ONE TEACHER'S TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL READING

TO WHOLE LANGUAGE READING INSTRUCTION:

A CASE STUDY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Whole language is a philosophy of teaching children that views teachers and children as partners in learning. "Basic to whole language is the idea that children are intrinsically motivated to learn, to make sense of the world" (Rich, 1985, p. 720). Language includes reading and writing that is learned as a whole, in context, with an emphasis on meaning. This new view of literacy empowers teachers "to inspire children, to help them develop competency in reading and writing, and to understand the role of reading and writing in their lives" (Fagen, 1989, p. 572). Empowering teachers empowers students to "become literate, to learn and to dream" (Rich, 1985, p. 723).

How does this whole language view fit with traditional instruction in reading and writing? "In the current educational climate, the 'right' way of teaching reading is typically represented by a commercial reading program which comes with goals, materials, tests, and activities determined by 'experts'" (Dreher & Singer, 1989, p. 612). The teacher's role in this setting is as an activities manager carrying out someone else's plans. Heymsfeld (1989) suggested using the strengths of each in a combined approach. The problem with that, according to a rebuttal by Ken Goodman (1989), is that one cannot reconcile incompatible and contradictory concepts.

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Whole language redefines reading and writing as processes for making sense out of and through written language. It redefines the teacher as a professional decision maker . . . it redefines the role of the learner . . . it redefines the relationship between teacher and learner as one of supporting development rather than controlling it (p. 69).

Rich (1985) queried those advocates of the traditional system who claim they turned out just fine with: "What might you have become if you had been given the power to ask questions, to shape your own learning?" (p. 723).

However, many teachers share Heymsfeld's concerns because they, too, have been educated to teach as technicians. To them, reading instruction is equated with basals and skills. To change, "a teacher must begin by questioning his/her current practices and beliefs as to how children learn" (Reimer & Warshow, 1989, p. 596). Change affects three dimensions: use of new and revised materials, use of new teaching approaches, and alterations of beliefs (Fullan, 1982).

The knowledge base in reading is changing, as evidenced by the shift in articles that focus on whole language. The Reading Teacher, one of the official publications of the International Reading Association with an audience aimed at elementary school teachers, plans a special April 1990 issue devoted to whole language. How can teachers be enticed to change their teaching methodologies when basals lag fifteen to twenty years behind the research (Shannon, 1989)?

Case for Change

"You can always tell when education is trying to shake loose from a previous generation because a new set of terms begins to appear. <u>Metacognition, schema theory, and emergent literacy</u> are current examples" (Smith, 1989, p. 528). In 1988-89 ERIC/RCS identified four topics and themes in the language arts and reading research: integrated language activities, individualism, literature, and writing. Accountability and testing still receive attention but mostly negative. "The current trends indicate that the philosophical ground may be shifting" (Smith, 1989, p. 720) to a more holistic, child-oriented curriculum.

This new view of (reading) education is gaining nationwide recognition. The April 17, 1989 <u>Newsweek</u> cover story entitled "How Kids Learn" decried the practice of putting children in desks and drilling them all day. Based on Piaget's research in child development and supported by child psychologists like David Elkind, children learn by moving, touching, exploring,--a hands-on approach. "Learning by doing also encourages children's 'disposition' to use the knowledge and skills they're acquiring. Sitting for long periods of time is still more tiring than running and jumping" (Kantrowitx & Wingert, 1989, p. 53). Children need to experience reading and writing as something that people use to learn and to communicate. Smith (1989) stated "Establishing that attitude may be as important as any set of skills" (p. 528). Mason (1984) suggested "preparation for reading is better addressed with specific experiences that are more

closely related to reading than to general cognitive and motor tasks" (p. 536).

What does this mean for teachers? Traditional reading instruction, the basals, have amassed many critics including Ken Goodman's treatise, The Report Card on the Basal and Patrick Shannon's book Broken Promises. Duffy, Roehler, and Putnam (1987) lamented the deskilling of teachers to technicians, who can't or won't make decisions. Even though teachers are better educated than even a decade or so ago, the basals have become more explicit, have turned into a management system with everything spelled out for the teacher. Basals are the predominant mode of reading instruction in 90-95% of our schools (Shannon, 1989; Weaver, 1989). Teachers rely on the teacher's manual to organize and manage the complex reading routine developed by the publishers of basal series. Students spend up to 70% of "reading time" doing seatwork exercises which equate reading with skill mastery. When interviewing school personnel, Shannon (1989) learned that they are under the illusion that the basal materials applied according to the guidebook's direction can teach students to read. This is based on the assumption that the directions in teacher's guidebooks are scientifically based, making the basals the technological solution to the problems of teaching students to read (p. 54).

This paradox needs to be addressed by teachers and school administrators. Current research points out the fallacy of relying on the basals for teach reading. The illiteracy rate stands at 25%, the aliteracy rate is 50%, leaving only about 25% of the population as regular, 'serious' or 'quality' readers (Jewell & Zintz, 1986, p. 82). Educators continue to hunt for a panacea to solve reading problems.

The solution, however, does not reside in a method or a program, but rather in an "understanding of the nature of language, the nature of learning, and the reading process itself" (Jewell & Zintz, 1986, p. 81).

The critical question then is how to change school administrators and teachers perceptions about literacy and how children learn?

Record of Change

With the advent of Sputnik in 1957, Americans became concerned about their schools. The next decade saw a variety of reforms, educational measures passed, monies given to math and science, and other innovations to improve the quality of the schools. A great deal of time, energy and money was invested to improve school curricula, achievement of students, and performance of teachers. A cycle of introduction, evaluation, and rejection became commonplace as educators sought to improve schools and discovered there was little to show for their efforts. Goodlad's (1975) report on the "Schooling Decade" portrayed this ten year period as one of extraordinary innovation. That it ended in disillusionment was due in part to unreasonable expectations. Change was outer-directed and did not take into account the "school as a culture", with its own structure and functions (Goodlad, 1975; Sarason, 1972). In two classic case studies on educational reforms, Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein (1971) and Smith and Keith (1971) documented that change initiated from outside or from the top-down is ineffective. While teachers play a minor part in the initiative for change, the power for change lies with the teacher. "Teachers have one important power, that of refusing to participate in an innovation made accessible" (House, 1974, p. 95).

Goodlad (1975) summarized this unique relationship between the school and the teacher.

>The culture of the school sets certain limits on teacher behavior. Teachers possess or potentially enjoy a great deal of freedom behind the doors of their own classrooms, until what they do interferes with other teachers and the established ways of the school. Innovations calling for collaboration . . . strain the system . . . Implicitly, most schools support controlled, quiet, total group practices . . . and do not reinforce noisy small-group learning. It takes a relatively autonomous teacher to buck the system and gain satisfaction from inner rewards (p. 18).

The nature of the teacher's role in the school impedes teachers from taking the initiative for innovation. Lortie (1975) depicted the teacher's role as one of conservatism, individualism, and presentism. Teachers are socialized into the profession. Many teachers enter the profession because of their own personal history of what education and teaching are all about. Conservatism is fostered by tradition, continuity, and congruence. Desirable change is "more of the same". While teachers value their autonomy within their classroom, this individualism fosters aloneness, mistrust, and prevents collegiality. Presentism retards the growth of teaching as a career. Teaching is viewed as a high-turnover profession. Women have the flexibility to leave to get married, have children, and return. Men often use teaching as a career-ladder into administration.

The isolation of teachers works against change because teachers have little sustained contact with other adults. Dealing with children all day provides little time for keeping current in educational matters

or sharing with colleagues. Information is controlled, selection for projects is dictated, and resources are allocated by others. A heavy teaching load confines teachers to their classrooms which restricts their access to new ideas and innovations (House, 1974).

Teachers considering change must balance the cost with the rewards. Those who advocate change often get the rewards; those who implement change experience most of the costs. This explains why "the more things change the more they remain the same. If the change works, the teacher gets little of the credit; if it doesn't, the teacher gets most of the blame" (Fullan, 1982, p. 113). The cost of change must be balanced with the amount of return and amount of investment (Doyle and Ponder, 1977-78). Costs include time, energy and threat to sense of adequacy. Rewards include student interest and learning.

Constraints from teachers' real life work situations also impede change. Duffy and Roehler (1986) identified four constraints teachers give for resisting or trying innovations: curricular, instructional, milieu-related and organizational. Teachers filter new information through their framework of what they already know and do, restructuring it to fit their classroom reality.

The teacher's role in school change is based on four principles discussed by Red and Shainline (1987) which overlap with Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall's (1987) work on the Concerns-Based Adoption Model to explain change. Hord et al (1987) have drawn the following conclusions based on their research on change:

1. Change is a process not an event. Change takes a minimum of two to three years.

2. Change is accomplished by individuals. Since change affects people, they must be the focus of attention in implementing a new program.

3. Change is a highly personal experience (and complex). Teachers make decisions based on their beliefs about instruction and learning which influence their use of materials or a program. Support must be geared to the individual and his/her use of the innovation.

4. Change involves developmental growth. Change without turmoil is unavoidable. Teachers relate to change according to how it will affect them and their current classroom practices. Turmoil is inevitable as teachers wrestle with the conflict created by change in their beliefs.

5. Change is best understood in operational terms. Teachers need to deal with the realities of change and how it will effect their instructional practices.

6. The focus of facilitation should be on individuals, innovations, and the context. The teacher controls the appearance and substance of change. Each teacher needs to work out the definition, the context, and setting of what will work in their classroom.

By understanding how the change process works, educators will be more successful in implementing new innovations. Just because an innovation is introduced into the schools does not mean it is implemented. "The answer to why a program was ineffective may even reduce to the simple fact that it was not in reality operative; it existed only on paper. When the stimulus is not there, there is no process that it can generate" (Gross et al. p. 7).

Change can come from many sources, both outside the school or within the school. Studies on change imply that effective change comes from the bottom-up: the individual school with its principal, teachers, pupils, parents, and community links is the key unit for educational change (Goodlad, 1975, p. 81).

Statement of the Problem

"Educational innovation has been a persistent and ubiquitous feature of schooling . . . during the last quarter century. Specific innovations have been developed to address virtually every conceivable educational concern" (Hord, 1987, p. i). The majority of the studies on change report the failure of these innovations to take. While the key to successful innovation may well be the individual school, the teacher plays a crucial role in the process. Regretably, few studies have looked at the teacher's role in change except as a player in the process of adopting the change in her classroom. Few studies have addressed teacher initiated change or the problems of a teacher trying something new in a traditional school where maintaining the status quo is the norm. What motivates a teacher to try something new, what is involved in the process of change, what kinds of problems does she encounter, and what are the rewards?

This study focused on one first grade teacher who was looking for something else, who started asking questions. She enrolled in a university course and became excited about whole language and decided to make some adjustments in her reading and writing instruction. However, she still faced traditional expectations from her principal

and school faculty. This case study examined her transition from traditional instruction to a whole language reading and writing program.

The purpose of this study was to focus on the teacher as the primary change agent and understand her role and reactions to the events associated with her desire to change. Four areas of change were studied: motivation to change, the process of change, the constraints and facilitators for changing, and the effects of change.

The following research questions guided the collection and analysis of the data:

1. Motivation to change.

    1.1 What motivates a teacher to seek change in her classroom?

2. Process of change.

    2.1 If a teacher decides to change her instructional practices, how does she go about doing it?

    2.2 What will she do differently? The same? Why?

    2.3 How congruent are her beliefs and practices?

3. Constraints and facilitators of change.

    3.1 How does her principal, other teachers, and parents react to her change in reading and writing instruction?

    3.2 How does she deal with the pressure to cover traditional materials?

    3.3 What constraints does she feel, real or imagined?

    3.4 What facilitates her efforts for changing?

4. Effects of change.

    4.1 What influence does she have on the rest of the school?

    4.2 What are the rewards?

4.3 What kinds of "costs" does she encounter with change?

4.4 What makes her "know" that the change is better?

4.5 What does she learn about herself in the process of
changing?

Scope of this Study

A qualitative design was chosen to study this first grade teacher
because it would provide a descriptive record of teacher-initiated
change and would offer insight into a teacher's thoughts, feelings,
and actions as she dealt with implementing innovations in her
classroom. Qualitative research is concerned with the meaning of
behavior as "the researcher listens to what people say, observes what
they do, asks them questions when appropriate, and participates in
their activities whenever possible" (Stainback & Stainback, 1988,
p. 1).

Lighthall (1973) spoke of educational change as a process of
coming to grips with the multiple realities of people who are the main
participants in implementing change. This concept of multiple
realities refers not only to individual differences among people, but
also to the fact that each person experiencing change feels within
herself some ambivalence and uncertainty as the awareness of multiple
personal meanings develops. Schon (1971) felt all real change
involves "passing through zones of uncertainty . . . the situation of
being at sea, of being lost, of confronting more information than you
can handle" (p. 12). Since change is multidimensional, qualitative
research with its emphases on long-term observation and holistic
descriptions of events, programs, procedures, and philosophies as they

operate in the context of natural settings facilitates understanding of how individuals make sense of and give meaning to what is going on in their "reality" (Stainback & Stainback, 1988).

Assumptions and Limitations

Three assumptions were made about the school setting that was chosen for this research. First, Anderson Elementary School is considered a typical, self-contained elementary school, grades kindergarten through six with a transitional first grade program. The expectations for faculty, staff and students are similar to other schools. The success of the school year is measured by the students' performance on the achievement tests. The curriculum is based on the adopted textbooks and instruction is predominately traditional, of teacher lecturing and students using textbooks to learn.

The second assumption was that the children in the first grade class under study were normal children with similar kinds of prior school experiences as they begin first grade. Most attended kindergarten at this school. Some of the children were in the transitional first grade program the preceding year or are repeating first grade again this year.

The last assumption made was that the classroom instruction observed was part of the normal daily routine of the class. The interactions observed between teacher and students were also established behavior patterns.

There were a number of limitations that a case study approach encounters. One of the most severe limitations was that this study focused on one teacher who has initiated change in her classroom. She

is probably not typical of teachers and thus it is not the purpose of this study to generalize the results to other teachers, but instead to begin to understand what is involved in initiating change and describing the transition of a traditional reading and writing classroom to one that incorporates whole language reading and writing.

A second limitation was the researcher. Her presence, at least initially, may have changed the dynamics of the classroom. Later, she became more of a participant observer, assisting children in their daily routines and responding to their questions and needs. Her bias, based on her own background and what she observed also influenced the study. To overcome part of this bias, field notes were taken and sessions were audio or video taped to obtain another record of what happened in the classroom.

Another limitation of the study was the population of the school. Anderson Elementary School was a middle-class school. The facility was relatively new, well maintained, and the school staff, children and community take pride in their building. Parents are encouraged to come to school and there are many activities going on that require parent support and involvement. Each Thursday was popcorn day, and when the researcher arrived, parents would be busy popping popcorn for the day. Throughout the school, there was much evidence of parent volunteers.

Another limitation was the amount of parent involvement encouraged by the teacher. Each month a volunteer calendar was sent home asking parents when they could come to school to help. Parents were involved in making big books, writing books, typing children's stories, and assisting with other tasks in the classroom. Parents

were encouraged to read to and with their children. This class was the first to make Pizza Hut Book It, and celebrated with an evening pizza party at Pizza Hut.

A final limitation that relates to the teacher was her classroom routine and the environment that encouraged children to try and to feel good about themselves. For this to occur, "bonding" with the children is essential (Holdaway, 1989). Lortie (1975) found that the biggest concern of teachers was the importance of maintaining control in the classroom. Discipline in this classroom was a private matter. Children's names were not put on the board nor were children sent out in the hall, or to the principal's office for misbehavior. Children were expected to treat each other with respect and the teacher modeled these expectations. Children were given flexibility and freedom of movement within the classroom routine and knew what was expected of them.

Definition of Terms

Change: The definitions for "change" offered by Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (1967) are: "To make different in some particular: modify; to make radically different: transform; to give a different position, course, or direction to; to become different: alter; to undergo transformation, transition, or substituion." Synonyms for "change" include: "alter, vary, modify: change implies making either an essential difference often amounting to a loss of original identity or a substitution of one thing for another; alter implies a difference in some particular respect without suggesting loss of identity; vary stresses a breaking away from sameness, duplication,

or exact repetition; modify suggests a difference that limits, restricts, or adapts to a new purpose" (p. 39).

Innovation: Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) defined innovation as an "idea, practice or object perceived as new by an individual" (p. 19). Chin (1967) explained innovation as "a type of change, although the term implies more self-initiation and spontaneity" (p. 334). Lippitt and Colleagues (1967) discussed innovation as "the creation of a new idea and practice" (p. 317).

For the purpose of this study, these two terms, change and innovation will be used interchangeably and mean a new idea or alternative practice for the teacher.

Implementation: A change in the curriculum that consists of changes in a) subject matter or materials, b) organizational structure, c) role/behavior, d) knowledge and understanding, and e) value internalization as a result of innovative ideas (Fullan & Ponfret (1977, p. 361). Innovations will be adopted with either fidelity maintained or adapted to suit the teaching situations (Loucks, 1983). Berman and McLaughlin (1976) believed the key to serious change and effective implementation is mutual adaptation.

Basal Reading Programs (Basals): Classroom management system to teach reading to children. A sequential, all inclusive set of instructional materials, based on scope and sequence of skills, featuring teacher guidebook, student readers, workbooks, worksheets, and a testing component (Goodman et al, 1988). Weaver (1986) defined reading in the traditional, basal dominated classroom as pronouncing words, identifying words, and getting their meaning (p. 138).

Whole Language: "Whole language is a philosophy which refers to
meaningful, real, and relevant teaching and learning. Whole language
respects the idea that all the language processes (listening,
speaking, reading, and writing) are learned naturally and in
meaningful context as a whole. Learning activities are open-ended and
involve student choice, discussion, and sharing in a social, literate
environment" (Routman, 1988, p. 26). Weaver (1986) defined reading from
a whole language perspective as: "bringing meaning to a text in order
to get meaning from it. Reading means actively transacting with a text
to create meaning. It means using one's schemas . . . using all kinds
of deep structure--in order to create meaning from surface structure (p.
138).

<center>Summary</center>

The present study was designed to describe the ways in which one
first grade teacher dealt with change in her reading and writing
program. While the change was self-initiated, the teacher was her own
change agent, she still faced the realities of the school setting in
implementing change. Using an ethnographic participant-observer
perspective, the motivation, the process, the constraints and
facilitators, and the effects of change were examined over the course
of the spring semester, from February through May, after the teacher
initiated change.

A discussion of related research on teacher change and reading
instruction will comprise Chapter II. Chapter III details the methods
and procedures on how this study was conducted. Chapter IV focuses on
the teacher and describes her role in the classroom and her realities

of change. Chapter V summarizes the findings and suggests implications

for other teachers interested in change.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to present the complexities of

educational change and the role of the teacher in the change process.

Historically, change has been initiated from sources external to the

school and implementation has not been successful. In examining the

perplexities of change, three dimensions will be explored: the

teacher's position in the culture of the school and what

characteristics facilitate or hinder change from occurring in the

classroom, the what of change; the process of change, examined in the

context of past change efforts and continued sources of change

efforts, such as staff development, inservice, and workshops; and to

share some case studies of teachers who have initiated change on their

own, in response to their classroom situation. Some change models

will be presented to understand that change is a process, not an event

and takes time (Fullan, 1982; Hord et al, 1987; and Red & Shainline,

1987). All this encompasses the how of change.

Reading instruction is the second area explored in this section.

A history of reading instruction is presented to understand the

current state of affairs in reading. Two paradigms of reading

instruction which are predominant in the literature and in the classrooms

are basal reading instruction and whole language. These two methodologies are compared in terms of instructional strategies and student expectations.

Reading and change are juxtaposed to understand the relationship of these two forces. These paradigms of reading instruction create dissonance in teachers. How do teachers reconcile whole language instruction with existing methodologies and the realities of the school structure? What makes some teachers more open and willing to try new things? By focusing on the change process and the meaning it holds for individuals involved in change, our efforts to understand change should be enhanced.

Schools and Change

The schools are a complex social system or culture--to use Sarason's (1971) term. Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) define a social system as "units which are functionally differentiated and engaged in joint problem-solving with respect to a common goal" (p. 28). One definition of culture is "the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experiences and generate behavior" (Spradley, 1980, p. 6). Culture embraces the human experience: what people do, what people know, and things that people make and use" (Spradley, 1980, p. 5). The culture or social system governs the way people behave in that particular setting. "What individuals do in organizations is governed by what has evolved in the institution to give it a character, a way of surviving and behaving (Goodlad, 1975, p. 18). The goal of schools is twofold: "to educate students in various academic or cognitive skills and knowledge, and to educate students in the development of

individual and social skills and knowledge necessary to function . . .
in society" (Fullan, 1982, p. 10).

The purpose of educational change is to help schools accomplish
their goals more effectively, by finding meaning in educational
change. "The problem of meaning is central to making sense of
educational change. It is necessary to contend with both the
what of change and the how of change" (Fullan, 1982, p. 4). Change
is a multidimensional process (Fullan, 1982) and involves coming to
grips with the multiple realities (Lighthall, 1973) of people
implementing change. Implementing change in education requires a new
pattern of human behavior or a new way of behaving toward a group of
children, unlike other disciplines where the change can be passed
along like a thing (Lippitt et al, 1967). For a change in practice to
occur, the innovation must be compatible with one's values, attitudes,
and behavioral skills (Fullan, 1982; Lippitt et al, 1967).

The What of Change

The focus of this section will be on the teacher's perspective of
what factors facilitate or inhibit change. Within the culture of the
school, the teacher has a unique role. Behind her classroom door, she
has unlimited autonomy yet the boundaries are limited by the principal
or other school administrators. "Teachers possess or potentially
enjoy a great deal of freedom behind the doors of their own
classrooms, until what they do interferes with other teachers and [or]
the established ways of the school" (Goodlad, 1975, p. 18). The
phenomenology of the teachers' world is complex. Teachers must
contend with "the pressures of external criteria of performance,

internally determined criteria of personal and professional ability, the demandingness of the role, and the developmental consequences of these interactions and other factors as well" (Sarason, 1971, p. 173). "The culture of the school, the demands of the classroom, and the usual way in which change is introduced do not permit, point to, or facilitate teacher involvement in exploring or developing more significant changes in educational practice" (Fullan, 1982, p. 120).

The social and organizational climate of the school affects teachers openness to change. Vertical and horizontal linking (Lippitt et al, 1967) connect the teacher to the social structure of the school. How supportive these links are account for innovation and diffusion attempts. The sociometric patterns within the school that establish peer relationships, teacher-principal relationships, and norms and standards for professional behavior serve to facilitate or inhibit change efforts. The physical and temporal arrangements of the school either permit or prevent teacher interaction and sharing to occur (Lippitt et al, 1967). House (1974) finds that innovation is dependent on at least two factors: face to face contact and advocacy. "Real change is generated by excitement . . . they believe in something, they are willing to change, to do something different. The support they get from their group makes change possible" (p. 53). Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) concur that "communication is essential for social change" (p. 6).

One of the primary forces affecting change is the climate of the school. Because innovation involves risk-taking, teachers are more likely to share information and try new things in a school environment that is open and supportive. The interplay of the social structure

within the school facilitates or hinders innovation and diffusion of ideas.

Lortie (1975) in his interviews with teachers found that teachers listed other teachers as their most effective resource. However, teachers request help on a selective basis and most of the help they describe is in "sharing tricks of the trade" (p. 77).

The practicality of the innovation is another consideration. Teachers are pragmatic. Activities, materials, or ideas that are prescriptive, specific, concrete and practically related to the day to day operation of the classroom are more likely to be adopted. The bottom line is that teachers change to become better teachers as measured by outcomes of student learning (Guskey, 1986). Doyle and Ponder (1977-78) describe change in terms of the "practicality ethic". Teachers make decisions based on three criteria of practicality: instrumentality, congruence, and cost. Instrumentality looks at the change in terms of meeting classroom contingencies. Congruence focuses on the 'fit' of the practice with other classroom activities. Cost is the ratio between amount of return and amount of investment required by the teacher. Cost factors include time, energy, new skill, sense of excitement and competence, and interference with existing priorities (Fullan, 1982, p. 113).

Teachers who choose to become involved in innovations must balance the rewards of involvement against personal costs, what is required of them. House (1975) cautions:

> The personal costs of trying new innovations are often high, however, and seldom are there any indications that innovations are worth the investment. Innovations are acts of faith. They

require one believe that they will ultimately bear fruit and be worth the personal investment, often without the hope of immediate return. Costs are also high. The amount of energy and the time required to learn the new skills or roles associated with the new innovation is a useful index of the magnitude of resistence. (p. 73)

Costs are closely tied to rewards. In implementing change, teachers are often in the position of "if the change works, the individual teacher gets little of the credit; it if doesn't, the teacher gets most of the blame" (Fullan, 1982, p. 113). Psychic or intrinsic rewards are connected to the classsroom (Lortie, 1975). Teachers interviewed cited task-related outcomes as the number one reward associated with teaching satisfaction (Lortie, 1975, p. 103). This is expressed as "reaching" students. This goal causes as much satisfaction as it does adversity for teachers. "Teachers are not sure they can make all students learn" (p. 132). In trying to reach all students, teachers must juggle time constraints, work activities, and classroom control; teaching requires skillful management. "Teachers . . . have inordinate difficulty in thinking other than in terms of covering X amount of material in X amount of time" (Sarason, 1971, p. 153). It is believed that for students to learn, teachers must cover the material. To cover the material, the teacher must be in control of the classroom to oversee the learning.

Control becomes a vital issue in the classroom. Control is often interpreted as classroom discipline which is reflected by children sitting quietly at their desks and working since time on task is associated with student learning. To elicit work, teachers must be in

control of and manage the work environment. "The outstanding teacher not only produces learning and the love of learning but evokes respect and affection, high effort from students, and compliance with classroom rules" (Lortie, 1975, p. 120).

The most important agent of change is the teacher. There are "forces" within each teacher which encourage or discourage openness to innovation. Some of these characteristics are related to personality, such as attitudes, values, and beliefs; others to background and training, including current professional developments, grade taught or subject specialization, age and family commitments (Lippitt, 1967, p. 310).

Background and training is a major factor influencing how teachers perceive their abilities. Teacher training does not equip teachers for the realities of classroom life (Lortie, 1975, Sarason, 1971). The transition from college student to teacher is abrupt; the new teacher is "a student in June and a fully responsible teacher in September" (Lortie, 1975, p. 59). Teacher training is characterized as "not requiring as much preparation as some professions . . . relatively high on general schooling and somewhat low on specialized schooling" (Lortie, 1975, p. 60).

Each teacher brings to the job a personal history of what education and teaching are all about. The teacher's conception of teaching is intuitive and imitative, based on their own experiences as a student. Clandinin (1986) presented an additional element of teacher histories, the construct of image. "Image is a coalescence of an individual's experience" (p. 148) and impacts upon a teacher's personal practical knowledge which influences classroom practices.

Another aspect of innovation is what the teacher perceives her role to encompass. Many teachers feel that they have little decision-making authority outside their own classroom. Sarason (1971) found that teachers often have difficulty verbalizing resentment about having little or no input about decisions that affect their work. This may "reflect the degree to which teachers are accustomed to being treated as lowly proletariats" (p. 160). Duffy, Roehler and Putnam (1987) discussed the lack of decision-making teachers have in regards to curricular instruction. The expectations set for teachers by others, "master developers," lead teachers to question their control of learning. "Teachers see themselves as technicians who follow directions rather than as professionals who adapt curricular materials to the particular needs of . . . students" (p. 35). This lack of professionalism has alienated teachers from their work and has promoted a sense of fatalism, that it's "just the way it is" (Shannon, 1989, p. 59). House (1974) also noted that teachers tend to be passive, to be acted upon rather than acting.

While one of the attractions of teaching is the autonomy teachers have in their classroom, one of the drawbacks is the isolation of teachers from other adults to interact and share ideas with. Spending their day surrounded by children requires patience and fortitude. Problems with boredom and routine set in. There is often too much emotional commitment and not enough intellectual stimulation. "Teaching is giving . . . the teacher is required to give of himself, intellectually and emotionally . . . To sustain the giving at a high level requires that the teacher experience getting" (Sarason, 1971, p. 167).

The teachers' self concept influences how they will respond to new ideas. "On the one hand, they were caught up in the enthusiasm surrounding the change and looked forward to the stimulation expected from what was intellectually novel . . . on the other hand, they became increasingly anxious" (Sarason, 1971, p. 41-42) because this was new and learning it was not going to be easy. The teachers' self-efficacy is related to their confidence in themselves, that they can manage their classrooms effectively, and that they have the power to direct their own classroom life (Lippitt et al, 1967, p. 322). The teachers most likely to be involved in innovation from a personal perspective are those: who are risk-takers, who are committed to their profession, who are active learners and aware of professional developments in teaching, who view the change as cost-effective and compatible with their personal style of teaching, and who have a support system.

The How of Change

The how of change examines two aspects. The first is how effective have change efforts been in the past. A second aspect is to recount models of change that assist in our understanding of how the change process works.

The majority of the studies of change have dealt with people participating in mandated change, usually from top administration or an outside source. Studies by Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein (1971), Keith and Smith (1971), Barth (1972), and Finch (1978) have reported on schools implementing educational reform and the teachers that participated in the innovations. All but Finch reported the failure of the change effort.

The study by Gross et al (1971) at Cambire Elementary School explored an alternative teaching role, the catalytic role model, to motivate ghetto children. Cambire Elementary School was a predominately black school consisting of 175 students and eleven teachers. The year before it had been designated as an experimental school. Teachers who volunteered to work there were committed to trying out new curricula and experimenting with novel instructional methods. The school was chosen for this study because of the staff's receptiveness to try innovative ways of teaching children. During the initial observation period, teachers were trying new materials though instructional practices were fundmentally traditional in nature, teacher-directed and controlled. The catalytic role model was then introduced to the teachers in November via a ten-page document. This new definition of the teacher's role was holistic, empowering both the teacher and the learner. The teacher was to act as a facilitator, assisting children to learn based on their interests, allowing them freedom to choose activities. She also was to emphasize the process of learning over content.

Observations were continued throughout the school year to determine the degree of implementation by the teachers. Teachers' classroom behaviors were monitored to assess both the quantity and quality of efforts at innovation. From the data analysis, Gross et al concluded that the barriers to implementation included: 1) teachers' lack of clarity about the innovation, 2) their lack of the kind of skills and knowledge needed to conform to the new role model, 3) unavailability of required instructional materials, 4) incompatibility

of organizational arrangements with the innovations, and 5) lack of staff motivation.

Keith and Smith (1971) studied Kensington Elementary School, an open-space laboratory school designed to exemplify the new elementary education aprroach of team teaching, individualized instruction, and multi-age groupings. Kensington School was in a middle class suburban school district and served a student body of two hundred, nine to eleven year olds with a staff of twenty-eight. A qualitative, case study approach was undertaken to gain understanding of the uniqueness of the "social psychological aspects of a school building design" (p. 9).

They found that even though their teachers were "bright, enthusiastic, and attitudinally focused on the central tenets of the new elementary education" (p. 392), their lack of experience and administrative support along with ignorance of the community they were to serve, caused the school to fail. This inexperience was compounded by: "1) being inexperienced in working together, 2) being part of a new organization without formalization, that is, without social structure, 3) utilizing organizational patterns, teams, and divisions with which no one was familiar, and 4) inhabiting temporary facilities" (p. 396). When they encountered problems, they had nothing to fall back on. Reorganizations occurred to resolve problems but only created new ones. By the end of the school year, many had resigned and the following fall, the school was more traditional. "This is the way they probably should have started and then, as things worked out branched off into the way they wanted to go. . . . It's what I would describe as building from one's strength

and then moving into new programs as opposed to moving dramatically, whole-hog into new programs" (p. 368).

Barth's (1972) experience with the Lincoln-Attuck Elementary School was another experiment in open education. Two totally different schools, one black, the other lower working class were linked together in an effort to address the problems of inner-city children. The merger created a school population of almost six hundred students with a staff of fifty-four. As one of the principals, Barth brought with him six young teachers committed to open education, who though aware that there would be great difficulties, looked forward to participating in the development of an important education alternative. These teachers were "short on experience, long on ability, energy, confidence, and idealism" (p. 110). Within three months, these teachers had regressed to a traditional transmission of knowledge model in their classroom. What had gone wrong? Barth recalled his perceptions of the experience, using case study methodology, to offer an explanation. Innovation was externally mandated. There was a problem with the schools selected, the staff had differing beliefs about children and education, and lack of administrative organization and leadership. The new teachers were not accepted by the other faculty because of their white, upper-middle class liberal beliefs. They also experienced resistence from the children who could not handle the 'open class', from parents who wanted traditional instruction, and from administrators who wanted to control them.

Finch (1978) studied the planning and implementation of an Optional Education Experience for students at Chute Junior High School, using a qualitative case study approach. She observed the four teachers who chose to participate in this experience from the

inception of the idea for an optional education program, through the weeks of implementation, until the end of the year, a period of six months. Initially, the teachers believed they had administrative support, but a lack of this support coupled with lack of planning time, lack of a common geographical area for the team, and lack of money and materials created numerous problems before they even began.

The reasons for the teachers participating also caused problems. Two teachers were escaping from an unpleasant work situation. Both of these teachers were also lacking in subject matter expertise, teaching outside of their majors. While a third teacher professed a philosophy of wanting to work with others and participate in the planning and sharing of idea, he had little understanding of what was involved in working with students at their own pace. Only the fourth teacher had a feel for what the program should entail and was in part already doing individualized, self-paced activities in her class. Because of student and parent support, the principal became supportive of the program and of its continuation for the following school year. Overall, the experience had been a positive one for three of the teachers and the students involved in the implementation. From this experience, Finch (1978) recommended that teachers contemplating involvement in change make sure they have administrative support and knowledge of district policies. Other potential allies for change are the parents and students.

Externally initiated staff development, in-service, or workshops are another source of exposing teachers to new ideas and of making changes in the classroom. A number of studies explore teacher change through this modality.

Using a case study approach, Martens (1988) chronicled four teachers who were involved in change because the State of New York was implementing a problem-solving curriculum for elementary science. A hands-on workshop, consisting of seven meetings spread over a three month period was the method of inservice used to train these teachers who were teaching science in the traditional lecture textbook mode.

Field observation showed that the presence or absence of environmental factors such as "administrative support and flexibility, availability of science materials, a school philosophy which encourages the full development of student potential, prior and concurrent student experiences outside of the science period which encourage independence, parental support, and teacher status (tenured or non-tenured)" affect implementation (p. 137). The teachers' classroom practice was influenced by these personal or internal factors:

> background in science, ability to see interdisciplinary possibilities in teaching science, organizational ability, regard for individual student's ideas, need to maintain control over student activities and thinking, personal reflectivity, regard for other teachers' intelligence and experience, emphasis on success, attachment to 'covering' a book, understanding the relationship between science content and problem solving, and general openness to change (pp. 137-138).

An evaluation of inservice training in effective teaching techniques suggested that teacher attitudes influence teachers' decisions whether to adopt a new teaching practice (Sparks 1984, 1988). The teachers who made the greatest improvements had a

"philosophical acceptance" of the recommended practices and worked to make their teaching congruent with their new beliefs. When the teachers were interviewed, they listed several things which they were doing differently in their classes. The teachers had grown in their sense of self-efficacy. They had developed confidence in their ability to deal effectively with their classroom problems. They had been dissatisfied with their teaching, but did not have any alternatives. The training raised their awareness of where the problems were and gave them new ideas and techniques to solve them. The teachers who were nonimprovers felt hopeless and helpless in terms of their ability to make changes in their classrooms. These teachers had low expectations of their students' ability and their own ability to make improvements.

A contrasting model of teacher change has been proposed by Guskey (1985, 1986). He contended that teachers change their beliefs and attitudes only after changes in the learning outcomes of students are evidenced. His pragmatic orientation toward staff development recognized that as a vehicle for giving teachers specific, concrete and practical ideas that directly relate to the day to day operations in the class. A change in the teachers' classroom practices should cause a change in student learning outcomes which then causes a change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes.

Mohlman, Coladarci, and Gage (1982) summarized five studies that addressed the issue of teacher implementation after training sessions. One conclusion they drew was that the type of training teachers received influenced implementation. Inservice that was personal,

longer in duration, and provided feedback to teachers was more effective.

Devlin-Scherer, Devlin-Scherer, Schaffer, and Stringfield (1985) measured the effects of public commitment by teachers on behavioral changes in the classroom. As part of the training, teachers were invited to make commitments to try specific teaching behaviors in their classrooms. This produced greater shifts in classroom practice. Coaching was also a factor in supporting these new behaviors.

Duffy and Roehler (1986) examined teacher resistance to change to understand why a particular instructional strategy was not being regularly used in classrooms. After four years of work with eleven second, third, and fifth grade teachers of reading, there was limited growth in students' reading achievement. Training consisted of staff development, twelve hours of instruction, individual on-site coaching, and feedback sessions. Exploration of the problem revealed that teachers were committed to the innovation at a figurative level but four constraints kept them from implementing the change. These constraints were: curricular, which required teachers to recast skills as strategies; instructional, how to explain and model strategies; milieu-related, both internal and external environmental factors; and organizational, reestablishing routines.

Wilson (1988) examined how participation in the Iowa Writing Project influenced teachers' beliefs and practices concerning writing instruction as they attempted to change their approach to teaching writing. While teachers' beliefs changed because of their participation in the writing workshop, changes in writing instruction

were more ambiguous. Teachers identified several impediments to teaching as they believed: curricular restraints, lack of support services, too little room, outside expectations that grammar instruction results in good writing, schools and communities that value standardized test scores, personal fears, and awareness that students may encounter others who expect certain skills and forms to have been mastered.

Another dimension of change studies is teacher self-reports that are shared in the literature. Welsh (1985) commented on how she reacted to change that was mandated from the principal and reading specialist on using a new reading approach. A teacher for fourteen years, she felt she had "perfected her teaching". Conflict arose over the change because it challenged her previous teaching. Three factors that caused consternation among the faculty and that administrators making changes need to be sensitive to are: trust needs to be established, a need for change must be shown, and a better alternative plan must be presented.

Burchby (1988) shared how she "came" to use children's books to teach her first grade students to read. Her reasons included "the joy and ease with which I have seen children learn to read," the control she had over the instructional strategies in her classroom, and that this method was consistent with the empowerment of students, students gaining ownership over words.

Five (1988) related the dramatic change she made in teaching reading to her fifth graders. She moved from a skill and drill emphasis where her students "hated reading workbooks, and I hated correcting them" to a process orientation where students read and

discussed books, and test scores remained constant or showed gains of two to six years. The change in her reading program and her growth as a teacher started because she viewed herself as a learner. "I learned about the writing process and my professional life changed. My students and I became involved with each other." Moving from process writing into reading was the next step, and again she read and with much trepidation, gave up her workbooks and basals.

Atwell (1987) in her book, In the Middle, described how she came out from behind her big desk to learn with and from her students.

I paved the way through writing and reading about writing, through uncovering and questioning my assumptions, through observing kids and trying to make sense of my observations, through dumb mistakes, uncertain experiments, and underneath it all, the desire to do my best by my kids. A lot of the time, doing my best hurt. It meant looking hard at what I was doing and asking kids to do. It meant learning--and admitting--that I was wrong. And, most painful of all, it meant letting go of my cherished creation (p. 4).

Routman (1988) told her story in Transitions from Literature to Literacy of how she began to trust herself and her children.

That group of low-achieving second grade children forced me to examine my beliefs about learning, reading, and what children could really accomplish. . . . The empowering of teachers and children has had remarkable results. Teachers, with the support of a wide body of research, have finally had the courage and freedom to trust their intuition . . . This book is designed to

help you make the same transition from the basal into the wonderful world of children's literature (p. 10).

The process of change is complex. Change requires the use of new materials, new teaching approaches, and alterations in beliefs and attitudes (Fullan, 1982). Change involves the sharing of ideas, support from others, and time. Loucks and Zacchei (1983) listed four ingredients for successful change: the innovation is classroom friendly, there is ample, appropriate, and continuous help for teachers, there is clear direction from administrators, and there is attention to institutionalization.

Introducing the innovation does not guarantee implementation. Change is filtered through the realities of the teachers' world, as such, the innovation is transformed -- or adapted -- to suit the teaching situation. "Any innovation . . . may eventually be adopted, but, when they are, they will be transformed from the philosophical purity in which they were born into something easier. The teacher will reject or adopt a piece of it, depending on . . . what is said about it, personal values, and the existential situation. Almost never will it be adopted in its entirety" (House, 1974, p. 79). Berman and McLaughlin (1976) agreed that for implementation to be effective "mutual adaptation" is necessary of both the design and the setting.

To understand the process of how an innovation comes to be implemented, different models have been developed to explain change.

Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) synthesized the research on the diffusion of innovations and identified five attributes that contribute to their rate of adoption: relative advantage,

compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. They have modified their innovation-decision process from a five step to a four step model to explain the mental process involved in change. Step 1 is the knowledge function and occurs when one is exposed to the innovations existence and functions. Step two is the persuasion function and occurs when one forms either a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the innovation. The decision function is the third step and leads to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation. The last function is confirmation and occurs when reinforcement is sought for the innovation-decision (pp. 22-23).

Another study by Thompson (1979) investigated the process of change based on reports of sixteen teachers who participated in the National Writing Project. The focus of the study was on the decision-making process of teachers to try an innovation, adopt, adapt, or reject it. The term "innodopter" was created to describe persons engaged in this process. A theory of change was generated wherein the change process occurs within a setting and includes stages. Setting includes: social systems, personal conditions, external conditions, and relationships. The nine stages are: 1) Need and/or opportunity for change 2) Alternatives perceived, created, or not perceived 3) Alternatives selected or adapted 4) Planned use, lack of planned use, or delayed planned use 5) Implementation or no implementation 6) Summative evaluation or no evaluation 7) Rejection, adoption, adaptation 8) Consequences of use or non-use and 9) Continued rejection, later adoption, later adaptation, continued use, and continued rejection.

Another widely used change model developed to understand the
process of change is the Concerns Based Adoption Model (Hall & Loucks,
1981; Hord, 1987; Hord & Loucks, 1980; Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin,
& Hall, 1987; Loucks & Hall, 1979; Loucks & Melle, 1982). The CBAM
has three components: the concept of Innovation Configurations which
represents the patterns of innovation use; the Stages of Concern; and
the Levels of Use. Provisions are made for all of the various
concerns that individuals experience as they participate in change.
"A Stages of Concern (SoC) Questionnaire and "A Manual for Assessing
Open-ended Statements of Concern about an Innovation" help to locate
individuals on the following continuum of change:

Stages of Concern about the Innovation

6   Refocusing -- focus is on exploration of more universal
     benefits from the innovation.

5   Collaboration -- focus is on coordination and cooperation
     with others regarding the use of the innovation.

4   Consequence -- focus is on the impact of the innovation
     on students in their immediate sphere of influence.

3   Management -- focus is on the processes and tasks of
     using the innovation and the best use of information
     and resources.

2   Personal -- individual is uncertain about the demands
     of the innovation, his/her inadequacy to meet those
     demands, and his/her role with the innovation.

1   Informational -- a general awareness of the innovation
     and interest in learning more detail about it is
     indicated.

    0   Awareness -- little concern about or involvement with

        the innovation is indicated.

The SoC model reflects the self-concerns of the individuals in the early stages, the task concerns in the middle stages, and the impact concerns in the final stages. Levels of Use is designed to define operationally what the user is doing. Eight Levels of Use have been identified from 0 nonuse, I orientation, II preparation, III mechanical use, IVA routine, IVB refinement, V integration, and VI renewal.

These models assist the change agent in working with teachers to understand where they are on the continuum of change and to be sensitive to their needs and feelings regarding the proposed innovation. As Sarason (1971) warned:

    Those who introduce change are guilty of the very criticism

    they make of teachers: not being sensitive to what and how and

    why children think as they do. As a result, teachers react in

    much the same way that many children do and that is with the

    feeling they are both wrong and stupid. They seem unaware they

    are asking teachers to unlearn and learn. One [does not] effect

    change by telling people what is the "right" way to act and

    think. Here, too, those who want change do exactly that for

    which they criticize teachers (p. 193).

History of Reading Instruction

Reading instruction is synonymous with basal readers in today's elementary schools. To understand how basals have assumed such an important role in reading, it is necessary to examine the history of

reading instruction in America. Three sources (Goodman, Shannon, Freeman, and Murphy, 1988, Shannon, 1989, and Venesky, 1987) provide a rather detailed history of reading instruction in the United States from early colonial times to the present.

Early colonial schools were established to teach children to read the Bible. In 1647 the Massachusetts colony passed "The Old Deluder, Satan Law" which required that townships of over fifty households appoint a teacher of reading and writing so that children would learn their Bible verses (Goodman et al, 1988, p. 4). Schooling lasted two to three years and rendered children literate in English, familiar with the word of God and proper religious behavior. Instruction focused on oral performance and rote memorization. Materials included: hornbooks which contained the alphabet, a syllabary, and the Lord's prayer; when students could recite on demand they were moved to a Psalter, a book of spelling lessons that listed syllables, words, and Bible verses; then the Bible and a textbook, such as The New England Primer (Goodman et al, 1988, p. 4; Venesky, 1987, p. 249). The primer lessons began with the alphabet followed by a syllabarius (ab, eb, ib, ob, etc.) then continued with word lists graded by number of syllables, alphabet rhymes, the catechism, Lord's Prayer, Apostle's creed, and various ending materials, including secular rhymes (Venesky, 1987, p. 249).

Teachers were classified according to the method of instruction they utilized: drillmaster or overseer. The overseeing master supervised students' independent practice of lessons followed by recitation. The drillmaster led students in choral drills of lesson content.

John Newbery's A Little Pretty Pocketbook in 1744, heralded the publishing of books for children. The contents of books demonstrated a shift in child rearing philosophies from that of instilling a fear of God in children to developing a positive moral character and entrepreneurial spirit in children (Shannon, 1989, p. 5, Goodman et al, 1988, pp. 4-5).

The 1800's saw major changes in public school education. Schools expanded, children spent more time in schools, and series of readers began to appear. Reading was viewed as the route to developing good character, and a means for acquiring an appreciation of good literature. The first half of the 19th century continued the use of the spelling method to teach reading. Noah Webster's Blue Backed . Speller was a popular text. Students learned the names of letters, spelled them, pronounced lists of two- and three-letter nonsense syllables, then spelled and pronounced lists of words. Finally, they read sentences aloud (Goodman et al, 1988, p. 5).

A number of primer series were now available along with five to six graded readers. Books also included a section on assistance to the teachers. Worcester's Primer of the English Language, 1826, devoted thirteen pages exclusively to instructions to the teacher with separate sections on prereading activities, introducing words, reading full sentences, providing extended information on objects and avoiding arbitrary rules. Cobb's New Juvenile Readers, 1840, contained a three part lesson plan built around the reading selections with step 1 covering spelling, pronunciation, and definition of new vocabulary; step 2 reading the selection; and step 3 answering questions after the selection (Venesky, 1987, p. 253).

The McGuffy <u>Eclectic</u> <u>Readers</u> published from 1836-1920 were the most popular partly due to the shrewd marketing practices employed. The Readers removed spelling as a prerequisite to reading and used it as a means to aid and assess students' mastery of the recognition of words. In this phonics method, students first mastered the alphabet, learned the pronunciation guide for words, and finally progressed to simple sentences and stories (Shannon, 1989, p. 7).

Reading instruction still emphasized word identification over meaning and oral reading rather than discussion. Teachers continued to be overseers or drillmasters, though a new role developed as interpretors of culture. This later role was in response to the child nurture movement of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Herbart. The reading method they advocated was the word method which in its pure form eliminated the alphabet, syllabary, and spelling exercises and began with familiar words and discussions concerning their meanings (Shannon, 1989, p. 8).

Sheldon's Oswego Movement, begun in 1861, attempted to implement the word method. This method "required teachers to redefine their goals of education from the reproduction of facts within textbooks to the examination of objects from their daily experience and the interpretation of these facts in light of their observations" (Shannon, 1989, p. 9). He established one of the first schools, Oswego State Normal and Training School to train teachers in this "objective system." Controversy arose over the use of phonics to teach reading and the word method to teach content subjects. Most teachers who used the word method combined it with a phonics method-- pronouncing the word, oral repetition of the word, breaking it into

its phonic elements, blending the sounds to its original
pronunciation, and then discussion of the word's meaning (Shannon,
1989, p. 9).

Another "interpretor of culture" was Colonel Francis Parker.
Parker supported the New or Progressive Education and was given
permission to implement it in the schools of Quincy, Massachusetts,
1875. Parker believed in a child-centered curriculum. Besides
supporting a word method approach to reading, he wanted to integrate
the language arts curriculum. He also proposed that students be
allowed to progress through the curriculum at their own pace (Shannon,
1989, p. 11). Critics questioned the plausibility of students being
able to think, read, and figure without first memorizing the skills to
do these tasks. Students did poorly on year end exams which stressed
the memorization of textbook facts, confirming critics fears. Parker
resigned his position as superintendent, moved to a similar position
in the Boston Public Schools, and later went on train teachers in this
philosophy (Shannon, 1989, p. 12).

An 1892 report by Joseph Mayer Rice reported a crisis in reading
instruction in the public schools. His survey of schools in thirty-
six cities found that 90% of the schools' reading program were
outdated, mechanical, and totally ineffective. Of the three categories
that he placed schools in, only the New or Progressive Education
schools were doing a good job of unifying subjects within the
curriculum and responding to children's needs (Shannon, 1989).

The solution to Rice's report was to turn to science and
technology and the new discipline of psychology. Science provided a
rational explanation for the problems of industrialization, material

progress, and the laws of nature. Scientific management provided the method to increase productivity by an analysis of activities into its discrete parts. Education was searching for a way to become more scientific and found it in behavioral psychology. Edward L. Thorndyke's Laws of Learning, based on his studies with animal behavior, concluded that learning could be studied by examination of behavior. He thus set the stage for developing reading instruction in the form that spawned the basal management systems that have been the primary source of reading instruction since the 1920's.

The Committee on the Economy of Time, appointed in 1911, was charged with the responsibility of making recommendations to eliminate nonessentials from the elementary curriculum, to improve teaching methods, and to set minimum standards for each subject. William S. Gray emerged as the principal spokesman for reading instruction. Teachers were to remain at the center of instruction, but because teachers were poorly educated, the change agent would be the textbooks and the accompanying guidebooks. Teachers' interactions with students would be directed through the medium of a scientific teacher's manual. The manual was right for the time, an expression of faith in the powers of science. The guidebooks were based on business principles: standardized teacher practices according to methods proven to be productive and economical, scientific management of reading instruction, and quantifiable goals. If teachers followed the directions and materials, all children would learn to read (Goodman et al, 1988, p. 17).

Basal instruction became a remedy for the apparent crisis in reading education. Enthralled with business, science, and psychology,

the public concurred that basals were indeed the answer to prepare students for the rapid changes of an industrialized America. Basals required little tax expenditures, provided criteria and materials for scientific reading instruction, and taught poorly trained teachers to improve their instruction (Shannon, 1989). Basals utilized Thorndyke's Law of Learning in a direct application to reading instruction. The Law of Readiness resulted in the sequencing of skill instruction and scope and sequence charts. The Law of Exercise provided practice in the form of seatwork activities such as workbooks and flashcards. The Law of Effect supported the part to whole concept of first learning words and skills before reading text. The Law of Identical Elements created tests to measure progress (Goodman et al, 1988).

Prior to basals, teachers were in control of teaching reading. While the materials were not ideal, and smacked of "basalitis" with phonics instruction and skill learning as the goal, teachers still had to develop daily lesson objectives, methods for instruction and practice, a pace for that instruction, and procedures for evaluation. There were no explicit descriptions of daily lessons which were simply applied (Shannon, 1989, p. 80).

Woodward (1987) examined the changing role and status of teachers as projected in the teacher guidebooks accompanying basals. Lessons from the early manuals allowed teacher independence and discretion; but by the 70's, the manuals had become more comprehensive, to "do everything" for the teacher leaving nothing to chance. He marked 1970 as the change in the image of a teacher from a professional to an activities manager. Another change he noted was the change in the

status of reading. Prior to 1970, teacher's guide emphasized the
importance of reading; post 1970, reading became predominately a
skill-based subject. Skills were interspersed with stories to
practice the particular skills. Basals had changed from reading
series to management systems. As such, an activities manager role is
required to cover and organize all the component parts of the system.
Root (1981) observed the change in size of the reader, from the Primer
which measured 2 1/2 " x 3 1/2" and weighed less than 1 1/2 ounces to
the present day teacher's edition measuring 8 1/2 by 11 by 3 inches and
weighing 5 pounds.

Current Basal Use

Winograd and Paris (1988-89) noted that while reading programs
were designed to provide systematic, uniform instruction, instead they
have produced management mentality in both students and teachers.
This acceptance of the instructional powers and scientific validity of
basals caused teachers to separate themselves from taking
responsibility for the reading instruction of their students resulting
in "reification," "rationalization," and "alienation" (Shannon, 1989).

Ironically, as teachers have become more educated, basals have
become more explicit in design. Over 90% of teachers use basals as
the material for reading instruction. The paradox for teachers is
"teachers think they are professional--but want to rely on basal
readers, graded workbooks, teachers' manuals, and other materials
prefabricated by the experts" (Goodman et al, 1988, p. 25).

McCallum (1988) urged caution in his article entitled, "Don't
throw the basals out with the bath water." While basals have

limitations, basal series play a critical role in reading instruction because of the difficulties with translating theory and research into practice. Basal systems come as a package that includes a comprehensive scope and sequence of skills, diagnosis and evaluation procedures, and supplementary materials. Basals have continued to change as understanding of the reading process has developed, incorporating successful instructional techniques (both Goodman and Shannon indicate that the basal lags fifteen to twenty years behind the research). Basals also provide on the job training for teachers. "A majority of reading teachers do not have the time, energy, or expertise to develop the types of materials and activities required to meet the goals" (McCallum, 1988, p. 205-206).

In a poll in the September 1987 issue of Learning (1988), three hundred thirty-nine teachers responded to questions about their reading instruction. The results indicated that more than 85% of the teachers used basal readers in some form or another (p. 62). The most frequent suggestion for improving basals was to include more real literature. Over 50% of teachers used one basal as the basis of their reading program, 56% used the teacher's manual all or most of the time, and 60% used workbooks all or most of the time (p. 64). Additionally, skills reinforcement was seen as the most important benefit of the basal because it provided a "sequential skills structure that allows teachers to cover the basics in an organized, logical manner" (p. 62).

A parallel study by Smith and Saltz (1987) conducted a follow-up to their 1985 survey on teacher's reactions to the basals. One hundred and thirteen teachers responded to an open-ended statement concerning their use of basal readers. The following reactions were

expressed by the teachers: teachers acclaimed the concept of basal readers but felt some series were better than others for meeting children's needs; basals served as the core for reading instruction and were easily integrated with other reading approaches; there was a balance between skill teaching and amount of practice in reading, however higher level thinking skills, study skills, and content comprehension skills were weak; higher achievement test scores were believed to have resulted from using basals; ability grouping was prevalent; and the success of the basal reader was only as effective as the teacher using it.

For every critic of the basal, there are an equal number of proponents. Basals have been around for almost seventy years in their present form, and some kind of "reader" has been used to teach children to read since colonial days. It is always difficult to change tradition, even in view of research that highlights problems with the existing system. The alternative to basal instruction is a whole language approach to reading that integrates the language arts.

Before examining studies that compare basal reading programs to literature-based instruction, there is a need to digress and present the whole language philosophy and a picture of whole language classrooms to better understand how whole language differs from basal instruction. Basal instruction is rooted in behavioristic philosophy; whole language is rooted in Piagetian or cognitive / humanistic philosophies. Additionally, whole language is supported by five areas of research: developmental learning, oral language development, reading, writing, and evaluation (Heald-Taylor, 1989, pp. 4-5).

Whole Language

"Whole language is a philosophy which refers to meaningful, real, and relevant teaching and learning" (Routman, 1988, p. 26). Whole language teachers have a positive view of children, which is rooted in the child-centered pedagogy of John Dewey:

> The child is the starting-point, the center, and the end. His development, his growth, is the ideal. It alone furnished the standard. To the growth of the child all studies are subservient; they are instruments valued as they serve the needs of growth. Personality, character, is more than subject-matter. Not knowledge of information, but self-realization, is the goal. To possess all the world of knowledge or information, and lose one's own self is as awful a fate in education as in religion. Moreover, subject-matter never can be got into the child from without. Learning is active. It involves reaching out of the mind. It involves organic assimilation starting from within. Literally, we must take our stand with the child and our departure from him. It is he and not the subject-matter which determines both quality and quantity of learning. (Gentry, 1987, p. 46)

"Whole language is based on a cognitive psychology view of learning and the relationships of language, thinking and learning including views of perception, cognition, schema theory and concept development" (Goodman & Goodman, 1981, p. 1). Whole language embraces all language processes (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) as learned naturally, and in meaningful context as a whole.

A holistic program integrates the language arts skills with the content of the curriculum. Reading becomes a tool, a means to an end. In whole language classrooms, certain practices are congruent with this holistic framework. Sometimes the practices are labeled as whole language, which is a misnomer, since whole language is a perspective, a set of beliefs on language and language acquisition.

Altwerger, Edelsky, and Flores (1987) addressed the question of what whole language is and is not in an attempt to avoid distortion and misinterpretation. Don Holdaway (1989) echoed this concern of labeling whole language in a recent address at the IRA conference in New Orleans. Routman (1988) and Reutzel and Hollingsworth (1988), have contrasted what is and is not whole language. They along with Weaver (1986), Rich (1985), and Butler and Turbill (1985) painted a picture of a whole language classroom. The kinds of activities observed would include: reading to children, big book experiences, silent reading time, language experience, children writing, teacher guided reading, individualized reading, and opportunities for sharing. Lots of time is devoted to literature and writing, and integrating reading and writing across the curriculum. Children work cooperatively, actively, where language is a tool for learning. The importance of the process of learning in a literate, risk-free environment is paramount. Frank Smith defined whole language as "an attitude of mind which provides a shape for the classroom" (Rich, 1985, p. 719). The teacher's role is one of facilitating children's entrance into the "literacy club" (Smith, 1985).

This paradigm of literacy is in stark contrast to the traditional basal approach to reading. Whole language redefines reading and writing as processes for constructing meaning. It redefines the role

of the teacher from technician to professional decision-maker and facilitator of learning. It redefines the learner as active, independent, and responsible. It redefines the teacher-student relationship as cooperative, responsive, and supportive. It redefines the curriculum as integrative, relevant, and child-centered. The whole language curriculum recognizes the strengths of children, the variety of knowledge and literacy children bring to school with them. It empowers the teacher as a professional who is in charge of her children and her classroom.

Whole language cannot be mandated, packaged, or formularized. It is a concept that must be supported and understood to take hold. It implies a restructuring of traditional schools and an opening of the curriculum which includes parent education and support (Rich, 1985).

As an alternative philosophy for changing schools' reading and writing programs, whole language will require a change in beliefs as well as practices. There are few overlapping concepts between the traditional approach and whole language, as Goodman (1989) reiterated in his response to Heymsfled (1989) when she attempted to meld the strengths of each into a combined approach. Studies that have compared the two approaches have found overwhelmingly for whole language. Tunnell and Jacobs (1989) summarized a number of studies that compare basal to literature based reading instruction. A review of these studies follow.

Comparison of Basal and Whole Language Reading Instruction

A study by Cohen in 1968 used a control group of 130 second grade students taught with the basal and compared them to 155 children

using a literature component supplemented with regular instruction. The treatment consisted of reading aloud fifty children's trade picture book and then following up with meaning related activities. The children were encouraged to read the books too. The experimental group showed significant increases over the control group on both the Metropolitan Achievement Test and A Free Association Vocabulary Test. A replication by Cullinan, Jaggar, and Strickland in 1974 yielded similar results (Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989).

A study by Bader, Veatch, Eldredge (1987) involved 1,149 second grade children in fifty Utah classrooms. The traditional basal approach (control) was compared to five experimental designs, two of which used a literature-based approach. Using a variety of evaluation techniques, the researchers found that fourteen of the twenty statistically significant differences favored the literature program supplemented with daily 15 minute decoding instruction. They concluded that "the use of children's literature to teach children to read had a strong effect upon students' achievement and interest in reading--much greater than the traditional methods used to teach" (p. 65).

The Ohio Reading Recovery Program, specifically targeted at beginning readers who were failing, showed impressive results using a one-on-one whole language program that involved reading and writing. Tutoring was for thirty minutes a day and extended from twelve to twenty weeks. Ninety percent of the children whose pretest scores were in the lowest 20% of their class, caught up to their class average and "never need remediation again" (Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989; Weaver, 1986).

Another study by Larrick in 1987 targeted ESL children from New York City's west side. The Open Sesame program immersed 225

kindergarten children in children's literature and the language experience approach to reading and writing. All 225 children at years end could "read". The following year, all 350 first graders were reading English--60% on or above grade level (Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989).

Chomsky (1978) worked with five third grade middle-class children in suburban Boston who had failed to make any progress in reading since first grade. The children read books and listened to tape recorded stories based on a neurological impress method. At the end of the year, achievement test scores showed gains of 7.5 months in reading and 6.25 months in word knowledge.

A study by Ribowsky (1985) investigated the effects of a whole language kindergarten versus a code emphasis (phonics) kindergarten upon emergent literacy. Fifty-three children in two intact classes participated in the year long study. Results obtained from various evaluation measures revealed a significant positive difference in literacy behaviors for the whole language group.

Reutzel taught 63 children in first grade using a Whole Language program with 2,000 books and no basals or worksheets. The results of the Stanford Achievement Test in reading ranked the children in the 99th percentiles (Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989).

Tunnell employed a literature based reading/writing program with 28 fifth graders, eight of whom were reading disabled. The children made average gains of 1.1 grade on the SRA achievement test (Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989).

Studies on attitude toward reading also favored a literature-based approach. Cairney (1988) reported children's perceptions of the

purpose of basal reading activities by interviewing 178 Australian children. When the children were asked "Why read basals?" responses fell into the task related or learning to read category. When children were asked to make judgements about themselves and others as readers, children relied upon assessment of their decoding, vocabulary and accuracy of reading. Success in reading was related to the amount of reading they did. When judging others, children used the same criteria for themselves along with fluency, expression, and speed. They felt teachers judged them on nonreading criteria such as effort and finished work. When children were asked the purpose for worksheets, responses included learning to read better and for the teacher to test their reading. Overall, the results indicated that children did not see meaning as important when reading basals, and they did not find basals interesting. These negative perceptions of reading associated with basals raise concerns.

Another study by Rasinski and Deford (1985) explored first grade students' conceptions of reading and writing based on the type of reading program. The three classrooms were identified as being either a content-centered mastery learning program; a traditional, eclectic, basal reading approach; or a child-centered literature based approach. Children were asked two questions: What is reading? and What is writing? Using a scoring system of 1 to 7, with letter sound related answers being 1 and meaning related answers being 7, reading mean scores showed that children in the literature based group had a mean of 4.91; basal group 4.32; and mastery group, 3.45. For writing, the literature based group had a mean of 5.78; basal group, 5.16; and mastery group 3.91.

A revealing study by Watson and others (1984) studied two teachers who had diametrically opposing views of reading--one teacher had a whole language orientation; the other, a skills orientation to teaching reading. Each teacher adhered closely to their theoretical orientation toward reading and instruction was very different in these two classes. These findings verified the contention that basal and whole language teachers view reading and writing instruction differently, that the classroom environment is dissimilar and that the instructional methodologies are distinctive.

Two studies of first grade classrooms compared vocabulary development of students instructed in a traditional basal reading program with those in a whole language classroom. In the first study (Shapiro & Gunderson, 1988) the writing of 52 first grade children in two whole language classroom was collected and coded for vocabulary usage. This was then compared to the vocabulary of the district adopted first grade basal reader program. Findings indicated that high frequency vocabulary was nearly identical and that low frequency words were more current than the basals. Children's misspellings demonstrated an over-generalization of phonic principles.

Bridge, Winograd and Haley, (1983) studied first graders' sight word vocabulary by using predictable books and dictated language experience stories versus basal preprimers. Children using the preprimer learned fewer target words and none of the nontarget words, while the experimental group learned significantly more target and nontarget words. Children in the experimental group had also learned strategies for figuring out unfamiliar words. The children also had

different attitudes toward reading tasks, with the experiemental group having more positive feelings about reading.

At this time, no studies were found that favored basal instruction over whole language instruction. This has been a representative sample of studies that compare the two, including studies that used different ages and grades of children, that used different economic and language levels, and different reading abilities. Another group of studies examined the internal content of basals and the basal management system.

Content of Basals

In examining the content of basal readers, studies have raised questions about steroetyping (Conway & Mechler, 1983, Fried, 1982, and Moore, 1984), portrayal of the elderly (Kingston & Droller, 1981 and Serra & Lamb, 1985), narrative content of stories, (Flood & Lapp, 1987) including the form and format (Root, 1981), altering of stories (Goodman, 1988), language of stories, ie. controlled vocabulary, unnatural language patterns (Bridge, Winograd & Haley, 1983; Gonzales, 1980; Reutzel, 1986; Templeton, 1986) and characters portrayed as not being readers and/or writers (Green-Wilder & Kingston, 1986; Radencich, 1987).

Other studies have uncovered inconsistencies with the match between the presentation of skills, reinforcement of skills, and assessment of skills (Russell & Siera, 1988). A study by Flood and Lapp (1987) examined the types of writing in basal readers and assessment tests and found incongruencies in the writing patterns used. Another study by Combs and Campbell (1988) discovered that the

majority of the lessons presented skills using declarative knowledge

rather than procedural and conditional knowledge.

Ken Goodman (1986) outlined many of the ills of basals. Included

in his list of wrongs are that basals:

1. Put undue emphasis on isolated aspects of language:

    letters, letter-sound relationships, words, sentence

    fragments, or sentences.

2. Lead learners to put inverted value on the bits and pieces

    on language, and not enough on making sense of real, stories

    and expository passages.

3. Discourage risk-taking.

4. Arbitrary sequence of skills.

5. Isolate reading from its use and other language processes.

6. Create artificial language passages, artificial text by

    controlling vocabulary and applying readability formulas.

7. Minimize time children spend on reading because of skill

    exercises.

8. Make use of real literature by gearing it to skill

    development, rewriting it, or using excerpts.

9. Cost of basals leave limited funds for other reading materials.

In <u>Becoming</u> <u>a</u> <u>Nation</u> <u>of</u> <u>Readers</u>, a report on the state of reading

in the United States, while no method for teaching reading was

advocated, many claim the report supported phonics instruction and

gave whole language instruction mediocre reviews. Yet the comparison

of approaches was based on twenty year old data, the 1967 Bond and

Dykstra study. Grundin's reanalysis of this data concluded that those

approaches that came closest to being "whole language" produced the

best results of the various approaches compared (Weaver, 1986, p.

213). Regardless, the report cited some pretty staggering statistics

about current reading instruction. Children spend 70% of their

reading time doing skill-oriented seatwork, completing approximately

1,000 reading workbook pages and skill sheets during the course of a

year. Worse, only seven minutes a day is spent reading (Burchby,

1988; Cullinan, 1989; & Weaver, 1986). As one presenter "joked" at a

local IRA meeting, he has never yet seen a child go to the library and

ask to check out a workbook!

This concern with the state of current reading instruction has

given whole language renewed attention as a viable alternative because

of two developments:

> the documentation of constantly expanding requirements for greater
>
> levels of literacy and the concomitant reduced rather than
>
> increased attainment of reading skill by children in our schools,
>
> and current research that has caused a fundamental shift of
>
> emphasis from content or product to process in the area of language
>
> and literacy learning (Ribokowski, 1985, p. 4).

Summary

The role of the classroom teacher is marked by conservatism,

traditionalism, and presentism (Lortie, 1975). The way in which the

teacher is socialized into the school culture encourages conformity.

The social structure of the school fosters isolation, autonomy, and

individualism. The complexities of the classroom day are resolved

through textbook management. A parallel is the structure of the basal

reading program. This complete management system provides a tool for

handling the varied demands of the classroom. The basal is also marked by traditionalism and conservatism. When the teacher and the basal intertwine, a curious thing happens. Shannon (1989) referred to this phenomena as reification, rationalization, and alienation. Instead of the teacher being in control of the learning process of her students, she abdicates control to a higher authority, a textbook company. Reading instruction becomes the "exchange between the basal materials that claim to have the power to teach and the students who are to absorb that instruction" (Shannon, 1989, p. 53). The teacher is the activities manager, making sure the parts run smoothly, maintaining order, and monitoring students' progress. Is it any wonder that teachers complain of routine, boredom and burnout! "Too many teachers are themselves not empowered but dependent on others for what they do . . . slavishly following curriculum materials, which . . . deny [their] intelligence and their roles as conceptualizers, planners, and implementors" (Fagen, 1989, p. 574).

Whole language may be the key for empowering teachers and restructuring their role in the classroom. Fagen (1989) characterized empowerment "as a positive force and literacy is the medium" (p. 572). With respect to literacy, "teachers can use their powers to inspire children, to help them develop competency in reading and writing, and to understand the role of reading and writing in their lives" (Fagen, 1989, p. 572). Fitzclarence and Giroux (1984) referred to this as the "concept of really useful knowledge" and emphasize the need to work on the experiences that students bring to school with them.

If the rewards in the classroom are related to student learning (Lortie, 1975), then empowering students and teachers should enhance

the reward structure and provide increased satisfaction for teachers as they reclaim their classrooms for meaningful learning. Whole language instruction has generated excitement among teachers as it empowers them to take control of the learning environment and work with children in the most effective way possible. This transcends reading as an issue, instead viewing the whole spectrum of how children learn, the nature of language, and using language as a tool for all learning. As one teacher explained:

> What allows this type of learning to happen? I trust the children in ways I never would have trusted them in the past. I believe they have valuable things to share with their peers and me. I believe that we can all learn from each other and that we are all teachers. I believe that they have a right and a responsibility to collaborate on their learning. They must have a lot of ownership in their choices, so that there is time to solve problems, time to share and time to reflect on their learning. (Reimer & Warshow, 1989, p. 606)

The whole language environment is characterized by trust, security, and interaction (Rich, 1985, p. 723). These are the same factors that facilitate change for teachers. Cullinan (1989) believed that "we are witnessing a rebirth of energy and a determination to do something" (p. 112). Teachers are communicating with peers to stimulate their growth, studying their classroom as they reflect upon their teaching behaviors, and are determined to make a difference in children's lives (Cullinan, 1989).

As a reading methodology, whole language embraces the process of learning and the active role of the learner. It frees the teacher

from the traditional role of dispenser of knowledge and enables her to meet the diverse needs of the children in her classroom. The change in the reading paradigm has dictated a change in role for the teacher. Will our classroom teachers accept the challenge? "Traditional instruction is a positively organized strategy to deal with the classroom situation, and it is perceived as having strong positive benefits. Innovation, of course, offers benefits, but these must compete with the benefits offered by traditional instruction" (House, 1974, p. 81).

One teacher summarized the challenges of whole language:

This type of a curriculum stance has its tension points for a teacher, though. It is not a neat, tidy, curriculum package one can buy and follow. It requires a great deal of my energy on a day to day basis and it is not easy to provide the day to day documentation of growth that parents and administrators like to see. But at the same time, it's rewarding. (Reimer & Warshow, 1989, p. 598)

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The major difference between quantitative and qualitative

research is the mode in which the study occurs rather than the actual

phenomenon being studied (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Scientific or

quantitative research studies have been geared toward the search for

causality, universal laws, and prediction and control (Stainback &

Stainback, 1987). Qualitative research seeks a holistic understanding

of the event/situation/phenomena. Patton contrasts the two (cited in

Rist, 1982):

This holistic approach assumes that the whole is greater than

the sum of its parts; it also assumes that a description and

understanding of a program's context is essential for understanding

the program. Thus, it is insufficient simply to study and measure

the parts of a situation by gathering data about isolated

variables, scales, or dimensions. In contrast to experimental

designs which manipulate and measure the relationships among a few

carefully selected and narrowly defined variables, the holistic

approach to research design is open to gathering data on any number

of aspects on the setting under study in order to put together a

complete picture of the social dynamic of a particular situation or

program (p. 441).

Qualitative research studies "people where they are and as they go about their normal routines." It asks "what is going on here" and looks for answers through observation in the naturalistic setting (Rist, 1982, p. 442).

In deciding to use a case study design for this research, the rationale came from Bromley who wrote that case studies, by definition,

get as close to the subject of interest as they possible can, partly by means of direct observation in natural setting, partly by their access to subjective factors (thoughts, feeling, and desires), whereas experiments and surveys often use convenient derivative data, e.g. test results, official records. Also, case-studies tend to spread the net for evidence widely, whereas experiments and surveys usually have a narrow focus. (Merriam, 1988, p. 29)

Other criteria to judge the appropriateness of a case study approach include: the outcome of an educational effort focuses on humanistic outcomes, observation would yield insight into the changes that have occurred; the uniqueness of the situation, to develop a better understanding of the dynamics of a program, interest in process and interpretation, and usefulness for studying educational innovations (Merriam, 1988, pp. 30-33).

The focus of this study was to study change in one first grade teacher, thus the case study method was an appropriate design to employ. Qualitative inquiry is inductive, focusing on the process, meaning, and understanding. The case study is a special case of qualitative research. Four essential properties of a qualitative

case study are particularistic, descriptive, heuristic, and inductive (Merriam, 1988, p.11).

Particularistic means that the study focuses on a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon. This study examines one first grade teacher who is involved in changing her traditional reading and writing instruction to a more holistic, literature based reading and writing approach.

Descriptive means the end product is a rich, "thick" description of the phenomena under study. The task of ethnography is to examine all the different levels on which an act can be analyzed by collecting and recording actions. Observation was the primary form of data collection. Field notes, audio-taping, and occasionally video-taping were kept each time the researcher visited the classroom to preserve the happenings of the classroom.

Inductive reasoning is a hallmark of qualitative research, and is designed to discover new relationships, concepts, and generate theory. (Merriam, 1988). "You are constructing a picture which takes shape as you collect and examine the parts" (Stainback & Stainback, 1988, p. 14).

Heuristic brings about the discovery of new meaning, extending the reader's experiences. "Previously unknown relationships and variables can be expected to emerge from case studies leading to a rethinking of the phenomenon being studied" (Merriam, 1988, p. 13). The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the multiple realities affecting the change process as experienced by one first grade teacher. By focusing on one teacher's involvement in change, insights into her thoughts, feeling and actions were gathered

as she began the transition from traditional reading instruction to a whole language reading and writing program.

Subject

The subject for the study was a first grade teacher who is in her fifth year of teaching. We met during the Spring semester of 1988 when she enrolled in the graduate reading program at Northeastern State University and enrolled in two of the graduate reading courses that I taught: Foundations of Reading Instruction and Foundations of Reading: Content Subjects.

She was looking for a better way to teach reading and was quite put out that nobody in her undergraduate program had talked about the Language Experience Approach (LEA), literature-based reading, and process writing. She was a very enthusiastic, interested student who had plenty to share and add to the class. In the fall of 1988, she enrolled in another graduate reading class, Reading Foundations for the Primary Grades and learned how to use LEA, big books, and process writing as alternatives to the basals for reading instruction. The class shared ideas of what they were currently doing in their classrooms and explored how to implement these alternative methods for teaching reading. Nancy became very excited and would report back each class meeting what she was changing and how her students were responding to what she was doing. She also had a student teacher that fall and they were sharing ideas and collaborating as was her entry year teacher who had also been exposed to many of these same ideas. Yet none of them had really seen them implemented--just talked about.

In the spring of 1988, when I was looking for a subject, Nancy volunteered. The only problem she claimed was that she was now using basals on an every other week basis. Since the focus of the study was to explore the change process, Nancy's situation as a teacher in transition from using traditional reading instruction to more holistic methods met the initial criteria for a subject. Because qualitative research is descriptive, inductive, and the researcher does not begin with preconceived ideas, Nancy became the subject for this study.

Nancy was unique as a subject because she had initiated change in the classroom. She was not pleased with what was happening in her classroom and had decided to go back to school to discover some alternatives for her reading program. She was in a traditional school where the reading curriculum is the basals. Interestingly enough, the year in which the study was conducted was the first year that her school district mandated basal unit and level tests be given and kept in a cumulative file for each child and passed from one teacher/grade to the next. Her principal had always been very supportive, giving the teachers much latitude to be professionals, as long as they did the required basal reading.

Setting

Anderson Elementary School is a middle-class, self-contained elementary school, grades kindergarten through six, with a transitional first grade program. The school is six years old in a rapidly growing suburban district. The school is fairly traditional in its approach to learning. The curriculum is based on the textbooks adopted and instruction consists of teachers lecturing and students

using textbooks and workbooks. There are approximately six teachers per grade, plus the specialty teachers for art, music, and physical education, and special education, learning disabilities, and reading. There is also a full time librarian and a nurse. Parents are an important component of the school, and parent volunteers are found assisting teachers in their classrooms and in the workrooms. A monthly newsletter published by the PTA is sent home to keep parents informed and involved in school events.

Nancy's classroom is in the first grade wing. The classrooms are large, carpeted, and brightly painted. Nancy had twenty children in her classroom this year. Originally, she had more but another first grade teacher, Becky, was hired a week after school started to alleviate overcrowded first grade classes. The children sat at desks arranged in clusters of six. There was ample space for the children to move about. The reading table was at the front of the room; another round work table was at the side. Nancy's room was warm and friendly, literally "littered with print" (Reutzel et al, 1987). A more complete description of the classroom environment is detailed in Chapter IV.

<div align="center">Data Collection Procedures</div>

Observation

The primary form of data collection was observation, appropriate to qualitative research. Participant observation falls on a continuum from nonparticipation and no involvement with the people or activities being studied to complete participation by the observer in the

setting. In between, there is passive participation, with minimal involvement by the researcher; moderate participation, where the researcher seeks a balance between being and insider and an outside; and active participation, where the researcher does what the other people are doing (Spradley, 1980).

For this case study, the researcher's role was limited to moderate participation. The focus of the study was the classroom teacher and her reading and writing instruction. As such, the researcher's job was to record the actions of the teacher as she worked with the students. While at first, my presence in the classroom was noticeable, I soon became just another member of the class, and when the children had questions or if the teacher was busy, they asked me. They also delighted in sharing their writing with me and would ask me to be their partner during DEAR time, Drop Everything and Read.

The participant observer has two purposes: "to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and to observe the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation" (Spradley, 1980, p. 54). The participant observer in order to acquire a "thick description" needs to have explicit awareness of all the things happening. The observer must approach the setting with a wide-angle lens, taking in as broad a spectrum as possible. Collecting observational data also requires that the researcher alternate between being an insider and an outsider, and often having both experiences simultaneously. Introspection is an important tool to understand new situations and enrich the data collected (Spradley, 1980).

To assist the researcher in recording the classroom events, field notes were taken, and the class was audio-taped and occasionally video-taped. Nancy's class was observed at least twice a week for the spring semester, February through May, during the morning when writing and reading instruction occurred. School started at 8:45. The children spent the first thirty minutes writing followed by author's chair where children shared their finished writing pieces with the rest of the class. Seatwork assignments were then explained to be completed while the teacher met with the reading groups. Lunch time was at 11:00. After lunch and recess, it was almost 12:00. In the afternoon the children did spelling, DEAR time, Math Their Way and the specialities. The school day ended around 3:15 when buses were called. It was possible to spend additional times in the classroom and occasionally I remained the whole day to observe the daily routine and to gain an additional perspective of classroom instruction.

Interviews

Interviewing is another means of obtaining data. In-depth interviewing is directed towards understanding perspectives of people's lives, experiences, or situations as they interpret it. A good interview is like holding "an interesting conversation. Ideas and perceptions are exchanged, information is shared, and participants come to know more about each other in the process" (Rist, 1982, p. 443).

Nancy and I visited together during her thirty minute lunch hour on the days I observed. We discussed what went on that morning, any problems or concerns that she was having, and what had transpired in my

absence. Occasionally, we saw each other on Wednesday nights after her class, and she would fill me in on what was going on at school, with the students, and if I could help her locate specific materials.

In addition to interviewing Nancy, interviews were conducted with the principal, Mr. Wood; her student teacher, Jane; her entry year teacher, Becky; and parents of her students who were volunteering in the classroom.

Document Analysis

Among the documents examined in this study were the following: teacher planbook, basal readers, other written resource materials used by the teacher, bulletin boards, samples of student work, test materials, teacher memorandums, and notes sent to and from the parents. These were used in conjunction with observation and interview data as additional information about the life of a first grade classroom teacher.

Data Analysis

Qualitative research employs a strategy of data analysis called triangulation. Triangulation uses various data sources and multiple methods to enhance the validity of research findings (Mathison, 1988,p. 13; Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 235). Triangulation establishes structural corroboration, which is "a process of gathering data or information and using it to establish links that eventually create a whole that is supported by the bits of evidence that constitute it" (Mathison, 1988, p. 13). Juxtapositioning what

was said with what was done provides a more accurate and holistic presentation and it allows the researcher to "throw a broader net" for evidence (Rist, 1982, p. 444).

Tape recordings of observations and interviews were transcribed in summary form with verbatim transcription of key portions. Data obtained from these sources and the field notes were analyzed for commonalities and differences verified. Patterns of behavior were identified and categorized with regard to the research questions initially posed at the beginning of this study. The four areas of focus on change were: motivation to change, the process of change, constraints and facilitators on change, and the effects of change. Data relating to each of the research questions is presented along with an indication of the relative emphasis apparent either through quantitative (frequency of occurrence) or qualitative (stated value or emotion shown) indices.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION OF THE CLASSROOM

AND DISCUSSION OF CHANGE

This chapter describes the change process that was being experienced by one first grade teacher as she progressed from a traditional reading program to a more holistic, integrated reading and writing approach. Knowledge of the teacher is provided as a framework for understanding the how and why of the changes that this teacher initiated in a traditional school setting. A description of the classroom environment and the literacy events that encompassed the reading and writing paints a picture of this first grade. Nancy is the initial focus of the chapter as her background is explored for characteristics that make her innovative and amenable to change. The daily routine of her first grade classroom and the instructional climate provide a sense of classroom life and a setting to examine transitions from traditional instruction to more holistic reading and writing instruction.

As Fullan states, "change is a process" and necessitates a change in beliefs, materials, and behaviors (1982, p. 41). For change to be understood, the multiple realities affecting change must also be considered. The factors that facilitate or inhibit change are integral to the multiple realities that impact upon this first grade teacher. The second part of this chapter examines the four areas of

change studied: motivation to change, the process of change, the constraints and facilitators of changing, and the effects of change.

Nancy's Background

Nancy did not start out wanting to be a teacher. She did not even major in education in college, at least not initially. She wanted to be a social worker. She had always enjoyed working with children, and many had commented to her that she had a gift for working with them. However, she was too sensitive and became personally involved with their problems. One of her college professors counseled her that if she still wanted to work with children, perhaps she should change her major from social work to education. She had never thought about being a teacher until then. Other events intervened that caused her to drop out of school her sophomore year. However, when she returned to school a few years later after moving to Tulsa, she majored in education.

She remembered being an average student in school, but "feeling very stupid, having a hard time." The only teacher that stood out in her memory was her sixth grade teacher, a man who "always made me feel very special. He seemed to know that I was having a hard time and he singled me out to run errands, I was the 'teacher's pet.' From him I learned that it is important to me to make sure my 'kids feel special about themselves.'" (interview 5/15—all interviews were conducted in 1989)

Undergraduate Preparation

Her undergraduate training in teacher education included one reading course, taken her first semester in education at Langston

University. When the teacher talked about language experience, "it didn't click." The language experience approach uses the children's own language and experiences to serve as the reading text. With the teacher's guidance, the children compose a story about a meaningful experience. The teacher records their words on chart paper and this becomes the reading text for the children to read. Disenchanted with much of her coursework, she switched universities. Her only other exposure to reading was in the language arts block taken at Northeastern State University. The focus of the coursework was traditional, with each of the language skills separated for study. One of the major assignments was to teach a lesson from a basal reader textbook. Students were graded on how well they taught the existing lesson from the teacher's manual to their classmates. (interview 5/15)

Nancy did her student teaching with the Union Public Schools in a first grade classroom. Her student teaching experience was very traditional. The Lippincott basal reader was used to teach reading, students were divided into three reading groups, and seatwork time was spent completing worksheets and dittos. The only new practice she encountered and adopted from her cooperating teacher was sixth grade partners. This teacher had paired up with a sixth grade teacher and the older children came down and read to the younger students on a weekly basis.

Moving Into Her Own Classroom

Nancy has taught for five years. Her first two years were at Boevers Elementary School, then she transferred to Anderson Elementary School. The first year she taught second grade, since then she has

taught first grade. She characterized her first school as being very traditional in their expectations, both for children and teachers. When she did creative writing with her first graders, everyone was shocked that first graders could write. They thought that first graders could only copy stories off the blackboard (handwriting). When she implemented sixth grade partners, it was considered a real innovation.

Nancy said of herself, "I've always been different. I've never been the typical teacher. I was the innovative one." (interview 5/15) She characterized herself in the following excerpt:

> One of the hardest things is to be different. Even though I like to be different, always have been different, other teachers don't know what to say or do with me. When I interviewed at Anderson, and the principal told me that everyone uses Workshop Way and would I use it. I was not familiar with it and said I would have to find out about it and that I would not promise anything. I use it, but very differently than the other teachers. I use it more like learning centers after children finish their work, rather than as their work. We use it on a limited basis and probably not at all how it is intended to be used. I did not like the rigidity of Workshop Way or the amount of homework that went with it for first graders. (interview 4/27)

Nancy's reading program was traditional. She divided the children into three reading groups according to ability. She used the prescribed basal series, first Lippincott then Riverside when it was adopted. She disliked Riverside and continued to use Lippincott for readiness and for teaching the skills. Since Lippincott was part of the kindergarten

program, it was acceptable to substitute it for Riverside's readiness program. She never particularly cared for the teacher's manual and relied on it occasionally to help in the planning of the lessons. She used a directed reading lesson format for presenting the lesson, spending prereading time on introducing vocabulary and having children use the words in a sentence. Then the children read the story in parts, first silently then orally. Nancy asked her own comprehension questions when they finished the story. She assigned most of the worksheets for seatwork while she met with the other reading groups. She was dissatisfied with how she did reading but that was how everyone else was doing it and she had no other models or ideas for making change.

Different or not, Nancy did not isolate herself from the other teachers. She was actively involved at her school. She was appointed head first grade teacher by the principal, a position she has held for the last two years. The head teacher is a coordinator position for each of the grades; first grade has six teachers. As head teacher, Nancy attended head teacher meetings, kept records, ordered materials, informed other first grade teachers of what went on at head teacher meetings, called first grade teacher meetings where special projects were planned, assigned duties, etc. Nancy had a student teacher the Fall semester of 1988 from Oklahoma State University and served on the entry year committee for the new first grade teacher. She was also on the district committee to rewrite first grade report cards.

The entry year program in Oklahoma pairs a first-time teacher with an experienced teacher to act as mentor during the school year. This cooperating teacher, along with the principal, and a

representative from the entry year teacher's university function as helpers, frequently observing in the classroom, meeting with the new teacher to assist her in having a successful first year, as well as recommending her for certification.)

Graduate School

Nancy realized as a teacher she was not meeting everyone's needs, only the high kids. Halfway through the letter books, which are part of Lippincott's readiness program, her children began to struggle with reading. "I knew something was wrong" but was not certain what to do about it. Nancy decided to return to school to work on her masters degree in reading to learn what she could do. "I started once before I got my first teaching job and I knew I was in over my head so I dropped out. Having experience really makes a difference. You know what you're looking for." (interview 5/15)

I met Nancy in the Spring of 1988, my first semester teaching at Northeastern State University and her first semester in graduate school. Nancy was very excited that there were some alternatives to basal reading instruction. The reading she did for class, coupled with the assignments that included doing a language experience story with a child or class and developing a themed unit that integrated reading and writing across the curriculum, presented to her some new ideas to try with her children. She was most excited about process writing and immediately started doing writing with her class, proudly bringing in examples of their work to share in class.

In the Fall Semester of 1988, Nancy enrolled in the primary reading class that I taught. We explored using big books and language

experience as alternative methods for teaching beginning reading. Big books are enlarged predictable picture books that utilize Don Holdaway's bedtime story paradigm as a model for teaching children to read. She was hooked! Another lesson that critiqued basal reading programs, reinforced for her their shortcomings. She expressed it as "things didn't flow. I was trying to make reading as real as possible but it still wasn't right." (interview 5/15)

Fall Reading Instruction

Based on the previous spring's coursework in reading, Nancy began the 1988-1989 school year with her first graders using a combination of basal and language experience. In lieu of Riverside's readiness basal Get Set, she used Lippincott's readiness basal which is a series of twenty-four letter booklets. Each booklet teaches children a letter of the alphabet in preparation for reading. The first thirteen letter books were covered in kindergarten. Nancy preferred Lippincott for a number of reasons including the continuity it provided from kindergarten to first grade; that Lippincott employs a number of different activities within each letter book such as cut and paste, listening, and simple stories to read; and that reading, writing, and listening are put together. (interview 8/24) The first thirteen letter books were reviewed and then the remaining letter books were taught. "We'd do a letter book, then language experience to extend the letter and make it concrete. We'd do cooking like "A" for applesauce and then write a language experience story. But things just weren't clicking." (interview 5/15)

Nancy spent the first two and a half months of school on the letter books, finishing in mid-November. Then, she would return to Riverside, the adopted basal reading series, beginning with the preprimers. This time, however, she decided to do things differently, based on the reading coursework she was taking. "I couldn't stand the thought of going back into the basals." (interview 8/24) She had the support and encouragement of the researcher, of her entry year teacher who was eager to try new things, and of her student teacher who was anxious to see theory put into practice. They brainstormed what to do next and decided to raid the library for picture books and easy to read books that they leveled from very easy to hard. The children, with teacher guidance, chose books to read and practiced reading the book by themselves, with a partner, with their sixth grade partner, with the teacher, until they felt confident to read the book aloud to the class. Nancy was also utilizing big books for reading instruction and continuing with language experience stories. (interview 8/24)

Classroom Environment

Nancy's classroom is literally littered with print. There is no blank wall space. Both bulletin boards are decorated; one bulletin board is used for Workshop Way, the other holds the Math Their Way calendar and related activities. Workshop Way is a structured, organizational system that allows for children to work independently on different tasks. Teachers view Workshop Way as a time management system that provides for individualization and self-paced work. Many teachers use it as a form of learning centers.

Math Their Way is an activity-centered mathematics program for primary children designed to develop mathematical ideas and concepts through the use of concrete materials that children explore and manipulate (Baratta-Lorton, 1976). The bulletin board is an integral part of teaching Math Their Way and displays the monthly calendar; the days of the week for doing addition and subtraction; the concepts of yesterday, today, tomorrow, odd, and even; weather; counting by 1's, 5's, 10's, and 100's, cups for place value; and patterning.

The door is decorated seasonally as is the children's artwork hanging from the ceiling by fishing line and clothespin hooks. As you enter her room, the wall on the right contains the Math Their Way bulletin board.

Next to the bulletin board is a chalkboard that is used for mystery words and a poster for author's club. Children join author's club when they write and share their first book. The remaining wall space illustrates money concepts with equivalence of pennies, nickles, dimes, and quarters. Also, a count down of school days went across the side wall and down the side of the door (part of Math Their Way). Above the chalkboard is the clock surrounded by giant crayons with their color names. In front of the chalkboard is the mystery word table that doubles as the listening center. A stuffed magician holds the daily mystery word on a 3 x 5 card. The chalkboard tray displays books for read aloud. A stuffed pillow rests next to the table. The read aloud chair is on the other side.

The front wall is dominated by the chalkboard. There is a little room on the front chalkboard for writing, however, for it displays a large apostrophe that contains examples of contraction words and a

large question mark that gives examples of questioning words. The board also reminds children of which bus they ride. A big hand with R and L signal right and left. A "b" in the shape of a bat and ball and a "d" with a dish and knife help alleviate confusion of these two letters. There are also number charts on the front wall with the different math combinations for 4-5-6-7-8-9, a map of the United States and "Rounding Up Rules," a teddy bear riding a rocking horse and lassoing the classroom rules. The rules are: Be kind to others, Be a good listener, Follow safety rules, Be a good and quiet worker, Do not bother other people's things.

Across the top of the front blackboard is a giant caterpillar with each of the children's picture and the words "We all pull together." The alphabet is above that. The computer is located in the left front corner. A growth chart is beside that. Children are measured three times a year, in the fall, after Christmas, and at the end of the school year. An "All about Me" area spotlights each student with photographs they bring from home. The reading table is also at the front of the room. Nancy's desk is in the right front corner.

A back door leads to the sixth grade hall and to the bathrooms that are right around the corner. On the third wall is the Workshop Way bulletin board, the background is changed monthly, and a new activity or two is added or deleted. Helping Hands, a large caterpillar that outlines the classroom duties, is changed weekly; panda bears with punctuation marks on their tummies hold balloons with the name of the punctuation; and a big "ck" displays examples of "ck" words. Multiple bookshelves hold Math Their Way materials, books, Workshop Way activities, and writing paper. A round table with chairs

provides another work area and also holds part of the Workshop Way activities. The reading corner is nestled in the back corner amid more bookcases. A wicker chair, several large pillows, and lots of books make for an inviting corner. A Cookie Monster cut out that says he likes to read doubles as a sign up sheet for children who want to share their book with the whole class during story time. During DEAR time, Drop Everything and Read, children may choose their own place to read, either on the floor, on the chair, on a pillow, at another table, or remain at their desk.

The back wall is a double wall. The very back wall is storage and cubbies. In front of that is a wall unit with a sink, drinking fountain, and cupboards for additional storage. The large cupboard door lists the months. Other cupboard cabinets display examples of phonic rules such as long a or e. Large size vowels are displayed across the top cupboard cabinets. A large listening ear is on another cupboard wall and when a child accumulates ten listening ears, his/her name is added or starred.

Children's desks are arranged in groups of five or six. Each child's desk has his/her name and a number line is provided across desks for the group. During the spring semester that I observed, seat assignments stayed pretty consistent with changes made when two new children joined the class and a switch of desks when one little boy complained about being surrounded by girls. See Figure 1 for a diagram of the classroom. In May, the Math Their Way calendar and counting tape came down because "the children were bored with it and it had outgrown its usefulness." It was replaced by a bulletin board on seeds and letter writing which was a first grade project that all

Computer

Blackboard

Reading Table

Teacher's Desk

Blackboard

Bookshelves

Bulletin Board

Bookshelves

Work Table

Student's Desks

Listening Center

Bulletin Board

Reading Corner

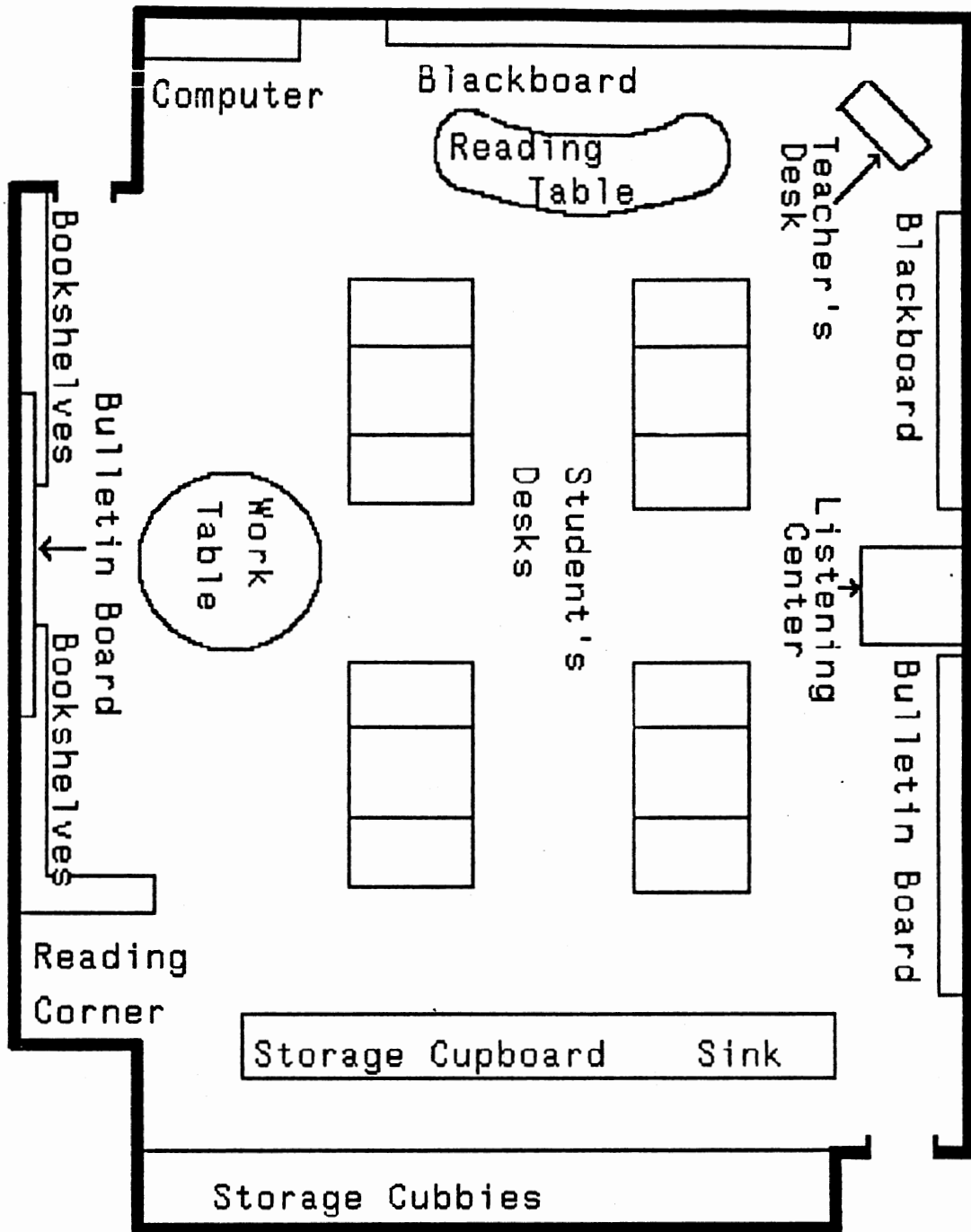Storage Cupboard   Sink

Storage Cubbies

Figure 1.   Classroom Arrangement

the first grades participated in with secret pen pals.   Even the hall

outside the classroom is decorated. The outside hall entitled

"Digging Up Books" has a dinosaur motif and as the children read a

book, a bone is added with their name and the name of the book read.

Daily Routine

The morning was devoted to writing and reading. After lunch, the

children did spelling, DEAR time, math, reading aloud, and the

specialties: art, music, and physical education. Special projects

were also done in the afternoons. If more time was needed from the

morning activities, the afternoon was utilized. I observed two

mornings a week during the "formal writing and reading times" from

February until the end of May. I often stayed through lunch to

observe spelling and DEAR time. Occasionally, as my schedule

permitted, I stayed for the whole day to obtain a better understanding

of the school day's activities. The school day was from 8:45 to 3:15.

I observed four standardized morning routines throughout the

course of my study. They day began with writing. Author's chair

brought clozure to writing time and allowed children to share

finished pieces of writing. The children then did mystery word, the

daily sight word activity. This provided a transition into seatwork

assignments which preceded reading group time.

Writing

As the children entered the classroom in the morning, they

immediately started to write. They wrote from 8:45 to 9:30. Writing

consisted of drawing pictures and writing on specially designed

writing paper that Nancy had made. The paper was blank at the top

with lines at the bottom for writing. Children could choose single

pages and later add a construction paper cover to make their book or

they could start with a ready-made book (cereal box covered with

construction paper and writing pages bradded in).

During writing time, the room hummed with activity. Nancy

conferenced with children who were stuck, who wanted teacher advice,

and who were finished. Final conferencing included having the child

read his/her story and helping with the mechanics of spelling,

punctuation, and capitalization that the child corrected. A cover was

added and the final book stapled together, if needed. Children also

conferenced with one another, checking to see what others were writing

about and often asking for assistance with drawing or spelling. As

the semester progressed, children collaborated on stories and wrote

stories at home to share at school. One day when I arrived, I noticed

"signs" on children's chairs that read: "I'm working come back later,"

"Working do not disturb," "I'm working please come back later," or "I'm

work come back later and you can't bore any of my soof," and "I'm

working please do desterb." I wondered about this and later when I

commented about the signs to Nancy, she showed me hers, "I'm writing

come back later." She had made it a few days before to try to finish

up some reports. (interview 5/10)

Around 9:15, those children who were ready to share a piece of

writing participated in author's chair. For author's chair, the

children gathered on the floor to listen and the "author" sat on the

reading table. The author also dispensed a listening ear to the best

listener. After reading one's book, the child joined the author's

club or added another star by his/her name for sharing. At another time, the child would share his/her writing with the class across the hall, providing another audience for their stories. Children were very attentive to each other's stories and freely borrowed ideas seen and heard during author's chair.

Children's books were on display in the reading corner and the library had a special section for their books. Later in the year, the librarian showed them how to make check out cards for their books and a library card for the card catalog. Once a month, children were asked to bring back favorite books written to reshare with one another. A class book of each child's favorite story was compiled as an end of year souvenir. Writing was indeed their favorite time and could have continued throughout the morning. As Nancy said, "We could have spent the entire morning writing, I never dreamed they would still want to write all year." (interview 5/19)

Seatwork

Following writing, children were directed to the mystery word which were the sight words that needed to be learned. A stuffed magician held the mystery word for the day on a 3 x 5 index card. Later, the word would be added to the chalkboard list. The teacher asked who knew the mystery word and could they use it in a sentence. Many sentences were elicited and one was written on the board. On 3 x 5 index cards, children copied the word and sentence, either the one on the board or their own; after spring break, children made up their own sentences. A picture was drawn on the other side. Each child had a file box with alphabet dividers, and the card was filed under the

correct letter. I often noticed children going back to their file box to find out how to spell a word, or if they asked, someone would remind them that it was a mystery word and then they would either look on the board or in their box.

One of the Workshop Way activities was "mystery word", and the worksheet provided the child practice with writing the word, by tracing, using configuration clues, and then writing the word in the key sentence (cloze). Another whole class activity done with the mystery words was "Around the World." This was similar to a spelldown only with sight words. Children competed with each other to be the first to say the words correctly, then went to the board and spelled the words correctly. Children had the option to compete or observe. During the middle of March, Nancy had parent volunteers check the students' progress by "testing" the children individually over the list of mystery words.

Next came the assigning of seatwork to be completed while Nancy met with the reading groups. The seatwork varied depending on what the children were doing during reading group time and their facility with the activity. Usually there were two to three worksheets to be completed. The repertoire included: alphabetizing their six spelling words (as children got better at this it was dropped); infrequently a workbook page from their phonics book, or a math workbook page; often a teacher made page to practice a skill, such as capitalization and punctuation using story related sentences; a writing page when doing content language experience or after teaching a mini phonics lesson; and a commercial "puzzle " page of 6-8 sight words (mystery words) which was a cloze activity to reinforce using context to predict an

unknown word. The strategy for completing the worksheet was to read the sentence, say blank for the missing word, decide what word makes sense, look at the choices, then check the choice by counting the boxes for length of word.

A little later in the semester, the children got writing tablets and used them for part of their seatwork assignment, especially to practice copying work from the board. These exercises became very structured and the children were required to follow a certain format that included: where to put their name, "Today is" and the date, the directions, and then complete the exercise. A frequent exercise consisted of adding ed or ing to words.

In May, during the letter writing unit, one of the seatwork assignments was to work on secret pen pal letters, either recopying their first letter with the errors corrected, or finishing a rough draft of their letter. Correct spelling, punctuation, and coherence was stressed since another child would be reading their letter.

Skill (phonics) teaching was usually done as a whole class mini-lesson before the reading groups met. Nancy would model the new skill, examples were given, children gave examples, and then the children would do a guided practice with Nancy, usually orally, with examples from their Lippincott basal or with examples on the board. For follow up, Nancy had them complete exercises from the chalkboard, copying and completing the work in their writing tablets, playing "games" as a teacher-directed class activity, and consistently pointing out examples during reading group time.

An example of a mini-lesson was the introduction of compound words. Nancy first directed the children to a page in their

Lippincott reading book that listed compound words. Then using the overhead, she presented the following lesson about compound words:

"Compound words are taking two words and putting them together. If you are reading and come to a long word it is scary. Why?" Children responded don't know what the word is and it is long. "One strategy is to see if this long word is made up of two words you might already know. (Writes cupcake on overhead). What are the two words. Right, cup and cake. If you put them together it is not the same meaning. You had a cup and a cake, now you have a cupcake. (Writes drainpipe). Water runs down the _____." Children responded with drainpipe. "Right. What are the two words? (covers up pipe then drain). Right, drain and pipe." Examples continued with weekend, sunshine, rainstorm, horseback, popcorn. First, she gave a sentence and the children filled in the compound word that made sense. Then she asked the children to identify the two words, then to use the compound word in a sentence. Next, she directed their attention to their book, p. 11. "I'm going to say a sentence and leave out a word. Find the word that will fit. The little green _____ is jumping." Children yelled out grasshopper. "That's right. Find the word on the page. Yes, it is in the last row, first word. What are the two words? Right, grass and hopper." She continued with handlebars, seashells, herself, and baseball. Each time, she gave a sentence with the compound word left out. The children decided on the missing word using their books and located the word on the page, and told what two words made up the new compound word. "Put away your books. I'm going to ask you some

questions." Mitch interrupted with the word cakecup and said it doesn't make sense. Nancy picked up on this and agreed that cakecup doesn't make sense. She asked the class, "what would you do if you were reading and came to 'cupcake' and read it as cakecup. Ask yourself does this make sense? Then what should you do?" Some children said sound it out. "What else could you do?" She answered her question, "give the word another look." She then reviewed with the children what they had just studied. "Compound words. What does it mean? That's right. Taking two words and putting them together to make a new word." To illustrate why sounding out doesn't always work, and to finish the lesson on compound words, she wrote the word blindfold on the overhead and this sentence: He was wearing a blindfold. "If you come to this word while reading, it's a long word, what would you do? You don't know it. You read the sentence, but can't sound this word out. Why not? Blind and fold are both mystery words because even though there is only one vowel it says its name. What do you know about one vowel in a word. That's right, it's short. It doesn't make sense to say blind fold (with short vowel sounds). You can't always use sounding out. You need to look at the word in the sentence. You need to make sure it makes sense." (lesson 4/20)

The next time I observed, Nancy gave the children word cards, told them to find their partner that would make a compound word and then make up a sentence for their compound word. As the children matched up and presented their word, she stressed the strategy for figuring out a compound word, looking for two words put together that make a longer word.

Other skill lessons that were observed followed a similar format in presentation. Skill lessons included: long _e_ with a review of short _e_, long _i_, adding _ed_, adding _ing_, nouns or naming words, verbs or action words, and adjectives or describing words. In presenting the skill lessons, Nancy referred the children to their Lippincott basal that she had nicknamed their "kitty cat" book. The Lippincott basal contains the skill lessons within the context of the reader, rather than as a separate workbook lesson and followed with a story that applied the skill taught.

Reading

Around 10:00, reading groups began. Initially, when I approached Nancy about observing her class and using her for my dissertation project because she was making the transition to whole language, she said that she had gone to an every other week schedule, alternating basals with whole language kinds of activities. Over the course of the semester I observed only one basal reading lesson from Riverside and several "testing" times when children were tested over unit and level tests. In retrospect, Nancy admitted that she actually used Riverside three times the whole year. However, when I approached her she was vacillating about what to do next in her reading program and felt pressured to use the basals and had temporarily decided on an every other week compromise. Her dissatisfaction with the basal readers and my presence in the classroom served to strengthen her resolve to utilize other methods and materials for reading.

Testing became a big issue and a headache during the last few months of school. In March, a week was devoted to achievement tests.

This year the school had changed to the MAT-6. Previously, they had used SRA. There was added concern about this year's first grade achievement testing because the school district had been using the wrong test and inappropriate norms. Children had been scoring above the average because of this mistake. The teachers were also required to give the Gates MacGinitie posttest in the spring. The pretest had been administered in the fall.

Nancy discovered at a district meeting in March, she was way behind in giving the Riverside unit and level tests. There were eighteeen unit tests and six level tests that had to be completed before the end of the school year. This was the first year that the testing had been mandated by the district. While she had sporadically given the first unit and level tests, as she became more involved in whole language kinds of reading activities, she had sloughed aside the tests and had not thought about them until they were brought up in a meeting. She worried and fretted about the amount of testing she was required to do and then became even more concerned about how her children would perform based on the knowledge that she had not specifically covered all the worksheets or skills that were tested. Her children did better than she expected which began to alleviate some of the stress she was feeling as the school year ended. The majority of the children passed the majority of the tests.

Nancy's concern over the amount of testing was based on her knowledge that these tests were not a valid measure of her children's reading and writing ability nor did they indicate how her children felt about themselves as readers and writers--their attitude about reading and their self concept. After completing the primary child

reading course and the class in tests and measurements, she was acutely aware of the tests' faults and that they did not accurately assess children's abilities.

Formal reading group time ran an hour, from 10:00 to 11:00. Nancy met with small groups of children at the reading table. Groups were determined either by seating tables or by interest groups, except for the one time that a basal reading lesson was done. Then children were ability grouped.

I observed three different kinds of reading lessons. One of the first times I observed, Nancy did a reading lesson from the basal. After that, reading instruction consisted of an alternating pattern, using big books one week, and content language experience the next week. Testing and skill lessons were incorporated into the big book week. The children loved the content language experience lessons and when the week of use was up they were disappointed and could hardly wait until they could do it again. The book cart went across the hall to Becky, the other first grade teacher doing whole language. The two teachers alternated big book and content language experience.

Basal Reading Lesson

The only basal reading lesson that was witnessed occurred shortly after observations began in February. A skill lesson over the long sound of e preceded group reading time. Seatwork that day included choosing a long e word and drawing a picture to illustrate the word, a math worksheet, choosing three of your six spelling words and writing a sentence for each, and by groups going to the listening center and completing a worksheet on following directions. Nancy had the purple

group go to listening first, and she met with the green group at the reading table. The story was "Who is Wendall?" from Riverside's Spotlight, the first story in preprimer 2. When she finished with this group, she met with the purple group, her top reading group. They read the story "The Big Little Bear" from Dive In, the primer. She ran out of time before she could call the third group, and planned to meet with them that afternoon, while the other children finished the worksheets and the listening center.

An interesting incident took place during purple group's reading time. Jessica commented that since we're in the "top" book does that mean we're the smartest? Nancy was taken aback by the remark and brushed it aside. Later, Nancy commented to me that she disliked using basals for that very reason. The children knew what group they were in and reacted accordingly.

The following transpired during the basal reading lesson that day:

The green group met at the reading table with their basals. Nancy had them turn to page 7, the first story, "Who Is Wendall?" She directed them to look at the pictures on the first page and the title. "Why do you think the children have the name Wendall on their shirt button and hat?" They proceeded through the rest of the story looking at the pictures and making predictions. "Look at page 10. Where are the children? On the last page the robot has a button. What is he doing with the button?" After previewing the story and making predictions about the story, Nancy had them go back to page 6 and look at the vocabulary words. The children took turns reading the sentences aloud.

Nancy asked them, "What kind of sentence is number two. That's right, a sentence that asks a question." She then had them read pages 7, 8, and 9 silently. When they finished reading, they went back to page 7 and discussed the story. Nancy asked five questions about the story (not using the teacher's manual). The children then read pages 10, 11. and 12 silently. When they finished, Nancy asked five more questions, two of them open-ended questions: "Do you think robots can really do these things? If you had a robot what would you like it to do?" She then gave the children a worksheet to complete. The worksheet was open-ended and asked "What would you like your robot to do?" and then directed the children to draw a picture.

She then met with the purple group. She had the children open to the story and look at the title. "Why is it called 'The Big Little Bear?' Look at the expression on the bear's face." She and the children went through the story looking at the pictures and making predictions and/or responding to the teacher's questions such as "Is Mom mad or shocked? What's happening in the picture? or Is this story fiction or non-fiction?" She directed them back to the beginning of the story and the vocabulary page. Together the children quickly went over the new words. She set a purpose for them to read, "Why does the bear want to be big?" and assigned them the entire story to read, pages 9-18. When they finished reading, they discussed the story briefly and answered the purpose setting question. She then reviewed what action words are, and the children went back through the story finding the action words. The worksheet assignment was to find and list the

action words in the story and then to respond to "What are some

things you like to do?" They wrote and then illustrated what

they like to do. (lesson 2/24)

Nancy's behavior and expectations with both groups was similar.

Since I was familiar with the level of stories, I was able to figure

out which group she was working with. Purposefully, Nancy tried not

to make a distinction between ability groups.

Content Language Experience

In preparation for the content language experience lessons, Nancy

had gone to the library and had checked out a variety of books on a

number of different subjects. Topics included geography, space,

famous people, transportation, sports, wild animals, weather, farm

animals, and dinosaurs. Four to five topics were chosen each time for

study so that the groups would be manageable. Children chose which

topic they wanted to study for the week. After sign up on Monday, the

children chose a book and started reading or looking at the pictures,

then they informally shared with each other. Groups met either on

Tuesday and Thursday or Wednesday and Friday with the teacher. On the

following Monday, the groups shared with the class what they had

learned, reading their language experience charts and their books

compiled from their writing pages. During the week of study, the

children read a number of different books about their topic. Books

were checked out to be read and shared at home. Children often came

to group time with their information already written out to share.

An example of a content language experience lesson with one group

followed this pattern:

The group met at the reading table with books and notes in hand. If this was the second meeting of the group, they would first read each other's writing pages and then as a group reread what they had written the day before. Then Nancy would ask, "Who wants to share first?" The child would read and/or tell what he had learned from his book. Then Nancy would ask, "What do you want me to write?" She encouraged the children to paraphrase and summarize what they had said, and assisted them in this process. The agreed upon sentence was then written on the large butcher block paper. Groups chose the color of paper and marker that Nancy wrote with. Each contribution was numbered. After the sentence was written, the group reread it. Each child's contribution was accepted, exclaimed over, written, and read.   · After everyone had shared, the chart story was again reread. As Nancy was writing, she asked, "How do I start this sentence? How do I end this sentence?" If special punctuation was needed within the sentence, that also was pointed out. For example, the comma between city and state, and using commas between a series of items became a quick minilesson on comma usage. Nancy was ever alert to the teachable moment. Often, after studying a particular skill, children were asked to find examples in the writing, such as compound words, contractions, long i or e words, action words, and naming words.

The language experience content activity was changed slightly in May. Each child's contribution was written separately on construction paper. After the group met, the child illustrated his information, then the pages for the group were bound with a title and author's page,

cover and back illustrations. Nancy made the innovation because she wanted to reinforce the concept of book, that the children's information constituted a book of knowledge about their subject. She had utilized a similar format for her part of the Oklahoma unit and the children had delighted in taking their book back to their classrooms to share.

Shared Book Experience

When the cart of library books went across the hall, the class did a big book. Because they had somewhat limited access to big books, Nancy had parent volunteers make some big books for classroom use. She also borrowed big books from the transitional first grade teacher and from the researcher. During the big book lesson, Nancy helped children develop and refine reading strategies using prediction, choral reading, and encouraged critical thinking skills as children predicted and discussed the story afterwards. She again capitalized on the opportunity to reinforce phonics skills that had been previously taught, such as long e words, ing words, compound words.

After reading the story and discussing it, Nancy usually had a worksheet for the children to do based on the story and reinforcing a skill learned. For example, with Mrs. Wishy-Washy, the worksheet asked four comprehension questions about the story. Another worksheet had sentences from the story with capital letter and end punctuation missing that the chidren were to correct. The worksheet for Just This Once asked the children to list all the places that the hippopotamus tried to get into.

For vocabulary, six words from the story were listed and the children had to fill in the sentence with the missing word. After reading I Was Walking Down the Road, the children were asked to name as many of the eleven animals as they could remember and to find the action words in the sentences on the worksheet. For The Menagerie, the worksheet had the children identify the describing words and then describe and/or draw their own nightmare.

One time, she tried innovations with Just This Once. The children were given the choice of working together or alone. Each child or pair was given the story in booklet form. Missing was the name of the character, the animal, the places they went, and the noise they made. The children also illustrated their story.

For big book lessons, children were called up by tables, with some overlap, so that the lesson was repeated three times. When I queried Nancy about repeating the lesson three times, she responded that she had better attention and the children liked the small group interaction. When she tried it with the whole group, she felt like she lost their attention. However, by the time she got to the last table group, the children had heard the story and the ensuing discussion and knew what would happen in the story. One of the last times that Nancy did big books, she commented that she was going to have to change the procedure because it wasn't working out.

A big book lesson for The Menagerie began with the children looking at the cover of the book and the picture and trying to determine what the book was about. Some of the children decided the book was about zoo animals but then someone said pretend because in the picture the animals are smiling, one is wearing a

heart, so they probably were stuffed animals. "Let's look at the title, The Menagerie. What is a menagerie? That's right, wild animals." As she began reading the book, Nancy drew the children's attention to the pictures. They made predictions about who the characters are, the elf and the little boy. The children were very observant and came up with some good observations and predictions about the story. Nancy explained the two nonsense words in the story, gish and golly. She also pointed out the contraction on the first page. Nancy read a page and then the children read the page with her. They went on to the next page. "Is this a real tiger? Why not?" The children read with her. "What are the rhyming words on the page? Why do you think the book has this refrain: Now who believes that?" Children commented on whether or not they believed. "What words are repeated on every page?" Children answered by gish and by golly. "What are the rhyming words?" The children responded with bear, hair, chair. The different spelling of ear, and air were brought to the children's attention. "They still rhyme even though they're spelled differently." She next commented on the way she was reading. "Am I reading with expression? Let's reread this with better expression. Why do you think he's called an elephant king?" The children responded because he is wearing a crown and a purple robe. Nancy continued reading, stopping at the next rhyming word. The children filled in with sail rhymes with pail. There was plenty of discussion generated as the children became involved in the story. She then stopped to ask the children to remember the different animals mentioned in the story. The

different animals were named. "This page is different. The animals look angry. What does fiercely mean?" was asked after reading the page with that word on it. Children answered mad. As they finish the story, the children realized that the boy in the story had been dreaming. They liked the ending and talked about what you call a bad dream--a nightmare. (The scenerio was repeated with other two reading groups, with minor variations). (lesson 5/9)

The next day, Nancy continued with The Menagerie. The children were asked if they remembered the two nonsense words. They did, by gish and by golly. Nancy asked them to look for the describing words as they read the story. The children read the story aloud all the way through and then went back and found the describing words. Each page was reread and the describing words were identified. A worksheet that reinforced the activity on describing words was assigned for seatwork. Sentences from the story were written with the describing words missing. The children were to fill in the missing describing words for each animal. Then the children were to describe and draw their own nightmare on the back. (lesson 5/10)

The story was continued for one more day. Again the children read through the story. Nancy then recorded each group of children reading the story aloud. She played the tape so that each group could hear themselves reading the story as they followed along in the book. (lesson 5/11)

Procedure for Reading Group Time

During group reading time, Nancy called each group to the front "reading table", a half moon shaped table at the front of the room. The table comfortably held five to seven children. While working with the reading group, the rest of the children were completing seat work and usually one group was at the listening center which required that the children listen to a tape, wearing headphones, and complete a worksheet over a comprehension skill such as following directions, sequencing, or prediction. Nancy tried to have a rotation set up so that the children did three different things during the reading hour--worksheets, listening, group, and if work done, Workshop Way. Some of the Workshop Way activities included: mystery word; SRA kit; math activities such as count by 3's, 5's, 10's; read a book; clean your desk; writing; and map activity.

For the most part, the children knew what was expected of them and also knew to ask each other for help. During change time, Nancy would ask/check on how things were going. Occasionally, children did interrupt her with a problem or a question and, occasionally, she would interrupt the reading group to make sure the other children were on task. She had a few problems with her two new students until they became acclimated to the routine.

By the middle of May, keeping the children on task presented more of a challenge. When they finished their seat work, they tended to visit with each other or listen in on the reading group. There were a lot of activities happening and the children were excited and less motivated to continue working independently. Nancy continued to

remain calm, reminding children of the work that needed to be done and helping strays get back on task, even though it meant interrupting the reading group. She commented that this was "typical end of year behavior. They're tired, I'm tired". (interview 5/16)

Afternoon Routine

After lunch was spelling time. She did not start spelling until after Christmas; this year she tried something new. The children chose their own spelling words using the Dolch sight word list and words from their writing. Nancy had the children partner up to test each other over their spelling words. Each child had six words and after spelling them correctly three days in a row, they would record the word spelled correctly and put it in the "out" envelope and then add new word(s) to their "in" envelope.

The children's routine was to come back from lunch, get their drinks, get out their spelling folders, find their partners and space to work in and get busy. Nancy worked around the room checking on students' progress. As the children finished up this activity they moved into DEAR time.

For Drop Everything and Read or DEAR time, children read for 20-25 minutes independently and then spent 5-10 minutes sharing their book with a partner. Once a week, the children went to the library during this time. Twice a week, children met with their sixth grade partners to read and often do some writing. Over the course of several meetings, each partnership contributed a page to a class book of What Am I? That became a favorite book to read during DEAR time,

and many versions sprang up during writing time, with children collaborating with one another.

Math time was next, usually lasting about thirty minutes. A fun culminating activity at the end of math time was "Math Around the World" which was a "math down" as children practiced their facts against each other. They also challenged Becky's class to biweekly contests, with the classes taking turns "winning." The children also enjoyed doing this with their sight/mystery words. The children always had the option of participating or not. Those that participated received "play money" for the class store; the winner and first runner up usually got a quarter and the rest, a dime.

Story time followed and the children again gathered together on the floor to hear a story read. To add a little excitement, Nancy had made signs advertising "Creole is Coming" before reading Creole to the class. During the dinosaur unit, different dinosaur books were read every day. Nancy usually chose books that could be read in one sitting. The books were then left on the chalk tray for children to read during DEAR time. A mini show and tell time accompanied story time.

Afterwards, children left for "specialty" of art, music, or physical education. They came back with just enough time to pick up and get ready to go home. Part of the end of the day ritual was to put homework and/or take home papers in their takehome folders and for the children to mark their behavior sheets by either circling a happy or sad face for the day. If they were doing content language experience, Nancy reminded them to take their book home to read. Otherwise, homework was kept to a minimum, and might be just what had

not gotten finished during the school day. Nancy felt very strongly that children not have a lot of homework, that they "need time to be kids."

Nancy did a number of special things with her class. Her class participated in the Pizza Hut Book It program and were the first class in the school to finish. The class celebrated with their families for an evening pizza party at Pizza Hut. Nancy also started sixth grade partners with her class during her second year at Anderson. This year all the first grade classes participated in the project.

As head first grade teacher, Nancy also planned shared first grade projects. For Christmas, each teacher designed a unit about a specific aspect of the holiday, and the classes rotated through the teachers. Another shared unit was done to celebrate the Oklahoma Land Run. Again, each teacher focused on a specific aspect and shared that with all the first graders. An end of year project was secret pen pals. As part of their letter writing unit, children were assigned pen pals from other first grades and did a weekly exchange of letters. This activity culminated in a first grade party with the children meeting their pen pals.

Nancy also made extensive use of the library. Her children not only went weekly to check out books, but the books they wrote were on display for other classes to read in the library. During the dinosaur unit, children made dioramas that were displayed in the library. A special project with the librarian was making library cards for the books the children wrote. Author, title, and subject cards were discussed and made for each child's book.

Motivation to Change

Motivation is a personal construct that influences our behavior. Motivation occurs on a continuum from extrinsic to intrinsic; with the most successful behaviors being intrinsically motivated (Zintz, 1975). Change has often been extrinsically motivated from top level administrators and as such has not been widely accepted or successful (Gross, et al, 1971; Smith & Keith, 1971). Only when change is desired, intrinsically motivated, is innovation possible. The more support there is for the change, the more likely that the intrinsically motivated behavior will continue.

Nancy was intrinsically motivated to investigate a better way to teach reading because of her strong commitment to children and the knowledge that her reading program was "only reaching the high kids." She was also dissatisfied with the traditional program, "I was bored and so were the kids. None of us were having any fun. When you dread reading time, imagine what the kids must feel." (interview 3/23)

All these feelings reinforced for her the necessity to return to school to learn some other ways to teach reading. She had tried graduate school once before, shortly after finishing her bachelor's degree, but she wasn't teaching yet, and found little relevance in the class she was taking. This time, as she experimented with new ways to teach reading from ideas shared in class, she noticed an incongruence within her teaching methods. She explained it as "things didn't flow together" that something "still wasn't right". In trying to meld the new ideas with her basal reading, she was reacting to the incompatibility of the two methods.

As she began to make changes, she commented that "it was such a relief, things began to fit together." She also noticed a change in her attitude about reading time and in the attitude of the children. They looked forward to reading time. As they began to see themselves as readers and to talk about what they were reading as well as the enthusiasm for writing they exhibited, Nancy's fears about whether they were missing something began to be dispelled. Because she was trying something new, she experienced qualms not only about her own expertise with whole language, but whether or not this approach to teach reading and writing would "click" for her children. In reading group time, she often took her cues from the children, letting the discussions follow naturally from the children's questions and what they were interested in. "They get so excited about learning." (interview 4/4)

Another motivator for Nancy was how she felt about children and that she had never seen herself as the typical teacher. "Very much I try to be myself with my kids. I don't pretend, they know who I am, a real person who makes mistakes." When she did make a mistake, she was glad they caught it, or if she noticed a mistake she had made, she would ask "Who is alert and can find the mistake I made?" We all make mistakes, she doesn't apologize or try to cover up. (interview 4/11)

Whole language is characterized by a philosophy of child-centeredness. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator or partner. For whole language to be effective, one must have this philosophy about teaching and children and not feel threatened by sharing the control. For Nancy a program that supports her philosophy about children is easily embraced. Her classroom is a community of

learners (Hansen, 1987); demonstrated by the way she bonds with the children. Holdaway (1989) stressed the importance of the teacher bonding with their class before learning can procede. The teacher must be able to be both visible, a model of discipline and control, showing competency and joy in the teaching practice; and invisible, transferring responsibility for learning to the children.

The classroom rules that are posted are indicative of the classroom climate that Nancy has established, one that is supportive and encourages risk-taking. During the period of observation, discipline was a private matter between teacher and student. Children were not belittled or threatened, names were not written on the board for misconduct, and no one was ever sent out into the hall or to the principal's office for misbehavior. Nancy's respect for the children was evident, and they returned her trust. She genuinely listened to them and responded to their needs. She knew her students and was both empathetic and supportive.

The children had much freedom and choice in her classroom. Except when giving group instruction, the children were allowed to move around the classroom, use the bathroom, confer with one another, and use others as resources as children collaborated on writing projects and paired up for spelling. There were many opportunities for children to make choices in the activities they did, including the use of Workshop Way. There was support and celebration for children's accomplishments. Nancy was sensitive to students' needs, their strengths and weaknesses. "Mitch is one of my proudest accomplishments. He can't hear sounds especially vowels, the old program was a disaster for him. When he used to write, it didn't make

any sense and he could not even tell you what he was trying to say. Now he writes 'well' as evidenced by his sharing of his book <u>Storm</u> this morning during author's chair." (interview 4/11)

Many times, Nancy reiterated that children were her motivation for doing "whole language." Having an entry year teacher across the hall who was enthusiastic about what Nancy was doing and who was anxious to implement similar kinds of activities in her classroom offered additional support and corroboration. Both teachers said they were support for each other and "I don't know whether I could have kept going without Becky/Nancy."

As a new graduate, Becky had been exposed to language experience, process writing, and using literature for reading instruction in her college classes. But the realities of the school, her experiences within the schools while observing and student teaching, had given her little opportunity to see what she had heard about. "My biggest problem was that I wasn't sure how to go about doing anything different." Consequently, she was trapped with "whatever you see you do" kind of feeling. Discovering that she and Nancy had similar philosophies about children and how to teach reading was not only exhillarating, but motivational. "It's one thing to hear/read about something, it's another to actually do it. Getting started was the hardest. It was a difficult first year in many respects, but I'm glad I did it with Nancy. I learned a lot, we are going to plan some units over the summer. I am also going to take some reading classes this summer." (interview with Becky 5/16) And she did!

Another supporter of whole language teaching was Jane, Nancy's student teacher during the Fall Semester of 1988. She had been exposed

to whole language in her college classes and was pleased to have a teacher interested in doing the kinds of things she had heard about. Jane became another collaborator in trying out new reading and writing ideas. She commented to me that she was so fortunate to have Nancy as her role model; otherwise, she would probably just have done traditional reading in her class. Having the exposure to this kind of classroom, "I wouldn't teach any other way." She liked the difference teaching this way made with the children. They get so excited about reading and you get so excited with them. (interview with Jane 5/22)

One of the critical factors that works against innovation is the isolation of teachers from each other. Classroom teachers are isolated from adults during their working hours. They endure professional loneliness, operating within the confines of the school culture (Duffy and Roehler, 1989; House, 1975; Lortie, 1975; Sarason, 1972). For change to occur, to be effective, communication is vital. In attempting something new or different, support is necessary as is feedback. Becky, Jane and Nancy provided each other support, feedback and coaching in their endeavors to implement whole language reading and writing.

While her principal did not always understand what Nancy was doing, he was supportive; pleased with what he saw when he came into her classroom. One of the comments that Nancy shared with the primary reading class (Fall, 1988) was that when her principal came in to observe, he could not tell which reading group was the high or low. He was extremely pleased over this, and as she visited with him, his own bias about grouping children became evident and how harmful labels

are for children. He actively went against district policy of homogeneously grouping children and departmentalizing instruction in the intermediate grades. He felt that teachers could do a better job of integrating their curriculum if they had the children all day. (interview with Mr. Wood 6/2)

As Mr. Wood became more interested in what Nancy was doing, he asked for materials to read about whole language which thrilled Nancy. Her efforts and his interest culminated in a major change for the next school year. He strongly urged teachers to include a writing component in their teaching day. For a principal that Nancy characterized as nondirective, with a laissez faire approach to teachers, this was a major step. This was the first time that Nancy could remember him interfering and asking teachers to change a part of their curriculum without it being district mandated. (interview 4/20)

There were a number of motivators that contributed to Nancy being an innovator at her school. First, was the kind of person that Nancy is. She is very child oriented and was bothered by the fact that children were struggling with reading and that the reading program was not meeting their needs. She has a strong sense of self-efficacy, that it is okay to be different. Mr. Wood characterized her as a teacher who has strong feeling about issues, who is not afraid to speak up and share what she is thinking. She also listens to other people's views and asks good questions. (interview with Mr. Wood 6/2) The principal supported her efforts and communicated this to her. Becky, Jane and Nancy became colleagues who worked together, exchanging ideas, offering support and feedback. The children's response to the classroom instruction pleased the parents. Parent

volunteers in the classsroom were able to observe firsthand the instruction that motivated their child to want to read and write. There have been a number of parental requests to have Nancy as their child's teacher. While the other first grade teachers, except for Becky, have been reticent, they have adopted sixth grade partners and have willingly participated in first grade projects.

Process of Change

Change is a multidimensional process. Nancy initiated change by stepping outside her immediate environment and searching for a different way to teach reading. This included going back to school which was a big step, especially with a new baby. She also began reading on her own to find out more about whole language. The recommended readings suggested in the reading courses became her starting point. She kept an open mind and tried things she heard, sharing what was happening in her classroom, which made her vulnerable, at-risk. As she shared with the other teachers in the primary reading class (Fall, 1988), they reciprocated. This particular group of teachers was responsive to trying new ideas in their classrooms; they eagerly shared what had transpired at each class meeting. They became a support group for each other, a medium for exchanging ideas about what worked and what didn't work and then brainstorming ways to do things differently next time. Nancy commented, "Now when I do things I ask myself questions, and when I read I approach reading with a questioning mind. And I have learned that it is one thing to read about an idea, but often quite another thing to try it. You just don't know 'til you do it." (interview 5/9)

In changing her classroom reading instruction, Nancy found that it was easiest to start with the writing. "The writing is easier because you are starting from scratch. It's all new. You don't have to replace or change anything, just do writing." (interview 8/24) Her writing program was very much a process approach where children learned to write by writing. Her ease in adopting the writing program first also substantiated the writing of Atwell (1987) and Hansen (1987). Their research with teachers initiating change found that teachers began with their writing program and then transferred the process writing approach to their reading program.

Based on the content of the two reading classes Nancy took in the Spring of 1988, she first started doing language experience and journal writing with her first graders. She gleaned what worked for her from her attempts in the spring, and revised her initial approach for beginning reading for the Fall, 1988, using Lippincott's letter books and language experience for her readiness program. By November, she was anxious to start the children writing. It helped having a student teacher that fall, because there were two of them to circulate and take dictation. The children encouraged each other and lead the way. "We went from writing a sentence for the children for each day's picture, to encouraging those who could to do their own writing, to the children writing their own books after Jessica brought in a book she had written at home over the holidays. Now, everyone wanted to write their own book and they did." (interview 5/19)

After Christmas, she started her spelling program. When that was smoothly in place, she turned her attention back to the reading. She had been using language experience, some big books, and had just

started using children's literature before Christmas break. She had

decided to use the basals on an alternating basis with either big

books or language experience.

> The plan was to maybe do two days of basals, then two days with
> language experience, then a day or two with big books. We were
> supposed to be using the basals and I really didn't want to get
> into trouble, and I wanted Becky to have the experience of using
> basals. But, I was really trying to figure out another way to do
> reading using literature. Becky and I kept racking out brain and
> thinking how else can we do reading. Finally, it hit me. Why not
> combine literature with language experience for reading. My
> mother was visiting and after school with her help, I checked out
> a cartload of books on different topics with a variety of types of
> books and levels of difficulty. (interview 3/2)

When I queried her about what she'll do differently next year,

she said,

> I'll keep the whole language things and do them again because they
> worked so well. I'm going to throw out the letter books and start
> the year with big books, probably Brown Bear first and teach
> letters and reading with language experience and big books. I'm
> also going to start my kids writing immediately. Math Their Way
> fits so well with the whole language philosophy and it is already
> in place. I can't believe how many of the teachers don't like it
> and the school paid for us to attend the workshop and bought all
> the materials. I also plan on doing more with reading and maybe
> try using literature circles. (interview 5/22)

How congruent are Nancy's beliefs and practices about reading? When she initially took the Reading Beliefs Inventory (RBI) (Combs and Yellin, 1985) in the Spring, 1988, while enrolled in the Foundations of Reading class, she rated herself as interactive. When she took the RBI again this spring, she scored within the whole language mode. She was very pleased that her responses were so strongly within whole language and does notice a difference in how she feels about her reading program and that there is now that flow.

> I'm a much happier teacher and the year has just flown by, I'd not
> do it [reading and writing] any other way. I hear the teachers in
> the lounge complaining how hard it is to get all their reading
> groups in and to cover all the materials and I feel very smug. My
> mornings are no longer pressured to meet with each group and to
> complete all the basals, workbooks, and worksheets. I know my
> kids are reading every day and that we're covering the skills.
> (interview 6/2)

Her children did well on the MAT-6 and surprised her on how well they did on the Riverside unit and level tests. She was feeling much more secure about her reading and writing program.

Nancy is cognizant of the skills that need to be taught and takes advantage of the teachable moment. The skills are basically the scope and sequence chart of Riverside's first grade manual and what is tested on the unit and level tests. The district does not have a curriculum guide, the textbooks are the curriculum. "I've been teaching the skills for four years and most of them are up here" (as she points to her head). Skills are still an area of uncertainty, and Nancy intends to continue handling them as mini-lessons and then

making sure she provides much practice for the children in using the skills in context. Becky found that particularly frustrating because her inexperience meant that she didn't have a "feel" for the skills or that intuitive knowledge of what the first grade skills should be. She and Nancy have agreed to meet over the summer to do some curriculum planning for the fall and make a list of what skills need to be taught. Change becomes more difficult when the administration feels that the textbooks embody the skills. However, this is congruent with Shannons's research that the basals are usually seen as the reading curriculum (1989).

Even though Nancy felt good about what she was doing, her fear of how her children would do on the achievement test manifested itself in many conversations we had. She expressed her fear, "What if my kids bomb the test, that will be the end of what I'm doing. Though the principal is supportive he won't let me change if my kids do poorly on those tests." (interview 4/20) Her fear that the kids might fail made it hard to rationalize not doing the basal. "What if it doesn't click together for them." (interview 3/24). Many times she commented on how she was scared and she was "putting herself at risk" and would question "Why am I doing this?" Part of the change process involves reexamining what we are doing and where do we go from here.

Nancy was very aware of the structure of the school system within which she must work. She knew that the children needed to be prepared to take tests and to cope in second grade. One of the tasks that will be required of them next year is to be able to copy work from the board. Another change will be in the classroom atmosphere; the children will be exposed to much more structure and discipline. While

this bothered her immensely, it is reality. Consequently, she spent time having the children do worksheets and some copy work from the board.

> I must work within the system. Some things that I do, I
> intentionally do. It is not part of what I believe but I need to
> get the kids ready for second grade and/or for the achievement
> tests. I know it is not beneficial for any kind of learning but I
> have to look at the whole picture and the kids have to be ready
> for taking those tests and for second grade. It's my way of
> accomodating being in a structured system. This is my first year
> that I am doing this and I am still feeling my way." (interview
> 5/23)

Nancy believed that she needs to work within the structure of the school system and while she felt very strongly about what she is doing, her concern for her children and making sure they will be able to cope with next year's situation forced her to accomodate herself to the system. Nancy expressed that she'd like to teach first grade for one more year, then maybe go to the transitional program. "The pressure is not there, no one is looking over your shoulder to tell you what to do or to make sure I've done all the tests." (interview 5/9)

After spring break, the stress of coping with the system, finishing her graduate class, and encouraging the principal to move ahead with his plans for writing were beginning to take their toll. Various disruptions within the school day, including my presence, certainly did not alleviate the pressure. Nancy indicated that the testing issue especially was causing her much consternation. She felt

that there were too many tests to give and that it was taking away from teaching time. Other faculty, both in her school, and district-wide, tended to agree with her. Even Mr. Wood was astounded at how much testing was done in first grade. The six different levels of basal readers comprising the first grade reading materials required that eighteen unit tests and six level tests be given. She was also operating under new guidelines, since this was the first year that the basal tests were being mandated. Each student now had a cumulative reading folder where scores for unit and level basal tests would be recorded and these folders would be passed from grade to grade. Level tests were to be included in the folders.

Hord et al (1987) in sharing what they had learned about change, concluded that to understand change, it must be recognized as a complex process. Change is accomplished at the individual level, and is a highly personalized experience. For Nancy, who initiated her own change, there was not even the luxury of grappling with a packaged program. The changes she brought to her reading program had to come from her and the ideas that she had garnered through her reading and in her graduate reading classes. Since she was the first to initiate such a change within her school, she had to convince her principal that this was a better way of doing reading and writing instruction. She also had to scrounge for different materials to use. The last few weeks in May, supplies were running low, and she had to deal with a paper shortage. She still had some of her original allocation left and Becky had enough paper to see them through. In some respects, Nancy applauded the paper shortage because teachers would have to ration the number of dittos they gave students.

With the concept of change as a process that takes time, the individual needs time to assimilate what she is doing, to reflect on what has been done and to plan how to continue. This was evident with Nancy as she reached what I would call a plateau. She had initiated so many changes in her curriculum this year that she needed time to evaluate what was happening, before she could progress further. She had taken a number of risks in deviating from the basal and finally making the decision not to use it at all. Because she was often feeling her way, once she found something that clicked, that the children enjoyed doing, she tended to stay with it. Consequently, her morning routine followed a set pattern. The children loved doing the content language experience lessons and Nancy made sure nothing interfered with that week's lesson. She did expand on the dinosaur topic, making it into a whole class unit of study, but this had been part of the themed unit that she had prepared and presented to the Spring, 1988 reading class. By following a set routine, she provided consistency for the children. They knew what was expected of them, what would happen in their day and when it would happen. They arrived at school ready to write and began writing in the mornings without teacher direction or admonishment. After lunch, the children prepared for spelling on their own initiative.

On the alternate week, when the book cart went to Becky, Nancy presented skill lessons, did testing, and used Big Books for group reading time. Her concern over materials superceded her concerns about methods of presentation. By May, she recognized that the way she was doing big books with the class was not effective and would need to be reevaluated and changed.

Constraints on Changing

There are numerous constraints on changing, both external to the teacher and her school and internal, within the structure of the school. The major external obstacle to change within the school district is the administration. The layers of administration within the district are the school board, the central administration, then the principal. The district establishes the goals and sets policy to accomplish their goals. The major way that goals are measured is through accountability as measured by achievement tests. Mr. Wood aptly put it that the "tail is wagging the dog" (interview 6/2). The achievement tests are used as a basis for making teaching decisions and policy. The textbooks that are adopted become the curriculum. Any proposed change in operating policy must be taken before the board and approval given.

Becky and Nancy requested approval to pilot two whole language first grade classrooms the next year. Mr. Wood shared their interest but to make that change required going to the school board. He was inclined to let them "do their thing" and not make a fuss about it because a pilot program requires district approval and if it were not approved, it would be back to the traditional kind of classroom. The only time Mr. Wood requested a policy change from the district was to ask for self-contained, heterogenerously grouped classes for intermediate grades. That was approved, but he's the kind of person who has to feel very strongly about an issue before he'll initiate a change. (A footnote here, he did request the piloting of two whole language first grade classrooms for Fall, 1989. This was approved in

August 1989 with the stipulation that the mandated basal unit and level tests still be given).

Another constraint was the pressure to cover the basal materials in preparation for the achievement tests and to complete the unit and level tests in the basals. The district had mandated that the basal unit and level tests be given along with the Gates-MacGinitie Reading pre and post tests. The principal expected Nancy to cover all the materials, equating materials with skills. While he did not expect her to do all of the workbooks, he did assume that she was using them. Nancy's class did extremely well on the MAT-6 with a composite score of 86th percentile, 7th stanine. When she finished the Riverside testing, the majority of the children had passed the unit and level tests. She was hesitant about confiding to Mr. Wood that she did not do the basals or the workbook pages; rather the skills were covered in mini-lessons and in the context of real reading and writing.

While Mr. Wood has been supportive of Nancy and what she was doing in her classroom, the bottom line was the accountability of her students and their performance on the achievement tests. He agreed with her that worksheets were a time filler, but since they bought the basals they needed to be using them. He always asked her if she was still using them, at least a little, and she indicated that she was. That made her feel bad because it was only a partial truth. Nancy is a very open, honest person and wanted approval for what she was doing without having to resort to subterfuge.

Nancy's relationship with the principal has been very positive. They respect each other as professionals and he has often complimented

her on the fine job she is doing. He values her opinion and frequently
asks her advice about a matter. However, his insistence on using the
basals and supporting materials has created conflict for Nancy. One
way of coping with this conflict has been to educate him about whole
language. He has been very receptive to the articles that Nancy shared
with him on whole language and process writing, and turned around and
shared a number of the articles with all the teachers.

The teachers within her building have reacted in different ways
to Nancy. Becky has become a friend and a collaborator. One
kindergarten teacher expressed interest in her reading program and the
transitional first grade teacher was pleased to share her big books
with Nancy and Becky. Nancy was aware that she can be a strong
advocate of a position and come on as pushy, and it worries her that
she may turn teachers off to her ideas just because of her manner of
presentation. She also found it frustrating that other teachers were
content to do things the same way and preferred to gripe about a
problem than to look for a solution. It amazed both Becky and Nancy
that teachers could lack curiosity. They were discussing the first
grade teacher meetings that were held in Nancy's classroom. These
teachers never asked her what she was doing or showed any interest in
the big books in her classroom or the children's writing. Maybe they
were afraid to ask. However, the first grade teachers did participate
in sixth grade partners for the first time this year, and did
contribute to the Christmas, Oklahoma, and secret pen pals units.

After the principal urged the teachers to think about doing more
writing with their classes, one second grade teacher asked Nancy if
her children could read their stories to nancy's first graders. Nancy

admired the teacher for deviating from her planned lesson when a giant spider had walked across the classroom wall. The teacher stopped her lesson and let the children talk about the spider, then write spider stories. As Mr. Wood continued to talk about writing, the more interested the teachers became. Nancy again offered to share or assist teachers with getting their writing program started. The second grade teachers have responded in the Fall of 1989 because they all have some of Nancy and Becky's students, and these children are asking "When can we write?" The interest of the children coupled with Mr. Wood's committment to implement process writing has begun to have an effect on the teachers.

An internal constraint that Nancy must contend with was the time involved in implementing change. One Wednesday evening, Nancy was tired and stressed after teaching and attending class and as we visited, she commented on how tired she was especially since her two year old was not sleeping and that coupled with the pressure to finish those Riverside tests was really getting to her. She could understand why teachers use the basals, they make life easier, no planning or creativity is required, you just go to class and open the book. She still had to go home and figure out what she was going to do the next day. (interview 4/26)

I was very concerned that night and wondered what I would find the next day when I observed. As we visited during lunch the next day, the morning had gone well, the children had really enjoyed the big book activity and Nancy was feeling much better about what she did and she knew she couldn't go back to the basals. "I was bored and so were the kids." She also remembered the pressure she felt to finish everything

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in each lesson and never having enough time to squeeze everything in.
She was so much more relaxed than she was with the old way she taught
and how she was having fun with the kids. "I'm glad I'm not doing that
[basals] again." (interview 4/27)

Many factors inhibit change. One major constraint that Nancy
encountered was the pressure to follow, at least minimally, the
curriculum as set forth in the adopted basal texts which coincides
with Shannon's (1989) conclusion that the basals reify reading
instruction. Another inhibitor that caused Nancy major stress was the
large amount of testing that was required with first graders.
Teaching time was sacrificed to accomodate all the testing time. A
third factor was the realities of the school structure. Nancy's
concern for her students required that she prepare them for handling
the more traditional expectations of second grade.

Facilitators of Change

Many factors facilitated making the transition from traditional
to more holistic classroom instruction. Nancy had a principal who
was willing to find out more about whole language, and from his
reading became more supportive of whole language and process writing.
The children's positive attitude about reading and writing generated
support from their parents. The children also displayed the same
postive responses in school. One morning after reading group, Kavita
came over to Nancy, put her arms around her and said "I love you." She
had enjoyed sharing her knowledge of farm animals and had been so
excited about the lesson. (lesson 2/28) Another day as Kali finished
her book during DEAR time she said, "I like to read books." Nancy

replied, "I'm glad to hear that." The whole class picked up on that and repeated, "We like to read best!" Nancy beamed and said, "That makes me feel so good to hear that." (lesson 4/11)

Numerous times, Mr. Wood shared his admiration for Nancy and for what she was doing in her classroom both with her and with me when we visited. He was pleased that parents requested her for a teacher, and he tries to accomodate parental requests. He appreciates teachers who question things, who have strong convictions and feelings about what they're doing. He considers that a sign of professionalism. He is also very child oriented and wants children to like reading and will do whatever is necessary to support this goal. At the process writing workshop, he shared about being in (Becky's) classroom and . that the children were so absorbed in their writing that they didn't want to stop, not even to go to physical education. That was a first for him that children would rather write than go outside and play. (writing workshop 5/24)

The parents were very supportive of what Nancy was doing in her classroom. They volunteered on a monthly basis to assist in making big books, constructing writing books, typing stories with the children (Erin brought to school a canned writing program for the computer where the children could pick different options to make a story with computer illustrations), and typing the children's stories. They were anxious to help in whatever way was needed. In visiting with some of the parents who were volunteering in the classroom, they expressed what a wonderful teacher Nancy was and that they tell their friends about her. Many parents requested Nancy as their child's teacher. Another teacher in the district called the principal and

wanted her son put in Nancy's class because she had heard about the "whole language" that Nancy was doing in her classroom. When Mr. Wood shared this with Nancy, he told her what an important role she was playing in changing the school and that none of this might happen if she left, confirming his support for her efforts and the need to work within the system. (interview 5/25)

Other parents expressed how much their child enjoyed reading and writing and credited Nancy's efforts. One mother who had recently moved from Utah was so sorry that her son had missed out the first half of the year. She felt that Ryan hadn't really learned anything in the old school because all the students did were workbook pages, day after day. Here Ryan was writing his own books and reading about lots of different things. (interview with Ryan's mother 4/11) The children's enthusiasm for school and their developing self-esteem about their reading and writing abilities obviously transferred home and pleased the parents. Nancy had good rapport with the parents and they frequently dropped in, called, or sent messages to school. While some parents were initially concerned that there was little or no homework as compared to neighbor children, who had at least an hour of Workshop Way homework in first grade, the concensus has been "I'm glad you don't use Workshop Way." (interview 4/4) At the first open house, Nancy informed the parents of what she was doing and why, and enlisted their support to read to and with their children. One evidence of her success with parental involvement and support was that her class was the first to make Pizza Hut Book It.

The children's progress in reading and writing encouraged Nancy to continue her efforts. Their performance on the achievement tests

and the basal unit and level tests lent additional support to the effectiveness of a holistic reading and writing program. One of Nancy's concerns was making sure her children would be able to succeed in second grade. An additional pressure for a teacher not using the basals is determining the placement of students for next year's teacher. In placing the children in the appropriate basal for next year, Nancy followed the suggestion made by Hansen (1987) that the children place themselves. First, Nancy predicted which basal she thought the children could read and then she let the children choose which book they could read well with just a little bit of help. "Don't choose a book that is too easy or too hard." As we listened to the children read, and compared their choice with hers, we learned that the majority of the children read with ease from the first grade reader. Her choice of placement in the basals tended to err on the conservative side, placing them in a lower level basal than their reading behavior warranted. (lesson 5/23) From this activity, Nancy learned that her reading program had been effective, reinforcing the value of having children engage in daily real reading and real writing.

Having the support of and being able to collaborate with Becky and Jane contributed to the growth and development of all three teachers this year. Nancy's view of herself as a teacher who is child-centered implied that her instruction should be congruent with her philosophy. The performance of the children on the tests and their attitudes about reading and writing attest to the power of a holistic reading and writing program.

Effects of Change

While Nancy often became discouraged and felt like she was waging a one woman battle, she has had a profound influence upon her school this year. Her principal became interested in whole language and read everything he could about literature based reading and writing. He took the initiative to push for writing in his school and encouraged his teachers to start process writing in their classrooms this fall. He has purchased a professional library of books that support whole language instruction for his school. He told Nancy that he gets up in the morning planning what he's going to do this next school year. (interview 7/13) He has taken a proposal to pilot two whole language first grades to the school district for approval, which was granted. He has relied on Nancy as a resource person, recognizing her expertise in the area of whole language.

Throughout the spring, many of our conversations centered on convincing Mr. Wood about the value of whole language; then refocused on how to assist Mr. Wood in convincing the faculty about using process writing. Many informal encounters between Nancy and Mr. Wood presented opportunities for them to share impressions with one another. He often reiterated how impressed he was with her and Becky, and to keep up the good work. He also solicited her advice about involving the teachers in writing. Initially, he planned to start writing with only the first grade teachers and let them act as a catalyst for the other grades, but then decided to involve the whole school. At the teachers' meeting on April 28, Mr. Wood talked to the faculty about the importance of implementing writing in their classroom on a daily basis, emphasizing

that he did not mean handwriting or copying from the board. He told

the teachers to begin thinking about this and he would talk more about

it by grade level when he met to discuss the MAT-6. Mr. Wood then

asked me to do a thirty minute presentation on process writing for his

faculty on May 24. He hoped that the workshop would stimulate his

teachers' in thinking about how to incorporate writing in their

classrooms in the Fall, 1989. He recognized the connection between

reading and writing and anticipates that students' reading would

benefit by being exposed to writing.

In evaluating the success of change in the school, it was

necessary to balance the rewards and costs. The rewards outweighed the

costs for Nancy because her number one priority is for children to

develop a positive attitude about reading and writing. When they

viewed themselves as readers and writers she knew the "costs" were

worth it. Much of the cost has been the worry of how her children

would perform on the multitude of tests required without benefit of

basal instruction. Since the effectiveness of teachers is often

measured by students' performance on tests, Nancy had a lot at stake.

The overall above average achievement of her students on the tests has

provided additional leverage in her quest for acceptance of whole

language instruction without the use of basal reading materials.

Nancy would definitely say the change was for the better. Whole

language supported her philosophy of teaching--a child-centered,

relaxed atmosphere where she and the children can work together to

create a positive learning experience, where she can be herself with

her children, and most importantly where the children develop a

positive attitude about themselves and what they can do -- and one of

the things they can do is read and write.

> All my kids talk about themselves as readers and writers . . .
> having author's chair and author's club reinforces for them that
> they are readers and writers. They all try and are praised for
> their efforts. I still can't believe the year is over, it went so
> quickly. I feel real good about this year. (interview 6/2)

Contributing to that good feeling were the good scores her
children made on the tests, how much she discovered they could do when
tested, and how well they did read. Thirteen children were ready for
placement in the second grade basal reader out of the nineteen students
in her classroom. All were reading. Even though she is still
discouraged about having to do all that testing, the hope of piloting a
whole language first grade has made Nancy excited about next fall.

Nancy summed up best why whole language works so well for her.
"It is the most eclectic approach to teaching reading because it meets
the needs of all the children." (interview 7/13) Whole language also
meets the needs of a teacher who wants to work with her children, learn
from her children, and grow with her children. Nancy likes a
challenge, being different is part of her personality. "I've always
been different, I'm the innovative one. Now when I do reading I will
do it with a questioning mind and ask myself why am I teaching some of
these things." (interview 5/22)

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the process of change
from the perspective of one first grade teacher who initiated change
in her classroom. Nancy was making the transition from traditional
instruction in reading and writing to holistic reading and writing.
In an effort to understand the multiple realities affecting the change
process, a qualitative, case study approach was chosen to better
comprehend one teacher's involvement in change. The study focused on
this teacher, the primary change agent, to offer insights into her
thoughts, feelings, and actions as she dealt with implementing change
in her classroom. The period of observation covered four months, from
February through May, as Nancy continued to make changes in her
reading and writing program. Four areas of change were studied:
motivation to change, the process of change, the constraints and
facilitators on changing, and the effects of change.

This particular study was unique in the respect that this teacher
initiated her own changes in her reading and writing curriculum in a
school system that espouses a traditional perspective on reading
instruction; the adopted basals are the reading curriculum.
Additionally, this was the first year that the district had mandated

that all basal unit and level tests be administered to children and that the results of the testing be placed in cumulative files. The school district was confirming their stance on the importance of basal use in the reading program at a time when Nancy had decided to undertake changes in her reading program. This is a contrast because most change is studied within a framework of an innovation or program that is adopted by the school, and how it is implemented by the teachers involved.

Nancy's motivation to change her reading and writing instruction grew as she watched her children struggle with the existing reading curriculum. Based on her knowledge and perceptions of children, Nancy actively sought a reading and writing program that would be child centered and would foster children's development into readers and writers. The exposure she had to whole language through her graduate reading courses at Northeastern State University provided a starting point for changing her reading and writing instruction. Whole language instruction was an attractive alternative because it was compatible with her philosophy about children, about how children learn, and employed materials that were written and designed for children--children's literature. As Nancy began utilizing some of these materials in her classroom, the enthusiasm the children displayed for reading and writing confirmed her decision to deviate from the prescribed curriculum.

In observing Nancy initiate changes in her classroom, the transition was slow, fraught with stress and doubts. Many of the realities of classroom life hindered the transition process; the constraints became a major detractor for her deviation from

traditional practices. Nancy also carried with her traditional experiences and these schema often interfered with implementing new ideas. While adaptation is important for ownership of methods and materials, the rationale for use and consistency within practices must be recognized. In the change process, Nancy found it easier to change the materials she was using, however, the procedures she used with the new materials often were influenced by traditional practices. One example was the way she utilized big books in her classroom. The format of big books and basal reading lessons were similar in presentation, the children read by table group, and worksheet activities followed the reading of the story. There appeared to be a reluctance to let go of what had previously worked, at least initially. For methods and materials for which Nancy had no history of use, such as process writing, she was able to utilize the approach more holistically. Process writing was eagerly embraced by both children and teacher as she allowed the children the freedom to write. For some activities, it was easier to share the control, letting children have ownership and choice; for others, the teacher controlled the children by assigning, using seatwork for management and organization of activities.

The constraints that Nancy encountered as she began making changes included: pressure to use the basals and the accompanying worksheets and workbooks, the amount of testing required in the first grade, the structure of the school system which demanded compliance and accountability, the worry about how being different would affect her children, how her children would perform on tests and cope with second grade, and her insecurities surrounding the innovations.

Facilitators of her efforts for change were: the children's enthusiasm for reading and writing and their improved attitude about their abilities, the support from the parents and the requests for children to be placed in her classroom, recognition from her principal and his interest in learning about whole language instruction, the support and collaboration with Becky, Jane and a few other faculty, and her growing awareness of the effectiveness of whole language.

The effects of change were varied, some having more impact than others. One major result of Nancy's change effort was the approval for her and Becky to pilot two whole language first grade classes in the fall of 1989. Her principal is promoting process writing with the other teachers in an attempt to encourage real writing in the classrooms. To support these efforts, the principal has furnished materials for the teachers to read, is building a professional library, and had the reseacher present a short workshop on process writing.

Conclusions

From the observations of Nancy's struggles and triumphs, several aspects of the change process seem apparent.

1. Change is an attitude.

Change is accomplished by individuals. The change process is highly personal based on one's beliefs about instruction and learning (Fullan, 1982; Hord et al, 1987; Red & Shainline, 1987). While there is some disagreement as to whether change in attitude precedes or results from change in instruction (Guskey, 1985, Sparks, 1988), the teacher's attitude influences what, when, and how she will make

changes. Nancy has a positive attitude about making changes in an effort to better meet the diversity of her students. Their enthusiastic response to her efforts in using new materials and methods affirmed for Nancy that the "costs" were worthwhile.

Attitude reflects your personality. Nancy's personality permits her to question, to challenge, and to explore possibilities for improving both herself and her classroom instruction. Nancy's commitment to children and to her profession allows her to withstand peer pressure and to validate being different. These personality attributes may be distinguishing characteristics of persons who make changes.

2. <u>Change</u> <u>is</u> <u>personal</u> <u>and</u> <u>involves</u> <u>time,</u> <u>order,</u> <u>and</u> <u>degree</u>
<u>and</u> <u>is</u> <u>unique</u> <u>to</u> <u>the</u> <u>person</u> <u>making</u> <u>it</u>.

The changes that Nancy instituted were personal, reflecting her priorities, which were based on her perceptions of her children's performance. Change involves time. Nancy made changes slowly, first supplementing a new material or method with existing practices, then altering her instruction to be more compatible with the new adoption. As Nancy continues to read and learn more, her instructional practices should also change.

The order of change is also personal. Nancy first began experimenting with writing, then language experience, finally changing her spelling program. Mr. Wood is also concentrating on the teachers improving their instruction in writing. Writing may be a more neutral area with less history to overcome.

The degree of change is partially dependent on the internal and external constraints operating in the environment. How much one changes is based on one's knowledge, comfort-level, risk-taking, and existing support base.

3. Self-efficacy.

A teacher's self-efficacy, her confidence in her ability to handle things in her classroom, to take risks, to experiment are indicators that she is likely to improve her teaching and innovate (Sparks, 1988). Nancy is a very self-confident person who is willing to take risks and to be different. She willingly opened her classroom to the researcher, acted as a catalyst in her graduate reading classes as she challenged herself and other students to experiment with whole language practices, communicated with her principal what she was learning, and enlisted the support of a new teacher and her student teacher in her endeavors.

When Nancy characterized herself as being different from the other teachers in her building, she was referring to her expectations of and interactions with the children. As she read Hansen's (1987) When Writers Read, the book clarified for Nancy the kind of learning environment she wanted to create in her classroom. It also validated her goals for providing choice in activities, for encouraging cooperative work, for fostering a sense of community, and for promoting responsible, independent learners.

4. Change involves sense of control and comfort.

Joyce and Weil (1986) identified two factors necessary for

successful transfer of skills (methods) to the classroom: executive
control and comfort.

> Executive control consists of understanding the purpose and
> rationale of the skill and knowing how to adapt it to students,
> apply it to subject matter, modify or create instructional
> materials attendant to its use, organize students to use it, and
> blend it with other instructional approaches to develop a smooth
> and powerful whole. . . . The degree of comfort also affects the
> transfer of the new skill because the greater the degree of
> discomfort, the greater the effort involved on the teacher's part
> to overcome her feeling of awkwardness and risk-taking. Her
> discomfort and pain often leads to the avoidance of the new method
> (pp. 474-475).

Nancy's involvement in graduate coursework in reading, the reading
she was doing through her classes, and her motivation to change some
practices, while putting herself at risk, also gave her the confidence
to try new things. Reading Hansen's (1987) When Writers Read,
encouraged her efforts at process writing. The success she had with
language experience provided the impetus to create the content
language experience lesson, merging the language experience approach
with children's literature. Her children's responsiveness to the
activities coupled with her "executive control" contributed to her
comfort and continuance of the new practices. These practices
contributed to her goals for achieving independent and responsible
learners who worked together as a community and developed positive
attitudes about themselves as readers and writers.

Her reading practices bothered her the most. While she was extremely pleased with the content language experience lessons, she was still concerned with her use of big books and other ways to use literature. Big books were used with a format similar to basal instruction followed by comprehension worksheets. She was also more defensive of her reading practices which was a sign of her discomfort. She recognized that there was still some incongruency within her practices and the children's responses confirmed that feeling. Nancy was trying to accomodate the reading to fit her schema and this was creating tension. The process of change is complex and is characterized by spurts of growth followed by plateaus that allow for assimilation and accomodation. Nancy has to construct her own understanding of whole language instruction and adapt it to her teaching style and the children's abilities.

5. The initial direction of change may not be clear.

Nancy's commitment to change was not initially to whole language, but rather to resolve the problems that some of her instructional practices were not productive, that students were struggling, and she was seeking solutions to her concerns. This is a way of thinking that is consistent with how changes occur in basal reading curriculums. That Nancy continued practices that were inconsistent with whole language is indicative of the complex nature of change.

Two contingencies appeared to be operating here. Nancy was dissatisfied with some but not all of her reading practices because of the children's response. Nancy described herself as being child-centered; she became a teacher because she enjoyed working with

children. Her child-centeredness made her more attuned to how the children were coping with the curriculum. Their struggles bothered her. Her first reaction to their difficulties was to fault herself. What was she doing wrong? She also blamed her inexperience with teaching. However, as the problem persisted, even as she gained experience, changed schools, changed materials, and worked with higher ability children; she began questioning the reading curriculum.

Nancy was intent on making changes in her reading program because of the dissonance she experienced. She expressed it as "things didn't flow," and "halfway through the letter books my children were struggling with reading." The children were her gauge for whether or not her instruction was successful. Because something was amiss, Nancy returned to graduate school seeking solutions. Whole language practices became a viable alternative to the existing basal reading program because they presented a workable solution consistent with her beliefs about children. Her children's enthusiastic response to process writing and big books confirmed her decision to innovate. As she adopted these whole language practices, supplementing these with existing practices, the incongruence with her basal instruction bothered her.

6. Instructional histories influence change.

Changes are made in the traditional reading program when new basals are adopted. The change, however, is often superficial and reflects virtually no alteration in the methods and practices of delivering instruction. Nancy's initial changes were with materials; adding writing and big books, deleting basals and the accompanying

workbooks and dittoes. However, with the activities related to writing--process writing and the content language experience, where there was no history or schemata of use--Nancy adopted the method and utilized the children's reactions to the instruction to accomodate these practices into her repetoire.

Prior knowledge, history and tradition influence the way teachers teach. Innovative ideas challenge instructional practices. Past experiences impact on how change is embraced by teachers. Especially in new situations, the past is relied upon to cope with the present. One's schema influences one's transactions with the innovation, the environment, and how information is interpreted. Instruction is personal and reflects one's image of teaching. New images are hard to perceive because of the lack of prior experience or schema. For learning to occur, it is necessary to connect what is already known to the new knowledge. Becky commented that it was difficult to get started because she hadn't experienced or seen whole language in practice though she had been exposed to different parts of whole language practices in her teacher training program. Nancy expressed the difficulties with innovation as "what you see is what you do."

One of the things that assisted Nancy in making the connections to whole language practices was her experience with Math Their Way. The summer before she returned to graduate school (1987), her school district had sponsored a Math Their Way workshop. Math Their Way supports a discovery based learning environment where the children work together to learn. Nancy had been using this program for a year in her classroom and it provided the framework for connecting whole language practices that she was reading and hearing about in her

graduate reading coursework. Though she had not seen whole language classrooms in operation, her experience with Math Their Way partially bridged the gap in her knowledge structure as she made the connections between the two and conceptualized ways to implement literature-based reading and writing instruction. The role of prior knowledge is critical to forging new connections and transferring learning from one situation to another.

7. Practice may lead theory (but eventually supports it for success).

In Transitions, Routman (1988) described her change with the term "process teaching" (p. 26). Whole language is the highest end of a continuum with skills teaching at the lowest end. Process teaching values the process and the struggle of developing and changing one's theories about learning and teaching. However, teachers need to have an educational philosophy backed by current research and theory to provide a rationale for what they are doing and for continued growth. Each of our philosophies will be different because of our own prior knowledge and experiences, what we understand about how children learn, and our individual personalities (Routman, 1988, p. 27).

Goodman (1989) stated that practice gets ahead of theory and research. Teachers often try an innovation, if it works, if there is a change in student learning, they are more likely to continue with the practice. However, teachers also need the theoretical base, "why they are doing what they are doing" (Goodman, Smith, Meredith, & Goodman, 1987, p. 402). Without theoretically based criteria for the choices they make in methods, materials, and activities, teachers will not be able to explain what they are doing and why, nor will they have

a basis for evaluating their successes and failures, and learning from
them (Goodman et al, 1987, p. 403). Theory becomes the guide and
provides congruency for practice in the methods and materials used.
Knowledge of theory contributes to understanding and influences
attitudes and beliefs, which constitute one's philosophy of teaching.
While often it is more expedient to change the what, the surface
changes reflected in the materials; probing the deep structure of
change contributes to changes in attitudes and beliefs.

Many of the inconsistencies observed in Nancy's instruction can
be attributed to the surface changes she made, recognizing that theory
has not yet caught up with her practice. Change takes time and the
complexities of change have often been overwhelming. Nancy has not
had the time to distance herself from the change and analyze what she
has done and where she is going next. She is still struggling with
the parts. The numerous constraints generated by the school structure
have required energy and fortitude to resolve.

In wrestling with these problems, it has been necessary for Nancy
to really think about what she believes and how that fits with what
she is doing. She has had to prioritize her concerns to prevent the
demands of the school day from overwhelming her. Many times her
discomfort level threatened her equilibrium. Nancy often verbalized
her worry and stress and questioned why she was putting herself at
risk.

8. Change means coping with external forces.

The April 1989 issue of Educational Leadership focused on testing
and the overreliance on test performance at the expense of learning.

This continued emphasis on skill and drill work negates efforts to make learning meaningful. There is still the prevalent feeling that teachers are dispensers of knowledge and that children are to be filled with this knowledge. There is a lack of trust that children can be responsible for their own learning. Teachers are afraid that if they don't teach the skills specifically, that children will not learn them. Even Nancy was leery of how her instruction was affecting the children. She questioned her expertise in favor of the textbook. She worried over the achievement testing and the basal unit and level tests. Not until the results were in did she express her relief that the children did well. Insecurity with new teaching practices measured by traditional testing methods further constrains teachers in their decision to innovate.

While a majority of studies support whole language teaching and show that children do at least as well as those in traditional classrooms, teachers still question the ability of children to transfer learning. Whole language is supported by research in the areas of developmental learning, oral language development, reading, writing, and evaluation (Heald-Taylor, 1989, pp. 4-5). Whole language empowers both teachers and children in the learning process. Teachers still have a hard time accepting this until they actually experience it.

Now that Nancy can openly share her "whole language" classroom, her concerns can now focus on other matters. As she continues to read, to innovate, and to risk her children will be her guide as she moves further along the continuum to whole language instruction.

Nancy appeared to be more of a pragmatist; she was aware of the realities of her school and knew she must function within the

structure of the school to be successful. Nancy's interest in whole language was reinforced by the children's response to the change in instruction. As she continued to find value in whole language practices, there was a growing commitment to the whole language philosophy. Her principal's interest and support of her efforts also facilitated her confidence and continuing growth. Nancy has made a public commitment to whole language which is also influential in altering behavior (Devlin-Scherer et al, 1985). Her commitment to whole language has been recognized and approved of by the school district in allowing her to pilot a whole language first grade classroom.

The multiple realities of classroom life make change a difficult process. Yet for teachers to change their image from technician to professional, they must grapple with these realities and make informed decisions that will benefit children and promote learning in their classroom. Durkin (1987) urges teachers to make "school an interesting and relevant place for children" (p. 19). However, this can only occur if teachers are cognizant of the reading (learning) process and consider children's age, interest, and abilities in making instructional decisions. Teachers must constantly ask themselves, "Why am I doing what I'm doing?" (Durkin, 1987, p. 27) To become knowledgeable decision-makers, teachers need to take control of their own instruction, ask questions, challenge existing curriculum, and make necessary changes.

Recommendations

A case study approach limits the generalizability of results because of the specificity of the subject matter. The study supports Fullan's (1982) assertion that change is a complex process and necessitates a change in materials, methods, and beliefs. Since change is a process, teachers will be at different points on the continuum and will experience different concerns and needs. After observing Nancy begin the transition process, it will be interesting to continue following her progress and to record how her concerns change.

From my experiences watching Nancy make changes, thinking about my own changes since returning to school, teaching, and participating in Nancy's transition, three areas of concern have emerged. The first area is the personal aspects for wanting change. Second, there is a need to reevaluate our preservice teacher training. Related to this is the third area, teacher inservice.

Change is highly individualistic. Teachers have different motives for wanting to make changes. An informal survey of my graduate reading classes find teachers voicing the following concerns for returning to school: looking for something different because they are not content with their instruction; the children are struggling with reading and writing; the dissatisfaction with the basal and the large amount of emphasis on skill and drill work; they are tired of the routine, bored, and looking for something new, fun, challenging, and/or ready for a change; surely there is a different way to teach reading; and they have heard about whole language and want to learn more.

To assist teachers in initiating changes then, inservice training should extend over a period of time, encouraging teachers who are interested to come together in making changes and assisting them to organize a support group. As teachers implement change in their classroom they often need additional guidance about what to do next. Joyce and Weil's (1986) training guidelines are applicable to teachers learning new methods. Their procedures include presenting teachers with a rationale for the method, modeling, practice, feedback, and coaching. Other teachers' enthusiasm for a new practice is often contagious.

Joyce and Weil (1986) concluded that "continuous practice, feedback, and coaching are essential to enable even highly motivated persons to bring additions to their repertoires under effective control" (p. 472). Teachers making changes in their classrooms need support of other teacher's to encourage each other, to problem-solve, and to learn. Congruent with understanding the change process is the notion that since change is highly individualized, each person will experience and react to change differently.

Preservice teacher training is crucial to developing teachers who will be able to bring current knowledge and research into the classroom. Preservice teachers must be knowledgeable about theory but also have the opportunity to practice what they hear and see in their college classrooms. Too often, method classes are viewed as out of touch with the real world of the classroom teacher. These preservice teachers, in order to make an impact on the status quo, must be competent and confident in their practices to share with other teachers the newest methods of teaching children. The preservice training programs need to

align with cognitive psychology in allowing students the opportunity to construct their own knowledge as they participate in learning.

The problem is cyclical in the respect that preservice teachers do not observe theory in the field. Classroom based experiences contribute to their confusion, doubts, and insecurity about trying new practices. The innovation disappears because the new teacher often cannot put the knowledge in her head into workable practice. The traditionalism of instruction discourages new ideas and often creates dissonance for the new teacher as she decides who must be accomodated. Teachers hear of new ideas but are either reluctant to change comfortable practices or lack the knowledge base to implement new practices. The structure of the school, from the central administration, to the principal, teachers, and parents are part of the problem and must share in becoming part of the solution. Awareness must focus on the learning process of children and of teachers, and the nature of change.

Another area for additional research, apparent from the study, is to focus on children and their reactions, both attitudinally and academically, to the various types of reading and writing instruction they receive. Teachers who are kid-watchers notice a difference in children's enthusiasm, participation, and performance when involved with whole language activities. Teachers do influence children's learning. Attention needs to focus on the impact of teachers' instructional practices and the effects upon children's learning in both the affective and cognitive domains.

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