

2000


## Writing portfolios in grades three and four

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## Writing portfolios in grades three and four

### Abstract

The concept of assessment is broadening in some exciting ways. Assessment may include descriptive or qualitative techniques, such as portfolios. Portfolios have the potential to relate instruction and assessment more closely.

Writing portfolio implementation in a third and fourth grade classroom is discussed. Three children with different abilities were focused on as they developed their portfolios with the support of their teacher. Through conferences with their teacher, the students selected writing exhibits for their portfolios, discussed their progress and instructional needs, and then set future goals for writing.

This Graduate Project by: Debra A. Carlson

Entitled: Writing Portfolios in Grades Three and Four

has been approved as meeting the research article requirement for the  
Degree of Master of Arts in Education.

4/17/2000  
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4/20/2000  
Date Approved

Rick Traw  
Graduate Faculty Reader

4/20/2000  
Date Approved

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and Instruction

**Writing Portfolios in Grades Three and Four**

**A Graduate Project**

**Submitted to the**

**Department of Curriculum and Instruction**

**In Partial Fulfillment**

**of the Requirements for the Degree**

**Master of Arts in Education**

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA**

**by**

**Debra A. Carlson**

**April 2000**

## Abstract

The concept of assessment is broadening in some exciting ways. Assessment may include descriptive, or qualitative techniques, such as portfolios. Portfolios have the potential to relate instruction and assessment more closely.

Writing portfolio implementation in a third and fourth grade classroom is discussed. Three children with different abilities were focused on as they developed their portfolios with the support of their teacher. Through conferences with their teacher, the students selected writing exhibits for their portfolios, discussed their progress and instructional needs, and then set future goals for writing.

Writing is a process to create meaning and needs to be assessed through qualitative measures. It is no longer considered a completed work or a group of separate elements that can be measured by quantitative means. Descriptions of children's involvement in the writing process cannot only assist them as well as their teachers and parents in understanding their progress and in developing goals for further study. From qualitative assessments, teachers can plan instructional programs and can more closely connect instruction and assessment (Tierney, Carter, & Desai, 1991).

Many techniques, such as student journaling, teacher observation notes, student-teacher conferences, and checklists, support qualitative assessment. Another descriptive assessment that is gaining much respect is portfolios. They facilitate three major assessment areas of the school program: the capability of curriculum, instruction, and assessment; students' engagement in their own learning and assessment; and students' growth over time (Valencia & Place, 1994).

In assessing writing, portfolios can offer ongoing evidence of an individual's abilities, accomplishments, and instructional needs. The emphasis is on what the students can do, not on their deficiencies relative to a norm (Hart, 1994). A well-designed portfolio contains a thoughtfully organized group of exhibits that document learning over time. Portfolios as collections of writing exhibits can become

powerful educational tools for encouraging students to take charge of their own learning; for in developing them, they can reflect on their involvement in the writing process (Paulson, Paulson, & Meyer, 1991; Valencia, 1990).

### Implementing Portfolio Assessment

When introducing the concept of portfolio collection to students, teachers can show models, such as their own or other children's writing collections. Students need to know what kinds of writing exhibits can be included, for example, the piece shows evidence of reaching a specific goal, the writing of the piece was interesting or gave much pleasure, or the piece represents a different kind of writing (Paulson, Paulson, & Meyer, 1991).

In developing the portfolio collection, each child collaborating with the teacher during conferences can select pieces. Graves (1994) emphasizes that it is important for teachers to let children talk about their written samples and to listen to what they say about them in order to understand their intentions and goals. A label needs to be attached to each exhibit telling name, date, type of piece, reason for selection, progress noted, and future goals. From the labeling, future learning goals can be established, and activities can be engaged in to meet these goals.

The greatest asset of portfolios is self-reflection. Children can assess their progress and instructional needs and can establish further goals for learning (Valencia, 1990). In so doing, children are actively involved in the assessment of their own learning. Therefore, the portfolio collections should always be readily accessible to the students and the teacher so that they are able to consult them as resources from day to day (Graves, 1994). Many types of containers can house portfolios, such as cardboard boxes, scrapbooks, three-ring binders, file folders, or accordion type folders (Batzle, 1992).

Regular sessions for writing portfolio selection should be scheduled throughout the school year (Tierney, Carter, & Desai, 1991). Conferences should be a time for genuine sharing between the students and the teacher (Frank, 1994). The portfolio can then be viewed as an evolving description of students' writing experiences (Graves, 1994). Frank (1994) suggests that teachers keep a running record or a checklist from these discussions so that needed instruction on the specific writing elements can be offered.

At the end of the school year, the collection of exhibits can be surveyed by both the teacher and the students. With the assistance of the teacher, the students can select pieces that represent their writing progress during the year to include in a showcase portfolio



to be passed on to the next grade level. The teacher can also include observation records, conference notes, and checklists in the showcase portfolio (Batzle, 1992). The remaining pieces of writing can be boxed or bound and sent home with the children (DeFina, 1992).

### Introduction of Portfolios to Students

As a third/fourth grade language arts teacher, I had the opportunity of working with a class for two years. The instructional program focused on language as a process to create meaning; therefore, the assessment of the children's writing progress needed to be described. The implementation of portfolios supported by student journals, teacher logs of conferences, and checklists offered much information about each child's involvement in the writing process. Through this qualitative assessment program, students in their third grade and fourth grade years followed their writing progress through their portfolio collections.

During the second semester of the students' third grade school year, I introduced the concept of portfolio collection and explained that each child would develop a folder of writing samples to show their progress. The children were told that from their writing folders, they would choose pieces that were their favorites, ones that involved much work, or showed progress in some aspect of writing, or even a

piece in progress. Many types of writing, such as stories, poems, letters, reports, and journal entries, could be considered for the collection.

Each child's portfolio was kept in an expandable folder. The portfolios were housed in a box in the writing center for easy access to the students and the teacher.

A schedule for portfolio development conferences was announced so children could review pieces in their writing folders and select one or more for exhibits. During the individual conferences, we talked about why the student had selected a particular sample for the working portfolio. A label was attached to each piece: the date was noted, what the piece was, why the piece had been selected, what was learned in the process of writing the exhibit, and future goals for writing. I found that listening to the students during the conferences yielded much information about their involvement in the writing process. The running records of the students' progress and needed instruction that I made during the conferences guided my mini-lessons, usually conducted with small groups.

I choose three third grade students to study closely from a classroom of twenty-six students. The students selected represented a range of abilities. I observed their involvement in the writing process during the second half of their third grade year and the first half of their fourth

grade year. I noted their strengths and gains in writing ability over time in their portfolio collections. A rubric for writing pieces was used to assess their work. Five categories were to be critiqued: ideas, organization, word choice, sentence structure, and mechanics. The rubric is included in Appendix D. A summary of their progress is noted in the following pages.

### Student A

Student A was a girl with high academic ability. She was an avid reader and found writing to be an enjoyable and challenging part of her life.

#### Grade 3, Second Semester, April

Student A selected the first exhibit entitled "Hit Away Kid." This piece was a summary of a book about a boy who loves winning so much that he is willing to make up his own rules during a game. The girl chose this piece because, as she wrote on the label, "I told about the main action in the story and I like a book with a happy ending."

Student A is able to write text that appears to focus on the topic.

The pieces that Student A selected for her portfolio are in Appendix A.

During the portfolio conference, Student A shared that, "I am nervous about sharing my writing with peers, family, and teachers."

She was encouraged by her teacher to focus on writing about her

personal experiences to see if she would feel more confident about sharing something she had first-hand knowledge of. She set a goal, "To write some expanded stories from her journal entries." Student A wanted to create some original ideas and use punctuation more accurately. She is making attempts to include dialogue, but is not using quotation marks at this time. She was able to identify her writing strengths as having sequential order of events and most sentences are clearly written.

#### Grade 3, Second Semester, May

Student A's selection for May was a flip booklet entitled, In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson. She said in choosing this piece she demonstrated her creativity in writing and believed that she enhanced it with illustrations. The student related that she had engaged in a meaningful revision of her draft. Her writing showed a logical order of ideas. Most of her sentences were clearly written. She repeatedly used the same sentence pattern beginning each sentence in the same manner. Her use of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation were correct.

At the conference, Student A said she had been exposed to many quality books, but In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson had definitely been her favorite thus far. She related that she was

becoming more confident in her writing and that she wanted to write in a more interesting manner in the future. We discussed that she needed to include some sentence variety and to expand her ideas. Another goal was to write different types of pieces, such as a report so she could have an opportunity to gather information from many sources to build background knowledge for a writing project.

#### Grade 4, First Semester, October

Student A, as a fourth grader, selected her book The True or False Book of the U.S. Presidents for her portfolio exhibit. She had been assigned in social studies to research several of the presidents of the United States. Several options for presenting her research were offered. Student A selected the format of a booklet that presented a statement about each president. The audience was to decide if the statement was “true or false” and then could read on to find out more information about each president.

At the conference, Student A told the teacher that she had chosen the booklet to submit because she had enjoyed doing the research for the booklet whether it had been using books or looking on the internet. She was proud of the fact that she had been able to do the research independently and then was able to use webbing strategies previously taught to help with the organization.

Student A expressed confidence in her writing: She said, "I am finally comfortable enough with my work to share it with anyone who is interested." Her booklet was clearly focused on the topic and included supporting details. Her enthusiasm about learning was clearly reflected in the different types of questions she included in her research of the presidents. She used written conventions at or above grade level. Her self-assessments reflected that she had authentic purposes and the audience in mind.

Student A's parents were asked to complete a questionnaire to ascertain their understanding of their daughter's growth in writing and the use of portfolios as an assessment tool. Her parents commented about her progress in writing: Now, she readily shares her writing at home and has become more confident in her writing ability. Both parents related that portfolios gave them an opportunity to see her progress and a clear sense of their daughter's instructional needs. The parent questionnaire is in Appendix E.

Student A made progress in presenting original ideas and a logical sequence of ideas in her writing. She needs to work on selecting words that have more precise meanings in order to enhance her ideas and on using different types of sentences.

### Student B

Student B appeared to have average ability. He was a reserved child. Since his focus seemed to be on sports, he had difficulty with other topics for writing.

#### Grade 3, Second Semester, March

Student B chose for his first portfolio exhibit a piece titled "Pencil Talk." He said that his reason for choosing this piece was, "My teacher was proud that I chose to write about a new topic and not sports." While discussing the piece with the teacher, he said, "It's fun to write using your imagination. You can't be wrong because it's just make believe." The student maintained a focus on the topic. He needs to use different types of sentences. He recognized that he needed to reread his writing to clarify content and correct spelling.

Student B stated that one of his future goals was to expand his writing topics. Keeping lists of topics in his working portfolio would help him in choosing different writing topics. The student suspected that several words were misspelled. The teacher suggested the use of a personal dictionary to help him with the words he was using in his writing. He established a second goal to work on applying his knowledge of spelling rules as well as consulting reference sources if he was not sure of a correct spelling.

At the portfolio conference, Student B and the teacher talked about how he could include more supporting details in his writing. He had a good beginning, middle, and ending. He needs to reread his piece to make sure that most sentences are clearly written. The pieces that Student B selected for his portfolio are in Appendix B.

### Grade 3, Second Semester, May

In May, Student B decided that the summary of his story Stone Fox was a good example of his attending to paragraphing and that he was communicating the major ideas of the story clearly to his audience. The selection was written in a logical sequence. He sometimes wrote run-on sentences. Usually, he had correct capitalization and punctuation.

During the portfolio conference, Student B said that he saw himself as a writer and that his portfolio was a way of helping him keep organized and focused on finishing more pieces. He seems to be developing a greater understanding of the writing process and appreciates the opportunity to take an active part in setting goals and making decisions. He appears to be taking risks with his writing and to be trying new approaches. We discussed that the summary of his exhibit was well developed with action and details, and that he was showing improvement with his spelling. He established a new



goal to take more responsibility for his learning by self-assessing through revising.

#### Grade 4, First Semester, October

For the fall selection of his fourth grade year, Student B chose the story Galaxy Wars that he wrote on the computer. He related, "I like to write so much better if I have the opportunity to do it on the computer. It is so much faster to correct a mistake or to rearrange sentences."

Student B wrote this imaginative story in paragraph form. The selected example is one chapter of what he is planning to make into a five chapter book. He said that he was challenged by the idea of working on such a long-range project. This piece is a good example of the progress he is making with revising, for there are no spelling errors and few other form errors. Student B wrote in his reflection, "I really tried to expand my vocabulary with this story. I wanted the reader to know that I did know quite a bit about my subject."

At the parent conference, Student B's mother was truly amazed to see the array of pieces that her son had been working on for the past two years. She believed the portfolio truly illustrated his growth as a writer and that she had gained an appreciation for the instruction provided her child. She said that the portfolio assessment approach was a meaningful way to support her child's learning.

### Student C

Student C was a well-rounded student with much parental support; however, she initially applied little effort in the writing process. She was reluctant to go beyond the first draft and was not interested in seeing a piece completed. She showed little enthusiasm for portfolio development when the assessment was introduced.

#### Grade 3, Second Semester, February

Student C chose “My Pals” for the first portfolio selection. During the writing process, the teacher offered her much encouragement to expand and refine the story. The first draft was about four sentences long that she believed was “Just right for a story.” It had a logical sequence of ideas with simple sentences and many words that did not have precise meanings. The piece had several spelling errors.

The student set a goal to revise for spelling errors. She said, “If I do not understand or see a mistake, I will ask a peer for assistance.” She was going to try to read her work at home to her parents to get some feedback on her fluency. The pieces that Student C selected for her portfolio are in Appendix C.

#### Grade 3, Second Semester, March

Student C selected a social studies project on communities for the next exhibit. The students had been studying the three types of communities: rural, suburban, and urban. They were to make a presentation summarizing the differences in these communities. The

booklets were to be shared with the parents at a Social Studies Fair.

Student C included in her booklet a title page, table of contents, and glossary. She used at least four sources in her research. She had illustrations to accompany the description of each community. She said that she had difficulty putting the information in her own words and at first found herself copying from resources. Student C did not have the run-on sentences that had been previously noted.

The portfolio conference focused on both the strengths and weaknesses of her work. She readily recognized the need for proofreading. We discussed that spelling errors tend to distract from the information being presented. "I should have checked my spelling more carefully, especially since my booklet is going to be on display." She believed that the booklet conveyed her message and that the audience should have a good understanding of the differences between the three types of communities.

Student C shared, "I don't care for nonfiction writing as much as I do when I can write about anything that I want. Doing the illustrations did help to add my own ideas."

#### Grade 4, First Semester, October

For this conference, Student C chose the selection "The Halloween Hunt." The piece demonstrates the growth she has made in seeing herself as a writer. The story was written to share with a younger child. During the process, it was important that the author keep her

audience in mind so she needed to use appropriate content.

During the conference, Student C shared, “I was so proud of myself when I finished the mystery. I can finally say I am enjoying the challenge of being a writer. I can’t believe I took the risk to write poetry in my story. I feel it really added to the suspense. I have finally realized that the more I write, the better I write, and I am enjoying it more.”

Punctuation errors still were evident in her published work, yet, it was encouraging to see the risks she was willing to take with dialogue. Her run-on sentences were discussed in the conference and several mini-lessons followed. The piece was composed on the computer and the Spell Check was used as a resource. Student C seemed to have a better understanding of her abilities but realized that she had areas that need to be worked on.

Student C’s parents responded positively to portfolios as an assessment tool. Portfolios gave them an opportunity to learn what authentic assessment is. They appreciated the invitation to take part in the assessment of their child’s progress and liked the idea that portfolios are a pass-along record of their child’s writing activities and growth. One of her parents wrote on the questionnaire, “To know our daughter resisted embracing the writing process at first to now seeing her fully engaged has been a powerful illustration to the progress she’s made by having so many opportunities for writing.”

### Conclusions

In my third and fourth grade classroom, writing portfolio collection gave my students and me a clearer view of student growth, interests, and needs. Writing portfolios were a part of a multi-dimensional profile of the student as a writer. Through conferences, our collaborations gave the students and myself insights into their involvement in the writing process. The portfolios provided connections with my writing instructions and rapid feedback on instructional needs. From reflecting on their pieces, the students seemed to be able to develop a fuller understanding of their writing abilities and needs. As a teacher, I believed that a satisfying partnership with my students in goal setting and assessing evolved.

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## Appendices

Appendix A

Student A's Portfolio Exhibits



Exhibit for Grade 3, Second Semester, April

I would like to tell you about Hit-Away Kid the book. In the first chapter Barry, the main character is playing a game against the junk shops. Barry is one kid that does not like to lose. Barry's team's name is the peach street mudders. The junk shops were up to bat, Jerry hit a deep left fielder. It was up to Barry. He saw the ball so he ran and ran and tripped over a stick and just missed the →

ball. He quickly picked it up and said to the umpire that he caught the ball. Susan, Barry's sister, said that he missed the ball. Then his brother Tommy said it, too, and then almost everybody said it. Luckily, the umpire didn't change his mind. In chapter 2, Barry told his mom and dad and they were disappointed in him. They said you should always tell the truth. It is only a game you should have fun not lie. Chapter

skateboard and Susan came too.

She had a blue dog in her pocket

just than the mudders team came

and stole the dog for no good reason.

If you, Barry get two home runs

I'll give the dog back. It was the

game day and guess what

He did

it!

he got the dog back!

The End!

In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson  
by Sarah Peters



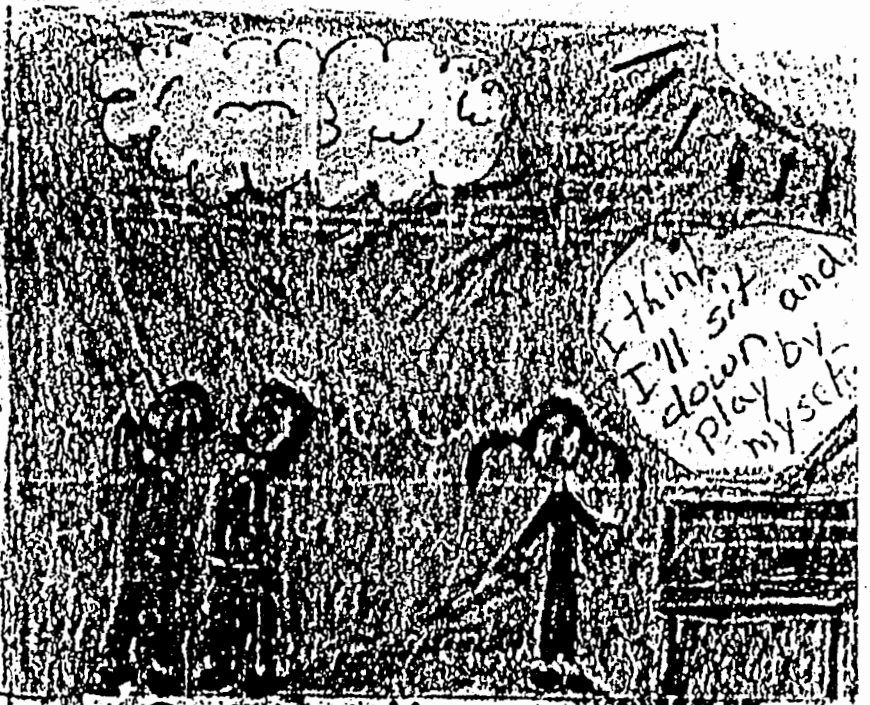


In Chapter 1 Shirley breaks a glass water urn on New Years.

In Chapter 2 Shirley travels ten thousand miles to America.



In Chapter 3 Shirley goes to school and she is in 5th grade.



In Chapter 4 everybody started ignoring Shirley.



In Chapter 5 Shirley got two black eyes because she got punched by Mabel.



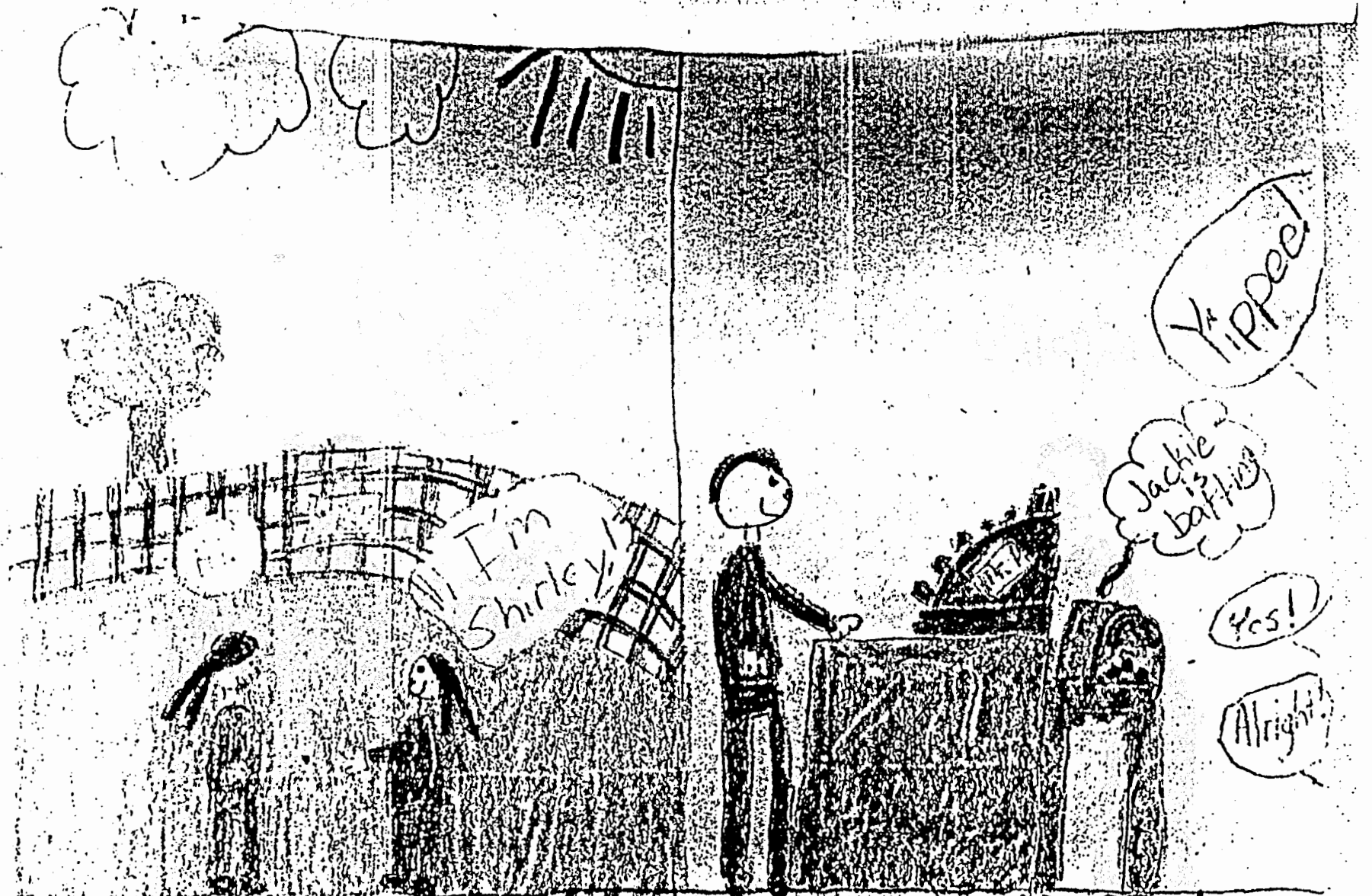
In Chapter 6 Shirley and her class talked about Jackie Robinson.



In chapter 7 Shirley takes  
Launnini for a walk.

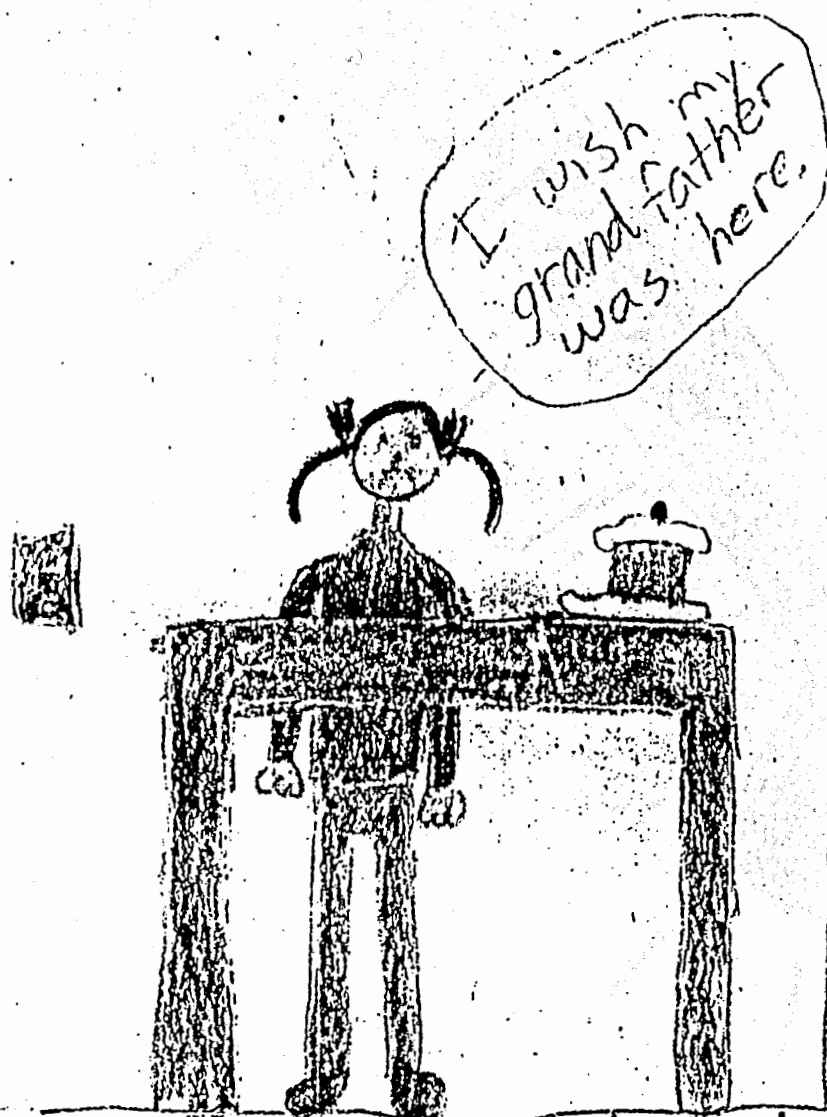
In Chapter 8 Shirley and  
her parent take care of  
son's house.





In Chapter 9 Shirley meets a new girl named Emily.

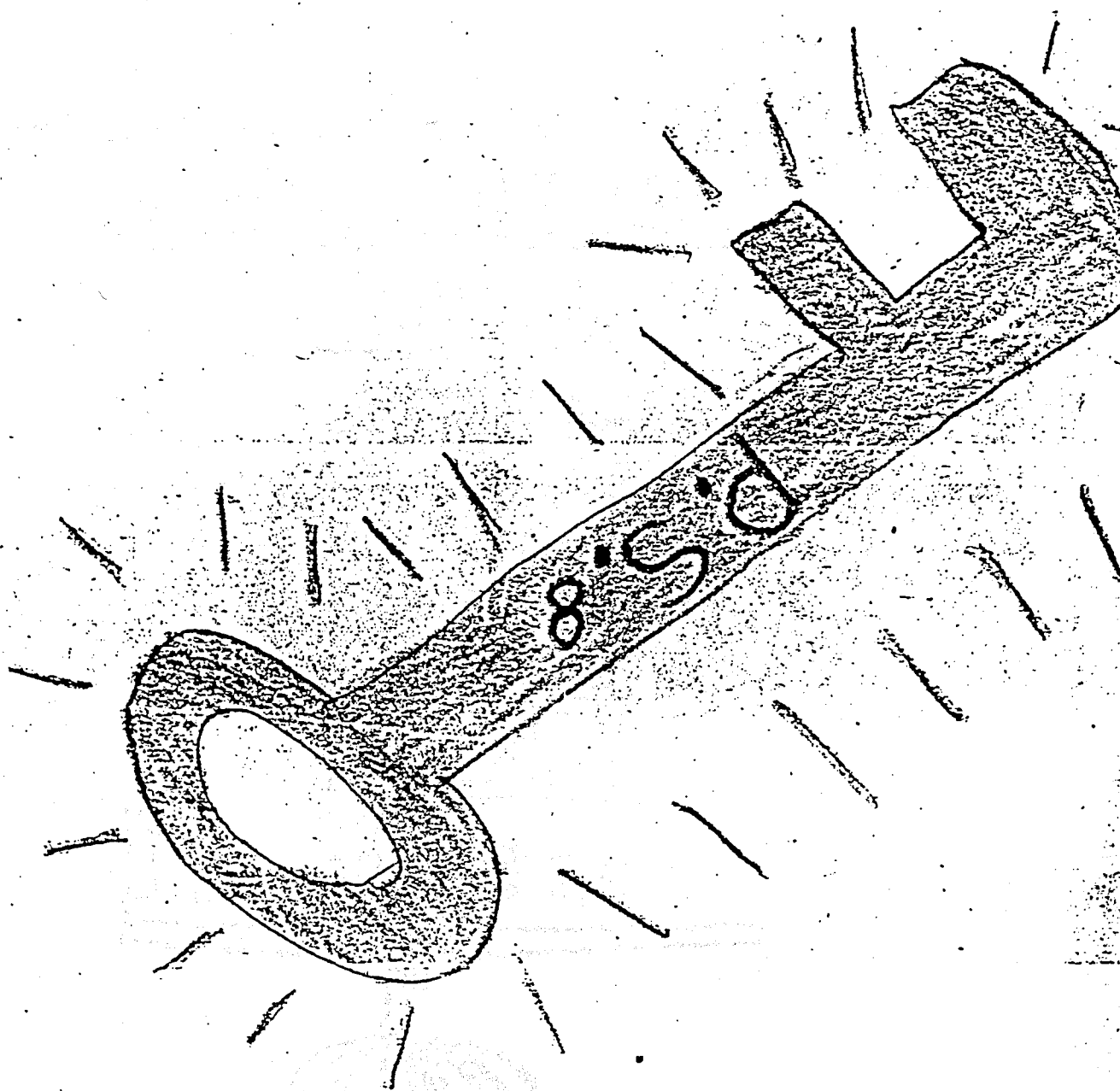
In Chapter 10 Shirley and her friends went to Mr. P's to listen to the baseball game.



In Chapter 11 Shirley and



In Chapter 12 Shirley gave



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
LIBRARY  
1100 EAST 58TH STREET  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637  
TEL: 773-936-3300

The True

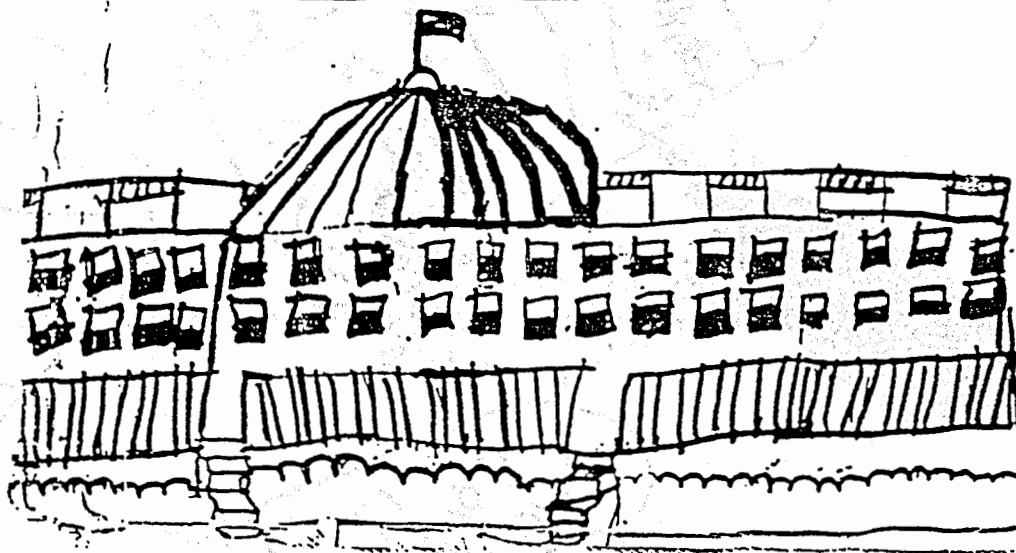
or

False Book

of the

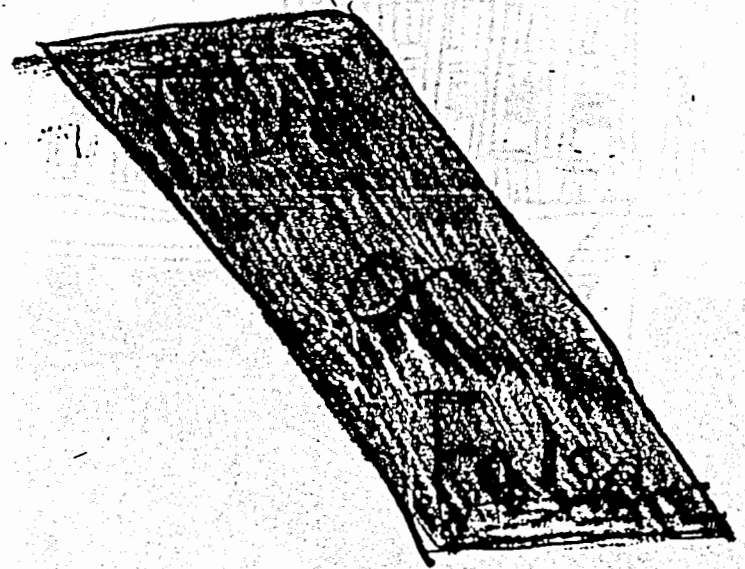
U.S.

Presidents



James Madison

<sup>32</sup> James Madison wrote the Constitution.



True, James Madison did write the Constitution



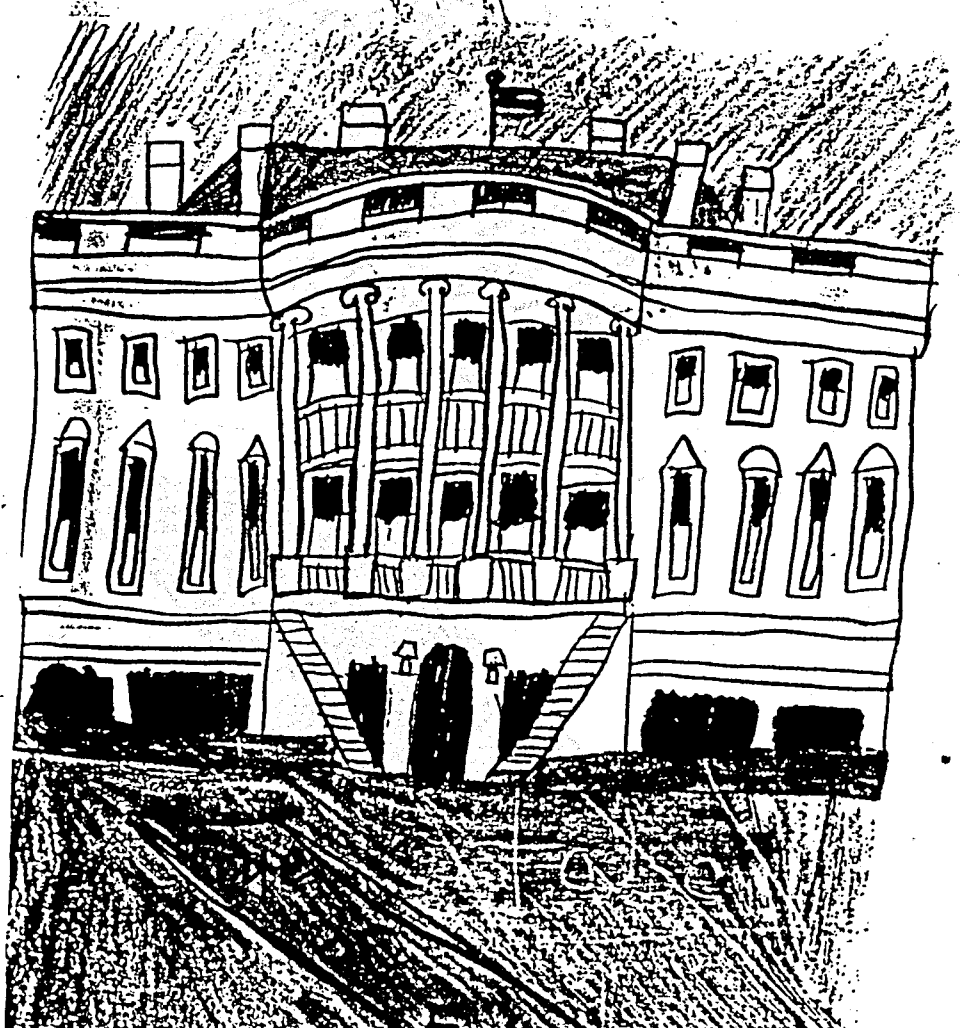
The Constitution is almost done!

Wow!

James Monroe

33

James Monroe was the fifth president to live in the White House.



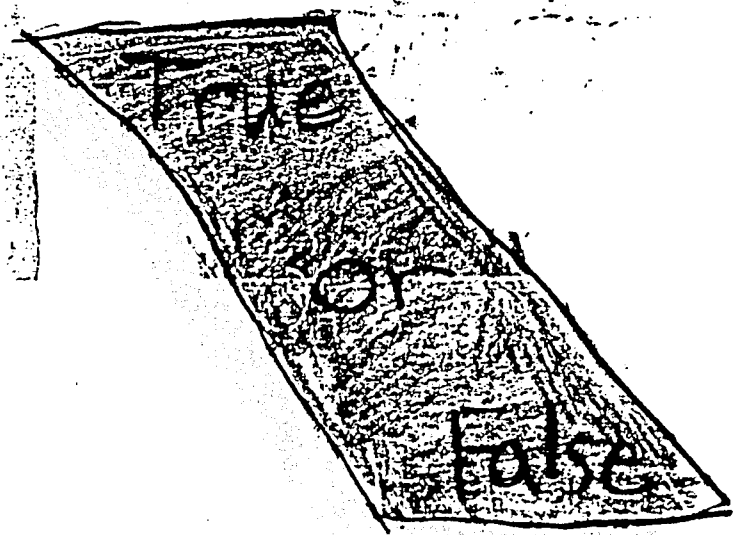
False, James Monroe was the fourth president to live in the White House.

4th

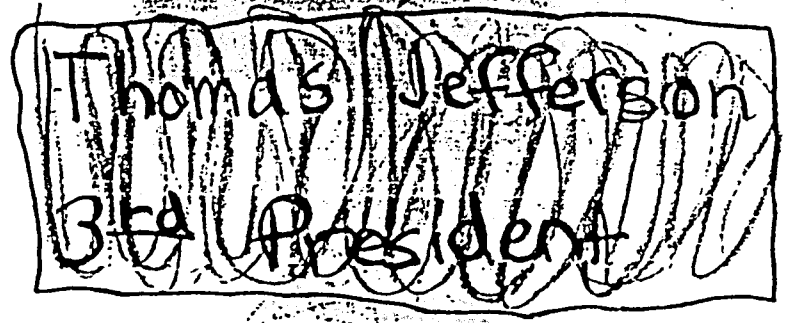
1 2 3 4  
President

34 Thomas Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence sp. -!



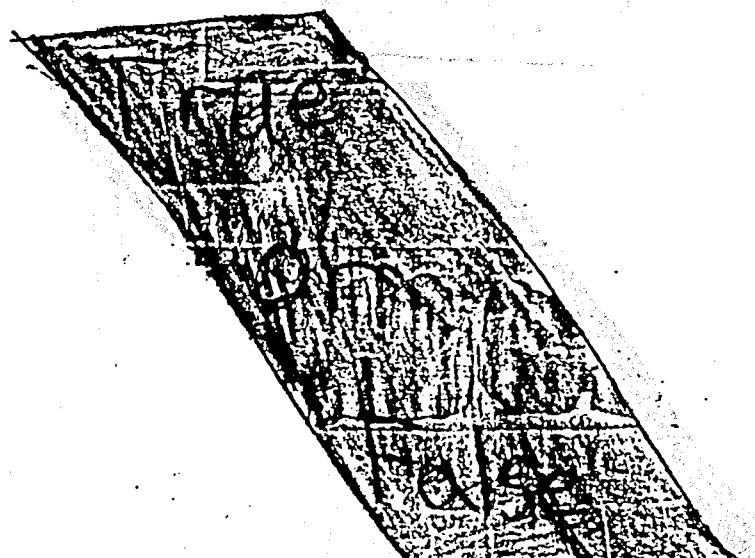
True, Thomas Jefferson did write the Declaration of Independence



John Adams

John Adams was born in 1745.

1745



False, John Adams was born in 1735.



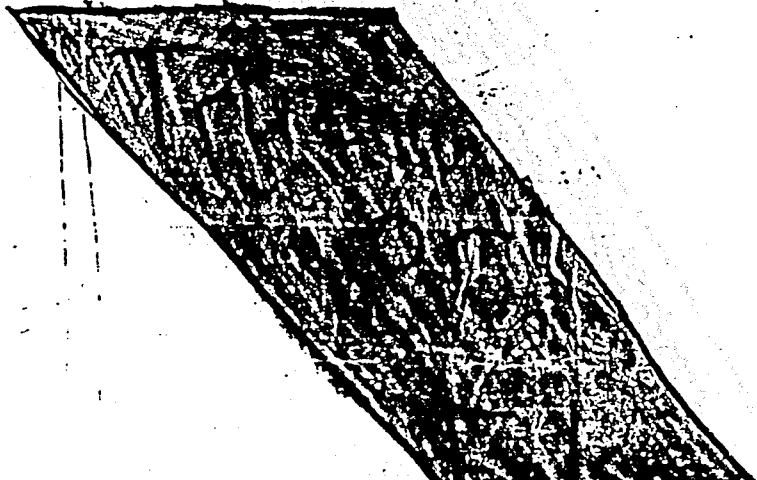
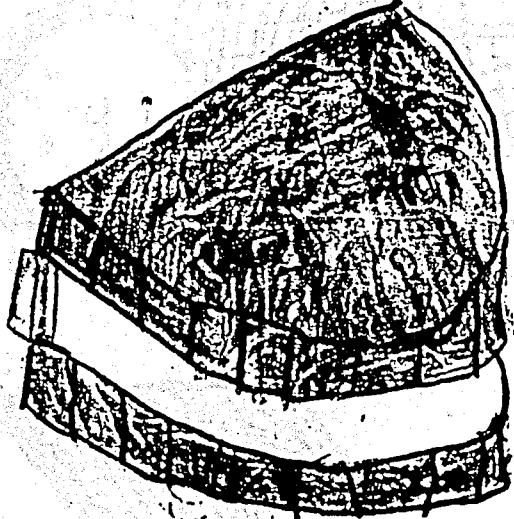
John Adams  
Second President 1797-1801



# George Washington

36

George Washington  
had wooden teeth.



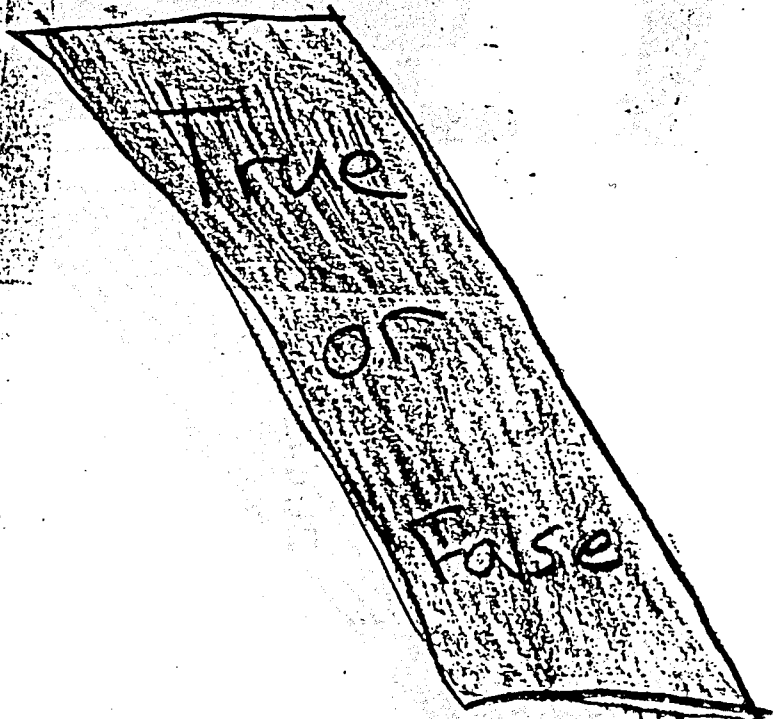
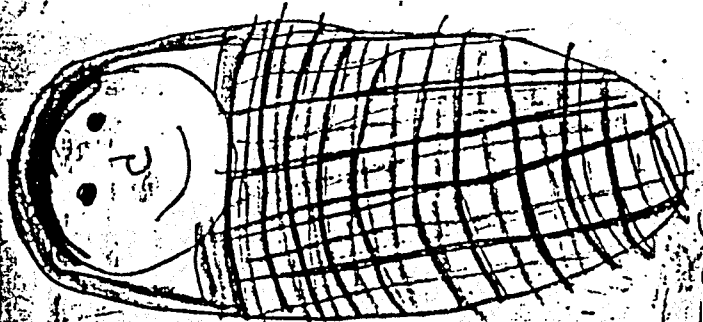
True, George  
Washington did have  
wooden teeth.

I  
have  
wooden  
teeth.  
I  
have  
wooden  
teeth.

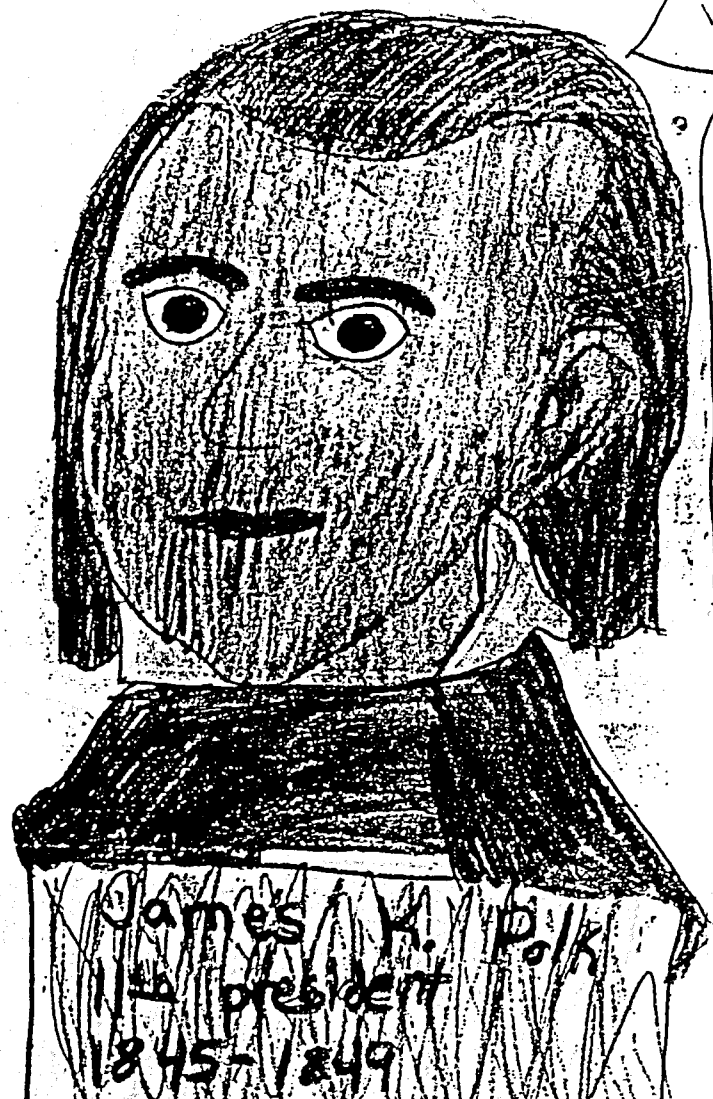


JAMES THE POLK

James Polk was born  
in North Carolina.



True, James Polk  
was born in North  
Carolina.



I was born!

North Carolina

# William H. Harrison

Harrison was the 4th president to die in office.

oh no!



False, Harrison was the 1st president to die in office.

He was the 1st one to die in office.

I didn't know that.

True or False

William H. Harrison  
9th president  
March - April 1841

John Tyler

39

John Tyler died in  
1842.

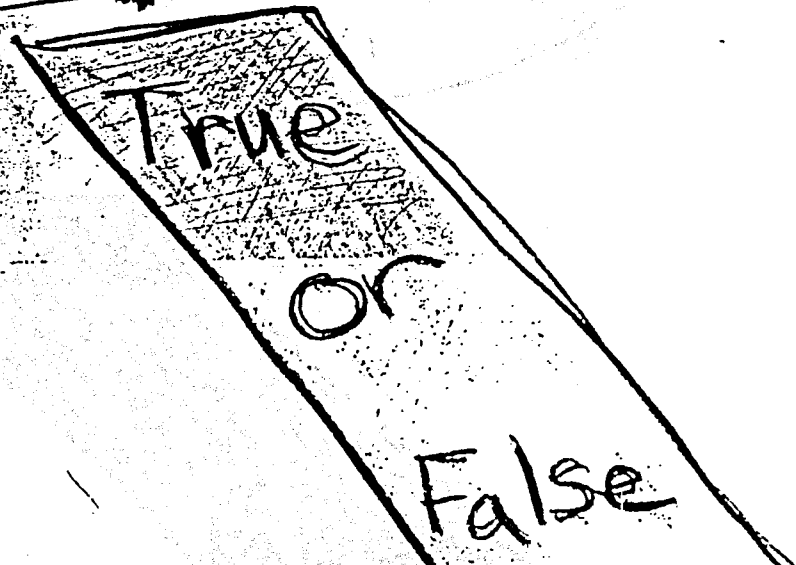


False, John Tyler  
died in 1862.



# Andrew Jackson

Andrew Jackson was president from 1827-1837.



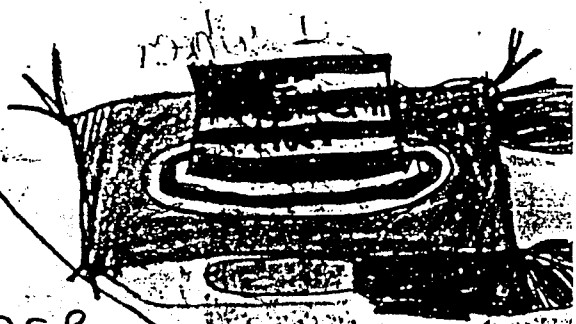
False, Andrew was president from 1829-1837.

You were right if you guessed....

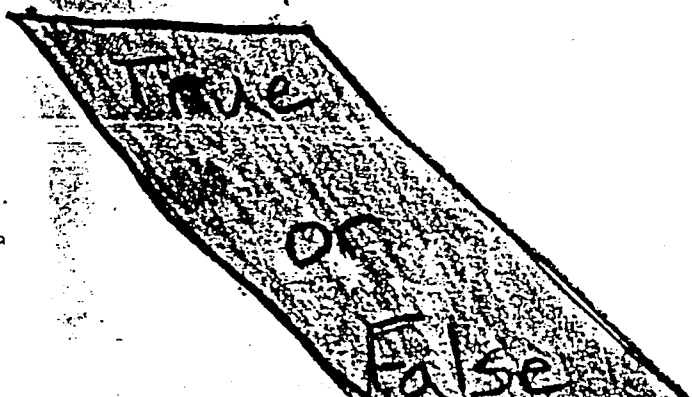
False!

# Millard Fillmore

Millard Fillmore didn't have any vice-presidents

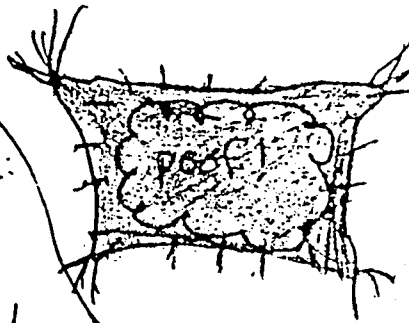


Do  
How  
pronounce  
p, you vice-?



True, Millard Fillmore didn't have any vice-presidents.

Hey where is my vice-president?



Well I better get rid of this hat then.

You don't have any vice-presidents sir.

Appendix B

**Student B's Portfolio Exhibits**

## Pencil Talk

Everyone left for lunch and the pencils began to talk. Until they got board. And then thaire tammys began to grumble. They went to look for something to eat. They found some bread of the shelf. And they found some peanut butter on the shelf to. They found some jam in the fridge. They found a knife aspoon in a jror. And they found some chitoes on the shelf. And then they made some Sand wiches. When they finished

pat. The kids a l u



They began working again.

The End

## Stone Fox

In the beginning of Stone Fox Grandfather gets sick so Little Willy runs down the road to Doc Smith's house. Doc Smith is a doctor who helps most of the town when they're sick. Little Willy and Doc Smith rushed back to Grandfather. Doc Smith thinks Grandfather got sick because he was worried about something. Little Willie finds out what is wrong with

Grandfather when Mr. Snyder the tax man comes to their house about taxes. Little Willie and grand father owe the bank \$500 Little Willy doesn't know what to do until he sees a poster in Lester's Genral Store. The poster says that there is going to be a race in town, The prize money was \$500 just enough to pay the taxes. The entry fee is \$50. That is all of little Willies collage money he was saving up to.

Decides to enter anyway. The only problem is that Stone Fox enters the race too. All races that Stone Fox has entered before this he had won. That makes Little Willie worried. On the day of the race Little Willie's eye is swollen shut because Stone Fox had punched him last night at 10:00 the race began. Little Willie knew more than half the race so did his dog.

Then they came to a  
frozen lake they crossed it  
but nobody else did. When  
they passed little Willie's  
house he saw a male  
figure sitting up in Grandfather's  
bedroom. When little Willie  
looks closer he sees it is  
Grandfather. Little Willie  
has made Grandfather  
better. They are still in  
place but Stone Fox was  
catching up 10 feet from the

Finish line Searchlight's heart bursts. Then he dies. Stone Fox notices this and stops beside them. Little Willie asks Stone Fox "is he dead?" Stone Fox nods his head in reply. Then Stone Fox pulls out a rifle and draws a line in the snow with it. Then he says to all the racers who caught up by now "Anybody crosses this line and I'll shoot." Then he nods at Searchlight and then towards the finish line.

signaling to carry searchlight  
across the finish line That  
is exactly what Little Willie  
did, He had won the race.

Grandfather was better,

# GALAXY WARS

## CHAPTER 1

### WHO WILL WIN?

Once upon a time there was a cadet named Joe. Joe was always interested in aliens. He was in an Air Force Special crew called Air Squadron. He was the general.

Someday Joe hoped he could fight against aliens (if there were any)! Joe led expeditions out far in space, but never found any.

Finally it was 4000 AD; some guy invented a super hyper ship. Joe bought it. He went to the Andromeda Galaxy and found aliens! He tried to establish communication. They declared war.

It was a terrible battle. For every 1 they killed, 2 more came back. Joe and his team were running out of missiles and team members. All of a sudden the real Air Force came in. Then aliens were blowing up left and right. Soon enough there were no missiles left. Joe had to forfeit this battle, but he didn't. He started shooting his machine guns, and the group followed. When they were out of those they landed on the main ship, and pulled out their blasters and droids. They sent the droids in first. The little machines took out a lot of aliens. After a while all the droids were gone. Now they were on their own. Then an alien came down the narrow hall. The group fired and fired. No effect. Joe hit it and it fell down. He checked it was a droid. (Aliens have droids, too.)

Then they found the meeting room, and lit a big bomb called the Jack Bomb! It exploded! It killed most of them. Joe took the



king, and an Air Force guy took the Queen. Joe said, "Forfeit or we'll kill them."

Then the aliens backed off. Joe couldn't believe it-- he had won. Just then a beast came running out onto the stage. Joe and the cadet shot the royal aliens. The beast stopped and went back. Then all the aliens fell over in death. Joe really won this war of the galaxies. THE GALAXY WAR! Joe took a couple of the inventions the aliens had made and left. Joe became the best hero the world ever had!

Appendix C

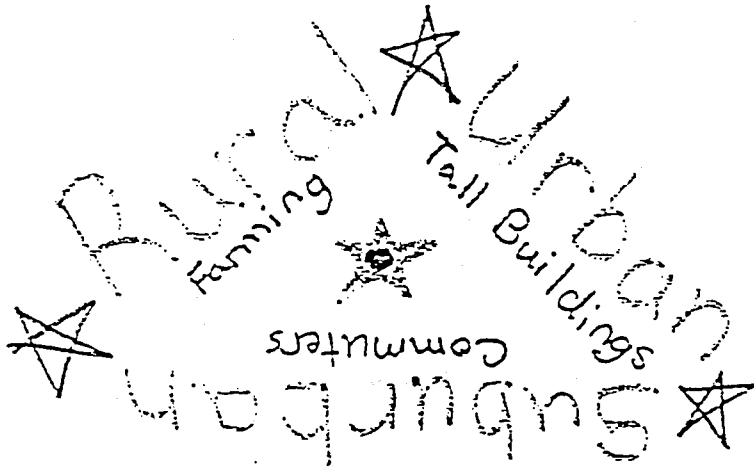
Student C's Portfolio Exhibits

## My Pals

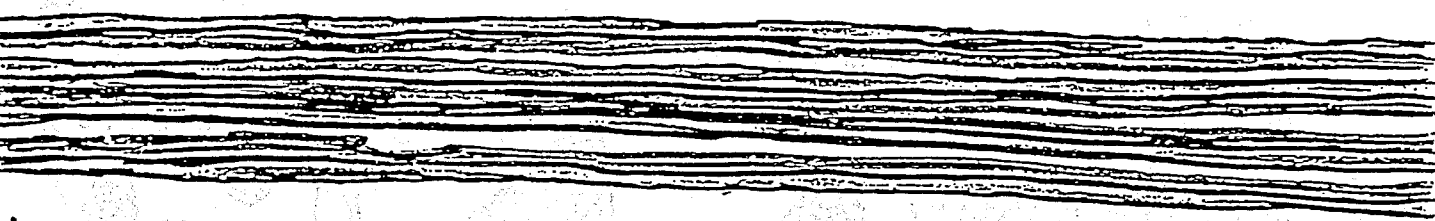
My two dogs are named Domino and Bear. Bear is a Pointer and Domino is a Dalmation. They both like to play together. Bear and Domino are black and white and are friends. They like each other a lot. When ever Domino comes in the house when someone gets him off the chain because when Bear is going to sleep he jumps and runs to Domino. Sometimes I get to give Bear a ball. Bear and Domino always play fight because they think it's fun. Bear

always wants to chew and bite. Bear and Domino sleep all day and run all night. They always want to play. Once when we came home from school they chewed up almost everything. We not actually Domino but Bear did it all. Once when we put them on the chain and we went inside they started to roll around in the mud and we had to give them a bath. I really like my dogs their nice.

# Communities



People, parks, schools



Hospitals, and houses

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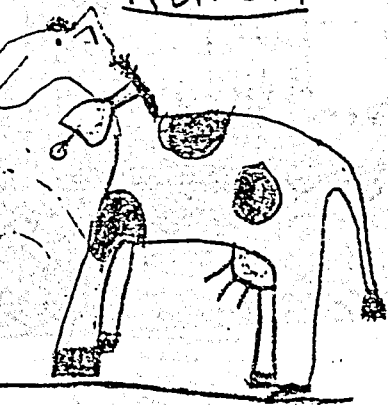
Page 5 - Suburban Description

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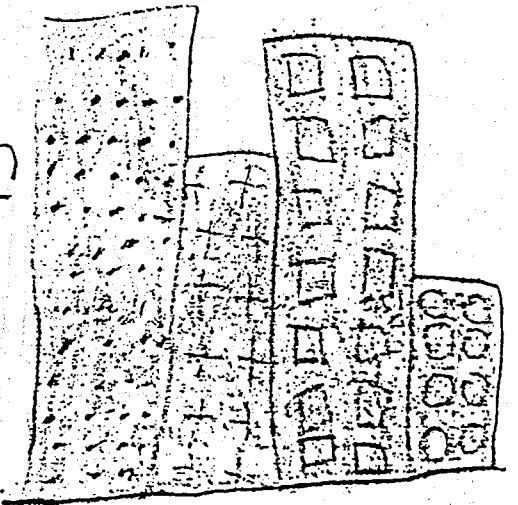
Rural



Suburban



Urban



Page 1

# Rural Picture



Rural Communitys are out in the country. Rural areas are like farms. They are surrounded by trees. Rural areas have lots of fields, trees, flowers, gravel, and dirt. There are lots and lots of animals and barns. Sometimes people have to travel to the nearest town to buy food. Even the farmers wife goes outside to take the hens eggs for their breakfast. They even have to work very hard to clean the house, the barn, the yard, and crush grain from their crops or fields. Lots of houses have dogs to round up sheep. Rural areas have very few tall buildings. Rural Communitys are not at all like Urban and Suburban areas. There are also Dairy Farms in Rural areas. There are hundreds of cows to be milked everyday and night. So, everybody who lives on the farm have to get up early, go to a big barn, and milk the cows.

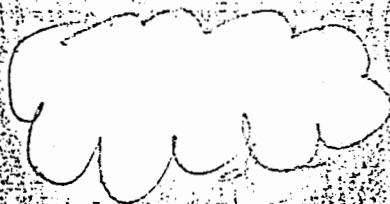


# Suburban Picture



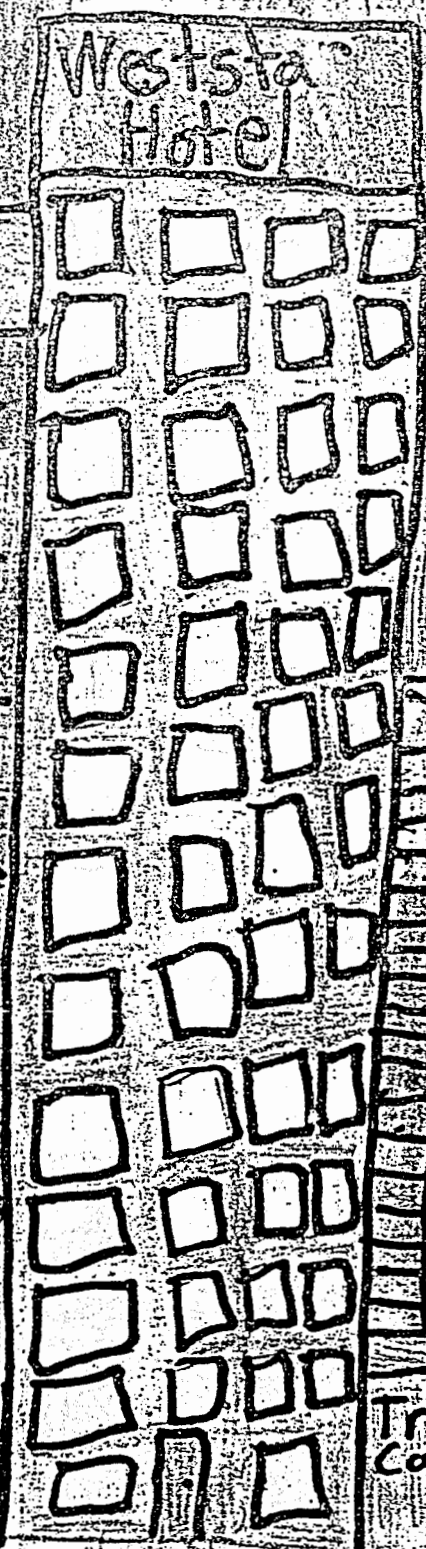
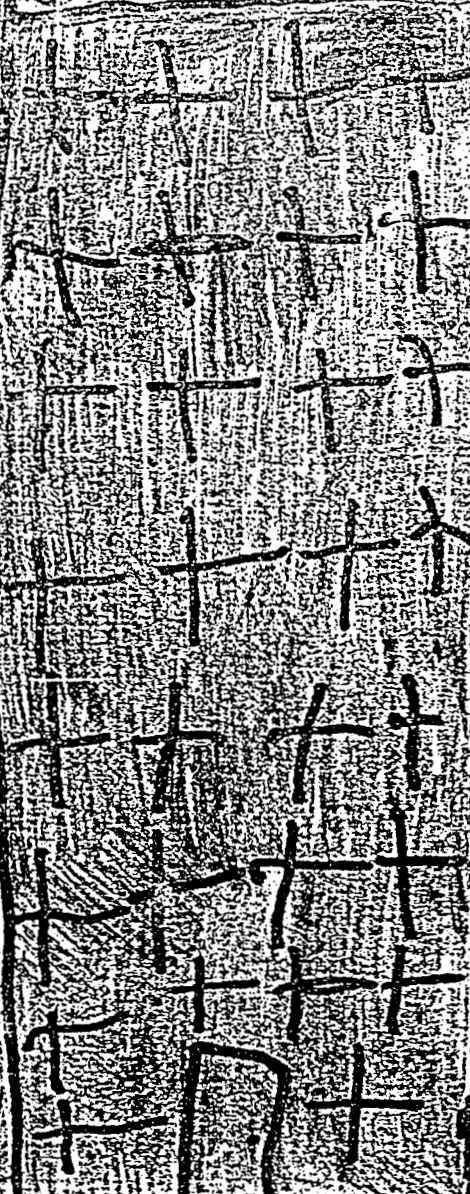
Suburban areas are close to a city. Suburbs have commuters that travel from suburb to city. Suburbs are usually less crowded than cities. Suburbs all have stores where people shop and homes where people live. Suburbs all depend on good transportation to travel to the city. Transportation can move people or products from place to place. There are suburbs all around urban areas. There is a suburb named Austell that is near the city of Atlanta. Sometimes when commuters are heading for the city the roads get busier and busier. Some other suburbs surrounding Atlanta besides Austell are Smyrna, Marietta, Sandy Springs, Norcross, Tucker, Clarkston, Decatur, Forest Park, Hapeville, and East Point. Sometimes if suburbs grow they become a city like the other city.

fishmen



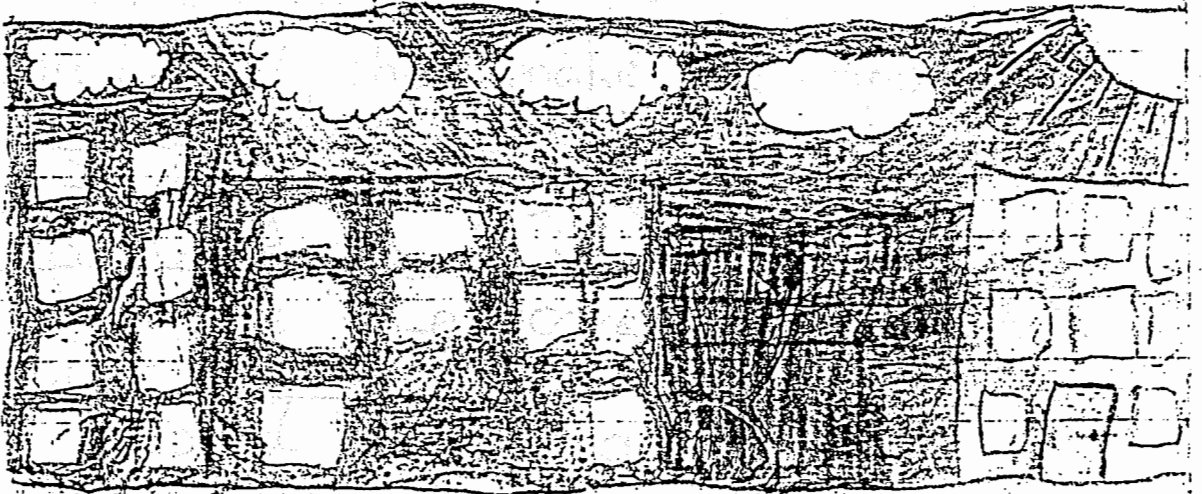
Office Max

Weststar  
Hotel



The  
Car

An Urban area is a community that is a city. Also an Urban area has suburbs surrounding it. People help make Urban areas grow. One natural resource that cities need is people. People are the ones who help build cities. There are many tall buildings in Urban areas. Washington has a city called Seattle. In Seattle they have a very important industry. It is a big building where they make airplanes. There are also many assembly lines in the big building where they make airplanes.



# Glossary

Assembly Line - An assembly line is a line of workers that put together the parts of a product.

Central Business District - A central business district is where part of a city's stores and restaurants are located.

Commuter - A commuter is a person who travels from a Suburban place to a nearby city to work.

Consumer - A consumer is a person who buys and uses a product.

Dairy Farm - A dairy farm is a farm where hundreds of cows are to be milked.

Factory - A factory is a place where goods are made.

Industry - An industry is the many businesses that make one product.

Pasture - A pasture is a field of grass of which animals feed on.

Prairie - A prairie is a flat land that was once covered with grass.

Port - A port is a place where ships load and unload goods.

Producer - A producer is a person who sells or makes goods.

Province - A province is like a state in Canada only it is called a province.

Public Transportation - Public transportation is what all people can use in a community.

Rural Area - A rural area is a community surrounded by forests and farms.

Suburb - A suburb is a community that is located near a city.

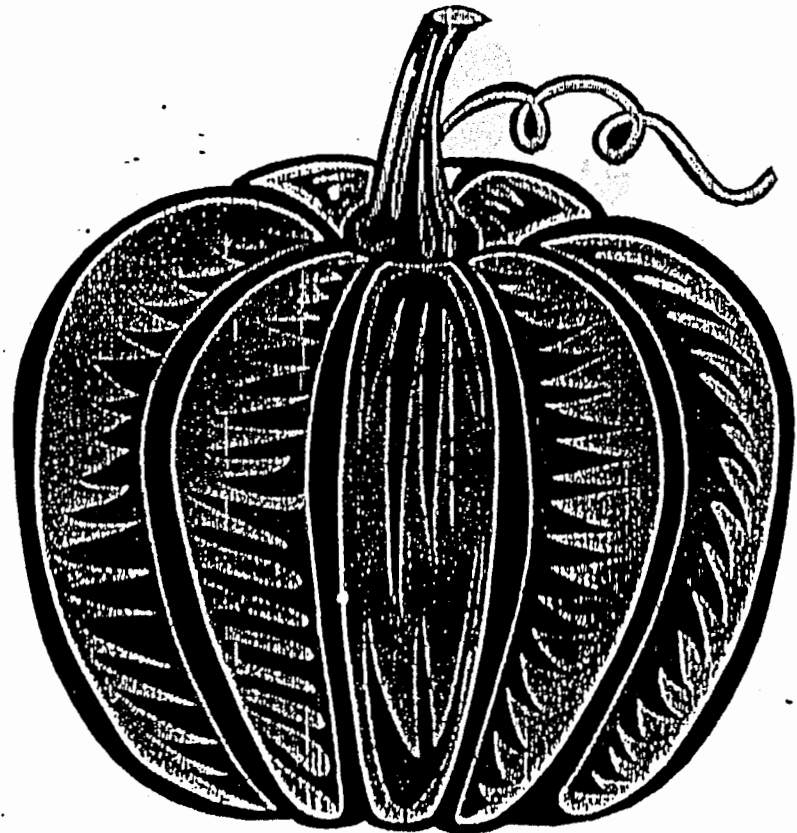
Subway - A subway is an underground train that

Transportation - Transportation is cars, planes, trucks, vans, helicopters, and trains that take people from place to place.

Urban Area - An Urban area is a city with lots of people and suburbs surrounding it.

# The Halloween Hunt

It was Halloween  
afternoon and the  
kids of the  
neighborhood were  
at the park talking  
about where they  
were going to go  
for their route.





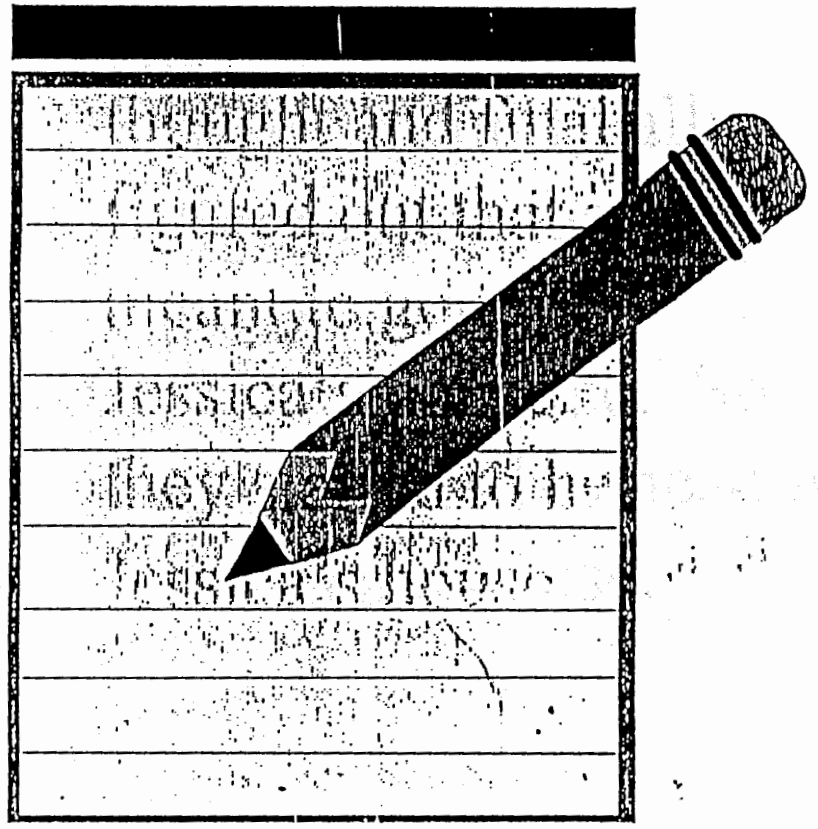
There were 5 kids. Their names were Jessica, Tyler, Brittany, Alex, and Sara.



They decided they would first go to Sara's house. Then they would go to Alex's house then Brittany's house and then to Tyler's and Jessica's.

After that they went to Sara's house to get some candy but instead Sara's mom gave them a piece of paper.

They thanked Sara's mom for the piece of paper even though they didn't know what is was for.



They opened the note to see what it said. The note that Sara's mom had given them had said:

*“Go to the person's house that begins with the letter J.”*

They thought and thought and finally figured out that it meant to go to Jessica's house. So they started to head for Jessica's house.

Five minutes later they arrived at Jessica's house. Again they held out their bags for candy but again all Jessica's mom gave them was a piece of paper with a message on it.

This time the message said:

*“If you know your A B C's this riddle will be of ease.*

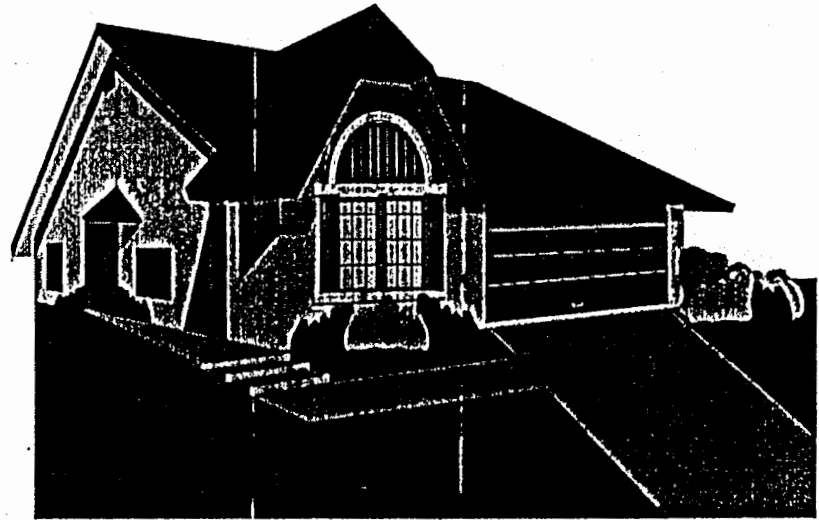
*The letter B is one of these letters.*

*The faster you get to this house, the better”*

It took them a while to figure it out but they did it turned out they were supposed to go to Brittany's house.



They went to Brittany's House and again all they got was a piece of paper. Alex was holding the piece of paper and was about to open it when Sara said.....



“Wait before we open it lets see who it can’t be. We know it can’t be my house we’ve already gone there and it can’t be Jessica’s or Brittany’s houses either.”

“So all that leaves is Tyler and Alex.”

And Sara was right it wasn’t Jessica’s house or Brittany’s, it wasn’t even Sara’s. But it was.....



*“Apples grow on tree’s,  
and taffy cooks with  
ease.*

*Two of the words are  
underlined,*

*One of the letters that  
they begin with comes  
before the letter E.”*

The two people that had  
the same letters in the  
beginning of the  
underlined words and  
in their names were  
Tyler and Alex.

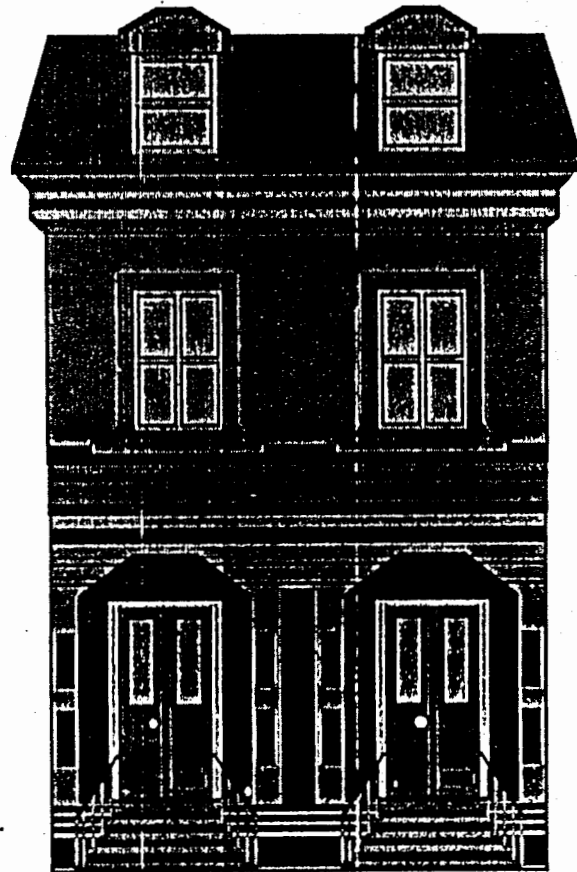
But which one came  
before the letter E.

Hmm.....

They began to sing the  
alphabet.

*A B C D E* but then they  
stopped. They had said  
the letters A and E.

That meant they were  
supposed to go to  
Alex's house.



They started to go to  
Alex's house that was  
only two houses down  
the street from  
Brittany's house.



When they got there they said “We don’t want any candy we just want our clue so we can get to the bottom of this mystery.”

So Alex’s mom gave them a piece of paper and said “You’re getting to the bottom

The note said

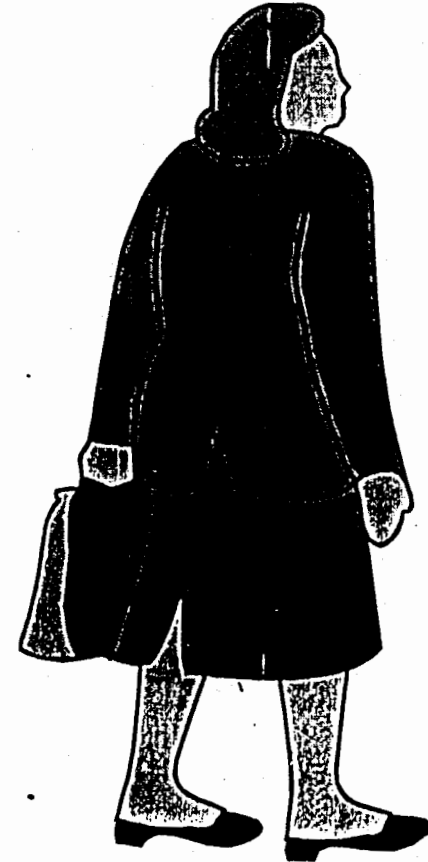
*“There’s one last house  
to go*

*But go there very, very,  
slow*

*Wait ten minutes before  
you arrive,*

*Waiting there will be a  
surprise.”*

But no one saw Alex's  
mom sneak over to  
Tyler's house  
followed by Sara's  
mom and then even  
Brittany's and  
Jessica's moms sneak  
by too.



Well they had ten minutes to wait before going to Tyler's house. They had nothing else to do but guess what the surprise could be. Alex said it could be a ghost but they knew it wouldn't be a ghost.



Time was ticking by five  
minutes left.....  
three minutes left...  
two minutes left.....  
one minute thirty  
second s..... Ten,  
nine, eight, seven, six  
five, four, three, two,  
one, Then they dashed

off to Tyler's house. But  
when they opened the  
door they didn't see a  
ghost but they did see  
their moms dressed in  
costumes. Then they  
yelled "Happy  
Halloween!" and that  
is what they had they  
partied the whole

The next morning the  
kids of the  
neighborhood got  
together and said what  
a good time they had.

The End





Appendix D

Reflecting on Writing

Parent Response to Writing Portfolio

Evaluating Writing Pieces

# Reflecting on Writing

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Piece:

\_\_\_\_\_

I chose this piece because

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Its special strengths are

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If I were going to redo this piece now, I would

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# PARENT RESPONSE TO WRITING PORTFOLIO

Dear Parent(s)...

Thank you for joining in on the sharing of my Writing Portfolio. Please write your thoughts about the portfolio.

\*\*\*\*\*

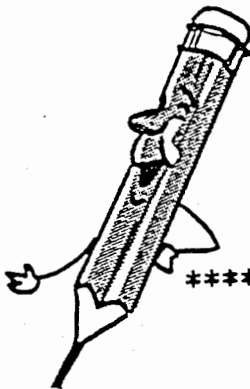
What was your favorite part of the portfolio?

Did anything in the portfolio surprise you?

What did you learn about my writing from the portfolio?

Compliments and comments:

\*\*\*\*\*



\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature*

## Evaluating Writing Pieces

	Ideas	Organization	Word Choice	*Sentence Structure	*Mechanics
4	Fresh, original Focuses on topic Supporting details	Ideas connected Strong beginning, middle, end Sequenced and logical	Wide variety used Consistent and appropriate usage Words "enhance" ideas	Clearly written Complete sentences Variety of sentence length	*Appropriate or acceptable: - spelling - capitalization - punctuation
3	Some original ideas General focus on topic Most supporting details included	Most ideas connected Good beginning, middle, end Most ideas sequenced & logical	Some variety Mostly consistent and appropriate Words generally support ideas	Most sentences clearly written Simple sentences Some variety of length	Some errors in - spelling - capitalization - punctuation
2	Few original ideas Moves away from focus Few supporting details	Some ideas connected Attempts beginning, middle, end Not always sequenced & logical	Common word choice Some appropriate word choices Little use of descriptive words	Some unclear sentences Run-on, fragmented, sentences Little variety	Several errors in - spelling - capitalization - punctuation
1	Incomplete ideas Unfocused Lacks details	Few ideas connected Lacks beginning, middle, end Little sequence & logic	Limited word choice Inappropriate word choices No attempt at descriptive words	Sentences not clear Frequent fragmented sentences No variety	Many errors in - spelling - capitalization - punctuation
0	No attempt	No attempt	No attempt	No attempt	No attempt

\*May vary depending upon which draft it is of the child's writing

(Rubric adapted from Batzel, J. (1992). Portfolio assessment and evaluation. Cypress, CA: Creative Teaching Press, 53.)