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A PROCESS WRITING CURRICULUM FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THIRD GRADE

by

Patricia P. Dukes

A thesis (project) submitted to the Division of Curriculum and Instruction in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

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Abstract

The curriculum that has been developed for this project is designed to promote the implementation of process writing in kindergarten through third grade classrooms. Writing activities are planned within the content areas and present writing as a natural way to communicate throughout daily activities.

The review of research reflects over fifteen years of work that has predominantly been carried out in classroom settings with elementary school students and teachers. Patterns of writing development have been identified that indicate a positive correlation between the students skills attainment and purposeful reading and writing experiences.

The plan incorporates individualized instructional strategies that have evolved as a result of the findings of the researchers and teachers who have studied the process writing approach. Procedures for conferencing and teacher modeling techniques are illustrated in this project.

The curriculum establishes the atmosphere of the classroom and outlines the stages of the writing process. Journal writing is planned as a daily activity with additional ongoing activities which encourage purposeful writing. The plan for the content areas is consistent with the whole language perspective. A culminating activity is included to provide an opportunity for students to apply the skills they have learned throughout the year.

The evaluation of this project was accomplished through interviews with teachers and the presentation of an inservice program. Samples of writing that the students were currently producing were used to identify developmental stages and to model teaching techniques that were suggested in the plan.

This curriculum presents writing as an integral part of daily classroom activities. The goal is for children to learn to write by writing and to develop a sense of authorship.

Chapter One

Research into the development of literacy in young children is challenging educators to review current educational practices and to question the nature of writing instruction. When we define writing as a continuous process of language development, then instruction must go beyond transmitting knowledge about writing to provide for guided practice in actual writing activities. Young learners are both active and interactive as they operate within the framework of cultural and personal experiences to become writers and readers.

A writing curriculum must be accorded the same level of importance as a reading curriculum, because "the two are of equal importance in children's literacy development (Teale, 1987) and learning to write can have positive benefits on learning to read" (Tierney & Pearson, 1983). In Becoming a Nation of Readers the Commission on Reading stated in 1985:

> "It cannot be emphasized too strongly that reading is one of the language arts. All of the uses of language--listening, speaking,reading, and writing--are interrelated and mutually supportive. It

> follows, therefore, that school activities that foster one of the language arts inevitably will benefit the others as well" (p.79).

Writing is a practical means of becoming a reader. Clay (1975) describes writing as critical to the early stages of learning to read. She found that self-motivated involvement in writing helps children develop basic visual scanning and memory strategies that reading requires. The literature on emergent literacy and writing instruction suggests that reading and writing should be taught together and should be introduced early.

Graves (1978), when reporting the results of a year long study remarked that, "the problem with writing is no writing" (p. 635). His findings support what most educators are already aware of, and that is that teachers in classrooms today spend far too much time handing out dittos and workbook pages for which the extent of writing is filling in one and two word answers. Bennett, Cockburn, Desforges, and Wilkinson's (1984) research on writing instruction found that even when the expressed aim of seventy percent of the teachers was to promote writing, the teachers assigned

tasks that predominantly provided "practice writing." Moreover, teacher's evaluation of writing did not attend to content but focused on aspects of grammar such as using capital letters and stopping at the end of sentences.

The problem of limited exposure to writing in the classroom is only the tip of the iceberg. Simply scheduling additional time for writing will not produce the desired results. Children need to have opportunities to select their own topics and express their ideas in their own ways. Furthermore, teachers should know how children develop into literate adults so that they can analyze progress and provide the kinds of writing opportunities that are most appropriate.

Children arrive at school knowing how to use oral language to express meaning. They have been learning naturally through interaction with adults. Adults who do not break language into separate skills but begin from birth to treat the child as a language user. The child not only learns the words that identify objects but he or she learns other conventions of language that make it possible to communicate ideas clearly.

Forester (1986) uses the analogy of teaching children to walk. We would never dream of trying to

explain to a babies how to balance their bodies, shift their weight, use their eyes as guides, and move their arms, legs, and feet in order to walk. Babies learn to walk by trying the process until they succeed. By the same procedure children are exposed to complex language patterns as they learn to communicate. In both cases children are testing, correcting, retesting and correcting again. They are not receiving explicit instructions but are observing and experimenting until adequate levels of expertise are reached.

Researchers (Graves,1983; Clay,1975; Farr,1985) have been investigating the processes children go through as they learn to write by writing. They have observed the ways in which children exhibit understanding of and growth in writing as they "play at" and experiment with many forms of verbal and written expression. Children write via drawing, scribbling, letter-like forms, various forms of invented spelling, as well as conventional orthography. Children are exposed to the fundamental aspects of the writing process as they participate in listening to stories, reading stories, retelling stories, and participating in dramatic play.

As researchers and teachers accumulate data, patterns of development through predictable stages are becoming evident. Children entering school write by drawing and naming objects with one word labels. They generally repeat themes that become more complex and differentiated. The writing of children progresses from one-word to several words strung together in a sentence. They use letters and sounds to produce approximations of words. Awareness of other language conventions develop as children begin to separate letters into words and to add capital letters and punctuation marks. When children are given the opportunity to write daily on their own they begin to refine their writing through stages at their own individual rates.

The process writing approach develops thinking skills and makes reading and writing more meaningful. Children draw conclusions about their own language. They can realize that what they say or think about can be written down so that their ideas can be shared with others--just like the ideas of authors of the books they read. The studies (Graves, 1985; Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1984) showed that children participated in the same activities as adult authors. They paused and

planned, encoded sounds into print, edited, and reread for accuracy.

Current educational practices reflect the influence of the theories of John Dewey who made us aware that learning happens as a result of "doing" and "experiencing" things in the world around us as we solve problems that are meaningful to us (Phillip & Soltis, 1985). Although the acceptance of this theory may be evidenced in educational literature we might ask to what extent it is implemented in classrooms. In particular, we question to what extent it impacts the writing curriculum. A writing classroom that ascribes to this theory is one in which the environment promotes literacy through students reading and being read to, writing their own creations, and engaging in actual contact with language involving productive opportunities to talk.

The theme of active involvement gains further impetus from the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky. Piaget's developmental theories describe how the child develops "schemes" for dealing with and understanding the world (Phillips & Soltis, 1985). The child moves through stages of cognitive development as he or she interacts with the environment. Vygotsky's theories

also show a stage process of development that leads to higher level intellectual processes directly related to social language interaction (Portes, 1985). He describes the zone of proximal development (a range of social interaction between an adult and child) which allows the child to perform at higher levels than he or she might attain at the same rate on his or her own. Vygotsky's research suggests that thought and language transact and together become more than their individual and independent selves (Harste et al., 1984).

"Thinking is invisible until we use language to make it visible" (Thaiss & Suhor, 1984, p. 145). Educational environments are notorious for being dominated by teacher talk and encouraging quiet on the part of students. We also find through research on questioning that teachers in all grades, and most prominently in primary grades, frequently ask questions requiring knowledge at the lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy of knowledge (1956). In light of the idea of "visible thinking" we must ask how we can know what is going on in a child's mind if he or she does not say it out loud or write it down. Moreover, how can we encourage critical thinking if we do not use selective questioning?

An effective writing strategy referred to as "interactional scaffolding" (Thaiss & Suhor, 1984) borrows from Vygotsky's theories. The student interacts with the teacher in much the same way that parents naturally help their children to think about their experiences. This questioning process is usually part of conferencing in a process writing program. It employs a series of questions that help guide the child to think through problems and to draw his or her own conclusions. Teaching strategies such as those help students to develop constructive thinking strategies that are best established through verbal interaction.

Interwoven with the concept of the child "thinking out loud" are the ideas of modeling and imitation. We know that children observe adult behavior and make attempts to copy and expand on the things they see. While teachers may be cognizant of modeling appropriate behavior they seldom model their thinking behavior. Educational literature is just beginning to emphasize how teachers can facilitate learning by taking part in the same activities as the children and modeling the thinking process they use to solve problems and make decisions.

Teachers complain that they have precious little time to cover the content in all curriculum areas much less providing time for discussion and writing. However, Frank Smith (1982) states candidly that: "Writing cannot be taught through a set of explicit rules or exercises. You cannot memorize the 'facts' of writing like math or geography" (p. 199). Smith and others strongly defend the necessity of providing the time for writing and discussion because children learn to write by writing, by reading, and by perceiving themselves as a writers.

Smith (1982) goes as far as to say that "it is dangerous to isolate writing as a subject in school" (p. 207). The time for writing, the purposes for writing, the teaching of the mechanics of writing, all need to be intermingled within other curriculum areas throughout the school day. Writing activities should extend the students experience and understanding of content.

This project attempts to incorporate the knowledge we have about how literacy develops, and how children learn to write, to design a process writing curriculum plan for kindergarten through third grade. The activities draw from many areas of the primary school

curriculum and involve experiences with a variety of writing genre. The curriculum incorporates reading, writing, listening and speaking into a holistic language arts approach. At the core of the plan is the promotion of communication skills in a print rich environment. The goal is to produce not only children who can read and write, but children who choose to read and write.

Definitions of Common Terms

Holistic refers to the integration of and interrelatedness of all areas of the language arts--reading, writing, listening, speaking.

Inventive spelling refers to the child's attempts to use what he or she knows about sounds and symbols to produce approximations of words.

Language acquisition refers to the strategies employed by individuals as they learn and use language.

Literacy or emergent literacy refers to the development that is taking place as the child grows and matures as a reader and writer.

Process writing refers to a curriculum for writing instruction that is based on learning through active, continuous production of writing by students.

Scaffolding refers to a process of questioning and reflective responses that stimulate cognitive development in adult-child verbal interaction.

Chapter Two

Introduction

In recent years the literature and research on the process of literacy development have conveyed a sense of the intensely individual and constructive natures of writing and reading processes. There are strong implications that active involvement in these processes of communication can foster the development of critical thinking skills and contribute to the development of skills in reading and writing. New instructional techniques are being shaped by current research. The educational focus is changing from teaching sets of skills and presenting certain types of writing in a given sequence, to focus on the development of the individual learner and the modeling of multiple communication skills.

Although the research is multidisciplinary, there are two broad fields of inquiry that underlie the development of a curriculum. First, the review of the process of literacy development, particularly the development of writing, provides a basis for educational observations and evaluation. Second, the review of instructional strategies and their influence on student attitudes and academic achievement provides

a rationale for curriculum decisions. The volume of literature on writing that has been generated in the last decade is raising the consciousness level of educators and establishing the status of writing as an integral part of a language arts curriculum.

The researchers who have outlined developmental levels have clearly indicated the types of learning that occur as children write. Unfortunately, the studies of academic achievement in traditional settings as compared to those in process writing programs are limited. This type of comparison has presented difficult challenges for researchers. Current standardized testing that assesses specific skills in a multiple-choice format has shown positive results for process writing; however, this testing is not compatible with the individualized assessment used in many process writing classrooms. Furthermore, the degree of implementation of process writing methods in classrooms varies. Graves (1983), Farr (1985), and others have indicated that the teaching methods in longitudinal classroom studies have changed during the progress of the research--as a natural adjustment to the writing process not as dictated by the researches. The way in which a teacher uses questioning, the focus

and methods of instruction, the degree of free choice afforded the students, and the teachers knowledge of writing development effect the results of classroom assessment.

The implications of the research on writing have already guided the curriculum in the direction of an holistic integrated language arts program. Connecting writing to reading and incorporating both into all aspects of the school curriculum appears to be a realistic expectation for the future in education.

Literacy Development

Researchers have established that children operate from a base of knowledge as they develop as writers. Clay (1975), Graves (1985), Bissex (1980), and others have outlined behaviors, attitudes, and understandings or knowledge that young children bring to the task of writing. Parallels are often drawn between oral language development and writing as well as between all the components of language. Parker (1983) proposes a theoretical view of writing development as "a process which is both continuous with, and embedded in, three broader processes, each related but each overarching and encompassing the others. First, writing is part of an ongoing process of language development, which has

its roots in the prespeech communication of mothers and infants and continues on through listening, talking, writing, and reading. Second, language development is itself part of a broader process of semiotic development, which includes gesture, make-believe play, drawing, and dance. Third, semiotic development is part of still broader social process which involves the creation and transmission of cultural as well as individual meanings" (p. 42).

Fundamentally, writing develops as children interact with their world. It is in the process of adult-child interaction that verbal regulatory processes are presented, modeled, rehearsed, refined, and eventually internalized (Portes, 1985). Adults present and model, both visually and auditorily, as they talk to or with children and as they read books or other environmental print. Children rehearse, refine and internalize language knowledge through play behavior, social interaction, and the development of symbol systems.

Literacy development begins prior to formal instruction. Key findings by King and Rentel (1979) confirm that "learning has its roots deep in oral language development" (p. 133). Their studies showed

concrete examples of particular features of language development in oral language that later appeared in written language. Harste et al. (1984) in their studies of three to six year olds concluded that there seem to be "process universals" in literacy events. They found that children engage in the same literacy processes that adults use. The "process universals" children used were textual intent, negotiability, using language to fine-tune language, and risk-taking. In defining textual intent the authors suggested that there is "not only an expectation that written language makes sense, but also includes a `shape' of what that sense is going to be like" (p. 49). Children learn how language is typically organized by hearing stories. They experiment with oral and written language using what they think they know.

Ferreiro (1986) endeavors to clarify the issue of "universals" using a Piagetian model of cognitive development to define literacy acquisition. She emphasizes the dynamics of the cognitive processes that impel and shape the child's learning. She reported that children whose observable paths of writing development differ still use the same processing of information. Her study of two Spanish-speaking preschool children

brought her to conclude that both children tried to "reconcile contradictory evidence; passed through periods of acute [cognitive] conflicts; selected that which they are able to assimilate; disregarded information for very precise reasons; and were not satisfied until they found a general coherent interpretative system" (p. 49).

Goodman's (1980) research indicates that children believe they have written a message for themselves or for others even when they produce what looks like a scribble or a string of letters to the observing adult. She lists in <u>The Roots of Literacy</u> the following roots that children develop:

1) print awareness in situational context.
2) print awareness in connected discourse.
3) functions and forms of writing.
4) oral language about written language.
5) metalinguistic and metacognitive awareness.

It is interesting to note some of the specific information she gained through her research that indicated the roots of literacy that she composed. Her studies were conducted with three, four and five year old children. She found that eighty percent of the four and five year olds could read environmental print. The

children were able to decode print to meaning and to categorize and relate print to life's experiences. Children as young as three knew that print carries a message. It is significant that almost all children said they could write while almost all said they could not read and they would learn when they went to school. The children could also discuss the function of writing to a greater degree than they could discuss the function of reading. All of the children were able to use the terms pencil, read, write, draw, and book in the context of the procedures and were able to respond to the procedures as if they knew how oral language related to the written language.

Observations of children in an experimental situation show that young children gesture, act out, draw, and speak, when they are directed to write (Harste et al., 1984). Alternative systems of communication arise spontaneously and assist children in planning their writing products. When children write they read at the same time because the processes are so intricately connected. Also, children may verbalize [think outloud] while they are writing. Exploring and manipulating the forms, processes, and uses of writing in a playful manner allows young children great

freedom. They are relieved of the pressures and constraints of producing correct answers and gain a sense of control (Farr, 1985).

In addition to the study of emerging literacy in children from birth to four, there has been an ever increasing interest in the writing development of children in the early years of schooling. Two noted researchers in this area are Clay and Graves. They have observed children in classroom settings and have provided important information about the process of writing development in young children. It is useful to look at their findings and related research to form a basis for defining the significant aspects of writing development as it impacts educational decisions.

In her book, What Did I Write? (1975), Clay presents thirteen concepts and principles that teachers can use to observe and analyze the writing development of young children as they begin school. Her observations were made with children between the ages of 4:10 and 7:0 and her primary goal was to show the variations found among children. She does not suggest that there is a fixed sequence of learning through which all children must pass. The concepts and principles are outlined as follows:

1. The Sign Concept--the early concept that a sign carries a message.
2. The Message Concept--the stage in which the child realizes that the messages he speaks can be written down.
3. The Copying Principle--some letters, some words, and some groups of words must be imitated or copied in a slow and laborious way to establish the first units of printing behavior.
4. The Flexibility Principle--left to experiment with letter forms children will create a variety of new symbols by repositioning or decorating the standard forms.
5. The Inventory Principle--children take stock of their own learning as they systematically and spontaneously make lists of what they know or they arrange their learning in order.
6. The Recurring Principle--children have the tendency to repeat an action which helps establish quick, habitual response patterns and helps the child to realize that the same elements can recur in variable patterns.
7. The Generating Principle--children can produce many new statements in an inventive way when they

know some elements and some rules for combining or arranging these elements.

8. The Directional Principle--children learn the directional patterns of print, left-to-right, top-to-bottom.
9. Reversing the Directional Pattern--children may produce mirror images when copying at this stage due to a lapse in the sense of body in space as it relates to the page of a book.
10. The Contrastive Principle--children playfully create contrast between shapes, meanings, sounds, and word patterns.
11. The Space Concept--children pass from writing single words to writing words in groups and they learn that a space must signal the end of one word and the beginning of another. [Some children do not hear words as segmented parts in spoken language.]
12. Page and Book Arrangements--children encounter new difficulties with directionality when they cannot fit their words on a line or a page.
13. The Abbreviation Principle--this occurs when children understand that words are constructed out

of letters and that the letters or abbreviations "stand for" words.

Graves, along with his associates Calkins and Sowers, conducted longitudinal case studies of children's development as writers. Their studies were conducted with children from age six through ten in their public school classrooms in Atkinson, New Hampshire. Even though the research team did not impose a writing curriculum they became a catalyst for change. It was the collaboration between the teachers and the researchers that contributed to implementation of certain instructional procedures. Therefore, the findings reflect the children's growth within a process writing approach. The four areas of writing growth that were examined are the skills or mechanics of writing, the development in space, the development in time, and the development within the phases of the writing cycle. Some of the significant findings in each area are as follows:

1. Skills

-Handwriting was influenced by the child's motor control and knowledge of convention. Children use drawing as the text or along with written text in their early development, eventually

dropping the drawings as they mature as writers. Growth can be observed in the pressure (light and heavy strokes) used in letter formation and in the way letters occupy the space on the page (Graves, 1979, 1983).

-Punctuation behavior in the groups that used it in the context of writing showed that students needed more kinds of punctuation and gained skill in using appropriate marks as the school year progressed. There was a tendency to overgeneralize when students used punctuation marks. For example, a child may use a period between each word in a sentence (Calkins, 1980).

-Spelling progress was highly visible. The students were allowed to use inventive spelling and they followed a predictable pattern of development.

Stage I	- Use of initial consonant	G
Stage II	- Initial and final consonant	GS
Stage III	- Initial, final, and interior consonant	GRS
Stage IV	- Initial, final, and interior consonant, and vowel place holder. Vowel is incorrect,	GRES

but in correct position.

Stage V - Child has the full spelling of the word, with final components from visual memory systems and better vowel discrimination (Graves, 1983, p.184-185). GRASS

2. Development in Space

-Children progressed from leaving space for a picture to covering the whole page with print. They learned to move from left to right, top to bottom, and they progressed from strings of letters to separation of words.

-Children rehearsed for writing in many ways including daydreaming, sketching, doodling, making lists of words, outlining, reading, and conversing. First grade children might rehearse by drawing on the page just prior to writing while older children reported rehearsing away from school. As children developed they extended their thinking over several different settings. They wrote about events in other places (Farr, 1985; Graves, 1983).

3. Development in Time

-Children extended the amount of time they would spend attending to a certain piece of writing and the flexibility, stability, and change of focus necessary for maintaining an interest over time.

-Graves (1973,1975) and Sowers (1985) found patterns in children's territoriality in writing. Graves found that girls usually wrote in primary territory, that is, they wrote about home and school; while, boys wrote about secondary territory or the neighborhood. Sowers found these territories to be less delineated between the sexes. However, she found that as children matured there was increased preference for writing about social situations.

4. The Writing Cycle

-The phases of the writing process--prewriting, writing, and revision--took on different patterns as children learned to write. As children grew older they drew after writing and eventually stopped drawing in relation to their writing (Farr, 1985).

-Children at each age participate in the phases of the writing process. Calkins (1980) describes children's writing cycles as occurring almost simultaneously rather than being recursive or linear.

-Graves (1983) noted that children in composing frequently verbalize, but this occurs less often in more mature children.

-Sowers (1985) reported that the children employed several kinds of talking activities during composing. They composed aloud, usually in a word-by-word rhythm. She indicated that children seemed to be dictating to themselves in a special register similar to the beginning reading register. They orally segmented words into syllables and sounds. They elaborated on the stories that their drawings and written text represented. They spontaneously evaluated their own and others' productions and made procedural comments.

-Revision may be evident through media other than writing. Children may use speech, dramatic play and drawing.

Research by Nicholls, Bauers, Pettitt, Redgwell, Seaman, and Watson (1989) has taken the information from Clay, Graves, and others a step further to provide a model of early writing development. They observed children ages five to over nine in classroom situations. Their project, like others, emphasized the impact of instructional practices. They found that the experience was a learning one for both teachers and researchers.

The model separates early writing into two areas of concern and four levels of development. It "offers a principled basis for identifying key issues and appraising profile components in the writing development of young children and for reporting on the level of attainment at around age seven" (1989,p. 88). The levels describe a developmental progression that is individual for each child. The authors identified the two areas of writing that must be attended to by the terms "composing aspect" and "performing aspect".

The model presented in Figure 1 can serve as a useful format for teachers as they observe and assess pupil progress in writing. The model illustrates the inverse relationship between the composing and performing aspects of writing. The writer clearly

attends more diligently to mechanical and conventional skills at early levels. As performing skills grow, the writer focuses more attention on composing, or the meaningful intent of the text.

In level one children are learning what writing does and evidence of their development can be observed in the children's "scribble" writing, as well as their comments about the writing. In level two children learn to compose and subsequently to dictate their own message, using the teacher as scribe. This is the early text-making stage in which the children are learning to organize and reproduce written messages using their own words. Development is shown when the children, during dictation, monitor the text as the teacher writes it. They question marks that the teacher uses that are not letters(e.g. periods or question marks), and they use a slowed pace while dictating. When copying, children show growing control of letter size, lines become more horizontal, and most letters are formed correctly. Children begin to show some awareness of spelling, and they vocalize whole words as they are copied.

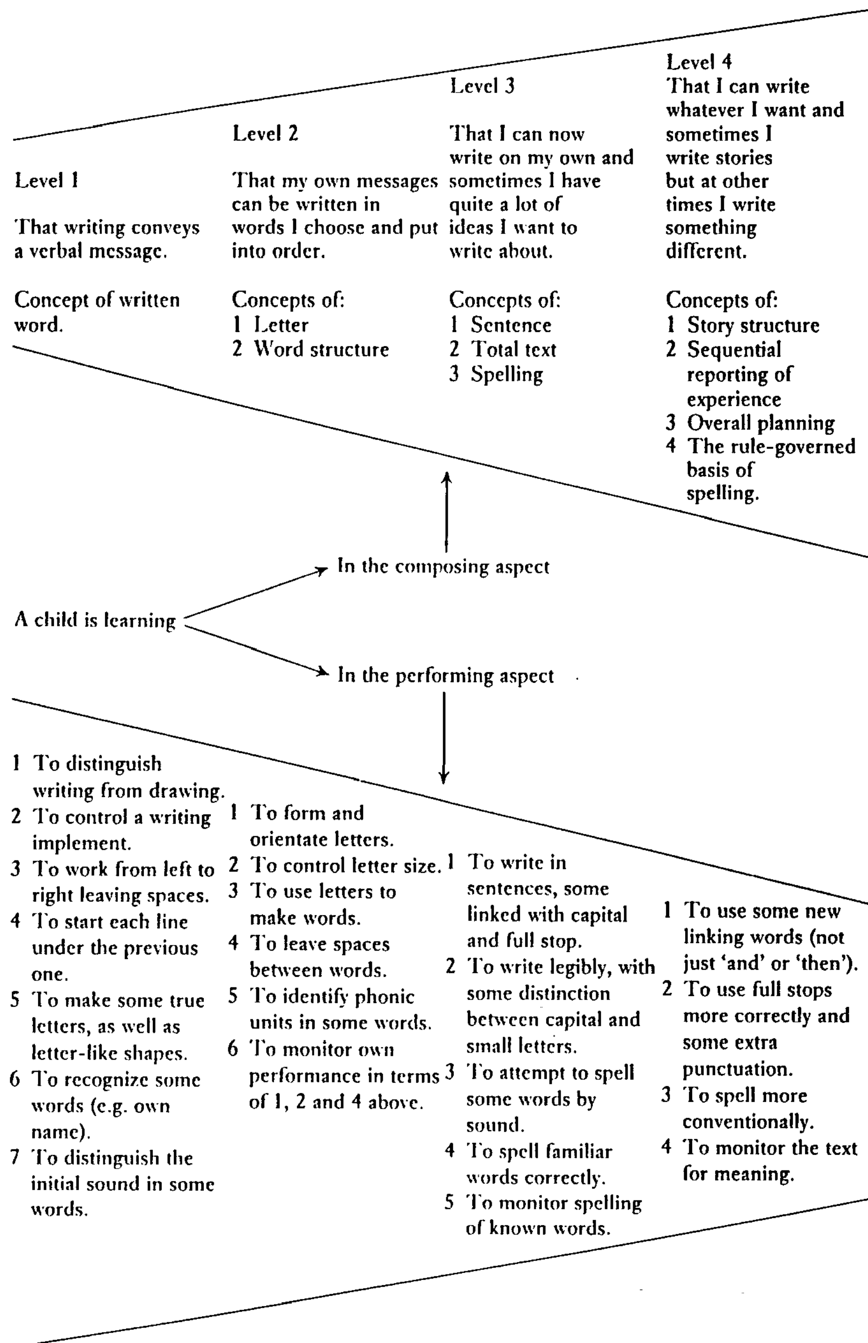

Figure 1. Writing development up to level 4. Note. From Beginning Writing (p. 92) by J. Nicholls, A. Bauers, D. Pettitt, V. Redgwell, E. Seaman, and G. Watson, 1989, Philadelphia, PA: Copyright 1989 by The Authors. Reprinted by permission.

Competence increases in the third level as the children learn to write extended and coherent text--i.e. to make sense to the reader. The teacher can observe development in this area when children pause at the end of groups of words that make sense or when they appear to be stuck for spelling. Also, the teacher can notice increases in verbal commentary, writing speed, length of time spent on writing projects, length of the text, and the use of dictionaries.

Finally, in level four the young writers achieve a balance between the demands of composing and performing. Now the intended meaning is developed in a sentence-by-sentence cohesive text. The teacher will notice a reduction in the need of spelling sources; the emergence of subordinating links like "because" or "when"; a growing control of tense sequence; and a change from bit-by-bit text-monitoring only to reading over the completed text as well.

Beyond level four, text construction becomes a more conscious activity and the editing or revising step of the writing cycle emerges. Teachers can see evidence of growth when the children can use different genre schemes, such as stories and reports. The

children can plan and organize their text maintaining a theme or a point of view. At this level the children are becoming more aware of a reader's needs.

Much of the current research on the development of writing in young children has been conducted in classrooms with a collaborative effort between teachers and researchers. Clay (1975), Graves (1985), and Nicholls et al. (1989) agree that writing will progress through predictable stages when students are actively involved in writing. Progress is of a highly individual nature and requires teachers who observe what each child knows and provide instructional guidance to facilitate growth.

Attitudes

There have been some interesting statistics published regarding the attitudes of children and adults toward writing. Graves (1985) took a survey of children's attitudes about writing when they enter school. He found that ninety percent of children believe they can write while only fifteen percent believe they can read. He goes on to point out that most adults think children cannot write until they can read. However, the students in Graves studies in one first grade class from 1978 to 1980 composed thirteen

hundred original little books. The children were able to spend as much as an hour at a time working on writing and could maintain interest in a single publication over several weeks.

Researchers are finding that while a child's ability to write increases with age and experience the child's enthusiasm or enjoyment of writing declines. Not only do they develop a negative attitude toward writing, they describe themselves as "no good" at writing. The work of Harste et al. (1984) lead them to conclude that what children know about reading and writing when they enter school far exceeds teacher expectations. The teacher's inclination is to take control of what the child is to write and to teach specific skills, while the child's inclination is to use pictures, letters, and numbers to symbolize meaningful aspects of their environment in attempts to communicate with others (Dyson, 1985). Children want to write according to their own choosing and their own purposes (Smith, 1984). Summarily, children entering school perceive writing as more than written language on a page (Newkirk & Atwell, 1988).

Despite the indications of interest and ability on the part of young students, and despite the educational

communities acceptance of writing development as a valued goal, the evidence does not show that sufficient amounts of writing instruction and activities actually take place in the classroom. According to the 1985 report of the Commission on Reading, every recent analysis of writing instruction in American classrooms has concluded that children don't have many opportunities to write. They cite a study in grades one, three, and five in which only 15% of the school day was spent in any kind of writing activity (Bridge & Hiebert,in press). They refer to another study by Applebee (1981) which found that two-thirds of the writing that occurred in classrooms was word for word copying in workbooks, and composition of a paragraph or more in length are infrequent even in high school. Furthermore, Graves (1985) reveals evidence that skills from workbook experiences do not transfer to essay writing.

Analysis of elementary basal readers, teacher's manuals, and workbooks discloses that written text activities are seldom visible. The writing required persistently is underlining, circling and supplying one-word responses. Careful examination of language arts textbooks published between 1969 and 1980 for

second grade and fifth grade indicated that even when 31% of time/pages were devoted to composition activities, 21% of that time was spent in preparation for writing. Researchers determined that approximately seven and one-half hours were designated for actual writing throughout the entire school year (Newkirk & Atwell, 1988).

Perhaps the neglect of written composition is due to the priority status of reading. Graves (1980) concluded that "for every $3,000 spent on children's ability to receive information, $1.00 was spent on their power to send it in writing" (p. 914). Graves (1985) also surveyed thirty-six universities and found that only two courses in the teaching of writing were offered as opposed to 169 course offerings in reading. Statistics such as these, coupled with the recent research about writing development which acclaims the correlation between reading and writing as thinking processes and components of literacy, have sparked considerable interest in promoting the status of writing.

Academic Achievement

The research is drawing attention to the benefits of writing instruction in which children are actively

involved in the process of writing. Furthermore, the connections that are being made between reading and writing and the other language arts are changing attitudes and restructuring educational practices. The classroom research is providing information about academic achievement and student attitudes within a new framework of writing instruction.

In Graves (1985) classroom research setting, children were asked "Are you a writer?" or "Do you know how to write?" when they began in his writing research program. The results showed that 76% of the children entering first grade said "yes" to these questions. Third and fourth graders were less confident with a drop to only 40% in fifth through eight grade. The children were ask the same questions after two years in the writing program. At that time affirmative answers were given by 90% of students in kindergarten through eighth grade (Graves, 1985).

One study showed that even though the process writing approach took time away from reading drill the test scores of students were as high or even higher than in their traditional instructional setting (Graves,1985). Calkins (1980), along with Graves (1982), found that children who were engaged in writing

for a purpose, and to a given audience, learned to use punctuation, spelling, and grammar within the context for which it was intended. Children also learned to focus on meaning before mastering the fine points of form. Sowers (1985) found that reading scores were comparable between first and second grade students receiving process writing curriculum and those in a basal program. She notes that spelling test scores did not suffer despite the use of inventive spelling and without the benefit of a traditional spelling curriculum. She hypothesized that the phonics scores on standardized reading tests for first grade students were on the average one and one-half to two years above grade level due to the daily encoding that children did as a part of their writing.

King and Rentel (1982) compared progress between students in two schools in similar middle class settings with different learning environments. In one, the class was "literacy rich" while the other relied heavily on workbooks and worksheets to teach skills and separated reading and writing as subjects. The results showed distinct differences in writing growth between the groups, with the greatest growth in the group that

received more actual writing practice and a broad exposure to literature.

Instructional Strategies

Much of the progress found in process writing classrooms is reflected through the specific set of approaches that are used. Although a variety of teaching strategies are inherent in the process writing approach this project will limit the review to some of the techniques that have generated the most attention by researchers and teachers.

The most significant instructional implications include student involvement in daily writing activities particularly those that allow free choice of topics; the use of conferencing between students and teachers as well as peers; the use of modeling through teacher participation and sharing of a variety of reading/writing materials; and the acceptance and use of writing techniques that encourage the free flow of ideas and establish the processes of the writing cycle.

Canfield and Wells (1976) describe effective teachers as having a more favorable view of democratic classroom procedures. They do not see students as persons "you do things to" but rather as persons capable of doing for themselves. When students are

allowed to write daily on topics of their own choice they are operating in three dimensions simultaneously. They are reconstructing experiences and using prior knowledge. They are using nonverbal signals as they code conventional language structure. At the same time, they are focusing on the context of the environment and becoming aware of the concept of audience.

One of the most prevalent forms of free writing is the use of journals. This activity allows children to write and/or draw for about thirty minutes a day on any topic they choose. Journals are frequently used as a diary or a continuing dialogue between the student and the teacher. The teacher reads the student's journal entries and makes personal comments (not value judgements or skill evaluations) in response to the things the child shares. The importance of journals to students lies in the establishment of writing as a habit for the real-life purpose of sharing communications in a risk-free environment. For the teacher, the journals provide insight into the personal perspectives of the children and awareness of their progress as writers.

Kintisch (1986) conducted a four year study of journal writing in kindergarten through fourth grade.

The most significant finding was that journal writing produced a sense of accomplishment and enthusiasm for writing in children at every age level and developed eager authors. The students were found to write more fluently and easily and to use a richer vocabulary. The kindergarten teachers reported that many children were learning to read earlier than before journal writing was introduced. The students learned to take risks with paper and pencil and displayed more imagination in their communications.

A major component of the process writing approach is the use of conferencing. Conferences involve verbal interaction between teachers and students or students and their peers. They do not represent an interrogation, but a workmanlike conversation about writing in progress. The research basis for conferences evolved from observations of adult-child verbal interaction that take place as children acquire language. Cazden (1983) describes three forms of discourse that adults naturally use to assist children in developing literacy. She refers to these forms as scaffolding, modeling, and direct instruction.

Cazden's forms of discourse can be examined as they relate to the process writing conferences.

Scaffolding is a framework of questions that an adult uses as he or she directs a child toward higher levels of understanding. The questions used by the teacher are designed to elicit progressively greater amounts of information about the child's writing. The questions indicate to children what events or information in their writing are most significant and helps the children focus on aspects that need expansion or clarification. Modeling, in relation to questioning techniques, refers to the teacher providing discourse models that the children can imitate and generalize to other situations and text. Finally, the direct instruction discourse assists the children in saying, or telling, or asking questions in response to a modeled utterance. These forms of discourse are helpful in expanding the students knowledge and providing information to the teacher about the level of development of the children.

The benefit of questioning in the conference situation comes from the writer's application of the questioning process to the text he or she has written. Sowers (1985) outlines three ways in which the teacher guides the children's response in the writing conference. The teacher helps the children reflect on

their writing by mirroring the text, summarizing, paraphrasing, or restating. He or she helps the children expand their text by bringing in more information to build background and descriptive vocabulary. The teacher also helps the children select the aspects of their message that are most important to communicating the meaning to their audience.

Sowers (1985) found that the writing conference helped students focus on and maintain the direction of the task. The conference helped reduce the degree of freedom in that it limits the number of issues that are discussed in regard to any one written text. It helped the teacher to guide critical issues in the writing process and to demonstrate solutions to problems. It also freed children to innovate and reverse roles with the teacher to explore possibilities for their writing.

The literature often speaks of a "print rich" environment. An holistic approach is concerned with presenting the components of language as they exist--as an interrelated, integrated whole. Therefore, process writing classrooms provide abundant examples of literature and language models. Writing and reading are shared in many forms from books, poetry, newspapers, letters, lists and recipes, to advertisements and

dialogue journals. Verbal interaction is part of daily experiences with songs, dramatization, conferencing, and sharing publications. Teachers can play a central role in the development of young writers by giving demonstrations and examples, and by allowing time for children's playful exploration. In short, the teacher "models" language products and processes.

"To want to write, a child must see writing done and see what writing can do" (Smith, 1982, p. 201). Teachers report that the books students write often reflect the books that are shared in the classroom. Furthermore, skills acquisition and critical thinking are promoted as children see examples of literature and participate in many writing activities. In summarizing the benefits of using writing and reading to explore topics in literature, Dyson (1989) noted that understanding was enhanced while meaning-making skills and appreciation of an author's craft were heightened. The children's attitudes and approaches toward learning were improved. Additional research found listening to and responding to books to be vital in fostering language development and linking reading to writing (Strickland, 1987; Taylor & Strickland, 1986; Chomsky, 1972).

Using a variety of writing genre in the classroom and using various methods of presentation has not specifically held the attention of researchers, but the idea of modeling as it relates to presenting "background experience" and constructing intellectual "schemes" for dealing with the world, has drawn much interest. Langer (1985) describes the source of children's knowledge of genre as it is revealed in their reading and writing lies in "functional forms they hear and use in their daily lives" (p. 185). Freeman, Carey, and Miller (1986) observed that when college students were in a genre of academic discourse that was new to them they concentrated on specific content, but they approached the task with a "dimly felt sense" of the new genre. When adult students find it difficult to write without previous knowledge of a genre then young children who have limited knowledge of many aspects of language are likely to experience similar difficulty.

The process writing approach endeavors to enhance the student's understanding of certain features of literature. Bereiter and Scardamalia (1984) investigated the knowledge gained by students from exposure to single examples of literary types. In all

of the experiments, whether features of the genre were actually taught or the students simply read and wrote in the genre, writing in conjunction with reading proved to be a powerful vehicle for learning. The students not only acquired a sense of the genres' features, but were able to develop a sense of possible variations of the genres.

The use of the process writing approach has brought up the issue of "inventive spelling". This term refers to misspellings children use before they know the rules adults use to spell. Even before children know how to read they construct increasingly elaborate rule systems for spelling. Researchers (Sowers, 1982; Graves, 1983; Dyson, 1985; Gentry, 1987) conclude that children learn to spell in much the same way they learn how to walk and talk. The literature suggest many reasons for allowing and encouraging the use of inventive spelling.

Sowers (1982) draws a strong case when she points out four advantages of inventive spelling. First, inventive spelling gives children the independence to proceed with their writing without having to constantly stop for assistance. Secondly, children are able to create fluent and powerful writing because they are

able to concentrate on the content rather than the mechanics. Third, inventive spelling allows for efficient instruction. The children are applying phonics rules and are involved in drill and practice at a level of difficulty appropriate to their skills. Sowers states that "no teacher has the time to motivate, diagnose, and assign the appropriate individualized material for encoding and decoding that could match the work children do when they write" (p. 48). She also observed greater commitment on the part of the children than they would ever devote to worksheets because the product is their personal creation. Finally, children learn to take risk and responsibility as they work independently on their writing. The results of testing showed that up until second grade children who used inventive spelling did as well on spelling test as those students who learned spelling list.

Students need guidance through all stages of the writing cycle--pre-writing, writing, revising, and publishing. In WRITING: Teachers & Children at Work (1983), Graves shared how process writing approaches can be implemented in classrooms. The procedures are based on the findings from the National Institute of

Education study conducted in Atkinson, New Hampshire from 1978 through 1980. Graves concluded that "teaching writing demands the control of two crafts, teaching and writing" (p. 5). He addresses techniques and strategies for use by teachers and students throughout each stage of the writing cycle.

Pre-writing involves the activities and thinking that take place prior to writing. Graves tells us that children who have been fed topics almost panic when they have to choose their own. The teachers must provide a total classroom atmosphere to help children select topics. They must determine the interest and knowledge of the students and provide an abundance of materials and activities that stimulate interest and build background knowledge. After children rehearse ideas through discussion and social interaction, dramatic play, drawing, observations, and other methods the children are ready to write.

The writing stage involves the actual recording of ideas. The children need to have an adequate amount of time to write and should feel comfortable to take risks with spelling and other conventions of language. This stage can and should provide many opportunities for writing to encourage practice in various forms of

communication. Ultimately, the content of the message should be the major focus in the writing stage.

Revision, or reseeing, is a process the child learns through conferring with the teacher and peers. The verbal interaction helps the children reflect on the message of their text and determine how clearly they have shared their message. Revision, therefore, involves re-reading the message for clarity as well as editing for errors in writing mechanics. This important part of the writing cycle affords the teacher the opportunity to observe development and instruct the child.

The publication of writing is essential to building the child's concept of authorship. Publication can take many forms from bound books, to bulletin board displays, to simply reading the child's written composition to a group of peers. Although it is not advisable to publish every piece of writing a child produces, it is important to carefully select specific works for publication.

The key concept to keep in mind for planning instructional strategies is "process". The teacher facilitates and evaluates the student's progress through a series of actions and changes (the process)

that results in children who are confident writers. The literature indicates that holistic individualized instruction and daily opportunities for students to write are of primary importance in a successful process writing program.

Chapter Three

Procedures

The purpose of this project is to design a basic writing curriculum with activities which can be adapted for kindergarten through third grade. The comprehensive, student-centered curriculum applies the research findings on literacy development and the writing process. The learning environment is presented as part of the curriculum plan since it establishes the importance of writing as a meaningful activity within the context of daily classroom events. Writing activities are planned around the themes and literature base of the currently adopted reading series for Clay County. Mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts activities expand the reading themes and introduce students to various forms of written communication. The culminating activity gives students the opportunity to apply the knowledge they have gained during the year and to share their experiences and their written products with an audience.

The review of research indicates that an organized classroom environment enhances the process writing approach. The arrangement and availability of materials should invite children to write. Students should know

where their written products are to be placed at each stage of the process. They should be able to request conference time with the teacher without interrupting instruction that is in progress. Moreover, the atmosphere of the classroom coupled with instructional methods should help children draw connections that encourage them to communicate their ideas in written form.

The term modeling as used in this plan has two connotations. First, modeling refers to the abundant use of examples of literature and writing forms. In prewriting activities the teacher familiarizes students with a variety of forms through regular guided observation of literature genre. Secondly, modeling refers to demonstrating the elements of composing and revealing the thought processes used in each component of writing. Children learn how adults think through a process or problem because the teacher shares her thoughts aloud when she presents an activity. Modeling is suggested as a routine teaching method, and this plan attempts to illustrate the process by presenting some activities in a dialogue format.

Each phase of the writing cycle--prewriting, writing, revision/editing, publishing--employs a set of

procedures and has specific objectives. This project addresses the stages in a whole class writing activity and presents instructional techniques that can be used in particular components of each stage. The basic procedures that the teacher and the students follow are on-going for each grade level throughout the year so that the patterns are established and built upon by practice and spiraling of skills within the writing curriculum.

The pre-writing stage is primarily concerned with identifying the interest and experience of the students, expanding the students knowledge base, and stimulating the students to rehearse the ideas that they will eventually share in their writing. Free choice of topic is important because fluent writing depends on the students feeling confident that they know what they are writing about and that their ideas matter to them and to their audience. This is where Graves' (1983) "craft of teaching" requires that the teacher saturate the students with content and with models of writing in order to prepare them for creating their own publications. In addition, topic selection is modeled in whole class writing activities where sharing

of ideas and democratic procedures are used to decide on joint written products.

The success of the writing stage depends upon allowing time to write, presenting writing activities in a meaningful context, and encouraging the free flow of ideas. Daily blocks of time are designated for uninterrupted writing. At this time the students are involved in recording their ideas while the teacher rotates around the classroom providing assistance in individual and small group conferences. Moreover, writing activities are incorporated throughout the day in center projects and group instruction. The content is of greatest importance at this stage and students are encouraged to use drawing or inventive spelling.

The collaborative nature of the process is stressed in the revision/editing stage. Conferences with the teacher and peers are a continuing, daily activity with learning objectives for the composing and performing aspects of writing. The questioning procedures for conferencing are extremely important in facilitating the learning of skills and the promotion of critical thinking. The goal of peer conferences is to broaden the students understanding of the author/reader relationship and to acquire communication

skills in all the components of language. The conferences attend first to revision of the text for clarity of expression and later address editing for mechanical accuracy. Teachers should use checklists to evaluate skills development on an individual basis during the conference process.

The implementation of whole language and process writing approaches have generated some anxiety among educators. Teachers want to know how to balance their concern for maintaining the individual students initiative and authority as a writer on the one hand with the efficiency of direct teaching on the other. This curriculum plan suggest the use of "focused lessons" (Nathan, Temple, Juntunen, & Temple, 1989) as an instructional technique that is compatible with an holistic philosophy.

Focused lessons can be used to introduce a variety of skills and concepts, but should only address one issue in a given lesson. When conferencing with students the teacher becomes aware of specific problems the students are experiencing. For example, a number of children may need help with writing endings. The teacher ask a child for permission to use his or her work to present to the class on an overhead to help

everyone learn how to write endings. As an alternative, the teacher might devise a sample to use to teach a specific skill that the curriculum introduces at the given grade level. The teacher can present focused lessons several times a week or as the need arises. The period just before free writing workshop is best because the students can focus on the skill or "try it out" in their writing. This instructional procedure allows the teacher to make connections between the student's work and demands of the curriculum.

Publication is vital for establishing the children's concept of themselves as writers. The children must attend more closely to handwriting, punctuation, and spelling at this point because they are presenting their finished product for others to read. Not all books that the class or an individual child writes must be published. In fact, the student's writing folders should contain works that are only drafts as well as completed works that are not to be published. Bound publications should be shared with the class or other audiences. Teachers may need to enlist the help of volunteers to keep up with the demands of the process writing curriculum.

Published works also include weekly or monthly newspapers that are printed on the computer and sent home for parents to share. Letters are typed or handwritten to send to companies and friends of the class. Poems are written, illustrated and posted on bulletin boards around the school. Teachers should be aware of magazines and book companies that publish children's writing and encourage children to participate in this kind of contest. This project suggests that teachers conscientiously strive to present purposeful reasons to share the students work with different audiences.

Ongoing writing activities include individual journals, letters and notes, and the class newspaper. Journal writing invites children to write/draw about anything they choose. It establishes a habit of writing down thoughts and promotes a special relationship between the teacher and the individual student as they share messages. Letter writing activities expand writing opportunities to include personal communications with friends and members of the school and community for business or for pleasure. These activities are for all grade levels and take on a different complexion each year as the students find

more reasons to write and as they develop skills in reading and writing.

The class newspaper provides a purpose for sharing written communication on a regular basis in the format of a real world publication. It encompasses informational writing, literature and entertainment reviews, comics and advertisements. Furthermore, it builds a sense of community as children share news from their class and the world.

"Writing gives people a means to move from observation to reaction to reflection. Writing is thus a powerful tool for learning in all subjects" (Temple et al., 1989. p. 6). This project presents activities for mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts planned around the themes of the Clay County reading series. The prewriting stage of the content area activities stimulates observation and reflection about the materials that are read or used to present information. The teacher and students record information on graphs, or semantic maps, and compare and contrast results. Writing has a purpose and generates more ideas that can be explored. Expository texts are written and published from the study in content areas.

The culminating activity is designed to give students as much freedom as possible while they plan to present a program for parents. The teacher sets the outline for the project and allows the students to work in groups to plan who, what, when, and how the program will be presented. This activity is part of the plan for each school year with the teacher giving a greater degree of control to the students at higher grade levels. Written communications, selection of speakers and readers, planning of the agenda, publication of the program, and other responsibilities afford the students opportunities to use skills they have developed throughout the process writing program.

This writing curriculum endeavors to incorporate the writing process into the fabric of the instructional day; it does not isolate writing as a subject. The whole group writing activities are designed to model techniques for developing writing that the students can apply to their individual written products. This approach functions in a collaborative format where the teacher's instructions are guided by the curriculum demands and by the students interest and developmental needs. The student's learning is guided by the content the teacher presents and by the child's

active involvement in the processes of writing, reading, listening, and speaking.

This curriculum plan is also intended to present a practical format for implementing process writing in the early elementary school classroom. Teachers are encouraged to provide activities in all curriculum areas using written forms that are natural to communication in the given subject. The teachers assume the role of facilitator of learning and present a model for effective thinking.

The activities and procedures that have been developed for this curriculum will be presented to kindergarten through third grade teachers in an inservice setting. The reactions and comments of colleagues will be used to evaluate and modify the curriculum. Prior to the inservice, samples of children's writing will be collected from classrooms and teachers will be interviewed about the procedures they currently employ. This information will be used to define the issues that are of greatest concern to the teachers and to prepare inservice lessons to address these concerns.

Chapter Four

The procedures and activities for this curriculum plan are arranged in five sections: I. Classroom Environment, II. The Writing Cycle, III. Ongoing Class Projects, IV. Content Area Writing, and V. The Culminating Activity. There are two appendix sections attached to the plan. Appendix A provides an interest inventory and forms for self-evaluation of writing that can help guide the students and the teacher. Appendix B provides a comprehensive list of the books, magazines, and other materials that can be used to enhance the activities and themes presented in this plan.

The activities represent ideas from a number of authors on the process writing approach. The following books provide additional information and teaching strategies.

WRITING:Teachers & Children At Work by Donald H. Graves

Creating Classrooms for Authors by Jerome C. Harste, Kathy G. Short, and Carolyn Burke

Classroom Strategies That Work by Ruth Nathan, Frances Temple, Kathleen Juntunen, and Charles Temple

Emerging Literacy: Young Children Learn to Read and Write by Dorothy S. Strickland, Lesley Mandel Morrow, editors

No Better Way To Teach Writing! by Jan Turbill

I. <u>CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT</u>

A. Introduction

The classroom environment for process writing should invite students to write as a natural communication process within all areas of the curriculum. Reading and writing activities need to be interwoven to create a sense of authorship for the students. The classroom should be littered with print and engage students in purposeful writing activities throughout the day. Blocks of time should be provided daily for uninterrupted writing on topics of the child's choice. The teacher needs to establish a management system so that the students know where to place their writing products when they need to have a conference; or when they have a writing piece ready for publication; or when they want to share a publication with the class. In addition, materials and supplies for writing should be readily available and clearly labeled so that the students will be able to obtain what they need independently. Individual classroom teachers can modify these general principles of

classroom organization to meet the need and constraints of their specific situation.

B. Materials

Paper: Computer Printout, Unlined, Lined Notebooks, Construction, Note Pads, Tag Board, Stationary, Envelopes, Index Cards, Sentence Strips.

Writing Materials: Markers, Crayons, Pencils.

Writing Supplies: Stapler, Glue, Rulers, Scissors, Three-hole Punch, Tape, Stamps and Stamp Pads, Stencils.

Center Materials and Equipment: Bulletin Boards, Chalkboards, Greaseboards, Flannel Boards, Bookcases, Trade Books, Students Publications, Magazines, Message Boxes, Charts, Puppets, Tapes, Records, Author's Chair, Conference Table, Writing Table.

C. Procedures

1. Prepare the classroom reading and writing centers. Provide materials and supplies that are needed for writing, for publishing, and for reading. Designate an "author's chair" for students to use when they are sharing

their drafts and publications with others. Provide bookshelf space for the students journals, student-made books, trade books, and magazines. Provide a table and chairs with space for several students to work at the same time. In the reading area, provide comfortable chairs and pillows for reading. If space is available the reading and writing centers need to be separated so that the noise level of the writers will not be distracting to the readers.

2. Prepare centers for mathematics, science, and social studies. Display materials, supplies, and information related to the themes that are being studied at the time. Use bulletin boards, charts, graphs, and experiments to extend the topic. For example, when the second grade is studying the "Helping Out" unit in the reading series: 1) the science center would include books about whales and a collection of sea shells or other things from the ocean; 2) the social studies center would include books and a bulletin board about occupations related to the sea; and 3) the

mathematics center would include activities for categorizing sea shell by size, shape, color, etc. and analyzing the information.

3. Prepare bulletin boards for the class newspaper, for sharing students drawing and writing, and to display materials related to subject areas or themes.(Specific suggestions appear in others sections of the plan.)
4. Label the room. Post students names on their desk and on their storage areas. Label centers as well as the materials in the centers. Label the containers for journals, for drafts in progress, for drafts to be published, and for conference request. Label book shelves to identify the contents.
5. Schedule a time for daily journal writing. Thirty to forty-five minutes of uninterrupted time should be devoted to free choice writing.
6. Use the language arts block of time to implement the stages of the writing process. For example, during a two hour period the teacher and the students will interact in prewriting activities, write as a group or

individually, conference in groups or individually, and plan for publication. These activities sometimes require a week or more to follow through the entire process, and other times require only one class period. The teacher schedules the daily language arts time, then the class follows through the writing process within that framework and at the pace dictated by the specific activity or the interest and decisions of the students.

7. Inform students about the organization and procedures used in the classroom and encourage their input for making plans and revisions. Students need to know what system is used for moving from one center to another, where writing materials are stored, who is responsible for weekly jobs in the classroom, and etc. Give students the feeling of being a member of a classroom community.

II. THE WRITING CYCLE

A. Prewriting Stage

This stage focuses on the students background of knowledge and experience and attempts to build

bridges between the students interest and the curriculum. At the beginning of the school year the teacher should take an interest inventory (Appendix A). Older students can complete the inventory themselves, but the teacher will need to interview younger students and complete the inventory for them. The teacher can use the information to help children with their writing. When students are selecting topics of their own choice the teacher can stimulate their rehearsal for writing and help them get started by asking questions related to their individual background and interests.

The teacher prepares the students for writing by assuring them that whatever they draw or write will be acceptable and encourages them to use what they know about letters and sounds to spell words. For second and third graders, the teacher should assure them that although they know how to spell many words correctly, they should feel free to spell words that are new or difficult the way they think they should be spelled. The teachers primary goal is to make the students feel free to take risks with their writing so

that they concentrate on putting their thoughts on paper rather than on producing a polished product. The teacher should let students know that authors write and rewrite their books many times before they are published.

The teacher also prepares students for writing by exposing them to a variety of literature, as well as an abundance of experiences and information related to the content areas. The teacher helps students develop observational skills and organizational strategies by presenting models and stimulating active involvement in the exploration of topics.

The procedures that follow present a focused lesson for modeling topic selection based on shared class experiences. After the topic is selected the teacher involves the students in brainstorming ideas on the topic and organizing the ideas in the form of a semantic map.

Prewriting Materials

Overhead Projector

Transparencies

Markers

(Chart Paper or a Chalkboard can be substituted if an overhead projector is not available.)

Prewriting Procedures

1. The teacher places a blank transparency on the overhead projector. The teacher tells the class that they are going to write a story about something the class has done together, and that they will make the story into a book to read to their parents. The teacher writes the number one on the transparency and tells the students that he or she particularly enjoyed the day that everyone brought their teddy bear to school. Then the teacher writes "teddy bear day" by the number and/or draws a picture of a teddy bear. The teacher should talk casually about the reasons she or he thought the experience was special. The teacher can use any shared class experience from field trips to visiting storytellers.
2. The teacher asks the students to think about class experiences that they really enjoyed. Call on a student to give a suggestion. Write number two on the overhead and write the child's suggestion, or have the student write

or draw the idea on the transparency himself or herself. Continue until several ideas are listed.

3. Review the list of class experiences and encourage the students to talk about the things they most enjoyed.
4. Summarize the conversation that has taken place and decide as a group what topic they think the class should write about first. Tell students that they can save the other ideas for another time and write about them on their own.
5. Remove the list of topics and place a blank transparency on the overhead. Write the topic that was selected, such as "Teddy Bear Day", in the center of the transparency and draw a box around it. Encourage the students to think of as many things as they can about the specific topic. For example, ask questions about the bear stories they read, where they took their bears that day, how people acted or what they said when they saw everyone with a bear, etc. Record the students ideas in clusters around the main topic.

6. Ask the students to tell you why they think you grouped certain things together. Encourage them to make suggestions of their own about different ways you could have grouped the words.

B. Writing/Drafting Stage

This is the stage in which ideas are written on paper. The important part of this stage is to encourage the free flow of ideas and minimize the students concern about spelling or other conventions of print. When students are writing on their own the teacher should rotate around the room and provide encouragement. If a student has difficulty getting started the teacher can ask questions to help direct the student toward a topic. Teachers can model writing and help alleviate concerns by occasionally writing language experience stories with the class. The "teddy bear day" lesson incorporates a whole class story model with individual writing to produce a class book.

Writing/Drafting Materials

Chart Paper

Computer Paper or Newsprint

Markers, Pencils, Crayons

Date Stamp and Stamp Pad

Writing/Drafting Procedures

1. Talk to the students about how they should begin their story. Refer to the cluster of ideas and ask students to think about what their parents would want to know about teddy bear day. The teacher can ask leading questions to help focus the students ideas on the topic and the audience. Ask questions such as, "Why did we decide to have a teddy bear day?", "When did we bring our bears to school?", and "Where did we take the bears?" The teacher will want to guide the students so that the beginning page will be a general overview of the event. Use the students responses to write the first line of the story, then the next, and so forth until the story is written on the chart.
2. When the teacher is recording the story she or he should sometimes ask students to help spell words by asking what sound the word would begin with, end with, and what vowel sound do you hear? If the spelling is

incorrect record it as the children spell it and attend to correction in the revision/editing stage. Students need to see that the writing the teacher is doing is a first draft or "sloppy copy" and has to go through revision and editing for publication like their writing. Leave space between the lines to allow for revision and editing.

3. When the group story is recorded on the chart tell the students that they can write a story about something that happened on teddy bear day with their own bear. Direct the students to get their pencil or crayons and paper to write their story.
4. Allow the students to write on their own for 20 or 30 minutes. Provide assistance when needed. Have the semantic map posted to help children form their thoughts for writing.
5. Provide a stamp pad and a date stamp. Dating writing products will help the teacher follow the child's progress. Dating is needed for completed copies as well as rough drafts.

C. Revision/Editing

Revision and editing are important parts of the writing cycle, but the teacher must use her own judgement as to when and how much revision and editing to require. Young children can become frustrated with writing if too much emphasis is placed on this stage. At the same time, revision and editing offers an excellent avenue for teaching and refining writing skills. Therefore, the teacher needs to achieve a proper balance. The teacher can help students understand that there are rules for spelling and writing because it is easier for everyone to read and write when we all follow the same set of guidelines. Students need to know that learning all of the rules for writing takes many years and even professional authors have a special editor to correct their work.

Revision and editing refer to two distinct aspects of reviewing writing. Revision refers to rereading the draft to make changes in the content. The teacher should ask questions during a conference that are designed to encourage the student to clarify or expand the writing.

Editing refers to rereading the draft to correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and other conventions of written language. The teacher should focus on only one problem when editing a work that is not for publication. The teacher should be concerned first with revision and later with editing. He or she should not require that all of the student's writing be revised or edited.

The procedures that follow present a focused lesson on revision/editing using the class language experience page of the teddy bear story. The students then work on revising and editing their individual stories on their own and through teacher and peer conferences.

Revision/Editing Materials

The Draft of the Class "Teddy Bear Story"

Colored Pens and Pencils

Editing Chart (Familiarize students with symbols that are appropriate for their grade level.)

Revision/Editing Procedures

1. The teacher displays the draft of the story that the class has written. The teacher can read the draft or ask a student to read it

aloud. Ask the students if the story includes all the information their parents will want to know about the teddy bear day. Ask them if the beginning part of the story will help their parents to understand all of the other parts of the story that they have been writing. Ask questions such as, "Did we leave out anything important? Do all of the sentences make sense? Did we say anything that does not help tell about our teddy bear day?" Use editing symbols to show where changes are being made and involve students in adding to or deleting from the text.

2. The teacher then directs the students to notice the spelling and punctuation. Ask, "Did we spell all of the words correctly?" Let the children suggest words that may not be spelled correctly and underline the words with a marker in a different color from the print. Ask the children to check the room for the words, e.i. is the word on a chart, label, or word list anywhere in the room. If not, ask a child to help you look it up in the dictionary. Point out to the students how

the inventive spelling you used was almost the same as the correct spelling and could be sounded out to sound just like the word.

3. When all of the changes have been made read the entire text aloud. Tell the students to check to be sure everyone is satisfied with the final wording and that everything is written correctly. Tell the students to return to their desk to revise their individual pages for the story.
4. Meet with students individually or in small groups to discuss the student's writing. The students may need to place their writing in the conference request box until the teacher has time to meet with them. The teacher should direct the students to reread their writing to be sure it makes sense just as they have done together for the introduction to the classes teddy bear story. He or she should help the children learn to think as the audience thinks so they will know what information needs to be added to or taken away from the text to help the reader understand the story. The teacher must listen

and think about the content of each individuals story in order to select questions that will help the writer. Discussion may contain comments and questions such as: "I like the way you described what happened. Can you tell me where you were when this happened? Can you tell me how you felt about this?"

5. In kindergarten and first grade, the teacher may ask the students to tell about their pictures or read their stories. At this early stage the students may publish their stories as they appear on the original draft with the teacher recording the story the way the child tells or "reads" it to her or him. The children will see the revision/editing process modeled in the group activity, but may not be ready to go through that process yet. The teacher provides conferencing while recording the text in order to build background knowledge the students will use when they mature as writers.
6. The writer in second and third grade is gaining more independence and can use the

questions on the self-evaluation forms that are supplied in the reading series to help them think through revision/editing of their text (Appendix A). The teacher should provide forms of this type in the writing center for students to use when they are working independently. The teacher can note the childs revision/editing skill when he or she is conferencing with the child.

7. Teaching students to listen carefully to each others writing and to make constructive comments or ask questions that reflect their understanding of the story are part of the strategies the teacher uses during conferencing. The teacher modeled this in the first part of the lesson and should encourage the students to follow similar procedures when they conference with peers in small groups.
8. The teacher needs to provide a stamp saying "writing in progress" or "sloppy copy" to identify working drafts. This helps parents to understand why the writing is not in a complete, corrected form.

D. Publication

The decision was made to publish the teddy bear story for the parents before the activity began, but this is not always the case. Many things the children write will remain in the rough draft form. Decisions about publication should be made carefully and the product can appear in book form or simply be posted on a bulletin board. The materials and form to be used will depend on the type of product the student is publishing.

When books are to be published the children need to prepare a front and back cover, and a title page. Credit should be given to the author and illustrator as any professional book would present them. If the book is prepared by a number of students their names should appear on the page or pages they produced or on a separate credit page.

The teacher should emphasize that professional authors and illustrators prepare many drafts of their story before the final product is published. The teacher can order films through the media center that show how this process

works. All authors want the final copy to be as neat and readable as possible. Many people are involved in the publication of a book or article. Classroom publications can be handwritten by the student, or typed by a volunteer. Illustrations can be prepared in any medium the child selects. Sometimes a childs drawings will be transferred to a page where they have prepared their text for publication rather than reproducing the drawing. The teacher needs to guide students through the process of making decisions about publications. Teachers should be careful not to over emphasize perfection in a child's published writing. Young children need to meet with an enthusiastic response when they have done the best work they can for their age and ability.

Publication Materials

Lined Paper(2-3), Unlined Paper(K-1)

Bear Shaped Brown Construction Paper 11x18

Pencils, Crayons, Marker, Paint

Transparencies, Overhead Projector

Publication Procedures

1. Give each student a piece of lined paper. Ask him or her to copy the teddy bear story they have written and edited on their paper. Tell students to use the neatest handwriting possible and to be sure they write the story in the same way they had planned in their final draft. [Procedure #5 under revision/editing describes a process to use with students who are not ready to rewrite and copy their stories.]
2. While the students are publishing their story the teacher can copy the class chart. The teacher may ask for volunteers to draw illustrations or ask students as they complete their individual drafts.
3. Following the writing of their text, have the students draw their illustrations. If the children want to transfer the original picture to the final copy then the picture can be cut out and pasted on the page with the finished text.
4. Have the students share their completed stories with the class. Place a blank

transparency on the overhead and have the students make suggestions for a title for their book. Write several ideas on the transparency. Discuss how the titles match the story. Have the students vote for their favorite choice. Circle the one they select and ask for a volunteer to write the title on the cover. If the students wish to have an illustration on the cover they should also determine who will be responsible for this.

5. The title page should be prepared by a student volunteer. The back cover design should also be discussed. The students may simply choose to write "The End" or they may want to draw an appropriate picture. The students need to be involved in the selection and preparation of these items whenever possible. The students who are preparing the covers and the title pages should work together.
6. When the pages and covers of the book are completed the teacher can illustrate for the students the process of binding a book, or the teacher may want to have a volunteer bind

the book. It is important to have the finished book bound as soon as possible to show to the students. Share the book together and set up a checkout system for the book to be shared with the audience for which it was written.

III. Ongoing Writing Activities

A. Dialogue Journals

Journal writing is an essential part of a process writing curriculum. Students should have time to write in their journals every day from the beginning of the school year even in kindergarten. Journal writing develops the habit of sharing thoughts in writing. Children can explore writing in a risk free environment that allows them to grow personally as well as in their writing skills. The children select their own topics and are not inhibited by following conventions but can focus on recording their thoughts.

Journals can be in the form of personal diaries that only the child reads and shares with others if he or she chooses. They can also be dialogue

journals which establish a dialogue between the teacher and the student. The students write in their journals each day and the teacher can conference with the students during class, or the teacher may read the journals and write responses to the student at the end of the day. The teacher's comments in either case must be carefully thought out to respond to what the child is writing in a positive friendly manner. Journal writing in the primary grades requires a slightly different approach and definition. The teacher in kindergarten and first grade takes a more active part in the children's journal writing while the students are involved in recording their thoughts. In these early years the teacher can talk to students as they complete their daily writing and may record what the student reads. In this way the teacher is able to understand what the child is sharing and to respond to the child verbally each day. This method also makes it possible for parents to better understand that the children can write in journals even though they are not yet proficient in the skills of reading and writing. The

dialogue between the teacher and the student is established in a writing-speaking mode at first and as children grow in skills the teachers move toward a more traditional dialogue journal format. The movement toward this mode will depend on the student's progress as a writer and the teacher's preference for journal writing.

Journal Materials

Notebooks (Three-ring, Folder)

Paper (Unlined for K-1)

Pencils and Crayons

Date Stamp, Stamp Pad

Journal Procedures

1. Prepare a folder or notebook for each students. Store the writing journals together in the writing center. The pages of the journal should be loose leaf so that pages can be added or taken out when desired.
2. Set a daily time for journal writing. Allow about 30 minutes.
3. In the beginning of journal writing, prepare the students by telling them that they each have a notebook to write in each day. Explain to the students that they can write or draw

about anything they choose in their journal. Tell them to spell words the way they think they should be spelled using what they know about sounds and letters. The teacher can share a real diary or a book containing diaries to illustrate this type of writing to the students. The teacher can use journals from historical figures or books such as Dear Mr. Henshaw by Beverly Cleary.

4. The students should be given uninterrupted time to write, scribble, doodle, or draw. The teacher can circulate and talk to students who need encouragement to get started. In kindergarten and first grade the teacher should speak to each child as they complete their work. The teacher will record what the child reads to him or her, and will respond to the childs writing. It is very important that the teacher is positive and accepting about whatever the child has produced in regard to the content and the form. Second and third grade teachers can write a response in the students journal at a later time unless they feel that the students still need

an immediate individual response. The teacher should endeavor to promote more independence in journal writing for older students.

5. Students should return their journals to the proper storage area as they complete their entries each day. The teacher can have students share with a peer if they choose to or go to centers to allow time for individual meetings and for students who complete their entries quickly.

B. Newspapers or Newsletters

Keeping abreast of the news around the world, the community, and the classroom can be a useful way to make written communication a part of daily class activities. A bulletin board can be reserved for news items and a monthly or bimonthly publication can be sent to parents. Students can learn that events at home and school can be news that is of interest to others. They can learn that information needs to be stated in a concise way and that choices need to be made about what to share. Newsletters provide many opportunities for learning to communicate.

Newspaper Bulletin Board

1. Prepare a bulletin board with a newspaper heading naming your class newspaper. Have the students help you decide on a name and use a computer print shop program to print the heading.
2. Explain to the students that the board will be for news that the students want to share with one another or with parents. Bring in a newspaper and show the students the types of sections in the paper. For older students the teacher should give different sections to groups of four or five students and let them list the kinds of information they found in their section. For younger students the teacher should show the class a different section each day for a week and talk about the things that are in each one. The class should decide on four or five sections they want to include on their news board. For example they may want to have a section for world news, class news, literature, weather, entertainment, or sports. The bulletin board

is then divided into sections with a title posted for each.

3. The students select the article in each section that they think is most interesting. The material can be cut out and posted.
4. Students are encouraged throughout the month to share information that can be posted on the bulletin board. In the beginning the teacher may need to encourage this by bringing in things herself or suggesting that things the children say or do be written about and put on the board.
5. As children share experiences or information that is of interest they can be asked to write the story down to put on the news board. Group activities can be dictated to place on the board.
6. During the last week of the month the students will decide on one or two articles from each section to be published in the newsletter to be sent home to parents. The teacher should be sure that all of the children are involved by encouraging everyone to post things on the board and by assigning

a different group of students each month to be the editors for the newsletter. The editors make the selections for the paper. The teacher will need to be on the newsletter publication committee for the younger students, but can simply have the editors confer with her when they have finished for the older students. A volunteer or older student could be used to work with the editors.

7. There are a number of ways the newsletter can be published. The teacher will make a choice that works best for her situation. For example, the editing committee can cut and paste the items on two large pieces of paper for the front and back of the newsletter. They can draw lines or pictures to make the layout look attractive. The teacher will make a copy of the newsletter layout and allow the students to revise once more before it is reproduced on the copy machine. Other teachers may prefer to have a volunteer print the children's selected articles on a typewriter or a computer. Some teachers will

prefer to publish the final newsletter themselves.

C. Letters

Letter writing can encourage enthusiasm for sending written messages and build a bridge between the classroom and the community at large. It is a natural communication activity that children and adults can do for business and for pleasure. Children frequently write notes to each other or send invitations for birthday parties. Children can learn to write letters as a part of school functions that occur throughout the year. Children learn about the genre of letter writing by hearing and writing letters for real life purposes. Some letter writing will be a whole class effort and some will be individual. The main focus should be on providing examples and making suggestions for when letters are appropriate to request information or exchange communications.

Letter Materials

Stationary (A Print Shop program can be used to design a class letterhead, which will add

interest to the letter writing process.)

Notebook Paper

Envelopes, Postage Stamps

Pens and Pencils

Chart Paper

Chalkboard

Business Letter Procedures

1. Share letters to the editor which appear in children's magazines and are related to topics that the class has read about or discussed. Read The Jolly Postman and discuss the types of correspondence that the book presents. Use models and direct instruction to teach the proper format for letter writing.
2. When students have strong opinions on a subject encourage the students to write a letter. This should not be an assignment but should grow out of classroom discussions. For example, if the class has been studying whales some students may want to write to Greenpeace or another organization they have read about to state their feelings about saving the whales.

3. The students can write a letter during their class time or at home using notebook paper for their draft. The teacher explains to students that letters need to be revised and edited so that the person receiving them can easily understand the message. The teacher will ask the student to edit the letter using the self-editing form (Appendix A) first. After the student has worked on correcting his or her letter, the teacher will conference with the student to help with any additional revision/editing.
4. The student will then use a piece of stationary to write his final copy to mail. The student will also address an envelope to mail the letter.
5. The class may sometimes wish to write a letter as a group. The letter would then be composed on chart paper using the remarks of the students. The teacher will follow through the revision/editing procedures with the group and have a student volunteer to print the letter and envelope. A signature page can

be included with the letter so that all of the students can sign.

6. Other business letters might include those letters requesting information or materials from a company or organization. Ideas and addresses of this type appear in some childrens books and in childrens magazines (Appendix B).
7. Teachers should involve students in the process of writing letters to places that they will be going to visit on a field trip. Class letters can also be written to invite a guest speaker to come to the school. These business letters should be composed with the class but can be typed by a teacher or a volunteer. The teacher should share the published letter with the class. The students will be anxious to read the letters of response as well.

Thank You Notes

1. Writing thank you notes to people or to places that have contributed their time, talents, or materials to your classroom is a nice habit to develop. There are many

opportunities for writing this kind of letter. The class can thank parents who have provided materials for a special project, a person who came to tell a story to the class, or the cafeteria staff for letting the class cook something in their ovens.

2. When you have a special person to thank the class can dictate a letter on chart paper, have everyone sign the letter, and deliver it to the person.
3. Letters to be mailed can be published by a student volunteer and signed by everyone and then mailed.
4. Another method is for each child to write a personal thank you note and mail them all in a big envelope. The letters need to be edited and published for mailing.

Invitation Letters

1. When the teacher plans to invite someone to visit the classroom she should tell the students who is to be invited and why it would be helpful or fun to have this person come.

2. The class composes a letter together to invite the person to visit. The teacher should first question the students about the kinds of information the person will need to know. For example: When would the class need to have the person visit?. Why would they like him or her to come? The teacher should record the information on the chalkboard.
3. Have the students review the draft they have composed to make sure that their letter includes all of the information the person will need to know. Make any revisions the students think are needed.
4. Read the draft again and have the students identify any mistakes in punctuation, spelling, grammar, or letter form.
5. The teacher can publish the invitation and mail the letter. The students should see the final letter and envelope. The children need to be involved throughout the process even when they are not writing the final letter themselves.

Letters to Authors

1. Throughout the year the teacher should recognize the author and illustrator of the books that the class reads. The teacher highlights the works of a certain author from time to time. Explain to the students that many adults like to read the books by a certain author because they like the kind of stories the author tells and the way the stories are told. Tell the students that authors like to know when people enjoy what they have written.
2. Suggest to students that they can write to authors, illustrators, or publishers and ask them questions or tell them what they think about their books. The teacher should not make an assignment of writing to an author because this should be a very personal correspondence between the reader and the writer. The teacher should be a facilitator for this activity by helping the students on an individual basis.
3. The teacher should direct the child to write the rough draft expressing whatever he wishes

to tell the author. The student then returns to the teacher for a conference. The teacher helps the child revise/edit the letter and provides the child with stationary to publish the letter for mailing.

D. Message Boxes

Message boxes should be placed in centers around the room. The boxes help children develop a habit of recording their reactions to things that happen to them or to information that they receive. The students learn that they cannot always discuss the things they think about when they first discover something new. The children can use the message box to write down their thoughts so that they can save them to be discussed later.

Message Box Materials

Shoe Boxes

Index Cards or Note Pads

Message Box Procedures

1. Place boxes and index cards around the classroom.
2. The teacher explains to the students that sometimes they want to ask questions when

they find out something new, but they can't talk to anyone at the time. The teacher tells them that they can write down their thoughts, drop them in a message box, and talk about them later.

3. At the end of class each day the person who is the messenger for the week will collect the messages from the boxes. Each student that has a message that day will read his or her message to the class and the other students can ask questions. If the child refers to an article in a magazine the teacher may want to read it to the class.

IV. Content Area Writing

Each of the units in the reading series are designed around a theme that can be extended to include writing activities for the content areas in mathematics, social studies, science, and language arts. The activities for this project are planned for one theme on each grade level and they can be modified to correspond to various stories within the reading series. Teachers need to think of the possibilities for

content area activities as they plan for other themes. Appendix B provides more information about the resources that are suggested in the following activities as well as additional materials to expand on the specific themes.

A. Kindergarten Content Writing

Story: Dogger

1. Social Studies: Mount five pictures of products that the students would be familiar with from advertisements in their environment. The items might include a McDonald's sign, a Pillsbury Dough Boy, a can of Coke-Cola, a Kellogg's Frosted Flakes tiger, and a toothpaste container, etc. Show the students one of the pictures and ask them to write something about the product on a piece of paper. The children then share their comments. Ask the students to explain why they wrote the comments they wrote. Ask them to tell where they have seen this picture before. Ask how they felt when they saw that picture. Following the discussion, select one of the students comments or a combination of responses to write under the picture.

Continue the activity in the same way for each picture.

2. <u>Language Arts:</u> Write the poem "A Poem for a Pickle" by Eve Merriam on a poster and display it for the class. Read the poem to the students and discuss what the word couplet means. Clap the rhythm of the verses as the class reads it together. Read the book <u>This Old Man</u> by Carol Jones. Sing the song by the same title letting the students use sticks to tap out the rhythm. Using the same tune write a class song. For instance, "This sly fox, he played one. He play tip tap just for fun. With a tip tap, pitty pat give the man a hand. This sly fox came strolling home. This sly fox, he played two. He played tip tap just for you."

3. <u>Mathematics:</u> Read the poem "A Poem for a Pickle". Write the words penny, nickle, dime, quarter, and dollar on sentence strips. Display real coins and a dollar bill. Tell the students that these words name types of money. Have the students find the words in the poem on the chart. Tape a coin by each

money word on the chart that identifies the coin. Look at the pictures on page 16 and 17 in the story Dogger. Discuss the signs and the prices that appear in the illustrations. Suggest that the class set up a fair in their room. (Use the Fair Activity in the reading series for ideas.) Have the students brainstorm about the things they would sell at the fair. Record the ideas on the chalkboard. Provide groups of three or four students with a piece of poster board and markers. Let the groups select the product they want to sell at the fair. Each group will then work on designing a poster for their fair booth. The groups should be encouraged to plan their poster on regular size paper first so they can use the poster for their final publication. The teacher should conference with the groups as they are working. Remind students to include the name of the product, the price, and any wording or decorations that they think will entice the people to come to their booth.

4. <u>Science:</u> The people in the story participated in games at the fair. Discuss with the student that their bodies have about 600 muscles to help them move and do work. Some of the muscles work without us thinking about them and others we move when we work or play. Have the students feel the muscle in their upper arm as they bend their arms. Then have them make their arms hang limp and feel their muscle. Do the same activity feeling the muscle in their calves while the stand on their tiptoes and while they are sitting in a chair. Play an exercise record and have the children think about the muscles they are using while they move with the record. Discuss how their hearts are beating faster and that their heart is a muscle that works without us thinking about it. Discuss how people can make their heart and other muscles stronger by doing exercise or playing certain kinds of games. Draw a large form of a child on bulletin board paper. Let the students write things on the body form to tell things they can do to make their muscles work.

B. First Grade Content Writing

Theme: Helping Out Unit

1. Mathematics: After reading The Doorbell Rang, and sharing the song "I'm A Little Cookie", the teacher will help students learn how to write word problems. The teacher places a blank transparency on the overhead projector. She has a package of chocolate chip cookies, gummy bears, peppermint candies, and chocolate kisses to match the verses in the song. Have the students look at page 20 of The Doorbell Rang. Ask how many children are there. (12) Write on the transparency :There were 12 children at Ma's house. Ask the students to tell how many cookies are in the picture. Write on the transparency: There were 12 cookies. Write and say the following: How many cookies are left when everyone eats one cookie? Have a student provide an answer. Write on the overhead: 12-12=0. Take the package of cookies and have a child count how many cookies are in the package. Write on the overhead: There are 24 cookies in the bag. Have a student count the number of children

in the class. Write on the overhead: There are 21 students in Mrs. Smith's class. Say and write: How many cookies are left over when everyone eats one cookie.Have a student write the problem on the transparency. 24-21=3. Follow the same procedure with the peppermint candy and have the students write the problem on a piece of paper. Then have a student write each part of the problem on the transparency. Tell them to check their problem on their own paper. Continue the process for the gummy bears, and then the chocolate kisses. Let the children eat one of each of the items then count the ones left over to check the answers.

2. Social Studies: Students can learn to notice how advertisers attempt to sell their product to the consumer by making their product sound like the best. Talk about who consumers are and relate the discussion to the stories in the reading series. Display advertisements for different cookies. For example, one brand says "the cookie with big, soft chips that melt in your mouth!" Read each advertisement

and discuss the words they use to describe their product. Discuss how the words make you feel or what they make you think about the cookies. Discuss why advertisers want you to think that their product is the best. Have the class prepare a cookie recipe. Have each student write a name for their cookie and make an advertisement to sell them. Let the class share their advertisements. Compare their advertisements to the professional ones.

3. Science: Students learn about chocolate and make a study of different forms of chocolate. Provide fiction and nonfiction books about chocolate including cookbooks. Prepare a display of cooking chocolate, cocoa, chocolate syrup, sweet and semisweet candy. Post a chart for the students to write information as they explore the forms of chocolate. Include color, shape, taste, and use.

4. Language Arts: Build students "ear for language" and promote drawing as a pre-writing communication. Tell the children that

words can draw pictures in our mind. Read a short poem like "Conversation" by Buson or "The Lost Cat" by Shel Silverstein and have the students draw a picture to show what the words make them think about. Have the students share their pictures, then show the illustration from the poetry book. Compare the images the children pictured with the ones the illustrator in the book drew. Read the poem <u>A Light in the Attic</u> and show the students the humorous illustration. Post poems by Shel Silverstein, Jack Perlutsky, and other poets on a bulletin board. Have the students draw illustrations. When a selection of drawing are posted share the pictures that the author had in his book. Encourage students to write poems and have a friend draw illustrations for them.

C. Second Grade Content Writing

Theme: Heroic Deeds Unit

1. <u>Science:</u> Study mammals of the sea. Prepare a center with fiction, nonfiction, and reference books about whales and other sea mammals. Display charts for students to

record information they discover about sea mammals. On each chart write the name of the sea mammal in the center and draw a box or circle around the word. Tell the students to group their information around the word in any way they think is best. Have a bulletin board prepared for students to post pictures or stories they have found or written that they want to share. When a sufficient amount of information is recorded on the charts read one chart to the class and talk about how they grouped the information. When the class talks about the second mammal compare the things that are alike and different about the two mammals. Continue this process until the mammals have all been discussed. The information can be prepared into a expository text by having groups of students prepare a page telling what they have learned about a given sea mammal and drawing illustrations to show the mammal. Using examples of expository text that have been available to the students in the science center, help the students plan the arrangement of the chapters and work on

the table of content. The teacher can write the information on a transparency with the class and then assign groups of students to publish the table of contents and other sections of the text. Bind the finished book and place it in the science center.

2. Social Studies: Study the types of work a person could do if they lived by the sea. Relate the discussion to the work that Abby's father did in Abby Keep the Light Burning. Prepare a center with a large selection of books about people who have occupations related to the sea. Divide the class into groups and have each group talk about one of the occupations. The group will write down a list of questions they would like to have answered about a type of work. Using the questions suggested by the groups have the students who have family members that work around the ocean interview that person and report to the class. The class could also write a letter inviting the person to visit the class and tell about their work. Another alternative is to write to Sea World for

information or to arrange a field trip. If a trip can be arranged have the class write a list of questions before they go and see if they can answer them when they come back.

3. Language Arts: Students can use periodicals to learn about categorizing information and determining what is useful for future reference. The classroom should have magazines, such as Ranger Rick and World Magazine (Appendix B), that are displayed in centers. Each month when a new issues arrive the teacher will select a group of students to take the old publications apart. The group will organize the information into sets of related topics. For example, the group will have a set of articles on wild animals, a group of articles about children's health habits, a set of poems or short stories, and so on. The topics will be determined by the contents of the magazines that were take apart. After the students have worked with the materials the teacher will review what they have done, talk to them about why they put certain things together, and ask

questions to help the children make adjustments when needed. The students will be given file folders with general labels such as animals, plants, mathematics,health,etc. A piece of paper should be stapled to the front of the folder. The students will file the magazine articles in the appropriate folders and will write the title and a brief description of each article they have filed on the attached paper. Each month the students will expand the files using the same procedures. The teacher should be sure to select a different group of students each month so that all of the students participate in the activity sometime during the year.

4. Mathematics: Students learn how to make estimates. Place a gallon size glass container in the mathematics center. Fill the jar with sea shells. Give each student a large index card. Ask the students to write their name on the card and keep it in their desk during the week. The students are told to look carefully at the jar of shells during the day and write down the number of shells

they think are in the jar on their index card. At the end of the day the teacher records all of the estimates on a chart. A student volunteer can count the actual number of shells, and the teacher can circle the correct response in a different color marker or write the number in if no one gave the correct number. Discuss whose estimate was the closest, and how students determined how many shell there were in the jar. The following day the teacher will fill the jar with marbles. The teacher tells the students to observe the jar during the day and record their estimate of the number of marbles on their index card. Tell them to also write whether the number is greater than or less than the number of shells and why they thought the number would be more or less. At the end of the day record all of the students estimates on the chart. Discuss their reasons for their estimate being larger or smaller. Ask a student to count the marbles. Circle or write in the actual number of marbles. Review the predictions and reasons in reference to

the actual number. The process will continue two more times. The teacher can place ping pong balls, wrapped candy, gum, jacks, etc, in the jar. Compare objects and estimates each day. Determine whether the estimates were closer on successive tries. Why or why not?

D. Third Grade Content Writing

Theme: Searching For Clues

1. Science: A study of dinosaurs can be expanded from the story in the reader. The suggested reading and additional reference materials about dinosaurs should be available in the science center. Talk about how fossils are formed and what scientist learn from the fossils that they find. Provide the students with a small piece of clay that can be air dried. Demonstrate how to make a fossil with the clay and a small bone. Instruct the students to take a small piece of the clay home and make a fossil of a object from their home or yard. They should allow the clay to dry and write a clue to help other students guess what they used to make their fossil.

Each student should return their fossil which will be displayed on a table in the classroom. Provide a piece of paper beside each fossil for the students to record what they think the child used to make the fossil. The class will then discuss each fossil. Emphasis the way the students used the written clue and visual clues to determine what was used to form the fossils.

2. Social Studies: The class will read the book, George Washington's Breakfast by Jean Fritz. The teacher should bring in a selection of books about presidents (Appendix B) for the class to share. Display the books in the beginning of the unit so that the students will have time to read the books. The teacher should also select some chapters or excepts from the books to read to the class. The students will select a president they think was important or interesting and write a short story about him. Each student will revise/edit and publish his or her story to be included in a class president's book. The students should place their story in the

conference request box as they work through their publication. The teacher will conference with students as needed.

3. Mathematics: (This is an extension of the social studies activity.) The students learn to research a question and present the finding on a graph. Since students have been studying George Washington they can use the example from the book they read to answer the question "Where were the presidents of the United States born?" The boy in the story searched for information about what Washington ate for breakfast. The teacher will ask the children to explain how the boy found out the answer to his question, then ask them how they can find out where U.S. presidents were born. The teacher should prepare a bulletin board with pictures of the presidents.(Vol. 15 of The New Book of Knowledge has a small picture of each president except Ronald Regan and George Bush. The media center may also have a picture file.) The teacher can then assign specific presidents to each student and

schedule a trip to the library to use the reference materials. The teacher should assist students in using reference materials. Each student writes the name and birthplace of the presidents she or he is responsible for on a piece of paper. In the classroom, display a large map on the presidential bulletin board. Help the students place a stick pin for each president's birthplace. The students can work in groups of four to prepare a graph of the information. Each group decides how they want to display their information. The teacher provides poster board or large paper, markers, rulers, and other materials each group request for their graph. The student groups write conclusions about the information they graph. For example, they may write about what part of the country most presidents came from and why they think this has occurred.

4. Language Arts: The class can share mystery stories while they are studying the "searching for clues" unit. The teacher should select a mystery to read aloud to the

class such as, Encyclopedia Brown Solves Them All by Donald J. Sobol. Then share the book The Mysteries of Harris Burdick by Chris Van Allsburg reading the introduction and enjoying the pictures and captions together. Talk about the students responses to the pictures asking questions such as, " How do they feel when they look at the picture? What do they think is going to happen?" Place the book in the writing center and allow students to study the pictures during their center time. Have students select a picture that sparks their imagination and write a short mystery that builds a story from the picture and caption. Provide time for sharing as each student is ready to read his or her mystery story. Students may want to read their story to the teacher or a conference group after the first draft is written.

V. Culminating Activity

In a process writing classroom the students have participated in many writing activities throughout the year. The culminating activity gives the

students a chance to showcase the things they have accomplished, and to apply the skills that they have developed. The teacher should be conscientious about involving the students as much as possible in the planning, preparation and presentation of the program at all grade level. The children can choose to read stories and poems they have written as a class or as individuals. Any recognition the students have received should be highlighted and correspondence they have written and received can be shared. The program helps keep parents informed about the activities and learning their children are involved in at school. Teachers may choose to have this type of activity each grading period rather than once a year. The teacher can allow more student control in each successive presentation if she or he chooses to have more frequent presentations.

Materials

Student Produced Stories and Written Materials

Writing Center Materials

Refreshments

Cups, Paper Plates, Napkins

Procedures

1. Tell the students that they will present a program for their parents or other adults they wish to invite. Let them know that the purpose of the program is to share the things they have done as they have become authors during the year. The teacher will ask the students to brainstorm ideas for what, when, and how they want to present the program. The teacher should record the ideas the students contribute on the chalkboard. The teacher will then select groups of students to discuss each set of items.
2. The teacher will have each discussion group report their plans and ideas to the class. First, the teacher talks to the class about when the program is to be held. A date and time will be selected. Then the class discusses the books and activities the class has written that they think would be of interest to the audience. The teacher will list all of the ideas and then the class determines which ones to present. Finally,

the class discusses who will be responsible for each phase of the program.

3. The teacher should appoint a group of student volunteers to write the invitations. The students should conference with the teacher to work on the revision/editing and to help them reproduce the invitation. The students should determine how many invitations will be needed and when they should be ready to send.
4. The teacher should have a group of student volunteers plan what will be served. They need to list the ingredients and supplies that will be needed. They will need to discuss their plan with the teacher to determine how they will obtain and prepare the things they need. They will help prepare and arrange refreshments in the room and act as hosts and hostesses.
5. The teacher should ask a group of student volunteers to plan the materials that will be presented. The group needs to write a tentative schedule for presentation and identify who will be the presenters. When their plan is made they will consult with the

teacher to polish the plan. They will also need to check with the persons chosen to present. Part of the presentation group will design and publish the program to be handed out to the audience. Another part of the presentation group and anyone who will be speaking will write down the plan for their presentation. In addition, the readers will practice the story they will share, or will write down their speech to explain how the class worked on an activity. Other students will write what they are going to share about a special visitor who came to the class or a letter that they wrote requesting information. The teacher will conference with students throughout the planning process.

6. The teacher will write an outline of everything that is planned and who is responsible for each activity. The class can review the outline during the planning and preparation of the program and check off the things as they are completed.

7. The presenters will practice their speeches for the class. Everyone will help arrange and clean the room.
8. The teacher will support the students as they plan and present the program. The teacher has to determine how much responsibility the students are ready to take upon themselves.

APPENDIX A

INTEREST INVENTORY NAME________________

1. I am happy when ____
____.
2. My family is ____
____.
3. My favorite books are___________________________________
____.
4. My favorite sports are _________________________________
____.
5. My favorite people are _________________________________
____.
6. My favorite book characters are ________________________
____.
7. My favorite foods are __________________________________
____.
8. My favorite television shows are _______________________
____.
9. My favorite movies are _________________________________
____.
10. I like to learn about _________________________________
____.
11. When I play with my friends we like to _______________
____.

12. When my family is together we like to ______________

    ____.

13. When I grow up I want to be _________________________

    ____.

14. In the summer I like to ______________________________

    ____.

15. Before I go to bed at night I like to ______________

    ____.

16. I have a pet. Yes _____ No ______

    The pet I have or would like to have is a __________

    ____.

    I like him or her because ____________________________

    ____.

17. I like to read books. Yes _____ No ______

    When I check out a book from the library I choose

    one that ____

    ____

    ____.

18. I like to write. Yes _____ No ______

    I usually write about ________________________________

    ____

    ____.

19. I am good at drawing. Yes ______ No ________

    I usually draw pictures of ____________________________

    ____.

20. If I could go anywhere I wished I would want to go

    to (a real place) _____________________________________

    ____, or

    (an imaginary place) __________________________________

    ____.

21. If I could be a person from another time or place I

    would want to be (a real person) _____________________

    ____, or

    (an imaginary person) _________________________________

    ____.

Put an X on the line to the left of eight topics that you would like to learn more about and write something you already know about the topic on the line to the right.

______ Animals ____

______ Art ____

______ Authors ____

______ Books ____

______ Dinosaurs ______________________________________

______ Earth ____

______ Illustrators ____________________________________

______ Insects ____________________________________

______ Mathematics ____________________________________

______ Movies ____________________________________

______ Money ____________________________________

______ Music ____________________________________

______ Oceans ____________________________________

______ People ____________________________________

______ Plants ____________________________________

______ Presidents ____________________________________

______ Rocks ____________________________________

______ Space ____________________________________

______ Sports ____________________________________

______ Transportation ____________________________________

______ United States ____________________________________

______ Water ____________________________________

______ Weather ____________________________________

______ Work ____________________________________

______ Writing ____________________________________

Put an X on the line to the left of four kinds of literature that you would most like to read. If you have a favorite book, magazine, or newspaper write the name on the line to the right.

______ Adventure Books ____________________________________

______ Biographies ______________________________

______ Fairy Tales ______________________________

______ Funny Books ______________________________

______ History Books ____________________________

______ Magazines ________________________________

______ Mystery Books ____________________________

______ Newspapers _______________________________

______ Scary Books ______________________________

______ Science Books ____________________________

______ Science Fiction __________________________

______ Sports Books _____________________________

What do you want to do most when you are at school?

Name ______________________________ Date __________

First Grade--Self-Evaluation Checklist for Published Writing Products

REVISION

_____ I read my story to a friend.

_____ I read my story to the teacher.

_____ I read my story to myself.

_____ I changed words if I needed to make the writing easier for the reader to understand.

EDITING

_____ I checked the end marks(. ? !)

_____ I checked the capital letters.

_____ I checked the spelling.

_____ I let the teacher check my writing.

PUBLICATION

_____ I used my best handwriting.

_____ I drew pictures about my writing.

_____ My paper looks neat!

Name ______________________________ Date __________

Second and Third Grade--Self-Evaluation Checklist for Published Story Writing

REVISION

_____ I wrote all of the sentences to tell about one idea.

_____ My story has a beginning.

_____ My story has a middle.

_____ My story has an end.

_____ I read my story to an audience.

_____ I made changes to make my story better.

EDITING

_____ I checked the punctuation.

_____ I checked the capital letters.

_____ I checked the spelling for words I was not sure how to spell.

_____ I had a friend read my story to check the editing.

PUBLICATION

_____ I used my best handwriting.

_____ I left proper margins.

_____ I prepared a cover page with a title and wrote my name as the author/illustrator.

_____ I reread my story to be sure I copied everything correctly.

_____ My story looks neat!

Name ______________________________ Date __________

Second and Third Grade--Self-Evaluation Checklist for Published Content Area Writing

REVISION

_____ I wrote a topic sentence.

_____ I wrote sentences that give details about the topic.

_____ I wrote the information in order.

_____ I read my report to an audience.

_____ I made changes to make my writing better.

EDITING

_____ I indented each paragraph.

_____ I checked capital letters and punctuation.

_____ I checked the spelling of words I was not sure how to spell.

_____ I had a friend read my report to check the editing.

PUBLICATION

_____ I used my best handwriting.

_____ I left proper margins.

_____ I centered the title and left a space between the title and the text.

_____ I reread my report to be sure I copied everything correctly.

_____ My report looks neat!

APPENDIX B

Books

Journals and Letter Writing

Ahlberg, Janet & Allan. The Jolly Postman,or Other Peoples's Letters. Little,Brown and Company, 1986.

Blos, Joan W. A Gathering of Days. Scribner's, 1979.

Cleary, Beverly. Dear Mr. Henshaw. Illustrations by Paul O. Zelinsky. Morrow, 1983.

Fitzhugh, Louise. Harriet the Spy. Harper & Row, 1964.

Frank, Anne. Anne Frank:The Diary of a Young Girl. Doubleday, 1964

Keats, Ezra Jack. A Letter To Amy. Harper & Row, 1968.

Children's Writing and The Writing Process

The National Written & Illustrated by...

Awards Contest for Students

Landmark Editions, Inc.

P.O. Box 4469

Kansas City, Missouri 64127

To obtain CONTEST Rules and Guidelines send a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope to the above address.

CONTEST winning books to share:

Joshua Disobeys by Dennis Vollmer, Age 6, Oklahoma.

<u>Strong and Free</u> by Amy Hagstrom, Age 9, California.

<u>Who Can Fix It?</u> by Leslie MacKeen, Age 9, North Carolina.

<u>Me and My Veggies</u> by Isaac Whitlatch, Age 11, Wyoming.

<u>Walking is Wild and Weird and Wacky</u> by Karen Kerber, Age 12, Missouri.

<u>Stone Soup: The Magazine by Children</u>

A magazine composed of stories, poems, book reviews, and art by children through age 13.

It is published five times a year in September, November, January, March, and May. One year membership cost $22.00.

Address: Children's Art Foundation
P.O. Box 83
Santa Cruz, CA 95063

Videos:

Order From: Weston Woods
Weston, CT 06883-9989

410 Ezra Jack Keats

From his New York studio, Ezra Jack Keats discusses the experiences which influenced his work as a children's book illustrator. The film concludes

with the motion picture adaptation of A Letter to Amy. Directed by Cynthia Freitag. Time: 17 min.

451 How a Picture Book is Made

Steven Kellogg follows the production of his book, The Island of the Skog, from its earliest preliminary sketches through editorial considerations and the procedures of design, color separation, printing and binding.

Directed by Catherine Urbain. Time: 10 min.

Magazines for the Content Areas

Child Life (Ages 7-9), Jack and Jill (Ages 6-8), Playmate (Ages 5-7)

P.O. Box 7133

Red Oak, IA 51591-0133

Price: $11.95

Highlights for Children

Dept. CA

P.O. Box 269

Columbus, OH 43216-0269

Price: $19.95

Kid City Magazine

P.O. Box 53349

Boulder, CO 80322-3349

Price: $13.97

Odyssey

21027 Crossroads Circle

P.O. Box 1612

Waukesha, WI 53187-1612

Price: $21.00

Ranger Rick

National Wildlife Federation

1400 16th Street N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20036-2266

Price: $15.00

Sports Illustrated for Kids

The Time Inc. Magazine Company

P.O. Box 830609

Birmingham, AL 35283-0609

Price: $15.95

National Geographic World

Department 00890

17th and M. Streets N. W.

Washington, D.C. 20036

Price: $12.95

Zillions

Consumer Report for Kids

P.O. Box 54861

Boulder, CO 80322-4861

Price: $13.95

Zoobooks

P.O. Box 85238

San Diego, CA 92138

Price: $15.95

Poetry K-3

De Regniers, Beatrice Schenk; Moore, Eva, White, Mary Michaels; Carr, Jan. Sing a Song of Popcorn.Illustrated by Marcia Brown, Leo and Diane Dillon, Richard Egielski, Trina Schart Hyman, Arnold Lobel, Maurice Sendak, Marc Simont, Margot Zemach. Scholastic, 1988.

Merriam, Eve. A Poem For A Pickle. Illustrated by Sheila Hamanaka. Morrow Junior Books, 1989.

Prelutsky, Jack. The Random House Book of Poetry for Children. Illustrated by Arnold Lobel. Random House, 1983.

Silverstein, Shel. A Light in the Attic. Harper & Row, 1981.

Silverstein, Shel. Where the Sidewalk Ends. Harper & Row. 1974.

Content Area Materials

Kindergarten

Freeman, Don. Courduroy. Viking, 1968.

Hall, Donald. Ox-Cart Man. Illustrated by Barbara Cooney. Viking, 1979.

Havill, Juanita. Jamaica's Find. Illustrated by Anne Sibley O'Brien. Houghton Mifflin, 1986.

Hoban, Lillian. Arthur's Honey Bear. Harper, 1974.

Hughes, Shirley. Dogger. Houghton Mifflin, 1989.

Lobel, Anita. On Market Street. Greenwillow 1981.

Jones, Carol. This Old Man. Houghton Mifflin, 1990.

Winn, Marie. The Fisherman Who Needed a Knife: A Story About Why People Use Money. Illustrated by John Johnson. Simon, 1970.

First Grade

Burningham, John. The Shopping Basket. Crowell, 1980.

Clure, Beth & Helen. Me. Bowman, 1968.

Cobb, Vicki. Gobs of Goo. Illustrated by Brian Schatell. Harper & Row, 1983.

Elgin, Kathleen. The Human Body: The Muscles. Franklin Watts, 1973.

Hutchins, Pat. The Doorbell Rang. Houghton Mifflin, 1989.

Hutchins, Pat. Don't Forget The Bacon. Greenwillow, 1976.

Record: "Jazz Fantasy For Kids Only 2 " by Howard Hanger.

Second Grade

Ardizzone, Edward. Little Time and the Brave Sea Captain. Penguin, 1983.(Video is available from Weston Woods.)

Berger, Melvin. The New Water Book. Illustrated by Leonard Kessler. Crowell, 1973.

Blumbert, Rhoda. The First Travel Guide to the Bottom of the Sea. Illustrated by Gen Shimada. Lothrop, 1983.

Catling, Patrick Skene. The Chocolate Touch. Bantam, 1981.

Goudey, Alice E. Here Come the Dolphins. Illustrated by Gary MacKenzie. Scribner's, 1961.

McCloskey, Robert. Burt Dow: Deep-Water Man. Viking, 1963.(Video is available from Weston Wood.)

McCloskey, Robert. One Morning in Maine. Puffin, 1952.

Roop, Peter & Connie. Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie. Illustrations by Peter E. Hanson. Houghton Mifflin, 1989.

Schwartz, David M. How Much is a Million? Illustrations by Steven Kellogg. Scholastic, 1985.

Smith, Robert K. Chocolate Fever. Dell, 1978.

Third Grade

Bulla, Cyde. Lincoln's Birthday. Illustrated by Ernest Crichlow. Crowell, 1966.

DeDay, Ormonde. Meet Andrew Jackson. Illustrated by Isa Barnett. Random, 1967.

Freeman, Russell. Lincoln: a Photobiography. Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

Fritz, Jean. George Washington's Breakfast. Illustrations by Paul Galdone. Houghton Mifflin, 1989.

Fritz, Jean. Why Don't You Get a Horse, Sam Adams? Illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman. Coward, 1974.

Hutchins, Pat. The Mona Lisa Mystery. Illustrated by Lawrence Hutchins. Greenwillow, 1981.

Monjo, Ferdiand. Gettysburg: Tad Lincoln's Story. Illustrated by Douglas Gorsline. Windmill/Dutton, 1976. (Abraham Lincoln)

Monjo, Ferdiand. Grand Papa and Ellen Aroon. Illustrated by Richasrd Cuffari. Holt, 1974. (Thomas Jefferson)

Monjo, Ferdinand. The One Bad Thing About Father. Illustrated by Rocco Negri. Harper & Row, 1970. (Theodore Roosevelt)

Sobol, Donald. Encyclopedia Brown Saves the Day. Illustrated by Leonard Shartall. Nelson, 1970.

Van Allsburg, Chris. The Mysteries of Harris Burdick. Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

Video: Shh! We're Writing the Constitution. by Jean Fritz, Illustrated by Tomie dePaola. Weston Woods. Iconographic Video, Utilization Guide. 31 minutes. FO V 489.

Chapter Five

Evaluation and Implications

Teachers have expressed concern because the Clay County Language Arts Curriculum Guide, which was adopted in 1989, in conjunction with the newly selected literature based reading series has placed them in the position of implementing process writing approaches in their classrooms without adequate training. For example, the teacher's guides in the reading series outline writing activities that follow the stages of process writing without explaining exactly how each step is to be carried out, while the language arts guide suggests writing strategies such as conferencing which the teachers feel that they do not fully understand how to implement. Therefore, the teachers are seeking specific information about how to accomplish the tasks that are outlined in the guides. The curriculum for this project is designed to address these concerns.

Two alternative methods were used for evaluation of the program. First, interviews were conducted with teachers at grade levels where process writing strategies were used; samples of student writing were collected from these teachers. Second, the process

writing activities and teaching techniques from this project were presented in an inservice setting and additional feedback was obtained from those in attendance.

The overall reaction to the process writing plan was positive. The preliminary interviews and discussion indicated that the teachers were interested in using the information from the inservice to evaluate and modify what they are doing in their classrooms. They wanted to acquire new ideas for teaching skills through process writing and to learn techniques for managing the classroom during the stages of the writing process. They were also interested in knowing more about what to expect of the students at various levels of writing development.

The importance of a print rich environment and an abundance of opportunities for writing was widely accepted. Many of the teachers attending the inservice were providing a variety of books, posting children's writing, displaying charts and story maps, and labeling the room. However, most of these teachers were presenting writing activities as a whole class project with the students working at their own desk. They thought that having a writing center and content area

centers that included writing activities would be a feasible option. They agreed that centers would help with classroom management by giving students an alternative activity when they completed their assigned writing, or when they were waiting to conference with the teacher.

Journal writing was of primary interest. The teachers had been encouraged to have their students write in journals, but they were unsure about how to proceed. The number of days a week and the amount of time designated for journal writing was different for each teacher. Two of the kindergarten teachers, and two of the first grade teachers were using techniques similar to those proposed in this plan. In fact, after conducting interviews with these teachers the plan was modified to include more individual teacher-student contact during journal writing.

During the inservice, samples of work from students journals that had been collected from four classes were displayed on the overhead. Discussion focused on writing development as well as methods for implementing journal writing. The progress in writing skills and the willingness to risk writing down anything they thought, which was evident in the

samples, convinced all of the teachers that the plan for journal writing could be very successful. They liked the idea of dating and reviewing the students progress through their journal entries.

The teachers were concerned about the length of time needed to meet with each student daily. The teachers using this method assured the group that it required only two or three minutes per child since the students were simply reading the message they had written. The suggestion was made that second and third grade teachers read journals after school (with student permission) and write responses. However, the suggestions and discussion did not alleviate their concern about the time.

How to work with students during each stage of the writing process was another major concern of the teachers. The prewriting stage was the most familiar to them. They were providing experiences to encourage writing and were allowing a certain degree of choice of topics. They had found that many students were reluctant to write and some students said that they could not think of anything to write about. The teachers thought the technique of modeling topic

selection on the overhead projector would help the students.

The teachers were interested in how to encourage students to use inventive spelling. Although the teachers felt that having the students concentrate on content first was best, several of the teachers had found that the students did not want to write unless they knew the correct spelling. The feedback indicated that the older the students the more reluctant they were to write without knowing the correct method. The group felt that modeling inventive spelling in the drafting stage of group writing activities might help, but mainly agreed that patience and encouragement would probably bring the students along. They felt that they, too, had a long way to go in learning to work through rough drafts. The teachers who were using sloppy copy stamps believed that this approach did encourage the students not to worry about conventions in their first drafts, and that it made the teacher feel more secure about the parent's reactions to writing in progress.

This discussion lead to consideration of how to revise and edit the students' work. The teachers wanted to know how to encourage revision/editing without discouraging the students from writing, particularly

when the students had numerous errors in the first draft. In addition, teachers wanted to know how to manage the class when students were at many different stages of the writing process simultaneously.

A sample of a second grade students' writing was placed on the overhead and the teachers attempted to read the paragraph. The story was written phonetically and had many errors in spelling and other conventions of print. When the teachers deciphered the meaning, a corrected copy of the writing was placed on the overhead with the original draft. The selection represented a complete and clever story with only a few revisions needed to clarify the meaning.

However, the mechanical errors in this sample required extensive editing. Examples of conference questioning were demonstrated for the teachers as the group worked through the process of revision/editing. Peer conferences were suggested so that students would be helping each other while they were waiting to meet with the teacher. The teachers were encouraged to model conferencing for the students in small groups so that they could develop skills to work with each other. The teachers were reluctant to use peer conferences and the ones who had tried reported that the students did not

provide much help for one another. They did feel that modeling might help peer conferencing to be more successful and they agreed that peer conferencing should focus on revision rather than editing.

The suggestion was made that when students have many errors in mechanics the teacher should discuss only a few points about the editing. For this type of situation, the teacher would rewrite the piece on another paper during the conference to model the correct form without pointing out every error to the student or making the editing process too long and laborious. Normally, the students will have edited the writing the best they can before they meet with the teacher and she will note their strengths and weaknesses to plan instruction. The teachers thought this process was practical and they felt that having the process modeled for them clarified the techniques.

The teachers thought that the ongoing activities and the content area activities would provide ways to implement meaningful writing. They felt that they would use some of the suggestions in their classrooms.

One teacher was publishing a weekly newsletter. She shared samples of her students' work and information about the procedures she used when

implememting ideas in the plan. However, most of the teachers thought they would be more likely to include content area writing and letter writing than newsletters. They felt this would be the most difficult activity to implement and would require too much time away from their prescribed curriculum.

The teachers thought the culminating activity would help parents to understand how process writing was being used in the classroom. Two of the kindergarten teachers planned to have a similar activity each term rather than once a year. When the teachers had their first meeting two weeks after the inservice they reported that it had been very successful. The student were excited about sharing their work and had selected more than they had time to present. The teachers felt that they would involve the students in more of the planning for successive meetings.

The feedback from the interviews and the inservice indicate that the curriculum presented in this plan is timely. The teachers are experimenting with similar strategies and are seeking additional information and ideas. The teachers thought this plan provided practical information and techniques that would help

them to implement process writing. The author plans to continue sharing and updating the curriculum in future inservice settings.

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language (pp. 3-18). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

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Vita

Patricia Dukes graduated from the University of Alabama in 1970 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics, Child Development. Following graduation she became a Home Economist for the Georgia Department of Agriculture and later for the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service.

During a six year period in which she was a housewife and mother, she attended the College of Education at the University of North Florida and attained her Florida Teaching Certificate. She has taught third grade, kindergarten and preschool.

In 1981 she began teaching kindergarten at Charles E. Bennett Elementary School in Clay County where she has continued to work. She became a Primary Specialist in 1983. Her love of children's literature and her interest in teaching reading has lead her to pursue a masters in education at the University of North Florida.