completed a year earlier.

Allen wrote that drama may result from different sources, such as a scene in history or geography or an episode in literature. He claims that drama should not be divorced from the linguistic and physical development of children. Allen acknowledges that drama is an important means of helping a child develop conceptual thinking, and discusses the junior-school child in depth. These children show an increasing ability to "use words expressively, to move, to use their imagination, to select, to create and sustain a consistent narrative in dramatic form" (p. 106). He feels that, although the form of drama changes from junior to secondary, the validity of drama teaching remains. The report states that improvisation is at the heart of drama in education, but clear aims and purposes are required if the work is to have effect.

As well, Allen laments the "linguistic impoverishment of a great deal of improvised drama", and feels that the value of improvisation should not divert attention from the importance of studying plays for their own sake, since the use of language, the depiction of character, the expression of ideas and the development of narrative

in dramatic form, are a substantial part of English. He says that too little time is spent on the study of plays and of spoken English.

The reasons for the close affinity needed between teachers of drama and English are not based on tradition, but on the importance of the word, written and spoken, as a means of clarifying the inner image and establishing exact means of thought and communication in certain areas of experience. (p. 109)

In A Language for Life (1975), the committee considered the ideal situation for drama to be one where the written word may become the spoken word, and the spoken word the written. Improvisation can provide a physical context for the printed word to come to life.

Words on a page may be almost meaningless until the whole relationship and all its implications have been fully experienced by trying them out in a convincing setting - physical, social and emotional. (p. 157)

The "situational context" of some sources seems to call for improvisation where drama helps the pupils to understand the meaning of the selection. The report said that improvisation can be given substance by literature, since literature is an unequalled source of quality subject matter.

The Negotiation of Meaning

The Schools Council Drama Teaching Project was set up in Great Britain to consider the aims and objectives of drama teaching in order to find possible ways of assessing outcomes, and to suggest ways

in which drama could be organized in the curriculum. As well as observing classes in each school, working parties were organized in each area to consider the place of drama in the curriculum. A number of groups and individuals outside these areas made contributions to the project by submitting papers on a range of issues. The book, Learning Through Drama (1978), is the result of the work of the project team and those who participated in the project. The value of this report lies in its attempt to understand how to assess drama, and to discover the place of drama in the curriculum.

The authors of Learning Through Drama state that the function of the arts is to make sense of life. The child develops symbolic forms through which he may understand his own problems, and learn to express his feelings and ideas. The authors claim that drama is an expressive process which is best understood through the idea of symbolization, and its role in the discovery and communication of meaning.

The process of drama involves the exploration and representation of meaning through the medium of the whole person, and this is done through social interaction. (p. 25)

As individuals assume a role in drama, they enter into a dialogue, affecting and modifying the actions and behaviour of the others, and exploring the symbols they are using, so that they may understand the meaning with which they are concerned. The authors say that this flow of interaction and reciprocal response is at the

heart of drama. The participants are working within and through the symbolic situation, negotiating at the symbolic level.

The way in which each of them responds will determine the actions and potential involvement of the other. It is a shared process. As soon as a child begins acting-out with others he evokes and must provide an immediacy of response. As the symbolic situation is developed through this process of interaction, so the underlying meaning is explored. Drama revolves around this pooling and sharing of experience in the development of a joint expressive act. Through this process individual perceptions are aired and challenged and extended. We are calling this process the 'negotiation of meaning'. It takes place on two levels - the 'real' and the 'symbolic'. (p. 17)

The symbolic situation may become the vehicle through which the hidden relationships in the group are expressed; beneath the surface level of the represented situation is a deep structure of personal motivations and impulses. Significant learning may be taking place in this symbolic situation.

The teacher needs to look at the deep structure of ideas, feelings and motivations which are giving the drama its shape, and to understand that the "point of arrival" may not be the final solution of the problem they are representing; through drama, the children may discover meaning in the issue being explored for themselves.

The destination is the resolution of the problem of meaning or understanding which is motivating the work. To work in the arts is to tackle problems of understanding through representing them in symbolic forms. This revolves around a dialogue between the content of the expression and the form in which it is made. The symbolic form encapsulates the meaning. The symbols chosen critically affect the nature of the understanding which develops during the work. (p. 19)

In expressing and communicating perceptions and attitudes through the arts, the child adds to the shared experience of those with whom he dialogues.

The drama teacher aids in the child's affective development by encouraging him to express and communicate his ideas, attitudes and feelings. The authors of Learning Through Drama state that drama revolves around problems of understanding. The individual finds meaning in personal experience through involvement in drama; the arts "...feed and nourish the individual's own search for meaning in experience" (p. 21).

Summary

This chapter describes the evolution of drama in education throughout this century. It discusses the various philosophies of experts in the field: drama is a developmental process (Slade and Way); drama is a tool for learning through social interaction (Heathcote, Fines and Verrier); and drama is an art form dealing with the intellectual and emotional response (Bolton, Witkin, McGregor). The place of drama in the curriculum is surveyed, both as a subject and as a system. In addition, I have summarized the reports of four research projects into the use of drama in education.

From this evidence, I conclude that there has been an awareness of the intrinsic value of drama in education from the beginning of its use in schools. However, some of the claims of the past cannot be

substantiated. Recent reports and writings (Heathcote, Bolton, McGregor et al), indicate that educators are realizing that, as well as furthering the goals of personal development, socialization, and artistic awareness, it is the symbolic quality of the dramatic situation which allows significant learning to take place. When students work in the arts, they gain understanding by representing the problems and issues in symbolic forms. These symbols encompass the meanings in their lives, and critically affect the growth of understanding that develops during drama. It is this negotiation of meaning at the symbolic level which relates learning through drama to the goals of developmental reading.

III. READING AND RESPONDING

Introduction

This chapter explores the relationship of the acquisition of meaning to the teaching of comprehension in reading. The examination of meaning has been a part of education since the first century B.C. A survey of authorities in the field of reading indicates that they consider the transmission of meaning to be most important in language learning. Suitable techniques for teaching reading in the schools are examined, as well as the reasons for students being unable to comprehend. Illustrations of some paradoxes in reading research are discussed, and I investigate methods of helping students to respond to what they have read. This chapter, then, concerns itself with defining the term "reading," seeing its relationship in the search for meaning, and examining techniques for encouraging personal response to text.

In Search of Meaning

The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations (1964) defines meaning as:

Meaning: It is possible to distinguish four different aspects in the meaning of a statement. As given by I.A. Richards, they are (1) sense, the denotative "something" that the speaker or writer is trying to communicate, (2), feeling, the attitude

the speaker or writer has toward this sense, (3) tone, the attitude he has toward his audience, and (4) intention, the effect he consciously or unconsciously intends to produce through what he says or writes, how he feels about it, and the attitude he takes toward his audience. In another way, meaning can be seen as of two kinds: Denotation and Connotation. For a literary work there are also four possible levels of meaning: the literal, the allegorical, the tropological or moral, and the anagogical or spiritual. (p. 307)

Phenix says in Realms of Meaning (1964) that human beings essentially are creatures who have the power to experience meanings, and that being human exists in a pattern of meanings. To him, general education is the process of helping human beings to find essential meanings in life, through intellectual development, and through processes that imply feeling, conscience and inspiration.

Meaning has four dimensions:...inner experience, including the quality of reflectiveness, self awareness, self-transcendence....; the dimension of rule, logic and principle; the dimension of selective elaboration (there is no limit to the varieties of meaning, but not all these are humanly important and selection has occurred leading to the development of those that are significant and have an inherent power of growth and elaboration); expression, for the meanings we are communicable through symbols. [Symbols are objects that stand for meaning]. (Hirst, 1974, p. 55)

Phenix looks to the work of Ernst Cassirer (1946) for an explanation of the ways in which we are able to order experience. Cassirer sees the whole world of human meanings as being expressed in symbol systems; these symbolic meanings are contained in such diverse fields as myth, ritual, art, history, mathematics, science and language.

James Britton (1970) quotes Cassirer on using the past to find meaning: "If I put out the light of my own personal experience, I cannot see and I cannot judge of the experience of others" (p. 154).

The transmission of meaning is of prime consideration in language learning, and in the teaching of reading. Teaching meaning in reading presents two difficulties: familiarizing the student with the connection between a concept and its linguistic sign, and acquainting him with the other linguistic, emotional, and material associations of the sign itself.

Kelly (1969) says that in the first century B.C., it was a common Alexandrian practice to illustrate fine shades of meaning by placing the word in a meaningful context. This was taken over by the Roman grammarians in their orthographiae, a form of textbook that continued during the Middle Ages.

Despite the title, spelling was only one of the interest of the genre: usage and nuances of meaning were accorded equal importance. The orthographiae were distinguished by the elegance of their language and the pithiness of their examples. (p. 136).

Finding meaning in linguistic code has been for some time one definition of reading. The problem for schools is one of relating the teaching of reading to the acquisition of meaning. In relating

meaning to reading, Charles Reasoner (1968) says that meanings are not printed; they are in people's minds. A word is only a mark on paper, and these marks cannot make sounds or impart meanings along. Meaning is a mental function and operation. Reasoner quotes Leland B. Jacobs as saying:

Though the words are the pegs upon which the literature production is hung, all the words written by the author cannot be held exactly in the reader's memory. The writer in order to develop his mood and meaning necessarily employs many more words than the reader can immediately recall. But the reader considers the big ideas, the pivotal meanings; these constitute what he keeps in mind as he continues to read. He does not even try to hold on to all the words the writer has employed. Instead, the reader makes of the words such sequences or series of meanings as seem urgent and sensible for him to move ahead with the writer is developing and it is these vivid constructs that the reader clings to so that he may go ahead with the author with confidence. To the extent that time, play, situation, mood, or character are made arresting through words, they can serve to aid the reader. By their precision and fitness, they can help the reader to hold in the foreground of his mind the ingredients that the prose of poetry are essential to the central thought, the total meaning of the author's words. (Reasoner, p. 63)

Andrew Wilkinson, in the Foundations of Language (1971), discusses the problems of language development and reading. He says that in learning to read, young children are confronted with a complicated system of auditory and visual language concepts. Learning to read, then, is a problem of language - the child's knowledge of language and his awareness of the possibilities of language. Rather than being specifically a reading problem, organization of vocabulary and structure is a language and thinking process.

Wilkinson claims that the child learns language by being in a situation that calls forth a particular type of language. He says that most evidence supports the view that abilities in oracy and literacy are "distinct but over-lapping", and that there is sufficient research evidence to prove that oracy is a means of developing literacy.

To Wilkinson, the child's awareness of possible meanings and patterns is vital to the child's reception of language and to his production of language, and he derives this awareness from hearing and using language. Therefore, the type of language experience that the learner has is crucial. As well, Wilkinson feels that the language children read should be interesting to them, so that they can use the skill and knowledge that they already have.

Towards a Definition of Reading

Kelly (1969) states that throughout the history of language teaching, reading has been approached as part of the other skills that teachers were to impart. In the late classical and medieval periods, it was often absorbed into literary and Biblical writing; from the Renaissance on, it was usually connected with the art of translation, achieving complete independence only during the twentieth century. For Kelly's purposes, he divides reading into the skills of interpretation of symbols, and the fluent handling of the matter to be read.

Maxwell (1974) feels that attempts to define reading tend to fall into two main groups; one is basically linguistic, defining reading as the decoding of the written symbols into the spoken language; the other concerns meaning or understanding. He quotes Goodman's definition as typical: "Reading is a complex process by which the reader reconstructs, to some degree, a message encoded by a writer in graphic language" (p. 5). The other group of definitions centres on comprehension. Maxwell quotes Tinker and McCullough (1962):

Reading involves the recognition of printed or written symbols which serve as stimuli for recall of meanings built up through past experience, and the construction of new meanings through manipulation of concepts already possessed by the reader. The resulting meanings are organised into thought processes according to the purposes adopted by the reader. (Maxwell, p. 6)

Definitions concerning code breaking treat comprehension as a product which may or may not emerge from reading; the definitions concerning comprehension assume the decoding process and concentrate on the product, comprehension. The difficulty is that both are statements about the same word, "reading".

Maxwell says that to be satisfied, the statements which apply equally well to other forms of communication, such as speaking and listening, are not defining reading; nothing which is necessary to the process of reading should be excluded from a definition of reading. He feels that one term to denote the different processes of reading is not adequate. The same word "read" applies both to understanding and to decoding.

Maxwell suggests that any definition of reading should be specific to the basic stages of reading: the introductory stage, when the reader is acquiring the basic skills of reading; the consolidating stage, where the skills are being applied and exercised, and the final stage, which involves the development of more advanced skills, adapting style to the purpose and the kind of material.

This division into stages is a coarse one, but something of this kind is necessary to achieve any precision in definition, as what is called 'reading' in the introductory stage is a very different activity from what is called 'reading' in the final stage. (p. 11)

It is the consolidated stage and the final stage to which this thesis is directed.

Kolers (1969) says that reading is not primarily a visual activity, with the author supplying all the information, or knowledge, so that the reader will have the message delivered to him if he looks at the words on the page in the right order, and with sufficient application. Two quite different sources of information are involved in the reading process, Kolers feels, one source being the author, who provides what might be called visual information, and the other source being the reader himself, who provides non-visual information. Reading involves information that the reader receives through his visual system, and information that he already has available in his head.

Smith (1971) says that a definition of reading is not usually useful.

I do, however, want to note a distinction between reading with comprehension and reading--or whatever else one might want to call it--without. It is, of course, possible to recite a series of words without understanding anything about them at all--what has been called "barking at print." Where there is no possibility of the comprehension of a meaning and it is important to make the situation clear, I shall avoid using the word "reading" but talk about "word identification" instead. Occasionally--because I want to make a comparison or contrast--I shall refer to comprehension as "meaning identification". But, in general, I shall use the terms "reading" and "comprehension (of print)" interchangeably. To my mind, reading is something that makes sense to the reader. (p. 8)

James Moffett (1976) says that what is unique about reading is not the intellectual part (the comprehending), which characterizes listening also, but the translating of print into speech (the literacy part). Conflict begins to arise when someone says that reading, therefore, is only decoding print, and someone else says that reading conveys meaning. Moffett claims that the conflict is a disagreement about two different senses of the word. He says that it is critical to note that it is the visual processing that is unique to reading, whereas comprehension extends far beyond reading, to oral language and into nonverbal media.

Moffett explains that one does not need to be able to read and write in order to comprehend and compose language, because both can be done orally, by preliterate or illiterate people. Meaning

is a larger, life-long matter and connected to literacy only because letters symbolize speech. Meanings are learned through one's total life experience, and learned no more by reading instruction than any other way.

Reading teachers sometimes speak of getting meaning from the page, and the expression is all right as a manner of speaking, but more accurately, people get meaning from the speech sounds that the printed words represent. Readers decode written symbols into spoken symbols they already know, to which meanings are already attached. (p. 122)

Moffett's research says that no one knows technically how sight and thought collaborate in reading. When two so closely functioning operations of the nervous system occur simultaneously, they tend to fuse in some way for greater efficiency. Thus a proficient reader probably comes to link printed words more directly to meaning than he did when he was first learning to read.

A long list of mental activities that any psychologist would consider general properties of thinking that occur in many different areas of human experience have somehow or other all been tucked under the skirts of reading. Recalling, comprehending, relating facts, making inferences, drawing conclusions, interpreting, and predicting outcomes are all mental operations that go on in the head of a nonliterate aborigine navigating his outrigger according to cues from weather, sea life, currents, and the positions of heavenly bodies. Not only do these kinds of thinking have no necessary connection with reading, but they have no necessary connection with language whatever. (p. 116)

Staiger concurs with Moffett. Writing in The Teacher of Reading (1973), he says that it has long been recognized that getting meaning from the printed page is too limited a definition

reading. Bringing meaning to the printed page indicates more accurately the reciprocal process between the printed symbols and the mind of the teacher. Constructing meaning is a vital prerequisite of all reading. The mental processes of thinking, problem solving or reasoning, are founded on past experience, so that the present context of the reading matter must be examined in the light of the reader's own experiences. Therefore, any definition of the reading process must include interpretation and evaluation of meaning as well as construction of meaning.

Staiger feels that exercises and activities designed to check comprehension rarely probe beyond the understanding of the literal level of a passage. For him, it is important that the reader recognize the relevant details, and be able to abstract the main idea, but this may take place only at the literal level. The accomplished reader must also "read between the lines," and frequently extend and assimilate the author's thought. To do this, he must interpret and evaluate what is read. To derive full comprehension, a reader must become the co-author, absorbing the concepts presented, and then scrutinizing and assessing the ideas in the light of his own knowledge and experience.

Interpretation and evaluation have often been linked under the label of critical reading. While it is true that the extent of comprehension activities may depend both upon the reader's purpose and the content of the material read, the effective reader seems to examine automatically the ideas received. (p. 45)

Reading, then, is a form of thinking triggered by printed symbols, and these symbols usually represent words. The reader has to take into account the total context, the problems, the perplexities and the novelties of the ideas presented. Thus, training in reading must focus on the systematic examination of the ideas propounded, and somehow facilitate the reciprocal exchange between the reader and the print.

Reasoner (1968) says that a reader never gets all the meanings of a word at any one encounter, since meaning comes from experience rather than from a dictionary. As experience broadens, meaning becomes richer; a reader never seeks one meaning of a word.

Duke (1977) says that reading is a personal action, and because it is personal, perhaps not totally comprehensible; reading is, for the most part, an act performed by an individual, an experience totally within the mind of the reader. The individual knows that the act of reading is personal and private. Authorities seem to agree that almost any amount of knowledge may be relevant to a literary work: knowledge of sources, tradition, development of the work, revisions, life and experiences of the author. But often there is little discussion on the relevance of feelings, experiences, attitudes, values and beliefs--these kinds of knowledge which the reader brings to a work--and on the extent to which these should be brought to bear on a work.

In the teaching of literature we have inexorably divorced the reader from the reading experience. We have denied him the very heart of the reading process. We ask the reader to forget half, three-quarters, or even sometimes, all of his personal experience in relation to a work when he comes into a classroom. This forces the reader to step onto "firm ground", where we can discuss and examine the work from a safe distance. Such action is dictated by the assumption that in this way we can all share the same experience in the work and thus have a better understanding of it.

(p. 34)

Duke feels that reading is not, and should not be, an "act of divorce." He sees it as an act of marriage, the reader and the text joining in a mutual experience which gives added dimensions to each. Without the reader and his experience, the text means little, but with him, it becomes something alive and responsive. Unfortunately, the experience of reading, especially for young people, is often not a satisfying one. It disturbs, because it often stretches and challenges their views of their own universe; it brings into question the order and form they think they see in their own lives, and it focuses their attention on events which in normal day-to-day routine they could ignore.

How we go about making the change to focus on reader response and the process of reading is not entirely clear, for no one method can be prescribed for what is, after all, a uniquely personal experience. One reason however, that talk about the reader's experience and its relevance to the work has led to disappointment has been that flow of such talk has tended to lead away from the work instead of toward it. A simple reversal, a movement from the reading experience to the work, will represent an important step in the right direction. Building a climate in which such a reversal can occur is difficult but within reach if we can believe the work of such individuals as David Bleich, Norman Holland, Ken Macrorie, Louise Rosenblatt, and Walter Slatoff. (p. 35)

Duke feels that we have to begin acknowledging openly the great importance of the union between the reader's personal response and the text. Only in this way will the reading process and the literary experience become synonymous.

The difficulty of understanding the reading process is reflected in these comments by two children in one classroom in Toronto who had been asked to define "reading":

- a) Reading is how to pronounce words.
- b) Reading is talking in my mind. Giving questions to my mind. Being in a story.

Factors Affecting Comprehension

There are many factors which may interfere with comprehension: many studies suggest that readers may fail to identify or empathize with the thought of the writer; comprehension is subject to the biases and attitudes of the reader; the interests and the purposes of the reader will affect his level of comprehension; there may be cognitive limitations of the reader in terms either of his developmental maturity or of his unfamiliarity with the topic of this material. In addition, the tone of the writer and his attitude towards his topic and towards the reader, all apparently influence the level of comprehension.

Kolers (1969) says that very little reading will take place if the subject matter of the text is completely removed from the experi-

ence of the reader. A good deal of prior knowledge is required if any piece of text is to be read; everything the author takes for granted is to be supplied by the reader.

According to Moffett (1976), if a learner can sight read aloud a text with normal intonation, and still does not understand what he is sounding out, he has a thinking problem that is reflected in reading, but has no problem peculiar to reading. The point is of the utmost importance to Moffett, because those who believe that incomprehension while reading constitutes a special learning case must then believe that "reading comprehension skills" exist and that these can be developed only through reading activities.

One result of this misconception is that many children spend a large amount of time plowing through various programs advertised to increase these so-called reading comprehension skills - "reading labs", "practice readers". Such programs consist mainly of sequenced reading passages about which students are asked comprehension questions. Scores often do rise on these built-in tests of reading comprehension because the activity itself is nothing but constant test-taking. (p. 123)

To Moffett, what accounts for the understanding a reader is able to bring to bear on a book at any given moment are some experiences between readings - warm-ups and follow-ups that help him to grasp a text better when alone with it. He feels that what is needed for good comprehension are strong motivation before reading and strong intellectual stimulation afterward, neither of which answering comprehension questions affords. Other teaching methods exist, but

these other ways are not often thought of as reading instruction or as testing reading comprehension skills. Many authorities (to be later discussed) consider drama as an appropriate motivation for reading.

We question the whole concept of reading skills beyond those of visual processing. We see nothing wrong in defining reading broadly to include comprehension, since it arises there as elsewhere, so long as the means of practising comprehension are correspondingly broadened. (Moffett, 1976, p. 124)

In examining definitions of education as held by a drama authority, and by a reading authority, one sees an intense similiarity. Heathcote's definition of education is:

a continuous process of assimilation of incoming data together with a constantly developing ability to respond. (Wagner, p. 192)

Her definition of education is similar to the one developed independently by James Moffett:

To perceive and take something in as full, complex, and sensitive a way as possible and then to bring it out again as words--as a statement that reflects the fullness and complexity of the experience and at the same time orders it and relates it to other knowing--is a goal worthy of any educational endeavour. (Wagner, p. 193)

The practical suggestions made by Huey and Thorndike at the beginning of the twentieth century are similar to those outlined in this thesis:

The school should cease to make primary reading the fetish that it has long been, and should construct a primary course in which reading.....[is] always for meanings....Word pronouncing will therefore always be secondary to getting whole sentence in meanings.....Until the speech habits are well formed, the school should have much more oral work other than reading....School readers, especially primers, should largely disappear, except for the real literature of mother tongue, presented in literary wholes, or as they may be records of the children's own experiences and thoughts, or as they may be books needed for information in the everyday life of the school. (Huey, 1908, p. 380-381)

In school practice it appears likely that exercise in silent reading to find answers to given questions, or to give summary of the subject matter read, or to list the questions which it answers, should in large measure replace oral reading....Perhaps it is in their outside reading of stories and in their study of geography, history and the like, that many school children really learn to read. (E.L. Thorndike, 1917, p. 332)

The Toronto Star Newspaper reported on September 23, 1976, that the ability of American school children did not deteriorate in the 1970's, and in the case of nine year olds, improved markedly. This conclusion, contrary to the beliefs of many educational critics, was reached in a report by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, and was based on identical tests in 1971, and 1975 of 7,500 children ages 9, 13 and 17. The report raises questions about the back-to-basics movement and challenges the assumption that primary schools ever gave up the basics, at least as far as reading is concerned.

If literal comprehension is the goal of reading in the early grades, then there is no need for a return to the basics. Certainly, there are pockets of low reading achievement, but to say we should go back to the basics for everyone would be a mistake and a misuse of money.

The above quote is by Dr. Roy Forbes, director of the research. The study found that difficult, complex or lengthy passages, caused

17 year olds and sometimes 13 year olds more difficulty than they did their counterparts of 1971.

"The weakness lies in not enough reading in the secondary schools, not the primary schools," said Dr. Roger Farr of Indiana University, co-editor of Reading Research Quarterly. The tests were administered evenly to 2,500 children in each of the three age brackets.

Teaching Comprehension

The Bullock Report (1975) discusses the problems involved with the teaching of comprehension:

Comprehension work is standard practice in schools, and for most pupils it occupies a place in English lessons for the greater part of their school life. Much of this work is from text-book exercises designed for the purpose, and in recent years there has been an increase in the use of reading "workshops" or "laboratories", to which we have already referred in general terms. In our view, exercises in English text-books or in kits of one kind or another are inadequate for developing comprehension. They provide too restricting a context and do not take account of the fact that reading should satisfy some purpose on the part of the reader. This may be to derive pleasure, experience, or information; it may be serious, or it may be relatively trivial. But whichever it is, the individual will read most rewardingly when he has a personal reason for reading, for he will then carry his own attitudes and values into the text and not simply respond passively to it. The declared "purpose" of so many of these exercises is to improve particular skills of comprehension. But even if there is any such result the improvement is so specific to the situation that it is unlikely to transfer to other reading tasks.

The development of literal comprehension is too important to be entrusted to exercises, even the best-designed of them. The principal object is to sharpen the reader's

perception of the main theme and the idea sequences from which it is formed. He must be able to determine what is essential....and what is peripheral. Even when skimming at speed, he must be able to pick out certain features and identify general structures and relationships.
(p. 120-121)

According to the report, the difficulty of teaching comprehension lies in the ability of the teacher simultaneously to check the accuracy of what is read, to probe the pupil's ability to assimilate and interpret more than superficial meaning, and to ensure that by participating in concepts and ideas presented by the author, the pupil not only receives information, but, through his cognitive interaction, also has a meaningful experience.

Staiger (1973) says that unfortunately, comprehension activities far too frequently concern just literacy:

Enjoyment and profits from reading are often dissipated by a lack of variety in the activities stimulating understanding. Repetitive activities usually result in rote reactions which tend to hinder continuous growth in comprehension. (p. 51)

Staiger feels the teaching of comprehension has tended to be haphazard. Too frequently it has been assumed that the asking of questions will serve not only to assess the understanding of content, but also to develop strategies enabling the readers to follow intricacies of thought.

Kelly's research indicates that comprehension exercises were never absent from the classroom:

Comprehension questions were probably taken for granted in praelectio. But one cannot argue from silence that this technique was never used on its own. It is true, however, that the first mentions of comprehension exercises as such seem to date from the nineteenth century. (p. 135)

Frank Smith (1971) states that it is only through the experience of reading that a child can learn to make minimal use of visual information, make use of redundancy to reduce the load on short and long term memory, and to identify new words on the basis of old. Children can find out what language is about if given the necessary opportunity to exercise innate learning abilities, but Smith says that they cannot have reading skills "thrust into their head". His studies show that in the average hour of reading instruction, the amount of time children spend actually reading is four minutes. He claims that the problem with formal instruction is that it deprives a child of critical learning opportunities. Smith states that if reading is essential for learning to read, then reading should be made as easy as possible for children. But, instead, reading instruction becomes isolated decoding drills and word identification exercises which are the most difficult tasks for any reader. Although reading is directed toward comprehension, children are often corrected on the basis of individual words read aloud, rather than meaning. Although reading is typically impossible unless the reader reads fast and takes a few chances, children having difficulty are told to slow down and be careful. The comprehension tests that children are given usually rely on long-term memory and inference, rather than on reading comprehension.

Children do not need instruction to learn how to read, nor do teachers need instruction to teach reading. It is through enlightenment that children learn best, by being allowed a chance to understand what is going on, and it is through enlightenment that teachers teach best, by understanding the reading process. Ignorance about the reading process is by far the greatest limitation on reading and learning to read. (p. 181)

Smith says that there is one basic rule in teaching reading; that is, to respond to what the child is trying to do.

Smith claims that isolating the sequencing skills appeals to the logic of the adult literate as a means of being sure that the beginning reader encounters and learns to control each thing that a proficient reader controls. But such sequencing was not a necessary prerequisite to the original language acquisition of the same learners. They learned to understand and be understood through oral language at an earlier age, with no prior language competence, and without the help of teachers. The importance of language and learning to read implies that the reading task must be defined with precision so that instructional strategies can be created. If the reader is highly proficient, he will have good speed and high comprehension; reading will be a smooth process. If he is less proficient or if he is encountering unusually difficult material, reading will be less smooth and will involve considerable cycling back to gather more cues and make better choices.

Meaning is the constant goal of the proficient reader and he continually tests his choices against the developing meaning by asking himself if what he is reading makes sense. The process does not require that he perceive and identify every cue. In fact that would be both

unnecessary and inefficient. But it does require that the reader monitor his choices so he can recognize his errors and gather more cues when needed. (p. 159)

Smith claims that language and thought are interactive in reading, but at some point, thought processes leap out and away from the message of the writer. In this interaction, a reader may be involved in cycles of reading, reflective thinking, imaginative thought of fancy and then more reading.

Goodman (1970), like Smith, believes in reading as a holistic process. He states that readers are users of language who use this receptive process to construct meaning from written language. Reading is successful only to the extent that readers can construct meaning. The writer encodes thoughts in language; the reader decodes from language to thought.

To Goodman, learning to read requires relevant, meaningful language in order for language users to make use of their existing language competence, and of the meaning context in which language processes function.

Reading, if it is successful, is not a passive process. The reader is a language user who interacts with the graphic input. Successful reading yields meaning, which becomes the means to further ends. The reader may follow directions, respond to questions, or read further. The extent and direction of application depend on the nature

and purpose of what is read. For example, literary materials, because of their aesthetic, stylistic qualities, yield pleasure and satisfaction which creates further appetite for literature. Plot and story line in literature propel the reader forward.

In teaching comprehension, then, teachers must be aware that adequate functioning of the reading process depends on development in a number of areas, both mechanical and intellectual. A deficiency in any one of these can affect the quality of the child's reading and lessen its meaning for him.

In support of this, Merritt (1978) states that the effect of multiple cues, such as context and number of letters, is greater than the sum of their individual contribution. But in a group of fourth grade children, aged ten to eleven years, the ability to use context cues was extremely limited.

The problem is can we expect children to develop their ability to use context cues efficiently if the language structures in their readers are unsatisfactory and if.... little serious effort is made to apply the findings of basic research in linguistics and psycholinguistics to direct research on teaching reading. (p. 277)

In The Journal of the British Columbia English Teachers'

Association, Mona Beebe writes that

I am convinced that we have for the last twenty years over-emphasized the role of diagnosis, prescription, and testing for mastering of isolated skills; we have

so emphasized these admittedly important aspects of a reading program that we have turned off students, sacrificing our long range goal of having students find reading satisfying, for a short-term profit of increased scores of post tests. I too seldom hear the crucial question, what do I do now that I have identified a student's reading deficiency? What I most frequently hear is, what is a good diagnostic test, or why does a student's score on the Step reading test differ so radically from his score on the Gates? We have so over-emphasized testing that I would bet that we are reaching the point when there isn't time to teach them the content or the skill for which they are being tested. My thesis is that having children read, leading them to stories and books, and encouraging them to trust their own responses to what they read, is the best method for teaching children to read and to make reading a life-long behaviour. (p. 60)

Although his contribution has been made in the field of teaching adult illiterates to read, Paulo Freire nevertheless has an important message for teachers concerned with the teaching of reading.. By involving Brazilian peasants in those matters that were vital and immediate to their lives, he was able to illustrate clearly the fact that the learner must be aware and conscious of what is happening before learning can take place.

In one village where there was a particularly offensive character who spied on the inhabitants and informed on them, Freire taught them how to read and write "the local bastard". In another village, the main talking point was the building of a bridge and words relevant to this need were taught. Although it is not my intention to suggest that Primary School children should be wholly immersed in a world of political reality, nevertheless there is here a lesson to be learnt, especially in the field of teenage reading attitudes. "Cowboy Sam" will not last forever. (Lund, 1973, p. 25)

In discussing some paradoxes in reading research, John Downing (1974) says that the way the child thinks and learns should be the starting point for all teaching.

It has long been recognized in industry that a dual approach is needed to maximize the worker's efficiency; training is not enough. Not only must they fit the man for the job, but they must also fit the job to the man. For example, the machinery, information displays, etc., must be designed to suit the men who work with them. A businessman would be regarded as extremely foolish if he insisted that his employees must just learn to use awkward equipment when he could easily increase production by redesigning the equipment. (p.115)

Downing says that in teaching, child-centred education is more efficient education. Teachers need to be constantly redesigning their teaching equipment to fit the natural ways in which children think and learn. Teachers need to think less about fitting the child to read and more about fitting the reading to the child. In this way, their teaching will go with the stream of child thought, instead of against it.

The Bullock Report, A Language for Life (1975), gives a comprehensive discussion of the teaching of reading. The point concerning the stages of skill development is interesting to this thesis:

The development of reading skills is a progressive one, and there are no starting points to which one can attach any particular ages. We cannot therefore speak of kinds of reading ability as being specific to the middle years and as something essentially different from those used in the upper forms of the secondary school. The primary skills

of the early years mature into the understanding of word structure and spelling patterns. The intermediate skills, so essential in word attack in the early stages, are at work in skimming, scanning, and the extraction of meaning in the more complex reading tasks of the later stages. The comprehension skills themselves do not change; it is in the increasing complexity of the purposes to which they are put as the pupils grow older that the difference lies. (p. 115)

Margaret Spencer (1975) examines critically the Bullock Report's view of the reading process:

Reading is a new way of seeing language, of seeing what others are thinking, of confronting one's own thoughts. The child, as well as the poet, raids the inarticulate. Meaning from reading is emergent, built up in a different way from meaning in talk. A full description of reading includes the relationship of language and thought. (p. 13)

Spencer says that progress through the various reading skills makes little sense in the experience of the child. Reading is whole-task learning. Many teachers, by telling children to switch their attention to the parts rather than the whole, have disorganized it for them. She states that the Bullock Report does not help teachers who want to know how to teach children to read. But its more significant failure is in the definition of what being literate offers children at this point in time.

To Spencer, the child is concerned with meaning, with making sense of the world around him. His intention to mean is a powerful force in acquiring language. Studies in child language suggest that

language is learned through use, as the child's attention is focused on meaning. Teachers should note how the intention to mean acts almost as a facilitator to the child's understanding. Much of this learning is implicit. The power of implicit learning is demonstrated in the way pre-school children acquire a language-system, complete with its own rule-governed grammar, without formal instruction. They seem to be able to manage this from the language around them and the feedback available in everyday conversation.

John Merritt (1970) claims that it is easy to understand how the idea has developed that reading readiness can best be fostered by providing a rich educational experience, since this is the best condition for fostering the development of language. However, reading is different from language in many respects, even though it is dependent upon language. Language is used automatically in dealing with children in a variety of situations. This exposure to language in various forms is a necessary condition for language acquisition. There must be a continuously high level of motivation for the child to use language in every way that is most effective in a give situation. Merritt claims that the best basis for the development of comprehension is the strong need to receive the commication. Teachers must ensure that as much as possible of what is written or spoken is done so for the purpose of communicating to someone else, since quality of the reading will improve when there is a genuine need or desire to communicate.

Halliday (1975) feels that reading is an absolutely artificial operation as contrasted with the natural activity of speaking. He thinks there is no discontinuity, that it is essential to interpret the use of the written medium as a natural extension of language in the spoken medium. He feels that in the early stages, children are not expected to produce meaning during the reading operations. Much of the reading experience the children have is decoding at the structural level because the reading is not slotted into their own language experience.

In Using Reading to Teach Subject Matter (1974) Arnold Burron states that direct experience, contrived experiences and forms of dramatizations, all call for the learner to participate mentally, emotionally and physically in the instructional experience. The child's whole being is employed in the process of gaining understanding. It seems advisable for the teacher to utilize to as great an extent as possible such instructional experiences as these in attempting to develop understanding in the subject areas.

Olive S. Niles (1972) states that if the comprehension skills are accepted as fundamental to good reading, teachers must make sure that students themselves understand and accept them. Strong motivations--so necessary in learning any skill--spring from two main sources: specific evidence of progress in learning the skills, and proof of its practical application. The more teachers share their own purposes and understanding with their students, the more likelihood there is of success in their teaching.

Helen M. Robinson (1972) discusses a study comparing the performance of thirty students in an undirected situation with a simulated school assignment where questions about the selection were expected. She concluded that the students remembered factual content to the exclusion of evaluative thinking. As well, there was little awareness on the student's part of the need for evaluative response.

John Holt, in Instead of Education (1976), discusses methods to help people read:

Reading is not a skill, but an act. The child sees written words all around him; he sees that the older people look at those words, use them, get meaning from them. Those words make things happen. One day (if we give him a chance) he decides that he wants to find out what those words say and mean, and that he can and will find out. At that instant, and with that decision, he begins to read. Not to "learn to read", but to read. Of course, at first, he doesn't do it well. He may not even be able to read one word. But if he is allowed (as few children are) to continue to do it, to seek out in his own way and for his own reasons the meaning of written words, with only as he may ask for; if this task which he has set for himself isn't taken from him and replaced with a lot of fragmented and meaningless tasks invented by someone else and done on their command; if he is not convinced by adults (as many children are) that he is not able to do this task he has set for himself, to figure out what written words say, but must "get" reading from a teacher as a patient gets a shot from a doctor; if he is very lucky, and none of these bad things happen, he will be reading well in a short time, perhaps even in a matter of months. (p. 19)

The Response to Reading

Warlow, in The Cool Web (1977), writes that we must somehow study "response" in the process of reading, which takes place both while one reads and when one pauses or closes the book altogether.

"Sometimes it may find expression in a long critical essay, at other times in a flood of bitter tears" (p. 92).

Moffett (1976) says that it would be much easier for us to consider only the texts themselves, but that we have responsibilities to our students, to the texts they read, and to their responses to those texts. He says that response is not something we teach directly. What a teacher can do is to allow the process of expatiation, enlargement through talk, to work. He can also contribute to the range of possible responses the student can have, thereby directly helping the student to acquire the means of more fully understanding what he reads.

Elliot Eisner, writing in Reading, the Arts, and the Creation of Meaning (1978), discusses his concern that reading in education be a social, interactive process:

I am concerned, too, that extreme conceptions of individualization have desocialized the reading process. Reading can be the basis for recovering the lost art of conversation. It can provide grounds for debate, speculation, the comparison of alternative interpretations of meaning. Reading does not have to be a race through a box of colour-coded reading skills. There were times when families read together and then discussed what they read. Poetry, short stories, political editorials, a sense of community affiliation, and of belonging and being were heightened by shared participation in a common event. I am concerned that in our effort to give each student what he needs, we use processes that foster competition and isolate him from the sense of community and shared experience that all of us need. (p. 28)

In his book, Seeing With Feeling: Film in the Classroom (1972), Richard Lacey affirms that "students need to feel that they owe a book

nothing; and they need to become aware that whatever they felt or thought is not only legitimate, but also valuable and worth sharing" (p. 66).

Morris (1963), in discussing success and failure in learning to read, says that the problem of responsive reading is to help the growing reader to read more objectively. That is, the reader must produce the author's scenario and not one created by his own distortions or additions, and succeed in this without losing the power of reading responsively. Many of the devices used in school to train the reader to note exact details in a text often result in producing a reader who, in making the effort to come more closely to grips with the exact meaning of an author, abandons the attempt to relate the significance of what he reads to his own life.

The reader's search for objectivity is always limited by the fact that he can only interpret meaning in terms of his own understanding of life. Morris says that the requirement of a mature reader is not that he should achieve an exact and complete understanding of the mind of the author, but that he should search for such an understanding.

This reaching out to "meet" the author as a person is an essential mark of the mature reader: without it the reader cannot use reading as a means for the enlargement of his life-space. Encounters with books that do not involve one in "meeting" the author add nothing to one's growth as a person. (p. 87)

Morris feels that allowing the pupils to respond is central to process-oriented education. There is a transaction between the selection of literature and the reader. Morris says that a reader enjoys a piece of literature to the extent that he comprehends it. The reader derives meaning from the literary selection (prose, poem or short story), and this causes some inner reorganization in the feelings, attitudes and dispositions of the reader. The reader must formulate his response to the impact of this new understanding and communicate it to others.

Alec Davison (1975) claims that responses to literary works are unique to individual readers, and are conditioned by the dynamic interplay of many factors, rather than by single causes. He feels that this principle should underlie the teaching of literature.

Attempts to prescribe or condition literary response deny the very foundation and value of literary experience--the transaction between the individual reader and the literary work. In the broadest sense, the teacher is seen as one who directs, or at least leads a process by which students achieve, within the limits set by their different abilities and funded experience, feeling comprehensions of various works of literary art. This process should be seen as a continuing one (only part of which can occur in the classroom)....Response is a word that reminds the teacher that the experience of art is a thing of our making, an activity in which we are our own interpretive artist....(p. 57)

Davison says that in the primary years, children need immediate experiences with literature--experiences that are satisfying to them, and experiences that lay the groundwork for deeper, more discriminating responses in later years.

The main thrust of elementary work in reading should be toward the personal enjoyment of literary experience and the expression of that experience through the arts. Teaching reading should be geared to helping students make sense of what they read in personal terms.

In literature, as in every phase of the language education process, successful teaching depends on the primary consideration of individual people and the ways in which they do, in fact, respond. (p. 59)

The authorities that have been discussed thus far claim that educational progress is marked by the deepening of response and by the power of its verbal expression. The central aim of the teacher, then, is to foster reading and responding to literature, and to stimulate the expression of personal response in increasingly powerful ways.

Charles Reasoner (1968) states that the good teacher seeks children's opinions, opinions which are relevant to, but not identical with, those in the story.

When you conduct a discussion with one child, a small group or with the whole class the atmosphere should be relaxed, uninhibited and informal. No child is likely to reveal his deep down beliefs to anyone he does not trust or in a situation where his opinions are not respected. By using open ended drama questions, children are released from the traditional notion that every reader is expected to obtain the same meanings and the same ideas and feelings about a piece of literature. By comparing responses and activities with others and with themselves, children are learning to weigh their own understanding of themselves and others by becoming more aware of their own values and the values of others. (p. 103)

Reasoner says that whatever a child takes from a book depends on many things: the child's own skills and abilities; his attitude toward the purpose for reading; the availability and variety of reading materials; the freedom to select books that appeal to him, and to his own measures of experience. The teacher must design activities that provide numerous possibilities for helping the pupils reveal their comprehension by asking readers to respond with their opinions about moral or religious issues as they find them presented in the book, or by inviting readers to make comparisons between modern and historical times, real and make-believe situations, or between the similarities and differences they can see in their environment and those found in the literature selection.

Reasoner says the teacher must, in helping children reveal their comprehension, be concerned with how and what children identify within their reading, with what they feel to be synonymous and analogous to their own lives, and with their ability to see relationships. The teacher must provide opportunities for the reader to realize that other child readers of the same text have found different ideas and understanding in it.

It is important, then, that the child do something with what he has read, whether through drama, writing or discussion. The pupil learns about language in a coherent way by participating in the experience of creating discourse. Herbert Kohl, in Reading, How To (1973),

says that the author establishes a distinct voice, whether his own or that of a particular character. The voice that is speaking in the book gives the work character and style. Therefore, it is important to consider the voice telling the story, as well as the content itself. The teacher must develop an active relationship between the reader and the text. For example, he can help the child discover who is telling the story, who wrote the story, what feelings the story teller aroused in him, what clues there are about setting and time, and what the speaker's point of view is. When he gives his personal response, the child exhibits his comprehension by putting together an intelligent and plausible interpretation of what the author is saying, and then by considering other interpretations critically.

Comprehension is the ability to search for meanings and to think about what one has read. Reading must be connected to life as the child knows it. The child can come to grips with personal interpretation by the teacher's posing of open-ended questions which call for maximum participation of all children, by inviting a wide variety of responses, by giving much practice in inferential thinking, and by helping children to develop their criteria for making judgments.

There should be available from the earliest possible stages, plenty of reading matter that feeds a child's interests, material that stretches his powers of making sense of what he reads, that relates to the world he really lives in, has talked about, and continues to talk about. (Britton, 1970, p. 164)

Summary

Human beings exist in a pattern of meanings expressed in symbol systems, meanings that imply intellectual thought, feeling,

conscience and inspiration. These meanings accrue through personal experiences; reading allows us to understand the experiences of others, and by doing so, enlarges our own spheres of meaning. The transmission of meaning is therefore of prime consideration in language learning, and in the teaching of reading. The problem of teaching meaning in reading presents the difficulty of familiarizing the student with the linguistic sign as well as its connection to a concept. Learning to read, then, is a problem of understanding the child's knowledge of language, and of helping him to increase his awareness of possible meanings and patterns acquired from hearing and using language. The type of contextual situations in which the student experiences language is vital, and drama can play a large part in creating such situations.

In attempting to define reading, one sees two aspects: the linguistic definition of code-breaking, and the definition concerning meaning or understanding. However, it is critical to note that it is the visual processing that is unique to reading, whereas comprehension extends far beyond reading, to oral language and nonverbal media. Any definition of the reading process must include interpretation and evaluation of meaning as well as the construction of meaning. Training in reading must focus on the systematic examination of the ideas of the author, and facilitate the exchange between the reader and the print. It is through the experience of reading and responding that a child learns; comprehension exercises offer limited opportunity for

a child to interact with the graphic input. Adequate functioning of the reading process depends on development in a number of areas, both mechanical and intellectual. It seems advisable for a teacher to utilize as many instructional techniques as possible in developing understanding of the reading process. Through discussion, writing and drama, teachers can contribute to the possible responses the student can have, helping him to acquire the means of more fully understanding what he reads and what he means.

IV. THE USE OF DRAMA IN THE TEACHING OF READING

Introduction

This chapter describes the drama techniques used in the teaching of reading over the last few decades, and considers the implementation of drama in the teaching of reading in the contemporary education scene. Duke and Moffett are both concerned with the improvisational and enactment possibilities of drama in education. They believe that, in drama, the student can move from particular experiences to a more general understanding of the nature of what is being explored, the nature of themes and the abstract concepts found in reading materials. Moffett notes that dramatic interaction is the primary vehicle for developing thought and language, and therefore is important for the teaching of reading. Dixon and Stewig make a distinction between interpretation and improvisation, and Beall-Heining and Stillwell feel there are deeper meanings to be probed in the story than just the action in plot. Heathcote considers the value of drama in breaking the print code, and as a method of helping students to bring meaning and implication to the words of a text.

The limitations and successes of story enactment are examined, and as an example of the power of drama in bringing out meaning from a

story, I have included an excerpt of students' improvising and discussing the story of Jezebel.

Finally, the chapter discusses the use of script in teaching, and the relationship of script to drama in education.

Drama As An Outgrowth of Reading

Recent conferences at Dartmouth College (1966), British Columbia (1967), and York, England (1971), have shown a growing awareness of the need for creative change in the teaching of reading. Schools are placing greater emphasis on student participation, and on an awareness of individual differences, but at the same time, society is calling for increased accountability, and for more attention to cognitive behaviour.

Charles Duke, in his book Creative Dramatics and English Teaching (1974), was interested in examining the role of drama in the schools, and in what can be done with such techniques. He begins his book by discussing the contemporary use of drama in Britain.

Duke illustrates that the British have developed their drama programs to the point where drama in education is used at all grade levels in some schools, and is considered a valuable teaching approach by many teachers. He quotes from Teaching English in the United Kingdom, by Squire and Appleby:

The educational value of dramatic play does not diminish in the junior schools but its form will change as the

children mature. As from the infant to the junior, so from the junior to the secondary. The forms of drama change its validity remains, the range of material becomes wider, its treatment more thorough. (1974, p. 199)

Duke reports that the British, as steeped as they are in the long tradition of drama, have seen the importance of drama and have moved beyond mere performance to total involvement in the school curriculum. Duke feels that it is probably true that an individual develops a feeling for literature, as much through kinetic activity and association as through more intellectualized approaches; drama seems to be the most promising vehicle at hand to allow such direct engagements.

In 1972, James Moffett, on a grant from Harvard University, compiled a report on an interactive method of teaching language arts. His book, A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, includes much material related to drama and print. He defines the difference between enactment and improvisation, and relates the terms to print. Moffett states that all improvisation is based on a story idea, which is the least elaborated, most summarized statement of character and event that will give the players the feeling of having enough to work with. He calls this idea the "minimal situation". The difference between enactment and improvisation is a matter of degree only, since there is always some given information, suggestive ideas that are the starting point for acting out. In improvising, one makes up more of the story as he goes along; when enacting, one has more details specified in advance.

Moffett explains that acting out has a double sense - both expressing oneself and filling out a ready-made story. Thus dramatic activity breaks down into two main kinds: inventing one's own dramas and enacting the stories of others. Both are improvisational; the difference is in whether the pupil makes up the main situations and actions, or merely makes up the details of word and movement that flush out the borrowed story. For example, putting on a crown invests the pupil with kingship, and this provides a source of ideas at the same time as restricting the range of possibilities.

It is also possible in acting-out to move from particular experiences to a more general understanding of the nature of what is being explored. This means that the experience of acting-out can be used to understand the nature of themes and abstract concepts.

Drama must help the pupils to find levels of meaning, and whether the situation that the drama is based upon is original or from literature is of little significance; the drama must elaborate on the facts to find the hidden truths and universal concepts, not just retell the events from memory. Weak drama, like weak reading, is concerned with the words rather than with the meanings behind those words.

Moffett says that dramatic work and small-group discussion play a considerable part in learning to read. Their essential relationship to reading is that, through them, texts are elaborated and further explored for implications. It is from reading that dramatization and discussion draw a large part of their content, and

they furnish one answer to the question of what to do with a text after reading it silently. According to Moffett, certain dramatic activities will hopefully prepare the students for the story; other activities can be used while the student is reading; still other activities can be used for assessing what the student has read.

Moffett explains that emotional experience and point of view can be enlarged by playing roles in dramatic work. He feels that schools can acquaint youngsters with the things that word and sentences refer to, but reading comprehension will always stand in some ratio to what an individual has done, heard, seen and felt in his personal life.

Moffett believes dramatization to be an important part of the reading program, because dramatization elaborates the text and thus brings out what is merely implied. Anything serving as a script is to be incomplete; the actors must infer many of their positions, movements, expressions, and lines of dialogue, not to mention personality, feelings, and character relationships. An important trait of drama is that no guiding narrator or informant leads the spectator through the maze. For the actor, the enacting of the text is one way of making explicit much of what is implicit.

Moffett claims that dramatizing and performing texts entail close interpretation in order to know "what to render and how to render it." Players involved in dramatization must think about and discuss many aspects of the text, and this experience will be of benefit during

silent reading. Moffett says that improvisation is especially valuable in elaborating over-condensed stories - such as myths, legends and folk tales - stories that lack dialogue or specific movement since they are in summarized form.

Language and thought are advanced through dramatizing. Moffett notes that dramatic interaction is the primary vehicle for developing thought and language. Complex cognitive skills are involved in the process of selecting, interpreting and arranging the material from which the dramatization evolves. Whether the children are working from a piece of literature or from a particular situation, they must choose the relevant and meaningful parts and arrange them so they are significant, and they must select words that carry this significance.

Teachers are seeing a greater need for active involvement and experience on the part of the children. Participating in dramatizing events, problems, situations, and stories, is an appropriate way of providing active involvement and experience that reading seems to require.

The Dartmouth Conference resulted in an increasing awareness of the role of drama in the teaching of English. John Dixon re-examined his findings from that conference in Growth Through English.- Set in the Perspective of the Seventies (1975). He says that enacting is like a play; you relive what has happened, but turn it into an event that happens as it is spoken about. The immediacy of the experience is more vividly captured, and the drama arouses sympathetic feelings, "the

emotive power of the language being stronger than the referential."

Dixon then compares the processes of narration and enactment, claiming that there is more thinking about the event in narration. Things are described from a distance in a calmer, less involved, more dispassionate way than in enactment. Narration tends to a more explicit and complete account with indications of a feeling for the reader.

Enactment leads us to live through and experience again from delight, from anxiety, from sense of shock, from grief, for reassurance, for pleasure and perhaps more deliberately to expose ourselves to the actual. Moving up in the levels we gain more control, more intellectual grasp for comprehension. (p. 116)

Dixon says that the need to grapple with experience through elementary levels of abstraction is not simply child's play, but a challenge for life. Literature can help teach the children to realize the kind of imaginative effort and the careful language demanded, so that the narratives or enactments of their personal experiences can grow and develop.

No amount of hindsight will help us to understand what we can't yet "live through". There is a sense of growing involvement with the experience and the past incident slips momentarily into the present. (p. 117)

Life Moffett, John Stewig sees two sides to the question of story dramatization. In Spontaneous Drama (1973), Stewig says that spontaneous drama adds interest and vitality to a reading program, no matter which method of teaching is employed. Many stories which

children will encounter are well-suited to dramatization. Whether it is a folk or fairy tale in a basal reader, a trade book, or made up in an experience-approach program, many stories can be dramatized. Stewig says that deciding what to dramatize in a story is crucial, and makes a distinction between interpretation and improvisation. In interpretation of the story, the teacher encourages children to choose characters in the story, and to portray or act out the characters' roles. In interpreting a story, the emphasis is on fidelity to the author's story line, and on retaining the basic characterization. In using story improvisation, the teacher uses the basic story as a departure point, and asks the children questions which will encourage them to extend, expand or in other ways, go beyond the basic material. According to Stewig, if the teacher is able to lead children through interpreting stories, to improvising on stories, such activities will greatly enrich the reading program. Related to the reading program is a literature program, the scope of which is broadened when drama becomes an integral part of the language arts curriculum. Many of the pieces the teacher reads to his children, in the period which makes up the literature program, can provide departure points for drama.

In Creative Drama for the Classroom Teacher (1974), Ruth Beall-Heinig and Lyda Stillwell talk about story dramatization as an educational process. They say that some stories may be quite complex to dramatize; they may have a variety of characters, an involved plot, or may require extensive dialogue to forward the action. The authors

suggest that a "programmed" approach is often needed. Programming ^{83.} means that the teacher analyzes and divides the story into the separate and unique experiences it offers. These experiences or scenes are played one at a time.

Beall-Heinig and Stillwell also explain that sometimes children have numerous ideas of their own for dramatizing a story, and sometimes they are mature enough to carry out these ideas with a fair degree of success. In this case, the teacher's role is mainly one of guiding and organizing the playing. More frequently, however, the teacher must help the children in selecting their material, in seeing the possibilities for dramatization, and in planning the dramatization. When the entire story is played, the children sometimes need assistance in remembering the sequence of events. The teacher may role-play when necessary, or the teacher may serve as a narrator whenever the story needs to be forwarded.

To Beall-Heinig and Stillwell, there may be deeper meanings to be probed than just the action in the story, since depth of characterization and feeling usually cannot be reached without some discussion and analysis. Often the story and the characters are more meaningful to the children if the situations can be related to their own lives. While there may be many interpretations of meaning in stories, the teacher may need to devote some thought to the theme he wishes to focus on.

Beall-Heinig and Stillwell understand that ideas for dramatization can come from a variety of sources - textbooks, newspapers, trade books and literature.

In Human Interaction in Education (1974), Stanford and Rowark suggest that students can have more freedom in story dramatization by making up their own dialogue, rather than borrowing it from the text of the story. As well, story dramatization can be carried beyond the written text of the story. The teacher can ask the students to be characters in the story, acting in a different situation, such as what happens after the story ends.

Geraldine Siks (1978) is concerned with the effect on the child of dramatizing literature. Siks states that story dramatization is an activity in which children are guided to create an informal drama from a story extemporaneously. After hearing or reading the story, children are guided to improvise character, action and dialogue, unit by unit, in each of the main plot incidents. Children are further guided to interpret theme and mood when they put the incidents together to create the informal play. Story dramatization also provides motivation for children to do research on the period in which the story is set, or on the characters in the story. Children are thus enticed to use encyclopedias, history books, and biographies to make sure their presentations are authentic.

David R. Maberry, Assistant Professor of Speech and Theatre at the University of Northern Iowa, has just completed an interesting

study entitled A Comparison of Three Techniques of Teaching Literature: Silent Reading, Solo Performance and Story Dramatization. Three-hundred and seventy-one elementary grade students from private, public, rural, and urban schools in Texas participated in the study involving three science fiction short stories of Ray Bradbury: "Here Be There Tygers," "A Sound of Thunder", and "The Exiles". Each student was exposed to the stories, either by silent reading, solo reading, or story dramatization. The stories were rotated so that some students were taught each story by one of the three different methods, and stories alternated first, second, or third place.

Immediately after the lessons, students were given two tests: a ten-item comprehension and an eighteen-item appreciation test. Ten days later, all students took a comprehension retention test composed of all the items from the previous tests but in a different and mixed order. Every third subject took the appreciation test for one of the three kinds of performances.

In the comprehension test given immediately after the presentation of the story, student means were as follows: silent reading, 6.42; solo performance, 7.09; and dramatization, 7.40. Both solo performance and dramatization produced higher comprehension scores than silent reading, but the dramatization group was the highest. The same was true of the retention comprehension test with the following additional factor: the dramatization group lost fewer points than the other two, widening the gap between student comprehension through silent reading and story dramatization, and also widening the gap between solo performance and dramatization.

Looking at Maberry's data, dramatization again produced the highest means (41.45), solo performance the next highest means (37.45), and silent reading the lowest (34.80). After ten days, the appreciation of silent reading decreased by 1.46 points, while the appreciation of solo performance increased by 1.47 points, and dramatization increased by 1.37. Solo performance showed a greater increase than dramatization, but the mean appreciation scores of the stories presented by dramatization remained higher than those presented by either of the other two modes of performance. Obviously, dramatization has much to offer the teacher of reading or language arts attempts to interest students in reading, through methods which produce both understanding and appreciation.

According to Rike (1974), drama can serve as a group method of diagnosis and remediation. For example, some misconceptions can be corrected as the teacher guides the children toward more accurate concepts.

Siks (1958) pointed out that teachers can check reading comprehension by having students act out the answers to questions about the story, or by encouraging them to become characters from the story. Children show their awareness of story sequence, their knowledge of details, their understanding of the characters and their sensitivity to the mood of the story, by the way they play their parts. If weaknesses in any of these areas are revealed, the teacher can plan additional activities.

Heathcote claims that her lessons will assist a child in breaking the print code. In a drama class, she shows the class the excitement of "not knowing", and shows them the impulse to learn created by this tension.

When her students start asking for and using dictionaries, art books, examples of illuminated lettering, adult texts of all kinds, Heathcote knows that drama has created a need for information. "The code has been cracked, and the learners have found they have power over material rather than its having power over them." (Wagner, (1976, p. 135)

Heathcote is not interested in how much a child has read but rather that the child is modified in some way by what he has read.

Has reading been a means of relating personal experience to that of other people? Has the student translated written symbols into experience? Through the process of identifying, readers give life to texts; in this sense, reading is akin to role playing in a drama. All print remains dense until a reader agrees to belong to it in some way, identifying with the protagonist or writer enough to allow the reader's own subjective world to come into play. Then the reader's being can flow into the dense words and provide a medium through which they can be dispersed and understood. Like role playing in drama, identifying as a reader releases a fund of subjective experience and recalled information that aids understanding and appreciation. The truth of any text is always limited by what the reader brings to it at the moment of reading. The reader's prejudice determines the range of understanding the material yields, for sensitivity and awareness are just as selective and limited in the process of receiving written material as they are in firsthand experiences of drama. (Wagner, 1976, p. 136)

Heathcote states that a person can translate print into meaning by bringing to it the understanding that it is a code to be cracked, and that to make sense of that text requires the application

of one's own experience. Through drama, Heathcote hopes to raise 88.
questions about the text that will stimulate the class to read more
selectively and insightfully.

Analogy, on the other hand, removes the burden of simulation, which can weigh a drama down. Analogy starts with attitude alone and, through it, unlocks the code to an internal understanding. By starting with feelings, not facts, Heathcote stimulates curiosity and stirs students to want to read texts and research for facts after the drama is over. Analogy sacrifices accuracy of detail for emotional depth; it is easier than simulation, because any one particular will do for a beginning. As the elaborate web of the drama is spun out from this single thread, the class is caught in the tension of the moment. (Wagner, 1976, p. 137-138)

Heathcote feels strongly that it is the teacher's job to help the student to go back and forth between print and drama, between text and response, in a search for awareness. The reading experience is a personal one and a private one; the reader understands what the words say to him, translates the experience he has read about into his own context, and has feelings and attitudes about the experience and the text. It is common for teachers to discuss the knowledge relevant to a text (awareness of the source, the author, traditions and techniques), but not much time has been devoted to those qualities that the reader brings to the text (feelings, experiences, attitudes, values and beliefs).

In order to bring drama into a text, students have to think about the meaning and the implication of words. As well, they have to grasp the characterization, the sequence of actions, the setting,

the mood and the climax. Drama, using the words of others as cues for his own response, allows the student to test the implications of his statements.

Heathcote (1978) feels that reading is ultimately recognition, and that drama can "provide illumination while engaging the imaginations of the readers" (p 14). She lists three points that are important in combining reading and drama: children need help in learning to decode, but it is important that the children find out for themselves as soon as possible; the pupils need time to conjecture, surmise, and experiment using their own experiences; the drama should help the students by leading them to the text as soon as possible and without getting in the way of the text.

Connie and Harold Rosen (1973) state that, in many classrooms, there is other work going on which would lend itself to drama, such as stories, read by the class or to the class, which are rich in dramatic possibilities.

At the elementary level, the purposes of drama involve promoting personal and social growth through developing and sharpening language skills, fostering creative expression, broadening children's vocal and experiential repertoires, and initiating engagement with literature. Appropriate content for dramatic work is drawn from myth, fairy stories, children's books and television programs, and from personal experiences. (p. 205)

Fines and Verrier (1974) discuss the language achievements of children through educational drama:

There have been many times in our work together when we have been overwhelmed by the power of a child's words or argument, and paused for a moment in respectful silence at a wonderful achievement in language. (p. 82)

However, they go on to explain that reading and writing play a large part along with oral language in language development. They state that it is necessary that the child gain background knowledge, as language develops, by having immediate access to books, and the right to spend a period of time using them. It is the fidelity of the drama to the original source that supports the children's belief in the reality, and looking up answers to questions, or browsing extensively, through books to "get the feel of a period" may indeed determine that reality.

The authors of A Proposed Humanities Framework (1975) recommend the integrating of drama and reading:

Live dramatic work can also have a remarkable effect on reading instruction. Although not the principal reason for keeping drama and the language arts in close touch with one another, it is one that administrators and teachers should bear in mind. Acting means action; it is physical, concrete, immediate and illustrative. Almost any kind of reading will yield a scenario for presentation to a small group or the whole class - a myth, a short story, a lyric poem, a folk song. In the process of inventing dialogue and action, the group arrives at a better understanding of the piece of literature and can offer interpretations of it orally or in mime. There are things to watch and do and talk about that urge the children back to the printed page for additional insights or to settle arguments. They get involved with the text they are bringing to view and find additional, practical reasons for wanting to read it well. (p. 205)

The Limitations of Story Enactment

Some authorities in drama are concerned with the limitations of story enactment. They feel that teachers must be aware of why they are asking the students to enact. For some students, enactment may be an important therapeutic or social experience; since decision and action are not required, the students are free to "savour feeling and to focus on form" (Drama Guidelines, P. 14). However, the students may not actually experience dramatic moments, just imitate them. As well, the impulse to get the sequence of events in the story right may take away the emphasis on the inner meaning of the narrative.

Far from enriching the child's understanding, there is danger that the initial experience of the story, poem or incident is merely diluted by subsequent action.
(Drama Guidelines, p. 14)

Since a story presents a completed narrative, the teacher must use the implications of the story, shifting the thinking of the students from the events to the themes and concepts within the story, so that the class will bring a new understanding to the original story.

In Down the Rabbit Hole (1975), Winnifred Lear recalls her experience in school, as a pupil, in an enactment class:

For literature we read *Hiawatha*, *The Heroes* and *The Talisman*, and wrote scenes from them which we acted in the form-room with a toasting fork as Pallas Athen's spear and an upturned wastepaper basket for the tribal fire. The idea, as I discovered when I did teaching practice years later, was that the child, by participation, enters more fully into

the spirit of the book studied. It had the opposite effect on me. Left to myself, I gorged deliciously on Hiawatha sailing away into the sunset, Richard Coeur de Lion and Saladin competing in the sword-play, the Medusa's snaky looks and the three Grey Sisters passing round their communal eye as the stranger approached, but the thing was spoiled for me once I had seen Doris Birchall in a fit of giggles and a couple of faded curtains being Queen Berengaria, or Jenny Denton as noble Andromeda chained to the rock, emitting mouse-like squeaks for help, tied up with a piece of string to the handle of the art cupboard. (p. 119)

This thesis claims that it is not the process of enactment that is the problem; rather, it is the lack of exploration of the meanings of the story, the themes, concepts and issues, that weakens the process.

Heathcote (1967) says bluntly that drama is not stories retold in action, but that drama is human beings confronted by situations which change them because of what they must face in dealing with those challenges. There is room for exploration in a story in which much is already known: the exploration, then, is a realization of the issues in the story, the meanings behind the actions, the understanding of the students.

Dixon (1975) says that in order for students to dramatize or discuss a text, they have to think about the meaning of it and follow those implications. Enacting a selection from literature is translating that text into voice, movement and space. He claims that the language of the children may even be different because the language of the stories would be incorporated into the drama.

Children will find many ways to tell their stories - what the child can draw and paint he knows. What he can show in bodily movement, he knows - let him tell where he is in the mainstream of life and learning. Listen to the songs he sings.....(p. 28)

James Britton (1970) says that some improvisational work is no more than a "story retold in action," descending to trivial detail in an attempt to recreate the right facts from the story. However, he says that there is ample room for exploration using a known story, since the exploration is a bringing-to-life of that story. When the situation takes over after the story input, the developing action may create a new understanding as the students "live through" the improvising.

Perhaps it is simply that since the myths themselves are the handiwork of generations of improvisers, they lend themselves to further improvisation. (p. 145)

Heathcote (1978) sums up the problem of story enactment very clearly in the following statement:

Though stories may be the inspiration for the planning, it is not stories we re-enact; we simply live through some events as best we may, using what we already understand to "inform" the situation, and give us hold on it. And this, in turn, leads us to need further information, gleaned during the living-through. (p. 65)

In a school in the north of England, a class of ten and eleven year olds were dramatizing the story of Ahab and Jezebel. The drama was at the point of conflict between the people and the

king. The headmaster, Mr. Tom Stabler, and the class teacher, were working together on the dramatic work. The description and transcription in this chapter are taken from a BBC film, Three Looms Waiting, and a chapter entitled "In Search of Drama," from The Language of Primary School Children. In a discussion of the difficulties of story enactment, it is important that this particular lesson be examined. The Rosens summarize the work as follows:

Beyond all doubt, every teacher could learn something from Mr. Stabler's style and thoughtfulness. He is the supreme refutation of the assertion that modern methods mean letting children do whatever they like and is an example of a way of leading children to exciting new insights.
(p. 223)

Gavin Bolton comments on the lesson in the same article:

To most of us, Jezebel means the Jezebel story. To Mr. Stabler, it divides into broad themes of: duties of kingship; nature of law; claims of a community, etc. Because the teacher thinks about the story in this way from the very beginning, even the first tentative efforts at dramatizing are put on a different plane - all his questions and all the children's thinking prodded by such questions will stem from this initial concept of the theme.

The second assumption is that Jezebel is not about Jezebel, but about a community, and following on this is the teacher's search for a possible starting point that is relevant to the children's experience, relevant to the spirit of the story, and a vehicle for confrontation through language. (p. 223)

Mr. Stabler's class is engaged in what has traditionally been called "story dramatization." The evidence of his success suggests that the difficulty must lie, not with the fact that a story was the

base of the drama, but with the drama techniques used by teachers who are using text as a source for drama.

The film indicates the immense power of the situation in drawing from the children appropriate language. The depth of commitment and the emotional content of the dialogue adds strength to the argument that story as a source for drama has a place in education. It is a matter of understanding the search for meaning under the text as paramount in teaching.

The following transcript is from the discussion held after a dramatic episode by the children, in which they plead with the king and queen not to knock down their houses to build a temple. This reflection period can follow silent reading as well as drama, and in reading the transcript, the learning mode is clear. The children need to interact with the textual ideas and their own ideas, in order to bring about meaning. As well, print resources are to be collected by the students at the end of the discussion.

T Well, that's fine. Is there anything else anybody wants to talk about before we start again?

P Please, Sir, some people aren't treating me like a king, they are treating me like a peasant, they shout at me in any way.

T Ahab has a complaint that some people are still not treating him as a King, have you got anything to say about that, the rest of you?

P He doesn't treat us like peasants, he doesn't treat us like we are human people. If everyone raised their voices a bit to the king it would sound better and you wouldn't get so much noise like horses shoes, like Mr. Harrison suggested, there wouldn't be much of a crowd closing up in front of the king, the guards would keep them back. If the king sounded more royal and spoke this way, sometimes he trips up when he is speaking, well usually the king speaks slow so as not to make mistakes. The people shout too much to the king they move up and shout too much, they don't treat him like a king.

- T Well, Ahab, what would you do as a king if you were Ahab himself, and you are Ahab yourself, these people are moving up towards you and doing this kind of thing, what ideas have you got?
- P The guards could send them back or whip them back. He just lets them come forward and he doesn't do anything, he just lets them stand and come up to him and shout.
- T What would you suggest then Elijah?
- P He could tell his guards to get them back or he could order them to be silent, tell them to get back himself.
- T Any other ideas about that.
- P He should have more power over the people. The way the people always come forward and people always seem to be on top of the king rather than the king being on top of the people. Sometimes when the king says "Go back" they just keep on shouting at him and come forward.
- T And do you think that people would really be like that?
- P No because they know that they would probably get stoned to death or something.
- T How can we find out a bit more about how kings behaved in those days, and how people were treated by them?
- P If you look in the Bible maybe, and look in the history books.
- T You think that we might find something there?
- P In the Bible because usually things that you try to re-create you find that there is something similar in the Bible. The story is in the Bible so you should find something about kings.
- T Yes. Oh there are a lot of stories about kings in the Bible right from very earliest times. You think you might - well is it a good thought do you think that we should go and try to find particular stories in different parts of the Bible of how kings behaved with their people and the kind of power they had?
- P Yes.
- T Have we got any volunteers to do that? Elijah is willing and those two old men and that old woman and another one here; five of you. All right then and we'll see in fact what we can find, and perhaps when we hear those stories we might have a better idea of the power that kings really did have in those days.

The History of Plays in Education

Plays have been employed to teach skill in language since the Middle Ages. In Greece and Rome, performing on stage was beneath the dignity of the class whose children could afford to go

to school, and a social ban remained on this activity "until the tenth century when a German abbess, Hroswitha, composed Latin plays for her novices. The aim was to replace the plays of Plautus and Terence, then considered too improper for use in the cloister" (Kelly, 1969, p121) Acting out the Bible stories in mystery plays was not unusual recreation among religious officials. Latin plays, written in the classical manner, were often played in the monasteries by the troupes of monks who staged the mystery plays in the churchyard.

Taking their cue from these mystery plays, the Jesuits wrote many of their plays in a classical style, but the characters were abstractions drawn from grammar and literary criticism. The plays were meant both to drill pupils in speaking Latin and Greek, and to teach formal grammar.

Classical drama formed an integral part of the Renaissance classics curriculum. In Britain, several who founded grammar schools specified that a classical play should be performed every year; on the continent, where Catholics were teaching in Protestant schools and vice versa, the religious climate excluded contemporary religious plays, so the classical repertoire was used exclusively.

In Britain, the custom of an annual performance of a classical play was still found at the end of the nineteenth century. Owing to the activities of the great German classicists,

the basic texts were now solidly established, but for school use, they were carefully expurgated. Many editors normalized the preclassical spelling and even added stage directions. Though it was considered most desirable to use plays written for native audiences, this means of instilling confidence was made available to younger pupils by providing them with plays in simplified language and style. As far as modern plays were concerned, teachers were inclined to choose those which reflected the culture of the country.

The step from parrot memory to free conversation is a difficult one, and the ways of forcing pupils to make the change rest on improvisation of some kind. It is not certain when conversation was recognized as a separate teachable skill. But for the Natural method it was a self-sufficient procedure: According to Marcel, "Conversation is more than an agreeable passtime: it is a very active agent in circulating opinions and information, in forming the taste and character."

The most sophisticated scheme of the sort was that of Rouse, who elaborated it in the early years of the twentieth century. To make the speeches of Cicero come alive to his pupils he restaged the trials in which Cicero had pleaded. His pupils prepared themselves for the part they were to play by reading and rereading the appropriate speech, and then studying the circumstances of the case. Then with all the solemnity of the Roman forum they tried the case, improvising every part, witnesses, defendant, jury, prosecutor, and defender. Forty years later in the language schools of the American army, such improvisation was one of the most valued ways of teaching. The men were made to place themselves in situations they would expect to meet on active service and act them out. Thus they learned how to interrogate prisoners, buy supplies and question local people. Such improvisation was used in civilian classrooms after the war as a development of dialogue practice. At present both script and improvisation are being used in educational processes. (Kelly, 1969, p. 123)

Using Scripts with Students

Until the development of drama in education, script was the natural factor relating drama and text; unfortunately, it is also the most difficult of the reading activities, especially if the script is long or complex. In the philosophy of Dorothy Heathcote, the student has to penetrate someone else's written word and has to illuminate those words from his own experience. Then using his memory, his observation, and his perception, he has to invent a complete personality, while remaining true to that suggested by the writer. He has to memorize and deliver this script to an audience, sounding as if he were creating the lines spontaneously. Reading is a major part of this process. The student must be able to read the script, to not be locked into one meaning, to enjoy the content and style of it, and to relate it to his own life experience. If print has been a normal part of his life, if exploring meanings in text and responding has been an integral part of learning, the student will have been part of the reading process.

Much of the meaning of a play is in the subtext, the meaning that lies beneath the apparently logical order of the words in the text. In life, actions and words usually have an obvious and unambiguous meaning, but underneath there is a whole range of motive and impulse that supports or conflicts with the obvious and surface meaning.

A great dramatist is great because with very few words he can create a vast space for exploration, and much of that space lies underneath the words. The greater the play, the more profound and significant is the sub-text, and to get at it, it is necessary to have a group trained to bring its collective resources to bear on the mining operation necessary. (Clark, 1971, p. 3)

Witkin (1974) has observed drama being done with plays, usually as an extension of English, thereby providing an opportunity for the pupil to be on more intimate terms with the texts. Occasionally, short dramatic pieces are used for their own sake. He reports that in the very few cases where a realised form was used in a performance context in the lessons observed, there was not one in which it was deliberately integrated into work on creative improvisation in the way that a piece of literature or poem might be used in dynamic inter-relationship with a creative writing exercise.

Drama's determination to strike out on its own and speak its own truth has tended to make drama teachers suspicious of realised form and of the aura of theatricality that this can introduce. They sometimes use it, but apparently keep some distance between realised form and the improvisation exercises in which they engage, as though to avoid blurring the distinctions that separate drama from theatre. As educational drama matures, this caution will no doubt disappear and the largely creative use of realised form both for appreciation and performance will be possible without sacrificing any of the ideals of creative drama. It will require of course a close relationship, working together of improvised form and realised form in both performance and appreciation. Such a relationship can provide a vital control in the process of reflexive awareness. As yet, educational drama appears not to have developed adequate techniques for achieving this. (p. 90 - 91)

John Allen (1975) thinks it essential that there be an alliance between the English department and the drama specialist as partners, but at the same time he can understand the reluctance of some drama teachers to be drawn too closely into being preoccupied with English Literature as the core of its program.

He says there is a traditional association between English and drama, since they share a common concern for the spoken language, and they both deal in some way with the study, appreciation, and creation of dramatic literature.

Some teachers have also demonstrated that it is not only dramatic literature that can be approached in a dramatic way. John Hodgson (1971), for example, outlined the ways in which dramatic improvisation could be used to open up the themes, stories and characters not only of plays, but of all written literature. He has made use of improvisation, for example, in increasing understanding of the Romeo and Juliet situation, by acting out similar situations of family conflict in a contemporary setting. This method can also be used in other subject disciplines which involve interpersonal relationships. Hodgson also examines ways in which improvisation can be used to help the students to discover literature, and the ways in which literature can help us to improve improvisations, by suggesting the ideas, the material or the methods. The deeper understanding of plot, theme and character comes as part of determination to grasp the whole of the text. He feels that if improvisation and literature come to-

gether, the goal is a greater insight into ourselves, and a deeper and fuller concern for other people.

The Plowden Report, however, suggested the following:

Children re-enact and reshape experiences of everyday life and those derived from literary, Biblical and historical sources. Unscripted speech plays a part but, if it is emphasized too much, it may cramp movement and kill action. As children become more accustomed to this way of working, improvisations can be discussed, revised and rehearsed until they grow into coherent plays from which children begin to understand something of the problems and strengths of dramatic form. It is significant that the liveliest drama in the first year of secondary school is of the unscripted kind that we have described earlier. Certainly, though some primary school children enjoy having an audience of other children or their parents, formal presentation of plays on a stage is usually out of place. (p. 218)

David Davis (1976) feels that a subsidiary aim flowing from drama would be to develop the students' critical abilities in relation to plays, (both as scripts and in performance), and to the cinema and television. This would spring from the analysis of characters, the study of their motivations and the influence and pressures on them, and the analysis of form, all in terms of the drama the students themselves are involved in. This study would therefore be a useful supplement as preparation for any student interested in studying literature or film at any level.

The authors of Drama Guidelines (1976) state that text can be a starting-point for improvisation, and improvisation may lead to a

closer study and a deeper understanding of the original text. At the primary level, improvisation can be a means of releasing children from "the tyranny of the script," and allowing them to examine the themes within the text they have been given. Improvisation becomes a tool for the exploration of the ideas, relationships and language of the original text.

This thesis is concerned with reading and print, but not script per se. Drama work at depth can create first-hand experience; therefore it is important that much of the drama be not just the acting out of a text, but a living through of the concepts.

The authors of Learning Through Drama (1978) see that drama can now be seen in a much wider setting than the study and appreciation of plays.

The drama teacher can draw on the vast resources of dramatic literature, its situations, characters and forms of symbolization, as a way of stimulating and enriching the child's explorations in drama. Equally the English teacher can use drama as a way of deepening the child's appreciation of, and sensitivity to, the work not only of the playwright, but also of the novelist and the poet. In this interchange between drama and literature, both in the drama lesson and the English lesson, the child is also brought into direct contact with a wide range of shared cultural symbols. Through drama the script can be lifted from the page and translated into the media which properly give it its life-sound, stillness, movement, space and time. (p. 154)

Summary

Drama has been used in the teaching of reading for the last several decades. The difficulty lies in what is meant by "drama"

in this process. In the interchange between drama and text, the child meets a wide range of cultural symbols. The drama must help the child in finding levels of meaning in those symbols. It must elaborate upon the given facts to find the implicit truths, rather than simply be a retelling of the events. The enacting of the text is one way of making explicit much of what is implicit. Enacting is reliving what has happened, but turning it into an event that happens as it is spoken about. The teacher must relate the story to the lives of the students for significant learning to occur. Drama can allow the reader's own subjective world to come into play, where subjective experience is released, helping the student in the understanding and application of the meaning in a text. The emphasis in enactment must be on the inner meaning of the narrative; the student lives through events that are inspired or suggested by the text, using what he already understands to gain more information from the living-through of the experience.

Script appears to be the natural factor in relating drama and text, and yet it is the most difficult of the reading activities. The student must penetrate the meaning of someone else's writing, and then illuminate it from his own experience. From the research evidence, most teachers do not use drama in script work the way they do in working with a piece of literature. However, script may be a starting point for improvisation, and improvisation may lead to a closer study and a deeper understanding of the original text.

V THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERATURE AND READING

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the importance of the material that the student reads, and the effect of that material on the student's development in reading. Research indicates that reading programs in the past concentrated on the mechanical aspects of skills, but today's programs are often more complex and more calculated to attract the interest of the young reader. Such activities as individualized reading, the teacher reading, use of media and of novels, all are contributing to the use of literature in the reading program.

The place of literature in the development of language and thought in children is discussed. The modes of literature that students should encounter are looked at through a particular genre, the fairy and folk tale, as representative of the narrative that young students can and should read. As well, this chapter relates what children read to the development of literature as an art form.

What Children Read

A significant contribution to the teaching of reading has been an examination of the importance of what is read. If

learning to read is separated from children's literature, the children may never realize what learning to read has in store for them. "Learning to read from books written in no man's language is no longer necessary" (Clark, 1976, p. 104).

Margaret Clark says that for all the preoccupation with children learning to read, the real book for children is the story book. "Offering stories to be read is the way our print-dominated society carries on a habit even older than writing and as common as bread - telling stories and listening to them" (p. 105).

Marsha Rudman's (1976) research in the United States indicates that in the past, reading programs concentrated on the mechanical aspects of skills. Now, most reading programs also take into consideration the more complex and advanced requirements for competence in reading. Rudman says that we may no longer make the assumption that children will automatically read whatever they are told to read. Children's textbooks and trade books have undergone a marked transformation: they are more calculated to attract and interest the young reader. The materials that children read must be meaningful or understandable to them, within the language, and within the vicarious experiences that they bring to the reading situation. However, the choice of reading material is secondary in importance to the transaction between book and reader. Ultimately, response to literature is subjective, and

is shaped by both emotion and intellect. It is important that the reading materials used should promote the child's natural interests, through which he learns about the world and about himself, and through which he acquires the tools of learning that make further education possible. ^{107.}

It is also important to examine the type of story that is read to and by the child. Does the quality of the writing affect the learning? What is the conflict in North America between the basal reader and books written by literary authors who write stories for children? What standards are there for choosing stories? What qualities define "literature"? Does the type of story used affect the response of the children who have read it?

In an article entitled the "Assessment of Readability: An Overview", Jack Gilliland (1972) says that teachers must be concerned with the problem of matching a variety of printed materials to a variety of children with specific reading abilities. It is important that an attempt be made to minimize the difficulties which a child will encounter, so that the reading undertaken will be "efficient, profitable and charitable". Reading materials for children are as varied as the characteristics of the children for whom the material is to be chosen.

Reading programs in many schools have become more complex

than simply having the students reading orally from a basal reader. 108.
Such activities as individualized reading, the teacher reading and telling stories to the class, use of the media, and novel study all may contribute to a reading program.

The Bullock Report (1975) suggests that children's favourite stories at different ages "reflect the particular fantasies and emotional conflicts which are foremost in their experience at that time" (p. 125). The report states that these stories may help the child resolve inner conflicts, as well as permit him, through vicarious experiences, to identify with someone else. Literature can provide imaginative insight into the feelings of another person, allowing for the contemplation of human experiences which may be possible, but which the reader has not yet met. At the same time, the child is confronted with problems similar to his own, but within the safety of literature. The report quotes C.S. Lewis' remark: "Nothing, I suspect, is more astonishing in any man's life, than the discovery that there do exist people very, very like himself" (p.125).

A Definition of Literature

John Hodgson, in Improvisation and Literature (1971), says that literature is composed of books or written composition which have received a significant body of acclaim.

It is essentially recorded or printed or permanent. It has the quality of being tested, tried and ponderable, and goes back as far as Aesop and as close to the present time as some rock songs. (p. 128)

Susanne Langer (1977) calls story the form we give to fiction, and fiction "the illusion of a life in the mode of a virtual past" (p. 73).

Martin Buber, in I and Thou (1970), feels that modern man is a voracious reader who has never learned to read well. He feels that part of the trouble is that he is taught to read inferior material:

In adolescence students are suddenly turned loose on books worth reading, but generally don't know how to read them. And if, untaught, some instinct prompts them to read well, chances are that they are asked completely tone-deaf questions as soon as they have finished their assignment - either making them feel that they read badly after all or spoiling something worthwhile for the rest of their lives.

We must learn to feel addressed by a book by the human being behind it, as if a person spoke directly to us. A good book or essay or poem is not primarily an object to be put to use, or an object of experience: it is the voice of you speaking to me, requiring a response. (p.38)

Fred Inglis discusses the politics of literature in Children's Literature in Education (1971). He says that reading fiction, like watching television, is not something which one does by oneself, but rather it is a transaction involving the story-teller and the listener.

Reading fiction has a total context, like any other human action, and while it is always impossible to recover that total context, at least we should remember that it is always there. One way of reminding ourselves is to change our modes of understanding; when we understand things differently, we value them differently. (p. 157)

Inglis claims that there is a cue for any understanding of human experience to be taken from children's novels. Fiction is a social means of exploring and defining our fantasies and their relation to our realities. He explains that even though the child tends to read novels in a rather isolated, absorbed way, he is engaged in a social and cultural transaction with the author, and with the sense he has of his social identity. Consequently, to study children's fiction is

to stand at the intersection of various perspectives, and to stand there in an attempt to sort out some bearings, bearings which will help chart the main question of humane and conscious teaching. (p. 158)

Denys Harding (1977), too, start out from the main premise that reading a novel is a social action. The response of a child to situations in a novel is instantly evaluative, though the value judgment may change with time. The nature of this involvement is not just analogous to the involvement we feel with the characters in a novel, nor is the child just a passive listener or spectator; his range of interest may extend or modify itself as a result of what he reads or sees.

Our psychology is endlessly busy, moving swiftly from reality to memory to fantasy and back to supposition. We constantly imagine, evaluate and discard possibilities other than those in front of us, and we perform this astonishingly rapid filtering and sorting operation during a dialogue with our author. (p.66)

Harding claims that this process is not the same as saying that the reader identifies with a character and lives through vicarious experience; rather, the reader is defining his desires, his fantasies, his aspirations.

John Potts, in Beyond Initial Reading (1976), claims that literature provides the widest and richest source of imaginative adventures and experiences, but an appreciation of literature must be carefully nurtured. As well, he states that the total reading process includes the skills performed in responding to the printed text, plus the whole range of experiences which result from exercising these skills. He feels that teachers need to take account of this aspect of the reading process when devising a program of reading experiences for their children. The emotive and experiential aspects are important in all aspects of reading. If the experiences provided are unsatisfactory for the children, they cannot develop satisfactory reading habits. Potts says the study of language should reflect the linguistic process; that is, it should be alive and active, not dead and passive. Teachers must create in students an awareness of the importance of language, and of its value as a means of communication and of expression.

James Moffett (1976) says that whereas adults differentiate their thought with specialized kinds of discourse, such as narrative, generalization and theory, children must make narrative do for all. Children speak almost entirely through stories - real or invented- and they comprehend what others say through story. The child does not talk and read explicitly about categories and theories of experience; he talks and reads about characters, events, and settings, all of which are filled with symbolic meanings. Children must represent in the narrative level of abstraction several kinds of conception that in the adult would be variously represented at several layers of abstraction.

Barbara Hardy, writing in the Cool Web (1977), says that narrative, like lyric or dance, is not to be regarded as an aesthetic invention used by artists to control, manipulate, and order experience, but as "a primary act of mind transferred to art from life" (p.12).

What concerns Hardy are the qualities which fictional narrative shares with the inner and outer storytelling that plays a major role in the child's sleeping and waking life.

For we dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate, and love by narrative. In order really to live, we make up stories about ourselves and others, about the personal, as well as the social, past and future. (p. 22)

Hardy thinks we may engage in telling ourselves stories in a constant attempt to exchange identity and remake the past.

The polarity between fantasy and reality is another instance of convenient fiction: we look back to go forward or to stay in a past-centred obsession. Like most works of fiction, personal history is made up of fantasy and realism, production and idling...It is hard to stop telling stories. (p.23)

In "Concerning Myth and Education" (1976), Ted Hughes discusses the power of story. He says that a child takes possession of a story as a unit of imagination, re-entering the story at will, looking around him, and considering all the aspects of the story at his leisure. To begin with, each story is separate from every other story. "Each unit of imagination is like a whole separate imagination, no matter how many the head holds" (p.80). If the story is learned well by the child, so that all its parts can be seen at a glance, then Hughes says that that story has become a word.

Any fragment of the story is the 'word' by which the whole story's electrical circuit is switched into consciousness, and all its light and power brought to bear...To follow the meanings behind the one word Crucifixion would take the child through most of

European history, and much of Roman and Middle Eastern too as well as...into every corner of our private life, ...compelling the child to acknowledge much more important meanings than merely informative ones. A story can wield so much! And a word wields the story. (p.82 & 83)

To Hughes, the story itself is an acquisition; it helps us understand most of the ideas which are at the roots of the society. Because of the brain's ability to use metaphor, it can use the pattern of one set of images to organize quite a different set. Therefore the images from one story can be used as images for related and yet different meanings.

The Plowden Report states that teachers must be convinced of the value of stories for children, stories told to them, stories read to them and the stories they read for themselves. The report states that it is through story that children search for the meaning of the experiences that they have had.

As they "try on" first one story book character, then another, imagination and sympathy, the power to enter into another personality and situation, which is a characteristic of childhood and a fundamental condition for good social relationships, is preserved and nurtured. It is almost certainly in childhood that children are most susceptible, both to living example and to the examples they find in books. (p.218)

The Modes of Literature

In exploring the effect of what is read on the child's reading ability, I would like to examine one particular mode of Children's Literature - the folk tale - to understand the power of stories for children.

Bruno Bettelheim, the noted child psychologist, in The Uses of Enchantment (1977), examines those aspects of folk literature that are of concern to children, and therefore, to parents and teachers. His study embodies the concepts of literature that this thesis considers vital to the choice of reading material for children, and the use of those stories in helping children respond intellectually and emotionally.

Bettelheim takes issue against the statement that fairy tales are no longer appropriate to the modern world. He claims that not only are fairy tales not damaging to children, they are necessary to the development of a healthy psyche. Since folk literature has a unique power to admonish, reassure, fortify, caution and enrapture, the child who is deprived of fairy tales is denied a means of externalizing and managing his deepest fears and wishes.

Bettelheim says that fairy tales carry important messages to the conscious, the preconscious and the unconscious mind on whatever level each is functioning at the time. By dealing with universal human problems, particularly those which preoccupy the child's mind, these stories speak to his budding ego and encourage

its development, while at the same time relieving preconscious and unconscious pressures.

From stories, Bettelheim says, the child learns to live real life to its fullest, by experiencing not only its rewards but its risks. The child, in the guise of the fairy tale hero, learns to go out into the world, experiences tribulations, and becomes master of his situation.

Bettelheim's criticism of those who oppose fairy tales is severe. People mistakenly thought that fairy stories caused, rather than embodied, these feelings of anxiety and violence, and promptly outlawed them. Bettelheim claims that removing these stories from the imagination of the child was expected to extinguish the "giants and ogres of the fairy tale - that is, the dark monsters residing in the unconscious," but he says that children cannot construct fantasies which will help them cope with problems that they will meet in their own lives when they have lost the common fantasy heritage preserved in folk literature.

Robertson Davies, in an article entitled "What Can Fairy Tales Teach? - Plenty!" (1978), comments on the importance of the fairy tale and Bettelheim's explanations of this literary genre.

Sensible people have known something else, too, of great importance, and it is a fact that the psychoanalysts have brought to the attention of a world where it tends to be forgotten children learn things before they fully understand them, and tuck the knowledge away for use when it becomes relevant. Children learn about sex, for instance, much earlier than is supposed, and what they learn falls into place when they need it. And where do they learn?

They used to learn such things from fairy tales, says Dr. Bettelheim, and the knowledge came to them without ugly shock. They learned about sibling rivalry, which fairy tales allowed them to understand fully without necessarily creating family strife or long-held resentments. They learned that everybody, including parents, has a double-sided nature and that it is foolish to cast parents or brothers and sisters or people in authority in wholly benevolent roles, and then to be shocked when they show their harsher aspect. They learned that love and hate are never far apart, and that ugly things may, under the influence of love, be revealed as things of value and beauty. They learned a great deal about retribution and poetic justice.

Fairy tales taught them about life, and gave them a working philosophy to which they could appeal when they need it and against which they could test the experience that came to them. In short, fairy tales were among the most valuable parts of a child's experience, and those who missed them had been denied something as vital as good food or a wise indoctrination in the decencies of communal life. Can this loss be made up to the modern child? (p.3)

Maurice Sendak finds fairy tales claustrophobic in an artistic sense. He feels that there is an incredible tension in each one of them, and that they work on two levels: first, as stories; secondly, as the unravelling of deep psychological dramas. The stories are intentionally emotional, but covered with a fairytale language. As an artist, Sendak was looking to catch the moment in each fairytale when the tension between the storyline and the emotion is at its greatest.

I wanted my pictures to tell the readers who think the stories are simple to go back to the beginning and read again. That was my intention. I didn't want to show Rapunzel with a hank of hair hanging out of a tower. To me that's not what the story is about. A lot of illustrators have chosen that image because there seems little else to draw. But to me, Rapunzel's hair is only the gimmick in the story. I had to find out what was really underneath. It was hard. There was not one story that gave up its secret right away. I had to read and reread them for years before I could abstract the particular thing that meant something to me. Each story had an internal problem to be solved, and the device I choose happened to fit. I can't verbalize or give you an intellectual account of why it fits. I can only say that I experimented for a long time, and the way I finally did it was how I knew my Grimm should look, as opposed to anybody else's. (p.172)

The teacher can use the fairy tale and the legend in the same way that Sendak does; through discussion and drama, he can explode the story and mine its depths.

Burnett (1977) writes that

It surely must be true that all children possess this right of entry into the fairyland where anything can be pretended. I feel quite sure they do, and that if one could follow them in the pretendings, one would make many discoveries about them. (p.39)

Literature As An Art Form

Maxine Greene, in Literature in Aesthetic Education, says that she is concerned with the place of literature in aesthetic education, and with the potential roles to be played by literary and dramatic forms in the interdisciplinary programs that emerge. To her, aesthetic education involves deliberate initiation into the modes of perception, apprehension, and

awareness on which aesthetic experience depends. Interdisciplinary programs include the several arts--music, painting, sculpture, film, drama, fiction, poetry - in their distinctiveness and, where possible, in their inter-relatedness. In both contexts, aesthetic education and interdisciplinary study, literature is likely to take on a significance different from that now ascribed to it in the curricula of present-day schools.

Greene reports that literature, whether in the guise of "English", "language arts", or "reading", has long been central in public school curricula. But Greene feels it has not been treated as an art form. When not justified as an exercise in reading, the short story or the poem or the play has been presented as a type of a "linguistic puzzle to be unravelled according to the rules, as a bearer of values - normally positive and humane" (p.60).

Greene's view is that literature is most likely to be constituted as an art form and taught as an art form within a program of aesthetic education. This is because the explicit content of such a program is understood to be composed of aesthetic phenomena, among which are examples of literary art. There is a sense in which an aesthetic education creates what has been called an "art world" in a school, an awareness the meaning of art and the impact of artistic creation on human life.

There must be an ambience that enables people to perceive those shapes and sounds and words in an aesthetic space - or, as one writer has said, 'What has been culturally established as perceiver's space.' This cannot happen unless reflectiveness is encouraged, where individuals ponder their own experiences with each art form, to become sensitive to 'the expressiveness of experienced things', and at once to reach out in an effort to explore the culture developed by artists over time, the realm of cumulative meanings to which works of art in some way refer. (p.62)

John Paynter (1974) says that the arts arise out of man's need to understand himself and his environment. Their principle function is to yield insight. The arts help man to understand things that cannot be comprehended by any other means; they are about feeling and man's emotional response to the intangible information he receives through his senses.

Paynter begins by discussing oral literature, then relates it to written literature. He says that the story maker's source of information was his own intuitions. Paynter makes the case that there was nothing scientific or reasonable about the storyteller's explanations, neither was there anything of modern science in his ways of expressing these ideas. Because the answers to the problems were felt, so were they expressed intuitively in the most natural outlets of expression, vocal sounds and bodily movement and gestures; that is, in poetry, dance and music. With the addition of extensions to the voice and body in the form of simple musical instruments, masks and costumes, these forms of expression grew into rituals that represented "whole

communities' understanding of the mysterious and sometimes hostile world around them." This kind of expression was only possible through a collaborative effort.

In so far as it was art, the art belonged to everyone. One can still see the primitive rituals of music, word and movement enacted any day of the week in any city and the world. Good literature embodies simple and timeless truths. Whatever the details, there is always the underling feeling that at the heart of the story is a message that applies to us now every bit as much as it did to people thousands of years ago. Themes from children's literature are frequently those universal gropings after truth that have been part of life on this planet since men and women first started to look around them and wonder. (p.6)

Albert William Levi, in Literature as a Humanity (1976), writes that the arts of communication are founded upon the clear intuition that language can never be merely private, that our forms of speech are clues to our evaluations of "things" and "persons", and that a language, in all its nuances of statement and implication, constitutes a form of life. The identity of the individual, the realities of social life, and our perceptions of the world as a whole, are reflected in language. The expressiveness of our language sets the limits of our intellectual and emotional perceptions.

The arts of communication are, therefore, deeply rooted in the human quest for expression and response - in our determination to be and in our passion to share experience. The entire repertory of our meaningful sounds, our sociable noises, even that arsenal of those purely vocal exercises which have little more for motivation than the prevention of silence - who can deny that behind them something is at work which we call Will or Mind or the Soul of Man? (p.55)

Assessing Reading and Literature

The National Council of the Teachers of English commissioned a study to assess educational progress in reading and literature in North America. I have included the study in this thesis to help explicate the difference in reading and literature, as seen by the members of teachers involved in the study, and to illustrate the continuum of the two terms. John Mellon has edited the results in a book, National Assessment and the Teaching of English (1977).

Mellon says that, like most tests of reading comprehension, these exercises measure word and sentence recognition, as well as overt vocabulary knowledge, tacit knowledge of discourse structure, and inferential reasoning ability. The difficulty is in distinguishing failures of word recognition ("decoding" in the traditional sense) from absence of word knowledge or faulty processing of syntactic or discourse structures. Some reading problems result from not knowing the meanings of written words one can pronounce, others from not being able to recognize the written forms of words whose meanings and sounds one otherwise knows, and still others from an inability to recognize the syntactic features of the sentence in which they occur. Mellon feels that until these three factors are isolated and controlled in the items of a reading test or assessment, it is wrong to believe that the test or assessment is measuring awareness of higher-level features of discourse

(significant facts, main ideas, organizational sequences, abstractness levels) or the ability to perform certain cognitive operations (infer purpose or tone, assess logicality, analyze humor, etc.). Mellon notes that the most interesting aspect of the results is that, although the rates for the easy and difficult passages are virtually the same at each age, the comprehension was markedly lower at all ages on the more difficult passages. It seems that the separate sentences of a challenging passage are comprehended literally, but are not further assembled in the reader's mind as recognized components of the discourse being read. As a result, major and minor idea sequences, and the development of key meanings, go unrecognized, and comprehension questions cannot be answered. "The reader simply fails to grasp the 'idea content' of the passage. This phenomenon might be termed 'sentence calling,' an analogy with 'word calling' among beginning readers." (p.68)

In word calling, individual words are read but are not understood in sentences. In sentence calling, sentences are read one at a time but are not understood in discourses. Rereading, reflection, study, discussion, and the answering of specially prepared questions continue to be the principal activities enabling students to progress from 'sentence calling' to the full comprehension of discourses.

In looking over the exercises used in the assessment, one is struck by the vast difference in difficulty between the short reading passages written especially for the younger students and the professional writing used in the exercises for older youth. As expected, this adult writing often proved difficult even for the seventeen year olds. Furthermore, there seemed to be no passages clearly identifiable as being at the medium - difficulty level. If this condition is at all true of reading material used in the schools, then it may well be the case that there exists a need in the middle school grades for more reading matter that is not quite up to the level of the "Village of Noyon" or the "Farmer Brown" passages, for example, but that challenges and exercises young readers more than do their Junior novels or the artificially simplified prose of some middle-school textbooks in the content areas. (p.69)

The following statements were the results of this committee's work in describing the goals of the teaching of literature, as separate from the goals of reading.

The Student:

1. Experiences Literature. Is aware that literary qualities exist in a variety of forms. Seeks experiences with literature in any form, from any culture:
 - a. Listens to literature:
 1. Is aware of literary qualities in oral forms, such as poems, songs, jingles, jokes, nursery rhymes, story tellings, sermons, speeches, advertisements and conversation;
 2. Seeks to listen to oral forms of literature whether live or electronically reproduced;
 - b. Reads Literature:
 1. Is aware of literary qualities in written forms, such as letters, diaries, journals, essays, poems, autobiographies, biographies, histories, novels, short stories, plays, magazines, newspapers, catalogs, posters, advertisements, bumper stickers, tombstones, and graffiti;

2. seeks to read written forms of literature;

c. Witnesses literature:

1. Is aware of literary qualities in enacted forms, such as plays, musicals, happenings, ceremonial and ritual activities, movies, and television productions;
2. Seeks to witness enacted forms of literature whether live or electronically reproduced;

2. Responds to Literature - responds to literature in any form, from any culture, in a variety of ways - emotionally, reflectively, creatively - and shares responses with others:

a. Responds emotionally - participates emotionally in a work of literature:

1. Experiences emotional involvement with characters and events in literature;
2. Experiences emotional involvement with the ideas and feelings expressed in literature;
3. Experiences emotional involvement with the language in a work of literature;

b. Responds reflectively - understands a work of literature by reflecting upon it in a variety of ways:

1. Understands a work of literature through its language and structure - comprehends the literal and figurative meanings of words and sentences in their contexts: comprehends the ways such elements as images, scenes, characters, and the ideas they embody work together to produce emotional effects and convey meanings.

2. Understands a work of literature through its relationship to the self - understands a work of literature and self by relating them to one another; relates kinds and patterns of experience in a work to personal experiences and values;
 3. Understands a work of literature through its relationship to the world - understands a work by relating it to aspects of its own or other cultures; understands a work by relating it to other works of literature, other forms of art, and other modes of perceiving experience such as history, philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology and theology;
 4. Evaluates a work of literature - evaluates a work of literature by reflecting upon its language and structure, its relationship to the self and its relationship to the world.
- c. Responds creatively - uses language imaginatively in response to a work of literature:
1. Enacts a work of literature through oral and dramatic interpretation;
 2. Recreates a work of literature through imitation or transformation in any form or medium;
 3. Creates literature in any form or medium;
- d. Shares responses with others - shares emotional, reflective, and creative responses in a variety of ways:
1. Communicates responses to others;
 2. Participates with others in responding;
 3. Shares works of literature with others;
3. Values literature - recognizes that literature plays a significant continuing role in the experience of the individual and society:
- a. Recognizes that literature may be a source of enjoyment;

- b. recognizes that experience with literature may be a means of developing self-understanding and personal values;
- c. Recognizes that experience with literature may be a means of understanding the nature of man and the diversity of culture;
- d. Recognizes that literature may be a significant means of transmitting and sustaining the values of a culture. (p.62)

The goals are not exclusively the domain of the world of literature; it is apparent that they are also the goals of reading and in many cases, of drama. When the authors use words and phrases such as "enact", "recreate", "share responses", "participate with others", "develops self-understanding and personal values", the committee is considering the experiential process of which drama is an integral part. If these goals of literature could be applied in teaching, alongside the goals of drama, the student might grow to understand his place in society, and, as well, develop his own sense of worth.

Summary

This chapter indicates that the student must experience, respond to, and value literature. Therefore, the materials that are used in reading programs should reflect a variety of literary forms, as well as expose him to the literary qualities in varied written and enacted forms.

Through reading, the child is engaged in a social and cultural transaction with the author, seeing various perspectives and modifying his own values and judgments as a result of what he reads. In dialoguing with an author, the student filters and sorts through many possibilities as he reads, responding in a complex way out of the framework of his prior experience. The reader is defining his fantasies and his wishes.

Children must represent, in narrative, several kinds of conception that would be represented with several layers of abstraction in the adult world. In order to understand life, the child uses narrative, making up stories about himself and others, about the past and the future. Images from one story can be used as images for related, and yet different, meanings.

Bettelheim says that from stories, the child learns to live life to its fullest by experiencing not only its rewards, but its risks. The student must ponder his own experience with literature and explore the culture developed by artists over a long period of time, understanding the meaning to which art, in some way, refers.

Drama is one method of helping the child to communicate his responses to others, to participate with others in responding, and to share works of literature with others.

VI. THE ROLE OF DRAMA IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THOUGHT AND LANGUAGE

Introduction

This chapter explores the relationship between language and thought. I examine briefly the theories of Piaget, Barnes, Britton, Vygotsky and Bruner, with regard to the development of language and thought. The role of talk in developing language in young students, and the importance of group work in helping that development to occur, is surveyed through the work of Barnes, Moffett and Britton. As well, I explore Courtney's concepts of using drama to create language activities based on meaningful contexts.

This chapter concludes with a discussion of talk, in and out-of-role, and with a transcript of children involved in a dramatic situation, as evidence of the power of living-through an experience in learning through role-playing.

The Relationship Between Language and Thought

In an essay entitled "Language and Thought" (1974), Paul Hirst explores the relationship between language and thought. He feels the most distinguishing feature in this relationship to be that between the private world of the mind and the public world of language. Hirst says that thought is expressed in words, and if thought is significant, then it involves distinction of some kind,

and therefore must be using symbols.

All intelligible thought involves the use of symbols, and most frequently, the use of words. It seems perfectly proper to say that we think in words. (p.71)

His point is that a particular thought exists only if it is formulated in relevant terms, for in order to have a specific thought, one must entertain a set of symbols that has specific meaning. Children learn to understand words by using these symbols.

To Hirst, the meaning of language is a

matter neither of the thoughts nor the objects to which terms are sometimes said to refer; concepts and propositions are units of meaning and not psychological entities, pseudo-objects or events. (p.83)

Piaget's argument is that thought is the capacity to symbolize, to oneself and to others, and that language is only one means of symbolizing. Thought precedes language, and language "profoundly transform thought" (1968).

Wilkinson (1971) says that thinking is possible without language, but not at an advanced level. "By means of words, we develop concepts which enable us to organize our experience, and

in one sense to create the world we live in" (p.94).

Barnes (1976) feels that speech, while not identical with thought,

provides a means of reflecting upon thought processes, and controlling them. Language allows one to consider not only what one knows but how one knows it, to consider, that is, the strategies by which one is manipulating the knowledge, and therefore to match the strategies more closely to the problem. (p.99)

To Vygotsky (1971), the relationship between thought and language is "inner speech," speech that becomes embodied in thought. He explains that the relationship between thought and language resembles the dialogue between two people who have perfect understanding of what they are talking about to each other, since they share a common subject. The child, then, learns how to use language as a representation of reality, manipulating the language in thought, before having to respond to the situation.

Bruner (1972) says that language affects thought by helping the child to define the required cues by modifying his perceptions and allowing the working out of a system of "differentiated associations". Bruner considers that language is an instrument of thought, the one refining and developing the other. Bruner speculates that the process of the internalizing of language depends upon

interaction with others, upon the need to develop corresponding categories and transformation for communal actions. What is significant about the growth of mind in the child is to what degree it depends not upon capacity but upon the unlocking of capacity by techniques that come from exposure to the specialized environment of a culture. (p.166)

Bruner describes language development as three stages of representation: the enactive; where, when something is imagined, it has to be enacted, (as when a word is thought, it has to be said); the iconic, where images stand for perceptual events, and the symbolic, when the conveyed meaning becomes specific rather than general.

Britton (1970) sees language and thought as two forms of behaviour, interacting but distinct in origin, and with differing forms of development. He says that as a child learns words, he sorts those words into categories, and those categories are complexes:

and in the course of handling complexes (in both speech and thought) to organize experience, meet the challenges of new experience, manage his practical undertakings, satisfy his curiosity, commune and argue with adults, ... the ability to think in concepts is achieved in adolescence by most members of our society. (p.211)

Britton writes that the primary task for speech is to symbolize reality in order to handle that reality. He claims that we use talk as a means of coming to grips with new experiences. As people talk, they relate the events of the conversation to their own experiences, creating personal contexts for that new experience. With the aid of language as an organizing principal,

we construct, each for himself, a world representation; we modify this representation in the light of further experience in order that our predictions may be better.

Britton feels that the child, in order to learn, will require, as well as knowledge of past tradition and art, an openness to new ways of experiencing and new ways of evaluating. He quotes George Gusdorf as saying:

To be open to the speech of others is to grasp it in its best sense, continually striving not to reduce it to the common denominator of banality, but to find in it something original. By doing this, moreover, by helping the other to use his own voice, one will stimulate him to discover his innermost need. Such is the task of the teacher, if, going beyond the monologue of instruction, he knows how to carry the pedagogical task into authentic dialogue where personality is developed. (p.273)

Britton feels that in trying to understand thought and language, we are in danger of overlooking man's emotional needs. It is important that we recognize the value and importance "both of the discursive logical organization and at the same time that of the undissociated intuitive processes, the organization represented in its highest form in words of art" (p.217).

The Importance of Talk in Education

Barnes says that speech is not only of use in helping the child in making sense of the world, but also as a means of imposing his version of the world on others. Language carries the message the child wants to communicate, as well as conveying

information about who he thinks he is, who he thinks he is talking to, and what he believes the situation to be. If the pupil develops a dependency on others and doesn't think for himself, or if he feels his knowledge is unrelated to the "school knowledge," he may undervalue his own ability to think. Pupils must play an active part in the formulation of knowledge, and schools must set up patterns of communication that will increase the pupils' participation in learning.

Barnes says that one of the best strategies in school to encourage language development is to allow the child to speak freely and often, thus making his thoughts more explicit and his statements more precise.

Barnes claims that the human mind develops through a process of decentration, in which

the child, by incorporating alternative viewpoints into his own knowledge, develops models of the physical and social world which transcend his original, more egocentric, view point. The decentration comes in part from the need to communicate with other people, since it necessitates insight into their understanding of the world. (p.91)

Barnes feels that no teacher can afford to ignore the influence of social interaction upon learning, or the influence of communication on curriculum.

McNeill (1970) points out that the semantic aspect of language is not simply concerned with acquiring a word or an expression; the child must build up the range of meanings connected with that word, recognize its context and relation to other words, and the emotional and expressive range of its application. McNeill feels that a child will learn by exploring language in meaningful situations, rather than by learning vocabulary lists, doing language exercises, or by using reading materials with a restricted vocabulary.

John Seeley (1970) points out that language is the medium through which a human being becomes a personality in society. He bases his work on developments in linguistics and in sociology, showing that this concern is not only common to English and to drama, but fundamental to the education process as a whole. Seeley feels that drama provides opportunities for simulating situations in which many language forms can be practised, and where children can begin to analyse social interaction and "learn how to exploit a new form of expression" (p.15).

The authors of Understanding Children Talking (1976) suggest that everyone needs to work through the events of his daily life; individuals have to assimilate their experiences and build them into a continuing picture of the world. They claim that talk is the chief means by which the child develops as an individual and as a social being. Young children think through their utterances; the process of developing social speech goes on side by side the "inner voice." The authors think a school could be and should be an environment in which all kinds of talk happen, where children can talk to adults in both formal and informal situations, where purposive talk goes on, and where undirected conversations are also seen as part of the educative process. They say that the crucial element in learning is a respect for everyday speech. It is through conversation that students formulate and revise their view of the world. As they gain confidence with words through practice, they are indulging in social behaviour and rational thought; everyday speech gives access to thinking.

We digest new experience by talking about it with ourselves, with our peers, with our elders. Many children are afraid of the reactions of their peer group. Laughter, content, disregard, silence, even simple disagreement expressed with quiet confidence, effectively discourage the timid from further participation in peer group talk. (p.14)

The Effect of Group Talk

Barnes (1976) says that teachers must understand the part played by speech in group work that is not teacher-dominated. He feels that average pupils are capable of learning to control their own language strategies if they are allowed to think aloud and "take responsibility for formulating explanatory hypotheses and evaluating them" (p.29). For this development to occur, the pupils must be placed in a social context which supports such developments; drama class can be such a context.

Barnes says that children eight to twelve have learned much about using language "for collaborative thinking, for encouraging one another, for coping with disagreement, and for rational persuasion" (p.30.) If the purpose of school is for pupils to grasp principles and use new knowledge as a means of recoding former experience, then this talk is of central importance. According to Barnes, the pupils need opportunities to go back over such experiences, reflecting upon the bases upon which they are interpreting reality, and thereby changing that reality. Barnes feels strongly that children need to use language in order to participate in the shaping of knowledge.

A communication system is an abstraction from the behaviour of a group of people; from one point of view it constrains them, but from another it exists only through what they do. The meanings that we live by change because we insensibly day by day renew them in the course of sharing our lives. This sharing is communication. (p.31)

Barnes states that groups collaborate in using language to elaborate and to relate. Barnes hopes to prove that groups can learn to elaborate, and he feels that such a finding would have great implication for the teaching of drama.

One of James Britton's justifications for small-group talk is that it may result in discovery "at the point of utterance." Heinrich von Kleist's essay on the "Gradual Fabrication of Thought While Speaking" (1967) explores this idea. Kleist says that when a child's thinking mechanism is stuck, he must talk to someone in order to release it.

He need not be especially brilliant, and I do not suggest that you question him, no, tell him about it. You probably raise your eyebrows at this, for you have been advised from earliest childhood to discuss only matters that you already understand. But that was under the assumption that you wished to enlighten others, while what I now recommend is that you talk to enlighten yourself. (p.374)

Britton says that language is modified by the influence of audience. It is the presence of a genuine audience that makes language authentic, and not merely an exercise. Children learn to shape language to suit the specific audience; children make attempts to be understood, and then correct or modify

those attempts, because of the reaction of an audience. That audience may be one person, a group of friends, or an unseen audience. Children need to be understood when they speak, write, or present to real audiences. When they feel their language has a real purpose, for genuine communication, they are more willing to adjust and correct it. To Britton, talk is the foundation for language development and language acquisition.

Drama and Language Learning

As a result of his intensive language study, Walter Loban (1976) concluded that to develop language successfully, students need many opportunities to grapple with their own thoughts in actual situations where they have someone with whom they wish to communicate successfully. Drama can provide students with such opportunities by setting up situations where language arises out of a genuine need to speak.

Richard Courtney (1978) feels that drama is the basis for the learning of language. Students who need to work with language must have language activities placed in a meaningful context that is "whole, unified, and dramatic" (p.23). Courtney claims that drama in education is a whole representation of thought, providing language learning with "whole" meanings for each student. He says that the process of living involves perceiving parts of the world, transforming these "in our heads," and externalizing them in action. Children have to

enact what they imagine, but adults can do it "in their heads."

Once we have imagined, then we act; we can speak or write, gesture or dance, paint or create in three dimensions. Or we can build homes, make gardens...these actions are representations or symbols of the active transformations "in our heads". (p.25)

Courtney says that whether we use Bruner's stages of development or Vygotsky's interacting circles of verbal thought and non-verbal thought, it is the feed back or reciprocal learning that is important in language. In the interaction, we receive from the other person information that enables us to reshape what we do or say. Courtney says that since all language learning is within some kind of interacting, "dramatic action is an essential element in all forms of linguistic growth" (p.32). To Courtney, this feed-back process affects all levels of thought. Comprehension is an intertwining of one's inner world and the expression of others. Drama encourages spontaneity and creativity, and "internalizes the criteria of the other person and encourages communication and interaction" (p.33).

In drama, Britton (1970) says that the speech is embedded in context. He feels that a dramatic situation propels the members of a group "out of their own skins into somebody else's more forcibly than any other form of representating" (p.143). To Britton, drama relies on spontaneity, sensitive interreaction, and co-operation. "In classrooms where drama is given prominence,

talking, writing, reading, painting, movement, model-making, both contribute to it and are generated by it" (p.149).

Moffett (1974) feels that dramatic play and interplay, small-group discussion, writing for real purposes and audiences, allow for group process - receiving and giving feedback, using language and finding out the results, "responding to responses and thereby sharpening the responses". This process allows the child to engage with language by letting him learn about it through sociality.

At the same time that the ultimately social origin and function of language has been stressed, an attitude of independence and initiative has been fostered, for children have taken over their own education and learned how to learn from each other.
(p.265)

In Growth Through English (1975), John Dixon says that there is nothing that we can offer children more direct than drama to help them understand the complexity of relationships in a group situation. In drama, there is a special demand to use language to make feelings explicit. Dixon says that through action and interaction, drama draws on more than our personal experience, "personalizing a kind of knowledge that would otherwise remain detached and alien to us".

The authors of Drama Guidelines (1976) feel that in a drama situation, the speech remains in context. The talk is

embedded in the situation, and is subject to inter-action and modification from the rest of the group. The authors state that they feel the best way of helping the child to learn will be by encouraging talking situations. Drama provides both teacher and pupil with the opportunity to tap a variety of situations that are not encountered in the usual school curriculum. By testing the effectiveness of his use of language through drama, the pupil may acquire an increased competence in language use. It is from successful experiences with words that a pupil builds up his resources; drama may provide experiences which might otherwise remain inaccessible.

The part played by language in drama is crucial: movement, silent ritual or mimed tasks may all feed into the drama, but it is the pupils' use of language which will determine the depth and intensity of the work, and will provide the teacher with the best means of assessing the experience. (p.62)

A Comparison of Talk In And Out of Role

This chapter has already examined the function of talk in language development, and the role of drama in establishing contextual situations in which "talk" can occur. It is necessary to examine the importance of talk in-role and out-of-role.

In Growth Through English, John Dixon analyses the similarities and differences between drama and talk:

drama, then, differs from other talk in three ways: movement and gesture play a larger part in the expression of meaning; a group working together upon an improvisation needs more deliberately and consciously to collaborate...; the narrative framework of drama allows for repetition and provides a unity that enables the action more easily to take on symbolic status. (p.37)

James Moffett (1976) says that through the process of expatiation, students can "give voice" to the thinking process. Teachers can provide the students with techniques which can contribute to the range of possible responses, and allow the students to give freely of their responses, in role-playing and in discussion. Moffett says that using the words of others as cues for one's own response is the centre of both improvisation and discussion. He claims that discussion is different from drama, in that drama is more abstract, more verbal, and can be more detached; in discussion, the speaker's appeal is more to reason than to emotion. (However, Moffett feels that discussion still retains a "dramatic underpinning", as evidenced by studies in group dynamics.)

Drama, on the other hand, puts a great emphasis on verbal interaction and on getting effect with words. It promotes the varied forms of expatiation, since responding is integral to the drama process. Through role-playing, the student has a chance to release emotion, to change feelings, and to reflect on the text and on what has been said to him, all in the safety of "role".

One of Moffett's major educational goals is that the child move from generality to example, and from example to generality. He says that drama works in the particular, and discussion moves it out to the general. This movement between abstraction levels is an important issue in reading and writing. Mental operations and human transactions are reflected in the choices made in composing and comprehending.

When the discussion is "in role," many of the implications of discussion and drama are blended together: the participants are involved in an intellectual and emotional learning mode; intellectual arguments are heightened by the emotional intensity of the dramatic situation.

The authors of Drama Guidelines (1976) state that it is essential for both class and teacher to have an opportunity to reflect on the drama experience. This reflection can take place within the drama or in actual discussion at the end of the lesson. Then discussion and role-playing will have joined to form a complete educational process.

Nancy Martin (1976) says that dramatic talk may be "an art, which, like the novel, can inform and lead to new places. It is the flow of our sympathetic consciousness" (p.12). It offers the child the help and encouragement of other people's efforts alongside his own.

In his book, Language and Learning, James Britton includes the following selection, an extract from a tape-recorded transcript. It illustrates the interaction process that talk-in-role allows, and exemplifies the modifying effect that talk has on thought and on perception.

MARGARET: Ooh! Oh, that's the plague.
 VILLAGER: The what?
 MARGARET: It's the plague.
 VILLAGER: It can't be! (General talk - Is it? Is it the plague?)
 JOANNA: Stop telling lies, Margaret.
 MARGARET: I'm not telling lies. Who's seen the plague here, then, tell us?
 VILLAGER: I have. That's the plague all right.
 JOANNA: I won't believe you, for a start.
 VILLAGER: But the plague can't have come here!
 MARGARET: Can't it? Well it can.
 JOANNA: It can't be the plague. She's telling lies, that's what she's doing.
 VILLAGER: Well it was the plague in London. We heard the messenger come round.
 JOANNA: Yes, but this isn't London, this is here.
 VILLAGER: Could have spread to here, couldn't it?
 MARGARET: What can we do? Look at him...
 JOANNA: You keep out of it, I'm his mother, not you.
 MARGARET: I won't keep out of it.
 JOANNA: I bet she's put a curse him, that's what she's done.
 MARGARET: A curse on him! How could I put a curse on him?
 JOANNA: 'Cos you're a witch, that's why.
 MARGARET: A witch! I'm not a witch and you're not going to say I am!
 VILLAGER: What are we going to do about it?
 BEADLE: We'll have to have him locked up, won't we?
 JOANNA: What do you mean you're going to have him locked up?
 BEADLE: Well if he's got the plague we can't have him wandering around the streets. (All talking together.)
 JOANNA: And where is he going to go?
 VILLAGER: Yes, she thinks more about her son than us.
 JOANNA: Yes, maybe I do.
 VILLAGER: And it's better that one person dying than the whole village.
 VILLAGER: We're not talking about that.
 JOANNA: It wouldn't bother me if the whole village did die.

VILLAGER: No, you don't care about anyone, do you?
 BEADLE: Look - where are we going to put him?
 VILLAGER: It's no good arguing here.
 VILLAGER: That's Joanna's job. She's his mother.
 VILLAGER: Yes- you find a place to put him.
 JOANNA: He's going to my house - that's where he's going.
 VILLAGER: He's not going to your house - not next door to me, he isn't!
 JOANNA: He's going in my house, that's where he's going!
 VILLAGER: He's not going in your house.
 JOANNA: Why isn't he then? You can't stop me putting him in his own house can you?
 VILLAGER: Not next door to me.
 BEADLE: Yes, he has his rights; he probably might get the plague.
 VILLAGER: I bet I will - if you go in there.
 JOANNA: So have I: I pay taxes on my house so I have a right to go in it, haven't I?
 VILLAGER: He'll have to go somewhere.
 VILLAGER: Yes. In an old place, somewhere away...
 JOANNA: Why should it be an old house? He's a human being not an animal!
 BEADLE: Well he has the plague, he's not an ordinary human being.
 JOANNA: That makes him different does it? So that means you can just kick him about and put him anywhere you want to? Well it doesn't to me.
 BEADLE: I am the beadle.

(In the end, the Beadle orders two men to carry the son to an outlying hut.)

BEADLE: Joanna has taken my orders. So you will take my orders.
 VILLAGER: (Pause) Come on, Peter. Let's take him.
 VILLAGER: I hope you get it first.
 VILLAGER: I doubt it, if you had hold of him.
 VILLAGER: Joanna, you're not going in there are you?
 JOANNA: Why shouldn't I go in there?
 VILLAGER: Well, he's got the plague!
 JOANNA: Yes, and he's my son.
 VILLAGER: I said: Are you coming in?
 JOANNA: Yes.
 VILLAGER: Then come on in.
 BEADLE: You'll have to stay in there!
 JOANNA: Who say's I'll stay in? If I want to come out I will do!
 BEADLE: I say you will stay in there.
 VILLAGER: Yes, now you must take his orders.
 JOANNA: I don't have to do everything he says.
 BEADLE: It's written in the Plague Laws.
 (Whispering) She's going in there! She'll catch the plague off her own son!
 VILLAGER: There's nothing we can do, except paint the cross on the

VILLAGER: door.
VILLAGER: (Pause) Come on, Peter, let's go.

This is an example of talk-in-role. The content in this lesson could have been considered in a class situation where the varied points of view could be offered by the pupils in the class. But Britton says that

when the scene is enacted, the physical situation itself - the sick man lying there - pushes them to the point where something must be decided, something must be done. In interacting with each other, it is to the demands of this situation that they are responding. (p. 147)

SUMMARY

All thought involves the use of symbol, and most frequently, the use of words. Piaget feels that thought precedes language, and language transforms thought. Thinking is possible without language, but not at an advanced level. Speech provides a means of reflecting upon thought processes and controlling them. The child, according to Vygotsky, learns how to use language as a representation of reality, and manipulates the language in thought before speaking to the situation. Bruner feels that language affects thought by helping the child to work out a system of differentiated associations, and that what is significant about intellectual growth is the unlocking of the mind's capacity by using techniques from culture. Britton says that the child uses talk as a way of creating personal and organizational contexts

for his own experiences. Barnes states that the teacher must understand the influence of social interaction upon learning, and McNeill says that a child learns by exploring language in meaningful situations.

It is through conversation that students formulate and revise their perceptions of life, digesting experience by talking about it with everyone about them. Teachers must set up situations where groups can collaborate in using language to elaborate thought. Britton states that talk is the foundation for language development and language acquisition. Therefore, students need opportunities to grapple with their own thoughts by communicating successfully to others. Courtney feels that drama is the basis for establishing meaningful contexts for language work, and Moffett says that drama allows for using language and sharpening the responses. Through discussion and role-playing, teachers can provide students with techniques which can contribute to the range of possible responses, as well as give the students a chance to use their intellect, to release emotions, change feelings and reflect on what has gone on.

VII. AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF READING AND DRAMA

Design of Study

This study will explore the effect of drama on the reading abilities of junior level children, based on three selections from children's literature.

This project was carried out with three classes of junior level students from Canada, and six classes of junior level students from Great Britain, a total of two hundred students in all. The first step was assessing the children's intellectual and reading abilities from student record cards, teacher observation, and standardized reading and intelligence tests, where available. Next, the students were categorized by chronological age, sex and nationality.

The choice of literature for this study was a folk tale, The Golden Swans, a poem, Overheard on a Saltmarsh, and a contemporary storybook, Split Pea Soup. These selections were chosen for the following reasons: they are representative of high quality children's literature for this age group; they are appropriate for the two different cultures, British and Canadian; they accommodate a wide range of readability levels; they are all narrative fiction in style,

fulfilling the requirements described in Chapter 4; they contain concepts and vocabulary that are dependent upon context and meaning; they allow for imaginative outgrowth in the follow-up activities, and they are all from a reading series, Colours, approved for use in the junior grades by the Ministry of Education for the Province of Ontario.

Administration of Study

All students read all three stories. Each story was handled in three ways: one test group read the story silently and answered the questionnaire; one test group read the story silently and discussed the story and answered the questionnaire; one group read the story silently and participated in dramatic activity based on the story, following which they answered the questionnaire. Each class was visited three times and a different selection and a different mode of response was used each time. Since time was needed to ensure some degree of trust and familiarity, the selection to be investigated through drama was completed in the last visit.

Collection of Data

Each story was accompanied by a questionnaire asking five questions, to be answered after having read the story. (See Appendix B). The questions were designed to measure recalled details, inferred literacy concepts and creative analogy, as well as the child's ability

to personally identify with the story. Each answer was graded from one to four: one was a wrong or inappropriate answer; two was a correct or appropriate answer; three and four indicated a creative and personal response to the question.

The information was transferred to a computer and the results tabulated.

Modes of Investigation Used in the Study

Mode 1

The pupils read the story silently and answered the questionnaire. There was no discussion used. This mode was chosen as representative of the most common strategy of teaching reading to juniors in North America, according to the Ministry of Education.

Mode 2

The pupils read the story silently and then were allowed to ask any questions pertaining to the story that they wished to discuss. The teacher responded to the questions as well as the pupils.

Examples: The Golden Swan

(Questions formulated by students)

"Where did this story take place?"

"Was it long ago or recently?"

"Why did he kill the swan?"

"Why didn't the people kill the hunter?"

The teacher did not always answer the questions but tried to elicit responses from the children. The interaction always occurred through the teacher, rather than among the children themselves. It is interesting to note that there was little evidence of emotional involvement on the part of the students.

Mode 3

The pupils read the story, and then participated in dramatic activity based on the story. Instead of redramatizing the story, the teacher used the reactions of the children to the story, upon which to base the drama.

Example: The Golden Swan

The children wanted to investigate the people who worshipped golden swans. They were interested in who the villagers were, what occupations were carried on, who were the priests, and did they believe in killing animals. They recreated the village as suggested in the story, defining role through occupation, and became members of societies of workers. The teacher-in-role played the part of the hunter who was discovered by the villagers. The drama focused on a suitable punishment for the hunter who had killed the swan; the hunter in turn challenged each working society to justify why he should be punished at all. At the end of the drama lesson, the students reflected on the lesson and engaged in a writing follow-up activity.

Limitations of Study

Since I had not taught these students previously, I was not able to achieve the high degree of trust necessary for quality drama. There were problems of simple drama techniques, such as role-playing, to be taught, as well as the necessary discipline controls. Because of these difficulties, the children were not always willing to respond as spontaneously and as honestly as they might with their own teachers. For this reason, the drama follow-up was always during the third story presentation to each class. This may influence the results, since by the third visit, the children were responding more openly.

I had to choose the literary selections without knowing the needs and interests of the children. As well, the selections had to represent quality literature and be applicable to English and Canadian children.

Another factor which may influence the study is the socio-economic conditions of the school areas; the British children were from small village or town schools, where the Canadian children lived in middle-class suburbia.

Due to the limitations of the time available to each class, the questionnaire had to be designed to elicit minimal responses to the selections. As discussed previously with reference to John Mellon's analysis of reading and literature skills, it is very

difficult to assess reading comprehension by using a questionnaire.

The tests indicating intelligence quotient and reading age are different according to the school. The measurements must be understood as general statements.

One particular facet of this study should be noted: the children were not grouped by ability groups based on reading levels. The stories were handled as literature where the general reading level was such that the majority of the class could cope with the selection. The study was designed in this manner since drama is a whole-class activity, and therefore, to keep the pattern of the study, there was no attempt at grouping or individualizing the reading program.

Statistical Results

Summary Information

Story 1	Split Pea Soup
Story 2	Overheard on a Saltmarsh
Story 3	The Golden Swan
Mode 1	Story and questionnaire
Mode 2	Story and discussion follow-up, followed by questionnaire
Mode 3	Story and dramatic activity, followed by questionnaire

Table 1:

A comparison of modes 1, 2 and 3 for entire population.

	Sum	Mean	Std. Dev.	Variance
Mode 1	365	1.9624	0.1908	0.0364
Mode 2	353	1.9396	0.2390	0.0517
Mode 3	426	2.4205	0.7127	0.5079

Table 2:

Mode 1 vs Mode 2		
Mean difference	.0228	in favour of Mode 1
Significance of difference	.0224	
Standard deviation	1.018	
Mode 1 vs Mode 3		
Mean difference	.4581	in favour of Mode 3
Significance of difference	.057	
Standard deviation	8.	
Mode 2 vs Mode 3		
Mean difference	.481	in favour of Mode 3
Significance of difference	.057	
Standard deviation	8.4	

Table 3:

A comparison of questions based on Story 1

Question Number	Maximum Possible Mark	Average Method 1	Average Method 2	Average Method 3	Significance
1	2	1.950	2.000	1.967	0.4796
2	2	1.960	2.000	1.983	0.4459
3	3	2.740	2.731	2.867	0.6313
4	3	1.620	1.923	1.867	0.0007
5	4	2.590	2.615	2.617	0.2693

Table 4:

A comparison of questions based on Story 2

Question Number	Maximum Possible Mark	Average Method 1	Average Method 2	Average Method 3	Significance
6	2	1.909	1.927	2.000	0.1335
7	3	2.091	2.049	2.511	0.0066
8	3	1.818	1.915	1.956	0.1154
9	3	2.000	2.329	2.467	0.0070
10	4	2.345	2.317	2.711	0.0574

Table 5:

A comparison of questions based on Story 3

Question Number	Maximum Possible Mark	Average Method 1	Average Method 2	Average Method 3	Significance
11	4	2.481	2.292	2.540	0.2275
12	2	1.852	1.903	1.880	0.6832
13	2	1.686	1.847	1.800	0.0867
14	2	1.648	1.708	1.340	0.0001
15	3	2.463	2.556	2.640	0.3589

Analysis

1. A comparison of modes 1 and 2 (table 2) yields a difference between means of .0228 in favour of mode 1. The significance of difference index is .0224, and the standard deviation is 1.018 which is insignificant. It cannot be said with confidence that mode 1 is better than mode 2.
2. The mean difference is .4581 in favour of mode 3, compared to mode 1 (table 2), gives a significance of difference index of .0224 and a standard deviation ratio of 1.018.
3. A comparison of modes 2 and 3 (table 2) gives a mean average difference of .481 in favour of mode 3. The significance of difference index is .057 and the ratio of 8.4 makes the result highly significant. The results of mode 3 are better than those of mode 2.
4. The observed significance levels are computed in relation with the chi-square statistics produced from the two-way counts classification. The expected number of significant results when no difference exists among the methods is 15 times the chosen significance level; for example, if we choose to declare significant all the questions whose observed significance level are smaller than 0.05 then we will expect to have 75% of the time, just by chance, one significant question. In fact, to assure an overall significance level we should declare significant only those questions whose observed significance will be smaller than

the chosen level divided by 15, i.e. for an overall significance level of 0.05, use a level of 0.0033 on each test.

5. It is interesting to note that while the last two questions on each story typically yield the most significant results, in question 14 the general pattern of responses (of increasing average with method number) is broken.

Summary

The hypothesis of this thesis was supported to some degree by the empirical study, especially in the areas of critical and creative responding to the questions that result from the reading selection. (Questions 4, 5, 9, 10, 14 and 15 were of this type). There was no significant difference in the response to the factual, comprehension questions in each selection. This point, however, works toward the hypothesis, since drama does not seem to interfere with the literal comprehending processes of students who, upon completion of reading the text, engage in dramatic activities, while allowing for a much greater world-view of the concepts explored in the text, since the dramatic interaction allowed for expression of individual ideas and values, and for the modifying and re-interpretation of those issues through dialogue and reflection in-role and in writing. As well, the motivational limits that comprehension questions imply are radically altered by those activities where drama is the mode of response.

The statistical data concerning reading level and intelligence measurement were unreliable; many results were approximations based on teacher observation. The reading tests used in North America were not uniform for each class, and the scores vary in value.

The comparison of males and females provides little evidence of significance, since some classes were composed entirely of males, others entirely of females, and the remaining classes were a mixture. With this in mind, the scores show little variation according to sex, and the evidence cannot be valued.

Anecdotal Results

While it has no bearing on the statistical results of the study, it is of interest to note some of the written responses of the children to each story, after having experienced the story through drama. It is my observation that the quality of these responses are indicative of the emotional and personal identification that occurred because of the drama that originated after the reading.

Section #1

Split Pea Soup (See Appendix B)

The following examples illustrate the strong understanding by the children of the relationships in the story as they respond in writing to the stimulus of being counsellors advising the two characters in the story, both of whom had been the stimulus for role-playing during the drama lesson. As well, the emotive language and sensitivity in the

advice given indicates the involvement both intellectually and emotionally with the story. Most of the selections begin with the first person, without instruction from the teacher.

I advise you to make your own food so you won't say to each other I don't like this and go to restronts alot and if one of you are ill ask him or her what you would like and how they wont it made thats what I say.

I understand your problem you ought to tell Martha about the soup or just say I don't want that today. If you feel that way about Martha. Why don't you marry then it would be easyer to tell her don't you think. I am sure you will get along with each other. I would try some more flavours of soup it could be tasty.

You should not be angry you should tell them to be friends maybe marry live together. Or spend a holiday together. Buy presents for each other by happy enjoy life. Meet people. They should never disagree.

I advised George to tell Martha every time if there was any trouble. I advised Martha never to give George Split Pea Soup again.

I would advise you to spend more time with each other and to learn what each of you like and dislike.

All you have to do is to tell Martha the truth because she will find out later. You sould live together because will make a nice couple. Martha would make you cook.

I would tell them to get married or get engaged. Not to be just good friends get to know each other really well. And that's all there is to it.

Selection #2

Overheard on a Saltmarsh

Because of the dramatic involvement with this poem, the children were encouraged to explore symbolic meanings in trying to understand the nature of the conflict. The "green glass beads" in the poem were represented by the following variety of responses from the students:

gold
 good looks
 secrets
 treasure
 money
 magic
 our goddess
 the power to open eternity
 my God
 sundrops
 eternal life

I asked the students to write a synopsis of the action that took place during the drama lesson. The students all demonstrated an understanding of the focus of the drama, with which they had been involved, and it is interesting to note that the differences in the original poem, and the drama lesson that grew from the poem. The students were able to answer the comprehension questions after reading the poem, and yet write a summary of the drama lesson, where many details had been elaborated upon, extended or invented.

The Goblin asked the nymph Give me the green glass beads or I will take away the moon and so the nymph did plead but the Goblin took a magnet and concentrated hard and the humming of the moon was heard for a mile and a yard. The Goblin he did get the beads the nymph he did give up so the mean old Goblin put the moon back up. Colin Hewitt

One day a young girl was walking in the woods when she saw a bear hurling a big magnet into the sky. A peice of rope was attached to the magnet. The magnet went out of sight but the bear still held the rope. When he pulled down again the moon was fixed to the magnet. The girl ran, up to the bear and said I'll give you a ruby if you put the moon back. The Bear agreed. Robert Martin

Once upon a time some Goblins were trying to get some green glass beads of a Nymph but as hard as they tried they could not. But at last a goblin had an idea it was to pull the moon down with belonged to him. They told him and if we pulled the moon down with out magnet he would give us the beads aslong as we put it back again. So we pulled it down then put it back and he gave us one bead each. Susan Brunskell

In this selection, the student imitates the structure of the poem while including the analogy from the drama lesson.

I want them!

No. .

I will blow out your sun if you do not give me them

No I will keep them

The Goblins pulled down the moon

The Fawn at last gave in and gave

the Goblins the beads

*Then very carefully the Goblins put the moon back with
the help of their magnet. Nicola Marant*

The author in this selection has included direct narration from the drama lesson, incorporating the original style of the poem while using the actual details from the drama lesson.

Nymph, you like my beads! We want them.

You will have to find away to get them. We have to find

away Goblins. The Goblins have a conversation. We know how

to get the beads said the goblins, we will use a great magnet.

All goblins lay our hands on the magnet. Close our eyes and hum.

There! The moon has come down Nymph! Oh no! Here are my

beads each of you have one. Now to get the moon back up.

*All of us goblins shut our eyes and hum the moon rose and
ascended back into the sky.*

Selection #3

The Golden Swans (A Vietnamese Tale)

The students demonstrated an understanding of the values of the story by writing a plaque to be placed on the statue of the Golden Swan. This is in contrast to two other classes who had read and discussed the story but had not done drama; in these situations, very few children were able to write the plaque for the statue. The

following examples are from those lessons where drama activities were carried on after reading the selection.

Death to those who comes here to kill.

The hunter who killed our ansestors cared this.

The man who killed the swan has carved the swan for us.

This is a trubute to show what happened to the ansesters when one hunter came along and distroyed them. They were in the form of a swan.

Do not tuch the swans or els. Because they men so mytch to us.

Never kill a thing.

Those who kill our swans shall be put to work.

Those who kill in this village shall be punished.

To the passers and villages that live in the village. You have kill the swan and have done evil.

We do not kill. And those who do kill will do work and they will not finish until it is completely finished.

Never kill a golden swan without permission, for the story says never.

People who are near read this. This statue is a dead swan; it is alone for all to remember.

This swan which is golden is our ansestor and the spirit of us all. It died in 807 and it was killed by an arrow.

To people are new to us. Take the story of this. A hunter who killed a golden swan and was given some stone to make a statue of one.

Here stands our golden swan that lived and died and died again years past.

This Swan is our Anseter and those who kill most be punished.

He who kills our ancestors will make their memorial.

This is to show what we will do if a liveing soul should kill another of OUR swans.

In these letters by the students in the role of the protagonist in the tale, the children show strong role identification, as well as an understanding of the feelings of the hunter and the consequences of his deed. The letters vary between the formality of the hunter who has committed the crime and the informality of the people away from home writing a friendly letter. This mix of the actual and the created indicates the negotiation of meaning that must be a part of drama learning.

Dear brother

I have found this strange town with the name of Viet Nam there is a story about some golden swans which are really spirits when you grow up please come and you might even see them. They were made by Indra's god come when you are older.

*Love from
Geoffrey Askew*

Dear daughter and son,

I am writing to you to tell you I am ok. I am in Viet Nam in a little village. It is very strange in this little village. Then one day I was walking in a deep forest when I saw a lake and some golden swans I ran and caught one. When I felt it died. And the people of the village were angry with me. I said I was sorry, but they still are angry. I have pondered for many days, and I have thought of a idea. I have built a statue of a swan, and the people have lost their angryness.

from you father,

p.s. Hope you are keeping well.

Dear Son

It is very strange in this place. I killed a golden swan and all the towns people were very mad with me. I hope you are ik. They played war with me for been a hunter because they had no hunters in that land. I hope I will be coming home soon. I just sit here thinking about the crime I caused. I know no one here. I hope mmm will send me clen clothes.

Julie Errington

Dear Daughter

The rules and customs are very different where I now live. One of the rules and customs are that you are not to kill one of the Golden Swans. One day I killed one because It was the day I arived and I did not no the customs and I now feel very bad. I go to the temple every day and pray.

I've got to go now I'm going to the temple now bye.

Dear Daughter

I am in a strange place. It has golden swans in the pond and I have killed one of them because I did not no the laws of the place. I would like to come home but they have got me and I will not be coming.

from Allison Wilsher

Dear Son,

I have been walking in this strange land for many days. The people have strange customs and I have killed a spirit swan so I have built a statue in return for my mistake. I hope you are all very well at home. See you soon.

from G. Carroll

Dear Son,

It is terrible here in VietNam. I was starving so I shot some swans and these villagers came and said you have killed our Gods spirit we will have to punish you so they whipped me twice. I was all right.

Love father

ps. Be back soon. I never knew about the customs.

Love father

xxxxx

Conclusions

If drama is to be used as an educational technique in learning to read, an atmosphere must be established where personal opinion and reaction is valued and reinforced. The students must be able to express their thoughts about the selection, so that the teacher can work with the concepts and larger issues within the story to promote greater meanings than just those of simple textual comprehension.

The teacher must be sensitive to the attitude of the students toward what they are reading, and toward what they will do with what they have read. Choice of material and of specific drama technique is vital to helping the students to alter perceptions and values.

This testing procedure did not take into account the attitudes of the students who participated. The student writings in the anecdotal section indicate the involvement of the participants on a self-identification level. As well, all of the authorities mentioned in the preceding chapters consider attitude and interest integral to the teaching of reading. If drama and reading are related, it is in this interacting of ideas and symbol systems in a meaningful social context that promotes learning. For a situation to have meaning, whether it be in private reading or in public role-playing, there must be a sense of identification with the spirit of the event, if not with the details of the event.

Children must have insight that print is meaningful, because reading is making sense of print; this occurs when a child observes print being responded to in a meaningful way. The print that normally surrounds children must be potentially meaningful, providing an effective base for learning. The meaning that readers comprehend from text is always relative to what they already know and to what they want to learn.

Each person has a theory of his own, personal world. Anything that he perceives in the world around him must relate to that theory if it is to make sense. "Our theory of the world seems ready even to make sense of almost everything we are likely to experience in spoken and written language" (Smith, 1971, p 57).

Spoken and written language are not the same; they are generally used for quite different purposes and addressed to quite different audiences. The fundamental question is how we make sense of language in the first place. Children learn by testing hypotheses and evaluating feedback. Relevant feedback is any reaction that tells the child whether the hypothesis is justified or not. Children must comprehend what they are doing all the time they are learning. It is the possibility of making sense that stimulates children to learn.

We are no more conscious of the hypotheses that underlie learning than we are of the predictions that underlie comprehension or of the theory of the world itself. Indeed, there is basically no difference between comprehension and learning; hypotheses are simply tentative predictions. (Smith, 1971, p. 58)

The material that a child reads should feed his interests and relate to the world he lives in, the world that has implicit meaning for him. The resultant meaning is a pattern of relationships, and he tests this pattern by translating it into his own experience.

Unable to read, a child or an adult is cut off from a way of entering into the experiences of other people, the better to understand his own.

As we engage in talk, we literally tell the stories of our lives as we live them, constructing the realities of our lives in conversation. As individuals, we must assimilate our experiences and build them into our continuing picture of the world. The responses we get from talk profoundly affect both the world picture that we are creating and our view of ourselves. All talk, be it purposeful or random in nature, helps us look at mankind in all its variety, and therefore is an educative experience. As teachers, we must consider the relationship of talk to thinking and to learning, and create an environment where students can talk in both formal and informal situations.

Drama can provide an evocative context for the expression of feelings and ideas, and it demands clarity and force of rhetoric in that expression. Children create alternative selves, alternate lives and alternative worlds, in play, in storytelling, and in drama, modifying and supplementing their every day experience.

Dramatic experience can help those who want to learn by providing illumination while engaging their imaginations. Students need different strategies for recognition in reading; drama is such a strategy.

The emphasis on using drama with a story is not on recreating the story, but on the process of demonstrating how the event occurred; the drama is a reconstruction, not the actual event. The story is the network and the teacher weaves the students' interpretations into it. What results is a hybrid of fiction and truth as seen by the students, a new perception of the concepts as presented in the story, related to the themes in the lives of the students.

Drama revolves around the process of behaviour, and is the exploration and representation of meaning, using the individual as the medium. Drama exists in action and develops through interaction. Each participant affects and modifies the actions and behaviour of the others. Through reciprocal response, they explore the symbols and begin to understand the meaning of the situation they are encountering. Drama revolves around a sharing of experience in the development of a corporate act; individual perceptions are challenged, elaborated upon, extended and deepened. Students are negotiating at the real social network level and at the symbolic level; this process is "the negotiation of meaning." The destination in drama is the resolution of the problem of meaning which is motivating the work. Working in the arts is a dialogue between the content of the expression and the form in which it is made.

Whether the stimulus for drama is original, chosen by the pupils, or recreated from a literary incident is of little significance; the drama must aid the pupils in finding levels of meaning. If the source is literary, the dramatic investigation must concern elaborating upon the given facts in order to find the implicit truths, rather than simply retelling the events as a memory exercise. Weak drama, like weak reading, is concerned with the words rather than the meaning behind those words.

Going beyond the text requires that the teacher's techniques somehow relate the concepts in the text to the child's experiences, where the fundamental memories that are brought forth by the intensity of the reading or drama experience are tapped so that the resultant response is personal and universal, and can be shared in the context of the literary situation and the dramatic experience. Then the literary code will be broken and the content made significant to the "theory of the world" that each individual is in the process of creating, as he is educated, in the widest sense. This is the true relationship of reading and drama, the development of perception and of experience, so that what the student reads or hears, he can fully comprehend, so that he can modify and re-value his own ideas, and expand his repertoire of feeling, tolerance and understanding.

Drama and reading can play a vital part in helping children find common points of reference in understanding perceptions about people and their situations. Development happens on two levels, as the child role-plays, identifies or relates to the role and as he experiences the print source. He negotiates between his own life, the social interactions at the real level, actual and remembered, and the symbolic roles of drama and

fiction. Thus the underlying meanings begin to emerge through this living-through process. The child, then, understands the meanings in the story as reflected in his own life experiences, both the symbolic drama relationships, and the triggered memories of reality. As the child develops these symbolic forms, he may use them to understand his own problems, and to learn to express his feelings and ideas. Reading and drama can play a large part in the discovery and communication of meaning. The print that the child reads serves as stimuli for the recall of meanings that have been built up through past experience, and dramatic interaction helps construct new meanings through the manipulation of concepts already possessed by the student. The resulting meanings are organized into the thought processes, giving him a pattern for meaning, a basis for exploring new learning.

In reading, the reader has to take into account the total context of the material. Drama allows the reader to examine the ideas propounded and facilitates the reciprocal exchange between participants in the drama, and therefore between the reader and the print. If the reader can carry his own attitudes and values into the text, he is reading with reward. Drama assists the teacher in helping the child go from the private reading experience into a shared common experience. The responding aspects associated with reading and drama allow the child to make his own experience of art. The child can then make sense of what he has read through personal terms. The student has translated written symbols into experience. The reader's own life is the medium through which the words of the text are understood.

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APPENDIX A

In setting out the fundamentals of the program for the Primary and Junior Divisions of the elementary schools of Ontario, recognition by the Ministry of Education for the Province of Ontario has been given to the following important factors:

- the philosophical commitment of our society to the worth of the individual;
- significant research conducted in Canada and abroad;
- the recommendations and viewpoints contributed by teachers, parents, trustees, administrators, and other citizens of this province through the cyclic review process.

It is the policy of the Government of Ontario that every child have the opportunity to develop as completely as possible in the direction of his or her talents and needs. On behalf of the educational community and other citizens, the Government pledges to support an education that develops basic skills, knowledge, and attitudes, that endeavours to provide a fuller life during a child's years in the Primary and Junior Divisions, and that endeavours to nurture every child's growth so that each may be able to continue his or her education with satisfaction and may share in the life of the community with competence, integrity and joy.

It follows that the curriculum will provide opportunities for each child (to the limit of his or her potential):

- to acquire the basic skills fundamental to his or her continuing education;
- to develop and maintain confidence and a sense of self-worth;
- to gain the knowledge and acquire the attitudes that he or she needs for active participation in Canadian society;
- to develop the moral and aesthetic sensitivity necessary for a complete and responsible life.

It is also the policy of the Government of Ontario that education in the Primary and Junior Divisions be conducted so that each child may have the opportunity to develop abilities and aspirations without the limitations imposed by sex-role stereotypes.

The child should:

1. Become aware of deeper levels of meaning in reading
 - master the essential word recognition strategies and use them appropriately as they are required (contextual, structural, and phonic clues and the dictionary);
 - expand his or her knowledge of words as personal experiences expand and as the ability to use the dictionary, a thesaurus, and books dealing with the origins of words increases;
 - understand increasingly complex language patterns, styles and forms;
 - recognize the variety of contextual, stylistic, and symbolic clues that an author uses to communicate meaning;
 - adjust reading speed and techniques to his or her purposes and to the reading material;

- produce reading materials and share them with others;
- understand and interpret ideas in poetry and prose and thus go beyond mere comprehension and recall of factual detail;
- compare ideas or statements and predict conclusions;
- use reading as a source of personal enrichment, relaxation, and pleasure.

2. Use reading as a source of information

- select realistic goals and formulate manageable questions for individual investigation;
- make extensive use of the school library resource centre and its reference and resource materials;
- obtain information from graphic sources such as pictures, cartoons, diagrams, charts, maps and tables;
- act on information received from recipes, directions, manuals, or patterns and evaluate the product;
- check information for relevance, authenticity, and bias;
- search for and detect inconsistencies and fallacies in texts;
- organize pertinent information by paraphrasing, summarizing and recording;
- express personal interpretations through notes, paintings, dramatizations, models, maps or diagrams;
- test personal interpretations through interaction with others.

3. Develop a deeper appreciation of excellence in reading materials

- read from a diversified selection of materials such as poems, biographies, novels, plays, myths, legends, newspapers, magazines and cartoons;
- read critically and develop an appreciation of function, style, feeling, intention, rhythm, mood, plot and characterization;
- begin to understand conflict in character and in ideas and values;

- develop an interest in reading for recreational purposes;
- react personally in a variety of ways to ideas presented;
- test the validity of personal reactions and insights in discussion with others;
- develop personal reading tastes and interests.

Listening

- demonstrate increased competence in the elements of listening outlined for the Primary Division;
- acquire and demonstrate the ability to listen critically;
- listen to an increasing range of prose and poetry and become aware of the human experience, feelings, and values expressed therein;
- understand and communicate with people who use different language patterns;
- listen sensitively and critically to oral reports and views expressed in a discussion and make pertinent contributions.
- demonstrate the ability to extract information from oral sources.

Speaking

- develop his or her private views through interactions with others;
- demonstrate in conversation, discussion, oral reading, interviewing, oral reporting, and role-playing the vocabulary, language patterns, and oral styles appropriate in questioning, explaining, describing, reasoning and evaluating;
- understand and use the speaking skills involved in drama, newscasting, advertising, the tape-recorder, and other contemporary communication devices;
- appreciate that speech can convey nuances of emotion and attitude over and above its literal content;
- appraise and improve personal speech habits.

Perception and Expression

1. Increase sensitivity of perception through the use of all the senses and develop the capacity to express this sensitivity through a variety of creative media
 - appreciate that his or her own ideas and feelings have value and are worthy of expression;
 - develop the ability to express his or her ideas and feelings through active participation in drama, music, physical education, and the visual arts;
 - become aware of his or her reactions to physical sensation and develop a healthy, positive attitude towards them;
 - classify objects by attributes such as colour, texture, shape, smell, sound, and weight and develop vocabulary to describe and identify them;
 - use the opportunities provided by the arts to practise problem-solving both independently and co-operatively;
 - enjoy the power of creation through the use of colour, pattern, movement, sound, language, and materials;
 - identify and use ideas gathered from the arts (e.g., those in nursery rhymes, songs, dramatic activities, the visual arts) to better understand our society;
 - develop the freedom of thought necessary for creativity.

Drama

2. Develop self-awareness and self-confidence through drama and related creative activities.
 - discover and clarify assumptions, points of view, and emotional reactions and gain an awareness of his or her role as well as the roles others play;
 - co-operate with others and develop empathy with them by working with them and exchanging ideas freely;

- develop the ability to concentrate and gain confidence from growing powers of self-expression;
- develop a greater awareness of bodily movement and of some of the factors inherent in movement expression (e.g., body awareness, body activity, relationship of self to space and to others, quality of movement).

Values

Begin to develop a personal value system within a context that reflects the priorities of a concerned society and at the same time recognizes the integrity of the individual

- become aware of the values that Canadians regard as essential to the well-being and continuing development of their society--namely, respect for the individual, concern for others, social responsibility, compassion, honesty, and the acceptance of work, thought, and leisure as valid pursuits for human beings;
- begin to develop a personal set of values by identifying value alternatives and their consequences, selecting personal values from the alternatives, internalizing the values selected, and acting in accordance with the values selected;
- identify and analyse public value issues.

Decision-Making

Develop the ability to make informed and rational decisions

- extend and organize personal questions and interests and participate in purposeful first-hand investigations;
- develop the elements of the scientific method, i.e., acquire the skills of careful and objective observation, learn to distinguish between observation and inference, and use observation to test ideas, investigate ambiguity, and make predictions, inferences, and generalizations;
- make effective use of the various types of notation and reporting techniques;
- develop the ability to obtain information from secondary sources by learning: to plan an investigation and to formulate questions specific enough for investigation; to locate sources of information

pertinent to a particular fact or theme; to identify the main point in a paragraph; to explain this orally and rewrite the information in his or her own words; to check information for accuracy, examine conflicting evidence, draw reasonable conclusions from texts, pictures, and charts, and to make useful notes of the information obtained from first-hand observations, reference materials, audio-visual media, and interviews;

- organize information to illustrate a point, sustain an argument, or provide a basis for decision-making.

The Individual and Society

- Understand social relationships at a level appropriate to his or her stage of development.
 - understand his or her own nature and needs as a basis for understanding the nature and needs of others;
 - appreciate that his or her actions as an individual are reflected, in however small a way, in his or her physical and cultural setting;
 - develop insights into the functioning of groups and the individual's role in them;
 - understand some of the factors that contribute to effective interpersonal relationships;
 - develop self-respect, respect for the rights of others, and respect for the rule of law;
 - appreciate the development of civilization through the ages and understand and respect customs, institutions, and the historical background of diverse social groups and communities;
 - develop an understanding of such concepts as community, conflict, culture, and interdependence;
 - learn the social skills and attitudes upon which effective and responsible co-operation and participation depend.

APPENDIX B
SPLIT-PEA SOUP

If there was one thing that George was not fond of, it was split pea soup. As a matter of fact, George hated split pea soup more than anything else in the world. But it was so hard to tell Martha.

One day after George had eaten ten bowls of Martha's soup, he said to himself, "I just can't stand another bowl. Not even another spoonful."

So, while Martha was out in the kitchen, George carefully poured the rest of his soup into his loafers under the table. "Now she will think I have eaten it."

But Martha was watching from the kitchen.

"How do you expect to walk home with your loafers full of split pea soup?" she asked George.

"Oh dear," said George. "You saw me."

"And why didn't you tell me that you hate my split pea soup?"

"I didn't want to hurt your feelings," said George.

"That's silly," said Martha. "Friends should always tell each other the truth. As a matter of fact, I don't like split pea soup very much myself. I only like to make it. From now on, you'll never have to eat that awful soup again."

"What a relief!" George sighed.

"Would you like some chocolate chip cookies instead?" asked Martha.

"Oh, that would be lovely," said George.

"Then you shall have them," said his friend.

NAME _____

SPLIT-PEA SOUP

1. Where did George put the soup after he had eaten as much as he could stand?

2. What else did Martha offer George to eat?

3. Why didn't George tell Martha how he felt about Split Pea Soup?

4. How did George and Martha feel about each other?

5. Does this story remind you of something that happened to you?

Nymph, nymph, what are your beads?

Green glass, goblin. Why do you stare at them?

Give them me.

No.

Give them me. Give them me.

No.

Then I will howl all night in the reeds.
Lie in the mud and howl for them.

Goblin, why do you love them so?

They are better than stars or water,
Better than voices of winds that sing,
Better than any man's fair daughter,
Your green glass beads on a silver ring.

Hush, I stole them out of the moon.

Give me your beads, I want them.

No.

I will howl in a deep lagoon
For your green glass beads, I love them so.
Give them me. Give them.

No.

NAME _____

OVERHEAD ON A SALTMARSH

1. What did the Goblin want from the Nymph?

2. Why does the Goblin love what the Nymph has?

3. What will the Goblin do to get what the Nymph has?

4. What is a "deep lagoon"?

5. What else could these creatures be other than a nymph and a goblin?

THE GOLDEN SWANS

Long ago and far away, near a small lake deep in the forest, there was once a flock of golden swans. Because the lake was so far away and so hard to reach no one knew about them - no one, that is, except the people who lived in the village nearby, and they numbered only a handful.

Every day at noon the villagers would see the swans gather in the sky and alight on the calm blue waters of the lake. They loved to spend their afternoons watching the golden birds; and the swans would come up to them without fear, as if wanting them for company.

Every evening, just before sunset, the swans would vanish. The villagers often looked for them in the forest, but they never discovered where the swans came from or where they went.

One day a wise man who knew something of the swans passed through the village.

"These swans are not merely birds, but spirits," he told the villagers. "It is said that hundreds of years ago a city stood on Green Mountain, the mountain that lies beyond the forest. A great fire burned it down and all the people were killed. The god Indra, who had loved the city, was saddened by its fate, and he was especially grieved for the many good people who had lived there. He did not have the power to bring them back to life as human beings, but he was able to turn their spirits into a flock of golden swans, and he decreed that forever afterward they could come each day to visit the lake in the forest near their former home. But why they leave the lake before dusk, and where they go at night, I cannot tell you."

When the villagers heard this they were filled with pride and awe that Indra's own swans should come to their lake, and they determined never to hurt them in any way. So the swans continued to come and go in peace as the years passed gently by.

Then one day a hunter came to the forest seeking game, and lost his way. He wandered farther and farther among the dense trees, and as the sun was dipping behind Green Mountain he reached the lake. He was just in time to see a great flock of golden swans rise from the water and fly away into the dusk.

When the villagers came to the lake that afternoon they saw no flock of golden birds. There was nothing but a hunter with a dead swan in his arms.

"What have you done?" they shouted. And the hunter tried to explain what had happened, that when he saw the swans he wanted one more than anything in the world, and that he could not understand why the swan had died when he had been so gentle with her.

The villagers were very angry.

"The swans did not hurt anyone," they told him. "We loved them, and they brought joy to us all with their gentleness and beauty. Now, because you were greedy, one swan is dead and the rest are gone."

Then the villagers carried the body of the swan to their temple and buried it in the temple yard, near the edge of the lake it had loved so dearly.

"Perhaps the swans will return tomorrow when they realize I meant no harm," the hunter said to the priests of the temple, for he was truly sorry for what he had done. But the priests said nothing for they did not believe the swans would return. And when the hunter saw how the priests and the villagers grieved, he began to wonder if there was not some mystery about the swans that they had not told him.

As the days turned into weeks and the weeks into months, it was clear to everyone that the swans would not come back. The hunter went daily to the temple to ask the priests how he could atone for his selfish deed, but they would tell him nothing.

One day the oldest and wisest of the priests spoke to him.

"I can see that you are sorry for what you did," he said, "and I will tell you why we prized the swans so highly." And he told the hunter the story the villagers had heard from the wise man many years before.

"Now I will tell you something else," the priest continued. "After much study I have learned what no man has ever known until now when it is too late. I have learned that the swans changed back into spirit form each night, and that Indra attached one condition to their right to appear as swans. He decreed that if ever one of them was captured and the secret found out, they would cease to be swans at all. The brave swan you caught knew that at sunset she would become a spirit. You would have seen the change take place and discovered the secret of the swans. She must have thought that by her death she would keep the secret and save the rest of the flock. But that was not to be, for the swans have not returned."

Now the hunter was filled with remorse, not only for the sadness he had brought to the people of the village, but for having caused the swans to forfeit their gift of life.

"Is there nothing I can do to make up for the harm I have done?" he asked.

"I do not think you can bring back the swans," said the priest. "But perhaps you can find a way to help the villagers remember the beauty that once was their to enjoy."

The hunter pondered for many days. Then he set to work to make a statue of the captured swan on the shores of the lake, where the villagers would be reminded of her beauty every day. He toiled patiently at the statue for many years, and when it was finished the priests and the people agreed that though it was not as beautiful as the swan herself had been, it was still a very fine statue and they forgave the hunter.

The statue stands there still, and as the sun sets behind Green Mountain each evening its rays make the swan gleam like pure gold. And ever since that time the waters of the lake have been pure and clear, even in the driest years.

The people are grateful for their miraculous lake. It is a sign, they believe, that Indra, too, has forgiven the hunter.

Kermit Krueger

NAME _____

THE GOLDEN SWANS

1. What happened to the swans in the morning and the evening?

2. What happened to the swans after the hunter killed one of them?

3. What did the hunter do to show the villagers that he was sorry?

4. "The hunter pondered for many days." What does this sentence mean?

5. If you were a villager, what would you have said to the hunter?

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