

5-2010

The Effects of Participating in a Service-Learning Experience on the Development of Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning of Third Graders in an Urban Elementary School in Southeastern United States

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THE EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATING IN A SERVICE-LEARNING EXPERIENCE ON
THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-EFFICACY FOR SELF-REGULATED LEARNING
OF THIRD GRADERS IN AN URBAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN
SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy
Curriculum and Instruction

by
Nancy McBride Arrington
May 2010

Accepted by:
Dr. Carol G. Weatherford, Committee Chair
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Abstract

The teacher-researcher employed multiple methods in this action research to analyze the effects of service-learning on the self-efficacy for self-regulated learning of her third-grade music students as they participated in an intergenerational project—sharing music and writing with residents in a local nursing home.

Quantitative data were analyzed using independent samples t-tests and regression analyses. The quantitative data included the results from the *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006) and progress rating scales administered by the teacher-researcher. Emergent coding of qualitative data revealed recurring themes derived from the following sources: observation and field notes, students' reflective journals, student and teacher interviews, classroom artifacts, and informal discussions with the homeroom teacher. Qualitative results supported the findings of the quantitative analyses.

The analyses revealed that the students who participated in a service-learning experience improved their self-efficacy ratings for self-regulated learning significantly more than the students who did not participate in service-learning during the three-month project.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family who has always believed in my abilities and aspirations—especially to my mother, my encourager.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to: the third graders participating in this project for their energy and enthusiasm; their homeroom teacher for allowing me to work with her students during this project; the nursing home residents for their uninhibited cooperation and delightful inspiration; the gracious staff of the nursing home for allowing and encouraging this rewarding project.

Thank you, Dr. Janet Mason, for introducing me to service-learning.

Thanks to: committee chair, Dr. Carole G. Weatherford, for the Wendy's value-menu meetings; Dr. David Weatherford, committee member and husband of chair, for accompanying us to the Wendy's meetings—especially for remaining with me through this process after his retirement; Dr. Angela Eckhoff and Dr. Bob Green, committee members, for providing input during the process of this study; Dr. Patrick Rosopa for his assistance with statistical analysis.

A special acknowledgement goes to my daughter, Heather, for editing my manuscript. Her anecdotal remarks, which accompanied her editing notes, made me chuckle on occasion—laughter which gave me renewed energy to continue the writing/editing cycle of the process.

My deepest heartfelt thanks go to my husband, George, for the many sacrifices required of him during this difficult journey. I have a lot to make up to you, Geo.

I must offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God for allowing me the opportunity to participate in advanced studies and for providing me the mental and physical strength to endure the dissertation process. Amen.

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Chapter One

The Question and its Setting

The Introduction

The development of self-efficacy in children, particularly in the construct of self-regulated learning, is a highly desirable trait as they are progressing through their elementary grades. Not only are students expected to develop in this area, but teachers are expected to foster that development by employing various instructional strategies and methodologies.

One teaching methodology that consistently produces outcomes leading to enhanced self-efficacy is service-learning (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000; Eyler, 2009; Freeman & King, 2001). The researcher in this study began utilizing this methodology in her elementary general education music classes ten years ago as a practitioner. Some of the outcomes included students' completing assignments by deadlines, learning to cooperate, and becoming more responsible in such activities as organizing their school work (Arrington & Weatherford, 2009a). Additionally, after following up with high school students who had previously participated in music service-learning projects while in elementary school, the researcher discovered that their participation in their earlier years was one of the contributing factors of their subsequent success in their academics, along with their continued involvement in service-learning experiences (Arrington & Weatherford, 2009b). Due to the outcomes of the elementary students' participation in these experiential learning projects, the researcher began the journey of searching for *why* such results were occurring.

The service-learning project in this study involved students from a third-grade general music class interacting with nursing home residents. The children planned, prepared, and shared music and writing activities with the residents in six sessions during a three-month period. The children completed self-ratings and responded to journal prompts and interviews during reflective sessions following each of their interactions.

Freeman and King (2001), Palkowski (2006), and Swick (2001) discovered that both young students and elderly benefit from being involved in intergenerational service-learning projects. In their studies, for example, the children developed positive attitudes toward the seniors, became more caring, and developed in their language skills. Additionally, the seniors experienced positive social connections and cognitive stimulation.

The students participating in this project had received general music training since pre-school, enjoyed singing and playing instruments, and were developing their writing skills in a general classroom setting. The venues of music and writing were natural choices, allowing the students to employ familiar skills that they enjoy—thus contributing to motivation which leads to increased self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994; Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Zimmerman & Ringle, 1981). Also, McIntire (2007), an instructor in music education, believes that music and literacy go hand in hand. Literacy is the ability to use language to communicate by reading, writing, listening, and speaking. *The National Standards for Music Education* (MENC, 2009) promote literacy. For example, Standard One, *Singing*, often incorporates reading the lyrics of a song. Standard Four, *Composing and Arranging Music to Accompany Readings*, involves both reading

and writing. *Listening to and Analyzing Music*, Standard Six, as well as Standard Seven, *Evaluating Performances*, involve listening, speaking and writing. Standard Nine, *Relating to History and Culture*, frequently involves all four components of literacy.

Additionally, music (along with the other visual/performing arts) naturally lends itself to open-endedness as students are allowed to create accompaniments and improvise with rhythms and melodies. Through the arts they have opportunity to think creatively and solve problems by imagining various solutions (Eisner, 1962; MENC, 2009; Phillips, 2006). Throughout this project the students had ample opportunity to create activities and make their own decisions about their involvement with the residents. This personal involvement further contributed to their motivation, a key in the development of self-efficacy through personal goal-setting and self-monitoring.

The use of music and writing are also effective with elderly residents in a nursing home setting, as was evident in this study—the residents responded to the music activities, and demonstrated their interest in reading and hearing what the students wrote. Clinical benefits of using music with the elderly include increased social communication skills by motivating and encouraging purposeful interaction (Aldridge, 2000). Singing has been used in music therapy with the elderly for the purpose of bringing human contact with others, which aids them in forming an emotionally intimate relationship. It is thought that this intimacy occurs as the elderly persons connect to their past experiences of being sung to when they were in need of comfort. Additionally, both singing and playing instruments have potential to build community for the older persons who desire contact with others (Clair, 2000).

The Purpose of the Study

This multiple-methods study addressed the effects of participating in a service-learning experience on the development of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning of third graders in an urban elementary school in Southeastern United States. In this design, one data set provided a supportive, secondary role in a study based primarily on the other data set. The primary purpose of this study used pre- and post-service surveys and progress rating scales, which predicted that participating in the service-learning experience (intervention) would positively influence the self-efficacy ratings for self-regulated learning for the third graders at Whitefield Elementary School. A secondary purpose was to gather qualitative responses to interviews, open-ended questions and journal prompts, along with the anecdotal notes of the teacher-researcher that explored the outcomes of the third graders' participation in a service-learning project with the elderly residents at Brookstone Living Center. The reason for collecting the second database was to provide support for the primary purpose.

The Importance of the Study

"Young children must gain self-knowledge of their capabilities in broadening areas of function. They have to develop, appraise, and test their physical capabilities, their social competencies, their linguistic skills, and their cognitive skills for comprehending and managing the many situations they encounter daily"

(Epstein, 2007, p.73).

This quote by an early childhood education specialist reminds educators that they face a fundamental challenge of helping students develop into caring and productive citizens by making them socially aware of others and the needs of their surrounding

communities—starting in the early years. Additionally, one of the basic goals of education is to equip students with self-regulatory skills that enable them to learn on their own. Earlier studies have shown a positive impact of experiential education on the development of self-esteem, self-concept, and self-efficacy in adolescents (Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Galati, 2004). Thus, the practice of engaging young students in service-learning and its effects on the development of their self-efficacy for self-regulated learning were explored in this research.

Service-learning is a form of education that involves students in needed service in the real world as they develop their academic and social skills. In this study, the need being addressed was that of residents in a nursing home needing stimulation and companionship. The students in the participant group were introduced to the concept of service-learning through the components of preparation, action, reflection, and celebration, which are a part of *The Eleven Essential Elements of Service-Learning* as outlined by the National Service-Learning Cooperative and the National Youth Leadership Council (Peace Corps, 2009).

Expected outcomes of the student participant group included (a) developing responsibility in planning and carrying out tasks, (b) increasing awareness of and compassion toward elderly residents in a nursing home, (c) enhancing their music skills, (d) increasing their communication skills, (e) developing their self-efficacy as it relates to their ability to contribute to society and prepare for their future, and (f) developing their self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. The outcomes related to self-efficacy for self-regulated learning are the only outcomes that were measured for this study.

Although there has been much research cited in the field of service-learning, much of the existing research examined the impact on middle school and high school students (Blyth, Saito, & Berkas, 1997). According to experts in the field, (i.e., Billig, 2002; Eyler, 2009; Freeman & Swick, 2003; Furco, 1996) there is a great need for additional research of the impacts of participating in service-learning experiences on younger children, particularly if service-learning is to become an integral part of the curriculum. Studies such as this seek to find more solid evidence of the effectiveness of utilizing service-learning experiences with young students, particularly in the areas of academic, civic, and personal benefits.

The Stated Research Question

What are the effects of participating in a service-learning experience on the development of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning of third graders in an urban elementary school in Southeastern United States?

The Sub-questions

The first sub-question. To what degree are self-efficacy traits of self-regulated learning demonstrated by the students, as indicated by their rating-scale surveys and as cited in their reflections?

The second sub-question. What service-learning activities have the most impact on students' development of self-efficacy for their self-regulated learning?

The third sub-question. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in finishing their assignments by deadlines?

The fourth sub-question. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in taking good notes during class instruction?

The fifth sub-question. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in using the library to get information for class assignments?

The sixth sub-question. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in planning their school work for the day?

The seventh sub-question. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in organizing their school work?

The eighth sub-question. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in getting themselves to do their school work?

The multiple-method research sub-question. How do the qualitative results explain, support, or contradict the results from the quantitative survey research?

The Hypothesis

Students who participate in a service-learning experience will develop self-efficacy for self-regulated learning to a greater degree than the comparison group of students who do not participate in a service-learning experience.

The Delimitations

The study did not measure the achievement of music skills by the general education students.

The study did not attempt to predict the responses of the residents in the nursing home.

The study did not attempt to discover the knowledge and attitudes developed by children toward senior adults while participating in this service-learning experience.

The Definitions of Terms

Self-efficacy. One's self-judgments of personal capabilities to initiate and successfully perform specified tasks at designated levels, expend greater effort, and persevere in the face of adversity (Bandura, 1994).

Self-regulated learning. Learning guided by *metacognition* (thinking about one's thinking), *strategic action* (planning, monitoring, and evaluating personal progress against a standard), and *motivation to learn* (Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992).

Service-learning. A teaching/learning method that connects meaningful community service with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility (National Youth Leadership Council).

R.P.M.S. The acronym for Roadrunners Partnering in Music and Service. (The Roadrunner was the school mascot of the students participating in the study.)

Grandfriends. The term the third-graders used for referring to the residents in the nursing home.

Chapter Two

The Review of the Related Literature

The researcher reviewed literature of theory and research that has contributed to a definition of self-efficacy and describes the development of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in elementary-age children. The researcher also reported findings of studies that link service-learning and the development of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in children.

The Development of Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning in Children

“A positive learner self-concept depends on feeling capable” (Albert, 2003, p. 109).

As students progress through their education, they are expected to expand their self-regulatory skills in learning. The development of their self-efficacy in this construct contributes to the improvement of these skills.

Self-efficacy has been defined in several ways. Bandura (1994) offers, “One's self-judgments of personal capabilities to initiate and successfully perform specified tasks at designated levels, expend greater effort, and persevere in the face of adversity” (p. 71) and later (1997), “Perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (p. 3). He adds that efficacy beliefs include exercise of control over action and self-regulation of thought processes, motivation, and affective and physiological states. Also, perceived self-efficacy is not concerned with the number of skills one may have, but rather what one believes he/she can do with what he/she has under various circumstances (Bandura, 1997, Sherman, 2002). Weatherford (2009) states that self-efficacy is a two-fold belief: “I can do” and “I can make a difference.” For the purposes of this study,

the following definition is used: “*A person’s belief in his/her ability to succeed in specific situations.*”

Bandura (1997) uses the term “self-regulated cognitive development” in reference to the construct of self-regulated learning. He reminds us that the development in this area is for lifelong learning. Self-directed learning requires motivation along with cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

According to Pajares (2005), young people must believe that their actions can produce the effect they desire, or they will have very little incentive to face the difficulties that they will inevitably encounter. Bandura (1997) concludes that developing self-efficacy influences the motivation of students and their willingness to undertake challenging tasks in school. He further notes that there are three main features of motivation: (a) selection, (b) activation, and (c) sustained direction of behavior toward certain goals (p. 228). Albert (2003) outlines Three C’s in her program of cooperative discipline: Students believe they are *capable* and know they can *connect* and *contribute* successfully. She stresses that “one of the most accurate predictors of success in school is a student’s ‘I-can’ level. The ‘I-can’ level is a much more helpful motivator than the IQ level” (p. 102).

Schunk (1991) discovered that several factors contribute to increased self-efficacy, thus leading to enhanced motivation. For example, students with self-set goals have higher self-efficacy, skill, and motivation over those students who do not set goals. He also found that students who are taught to use learning strategies have high levels of self-efficacy, motivation and skill. Students’ self-modeling (viewing their

progress on videotapes), and performance-contingent rewards were two other influences on their self-efficacy development. He further found that linking children's prior achievement to their efforts ("You've been working hard") is more effective in their self-efficacy development than emphasizing the potential of their effort ("You need to work hard") (Schunk, 1991, p. 218). Additionally, Zimmerman and Ringle (1981) found that observing peer models leads to higher self-efficacy than observing teacher models or no models. They also found that observing multiple models increases the likelihood that the students will relate to at least one of the models.

Bandura's social cognitive theory emphasizes the role of self-beliefs. This theory is the overarching theoretical framework for the self-efficacy construct (Bandura, 1994). This theory asserts that "cognitive development and functioning are embedded in social relations" (Bandura, 1997, p. 228). Bandura's view is that individuals are self-organizing, pro-active, self-reflecting, and self-regulating. One of the components of this theory is that of *reciprocal determinism*, in which one's behavior is constantly under reciprocal influence from cognitive and environmental influences. Additionally, personal factors (cognition, affect, and biological events), behavior, and environment create interactions that cause *triadic reciprocity*. An application of this concept is, as follows: Teachers can precipitate this effect of triadic reciprocity by creating classroom experiences which improve their students' emotional states (personal factors), improve academic skills and self-regulatory habits (behavior), and alter classroom structure to contribute to their success (environment).

Michael Carrera, director of the Children's Aid Society, said, "Self-esteem is not taught, it is caught" (Carrera, 1999). Although self-esteem and self-efficacy are not to be confused—self esteem is a feeling of self-worth, whereas self-efficacy is truly knowing what one can do because that individual has made an effort, experienced success, and developed inner pride because of the accomplishment—the two are directly related (Bandura, 1997; Thomsen, 2006). People need more than high self-esteem to do well in given pursuits. Self-liking does not necessarily contribute to attaining a specific performance—they need firm confidence in their efficacy to mount and sustain the effort required to succeed. Albert (2003) also reminds us that teachers must help students recognize their own achievements and not wait for others' approval. Instead, they should look inside for self-approval. This confidence contributes to students' ability to self-regulate and be able to stay on task and complete their assignments on time.

Four determinants of self-efficacy include (a) experience, or actual performance, (b) modeling, or vicarious experiences, (c) social persuasions, or verbal persuasion, and (d) physiological factors, or cues (Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 2002). Bandura (1997) asserts that experiences (referred to as *Enactive Mastery Experiences*) have the most influence on self-efficacy. For example, successes contribute to the building of self-efficacy and failures may undermine it. He further offers that difficulties can actually provide opportunities to learn how to turn failure into success.

Modeling has been reviewed in studies by Bandura (1997) and Zimmerman and Ringle (1981). This vicarious experience occurs when students compare themselves to

others. Seeing other students succeed may cause the observant students to infer that they can also succeed with a similar task.

Social or verbal persuasions can affect self-efficacy. Positive feedback tends to increase it, whereas negative persuasion can decrease the construct.

The fourth determinant, physiological factors, arises from a person's perception. Various moods and emotions can alter self-efficacy beliefs.

For determining the level of one's general self-efficacy, various assessment and rating scales have been developed. One of the earliest includes the *General Self-Efficacy Scale* (GSE) as developed by Jerusalem and Schwarzer in 1979 (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1993). Although it is not intended to be administered to persons under the age of 12, there are adaptations and applications that can be made with younger students. Items from the original GSE related to self-regulated learning include statements such as "I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough" and "It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals." The items have a Likert scale format in which the responses are ranked from 1 to 4, ranging from "not at all true," "hardly true," "moderately true", to "exactly true."

Another instrument, *The Academic and Social Self-Efficacy Scale* (ASSESS) was developed by Gresham, Evans, and Elliott (2009) in which self-efficacy ratings by students were used to predict academic achievement and sociometric status. The students' self-efficacy ratings were the best predictors, in contrast to parent-and teacher-reported ratings.

Through a series of related statements, the *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006) measures nine self-efficacy constructs, or “activity domains”:

(a) Self-Efficacy Enlisting Social Resources, (b) Self-Efficacy for Academic Achievement, (c) Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning, (d) Self-Efficacy for Leisure Time Skills and Extracurricular Activities, (e) Self-Regulatory Efficacy, (f) Self-Efficacy to Meet Others' Expectations, (g) Social Efficacy, (h) Self-Assertive Efficacy, and (i) Self-Efficacy for Enlisting Parental and Community Support. The statements that pertain to self-efficacy for self-regulated learning are, as follows: (a) Finish my homework assignments by deadlines, (b) Get myself to study when there are other interesting things to do, (c) Always concentrate on school subjects during class, (d) Take good notes during class instruction, (e) Use the library to get information for class assignments, (f) Plan my school work for the day, (g) Organize my school work, (h) Remember well information presented in class and textbooks, (i) Arrange a place to study without distractions, and (k) Get myself to do school work. (Bandura, 2006, pp. 326-237).

Bandura encourages expressing the statements in terms of “can” instead of “will.” *Can* is the child's judgment of his/her capability, whereas *will* is a statement of his/her intention. The values 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, and 100 are used to rate the belief for being capable of doing the stated tasks. This standard methodology with the 100 point scale ranges in 10-unit intervals from *Cannot do at all* through intermediate degrees of assurance (*Moderately certain can do*) to complete assurance (*Highly certain can do*). Additionally, Bandura (1994, 2006) gives guidelines for developing and

administering self-efficacy scales. For example, self-efficacy scales should measure people's beliefs in their abilities to fulfill different levels of task demands within the psychological domain selected for study. An appropriate judgmental set needs to be established—people should be asked to judge their operative capabilities as of now- not their potential or expected future capabilities. Two formats are offered: (a) Dual-judgment—participants in the survey first judge whether or not they can execute a given performance; then they rate the strength of their perceived efficacy on the tasks they indicated they could perform; and (b) Single-judgment—participants simply rate the strength of their perceived efficacy from 0 to 100 or 0 to 10 for every item in the activity domain. A score is derived by summing and dividing by the total number of items in the activity domain. A description of the use of the *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* in this study is given in the next chapter.

Self-efficacy affects a child's function, decisions, and motivation to develop self-regulated learning. According to Bandura (1994), a person's choice is affected by his/her self-efficacy. For example, people are more inclined to perform a task if they believe they can succeed and will avoid tasks in which they have low self-efficacy. Motivation is another area affected by one's self-efficacy, as is affirmed by Pajares (2005), Schunk (1991), and Zimmerman and Ringle (1981). High self-efficacy leads to more effort and persistence; low self-efficacy can provide incentive to learn more about a topic. One's thought patterns are also affected. For example, a person with low self-efficacy may believe tasks are harder than they really are; one with high self-efficacy may exert greater effort. Additionally, a person with high self-efficacy generally feels in

control of his/her own life; one with low self-efficacy may feel that his/her life is somewhat out of his/her own hands. Although these general principles from Bandura's social learning theory refer to the development of self-efficacy in adults, they can be applied to elementary age students who are in the process of developing their self-efficacy in self-regulated learning. The students' self-efficacy belief may determine how much exertion they put toward completing their assignments on time or to make themselves do their school work.

Bandura further delineates *perceived self-efficacy* and *outcome expectation*. "Perceived self-efficacy is a judgment of one's ability to organize and execute given types of performances, whereas an outcome expectation is a judgment of the likely consequence such performances will produce" (Bandura, 1997, p.21). He found that these two work jointly as follows: (a) high efficacy and low outcome expectations may produce such actions as protest, grievance, social activism, and milieu change; (b) high efficacy and high outcome expectations may lead to productive engagement, aspiration, and personal satisfaction; (c) low efficacy and low outcome expectation may lead to resignation and apathy; and (d) low efficacy and high expectance may produce self-devaluation and despondency. Sherman (2002) further notes that self-efficacy does not just involve cognitive, social, and behavior skills, but what the individual does with the skills he/she possesses. Additionally, Vallacher and Vegner (1989) validate that a high level of *personal agency* demonstrates that one understands his/her actions in terms of their consequences and implications, whereas a low level of personal agency demonstrates that one tends to look at his/her actions in terms of details and mechanics.

Pajares (2005), Bandura (1994, 2006), and Zimmerman and Ringle (1981) concur that the development of self-efficacy occurs over a life span. For example, infants explore their environment to develop a sense of some control over it. Infants acquire their personal agency when they realize that they can make things happen. They can form a symbolic representation of themselves as capable of making things happen. Young children, due to lack of language development have difficulty expressing their efficacy—their sense of agency is best reflected in evidence that their courses of action are intentional, self-monitored, and self-corrected. It becomes important for families to influence infants in their agency—this persuasion is linked to their cognitive development. According to Bandura (1997) efficacy-promoting influences work reciprocally—infant and environment; parent and infant.

Other theorists support development of self-regulating in young children, thus leading to their self-efficacy. Erikson (1968) outlines various stages. For example, in the basic *trust versus mistrust* stage, babies not only develop the trust/mistrust in their caretakers, but they learn to trust themselves. One of their first self-regulating activities comes when teething during nursing—they learn to regulate their urges in order to avoid hurting the mother. Additionally, they begin to self-regulate their learning when they become autonomous in the *autonomy versus shame and doubt* stage—they begin developing control in their walking steps and toilet training skills. Children begin developing their self-esteem through these two processes. During the *initiative versus guilt* stage, behavior becomes more goal-oriented, a trait found in self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. The crisis for the stage of *industry versus inferiority* is developing

excessive feelings of inadequacy. Erickson refers to resolving these issues as developing competence. These are all stages within which students develop in specific areas, and these developments span their lifetime—they are crucial to future development as human beings draw from these roots during their growth of self-efficacy.

Acquisition of language further provides children with the means to reflect on their experiences and express themselves. The judgments of their parents, specifically mothers, influence children's self-appraisal of their own capabilities. Children's self-appraisal skills improve with cognitive development through exploratory experiences, instruction, and modeling. By applying appraisal skills, children are enabled to judge their efficacy on their own. In this research study, students will be using their language in their reflection; they will be utilizing appraisal skills as they develop their self-regulated learning.

In order to make accurate appraisal of one's capabilities a number of basic skills must develop through direct social experiences. Children must pay attention to multiple sources of efficacy information, situational factors that may aid or obstruct their performance in the task, the characteristics of their actions and the results they produce. Exercise of personal efficacy requires managing multiple cognitive, social, manual, and motivational skills. Children have to learn about the difficulty of the tasks, the abilities required by the tasks, and what types of problems may arise. With more experience, children begin to understand themselves and their environments. As they develop this appreciation, they begin to judge their efficacy more realistically. Children tend to become dependent on immediate and salient outcomes, therefore giving an unbalanced

self-appraisal. As they become older and more proficient with self-appraisal skills this reliance on immediate outcomes decreases. With increased experience, they begin to understand that exerting more effort can compensate for lack of ability and they, in turn, begin to judge their capabilities more accurately.

Just as adults judge their capabilities partly through social comparison with others, children also monitor how well others do. Bandura (2006) and Pajares (2005) indicate that youngsters become increasingly discriminative in this comparative information as they develop. Very young children (three-year olds) do not discriminate differences in ability; but as their age increases they become more accurate in appraising both their own abilities and those of their peers. At about the age of six they become aware of the performances of others with relative accuracy. Parents or teachers may need to minimize the consequences of acting on faulty self-evaluation and provide instruction on their development of appropriate comparisons. As their self-efficacy for self-regulated learning develops, they will begin noticing other students' habits and achievements; teachers can guide them to the appropriate models and discernment of the proper actions of which they will duplicate or build upon.

People with a resilient sense of self-efficacy keep moving forward with energy and vitality. Low self-efficacy may lead to depression, resignation, and doubt. Another challenge of the teachers in the elementary school is to provide tasks and experiences which are age-appropriate in order to fuel the energy and vitality of their self-regulated learning efficacy and minimize students' self-doubt. Bandura's research findings affirm that measuring the accuracy with which children at different ages judge their efficacy can

illuminate educators on the developmental trends in how children use various sources of efficacy information in their judgments (Bandura, 1997).

In one study, the effect of self-efficacy on transgressive behavior was developed and verified in research with school children. Feelings of self-efficacy with respect to academic work, social interactions, and self-regulation influenced pro-social behavior (helping others, sharing, being kind and cooperative) and whether or not a child could avoid moral responsibility (Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Gerbino, & Pastorelli, 2003). A service-learning experience, such as the one utilized in this study, is excellent for assisting children in the achievement of these behaviors. As is indicative of Bandura's belief, self-efficacy in the modern world must become collective self-efficacy. In this setting people are working together for change (Bandura, 1997).

In a study of mathematical performance, Bandura (1997) found that students' efficacy beliefs predicted interest in, and positive attitudes toward the math performance, whereas their actual ability didn't. The students possessing a high sense of efficacy were more successful in solving conceptual problems--not those with superior cognitive abilities. An important finding was that the more self-efficacious students at each ability level managed their time better and were more persistent, a desired outcome in self-regulated learning.

Bandura (1997) reminds us of one of the fundamental goals of education—equipping students with self-regulatory capabilities that enable them to educate themselves. This self-directedness promotes their lifelong learning by surrounding themselves with skills for planning and managing instructional activities, enlisting a

variety of resources, regulating their personal motivation, and applying cognitive skills to evaluate their capacity for knowledge and strategies. A high sense of self-regulatory efficacy contributes to mastering of academic subjects by building a sense of cognitive efficacy and raising students' academic objectives in various domains of learning.

In cooperative activities, in which members encourage and teach one another, children's judgments of their capabilities and esteem with which they hold themselves promotes higher performance attainments than do competitive or individualistic ones.

Educational practices should be not be measured only by the skills and knowledge they teach for the present but what they contribute to children's beliefs about their capabilities, which affects how they approach the future. "Students who develop strong belief in their efficacy are well-equipped to educate themselves when they have to rely on their own initiative" (Bandura, 1997, p. 176). An application of this belief was showcased in an eighth grade service-learning experience on tolerance in the community. Edwards (2001) discovered that the development of self-respect in this project led to development of students' self-esteem, which she discovered contributed to their self-efficacy of being able to achieve in their academics.

In order to promote self-efficacy in self-regulated learning in children, teachers should create classrooms with space and a schedule that promote children's sense of efficacy and control, support children's ideas and initiatives and acknowledge their efforts and accomplishments. Inasmuch as Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martinez-Pons (1992) assert that students eventually regulate their own environments and monitor their own learning activities, modeling by the teacher is very significant during the early

school years. Additionally, according to Bandura (1997), teachers should minimize any undermining of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in school by avoiding such practices such as ranking, competitive grading and standardized testing. He emphasizes that children develop self-efficacy better through working cooperatively and by judging their work according to their own progress, not that of others. Teachers' feeling of self-efficacy is an important model for their students as well.

Some of the current research trends in self-efficacy that are related to self-regulated learning include (a) links between efficacy beliefs and college major and career choices, (b) efficacy beliefs of teachers related to their instructional practices and to various student outcomes, and (c) students' self-efficacy beliefs correlated with other motivation constructs and with students' academic performances and achievement (Pajares, 2005; Pajares & Schunk, 2001).

Applications of self-efficacy research can be made to childhood. Pajares (2005) agrees with the findings of Bandura (Bandura et al., 2001) that young people must believe that their actions can produce the effect they desire, or they will have very little incentive to face the difficulties that they will inevitably encounter. Developing self-efficacy, particularly in self-regulated learning influences the motivation of students and their willingness to undertake challenging tasks in school.

The Impact of Service-Learning on the Development of Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning in Children

As was established in the first area of literature review, experience is a powerful contributing force to the development of people's self-efficacy; self-regulation encompasses both cognitive skills and social skills (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, the

experiential learning methodology of service-learning, with its social context, can be utilized to enhance the development of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in children.

In order for the reader to understand the outcomes of the exemplary studies that are cited in this literature, the researcher first sets forth the history and definition of the methodology of service-learning. Secondly, a description of the process and the components of a true service-learning experience are provided to help the reader establish an appreciation of the impacts upon students' participation in service-learning experiences.

Service-learning is not a novel idea. Land-grant acts such as the Morrill Act in 1862 and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, along with movements such as the 1906 Cooperative Education Movement, helped establish a basis for service-learning—the three-fold mission of teaching, research, and service (Simpson 1998; Titlebaum, Williamson, Daprano, Baer, & Brahler, 2004; Weatherford & Weatherford, 2008). Shumer (1997) reiterates that service-learning is built on a rich history of study in various fields, including experiential learning, career education, and school-to-work programs. John Dewey, the early 20th century progressive educator, would be drawn to contemporary academic service-learning. His belief was that one's actions directed toward the welfare of others could stimulate both their academic and social development (Dewey, 1938). His educational and social philosophy described in *Experience and Education* include many of the key concepts of service-learning: (a) experience is necessary for learning, (b) learning is for the purpose of some end beyond itself, (c)

thinking and acting are connected by reflection, and (d) democracy requires active participation by an engaged citizenry (Dewey, 1938; Howard, 2001).

President Kennedy's famous words from his inaugural address of 1961 (U.S. Congress, 1989), "...ask not what you can do for yourself, but ask what you can do for your country," provided a notion which re-emerged four decades later in the education realm as service-learning. In 1990, President George Bush signed into law "The National Community Service Act," and most recently, on April 21, 2009, Public Law 111-13 was enacted, "The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act." These laws provide money and encouragement for young people to serve their communities and schools. As a result of these influential acts, many high schools and universities require a service credit for graduation.

Service-learning has been defined in several ways. For example, The National Society for Experiential Education states that service-learning is "any carefully monitored service experience in which a student has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning throughout the experience." (Billig, 2000, p. 659). The Corporation for National Service definition is "a method under which students or participants learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community, is coordinated with... school or community service program and with the community, helps foster civic responsibility, is integrated into and enhances academic curriculum... and provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience" (Billig, 2000, p. 659). According to Weatherford and Owens (2000), service-learning is

“a methodology that links classroom learning with real world experiences and expectations” (p. 125).

We are cautioned, however, by Howard (2001) not to use *community service* and *service-learning* interchangeably, but to ensure the community service has purposes in a course that are different than when performed outside a course. Hollis (2002) differentiates between the two by offering several elements of service-learning that distinguish this experience from community service: providing meaningful service, meeting a goal, providing collaboration, meeting course objectives, integrating reflection into the coursework, and evaluating the assignments. A concise definition that captures the distinction is offered by the National Youth Leadership Council—“Service-learning is a teaching/learning method that connects meaningful community service with academic learning, personal growth and civic responsibility” (Peace Corps, 2009). Weatherford (1998) underscores the importance of combining meaningful service and learning: “Service-learning experiences, projects, and programs have meaning to those who plan and participate in them. In fact, it is the process of ‘meaning making’ that is the power of the service-learning method” (p. 16). This process of meaning connects teachers, students, and community members in significant ways.

Both educators and legislators agree that service-learning provides rich experiential educational experiences for all students by helping “promote students’ self-esteem, develop higher-order thinking skills, make use of multiple abilities, and provide authentic learning experiences—all goals of current curriculum reform efforts” (Kahne & Westheimer, 1996). Furthermore, “service-learning provides a hands-on

opportunity for pre-service teacher educators to learn to value diversity and to appreciate the contributions and strengths of others.... The lessons learned from serving students who have different experiences from their own increase their future effectiveness as teachers while providing needed services for students and their families” (Weatherford & Owens, 2000, p.126). As a result, the communities served by the school are positively impacted.

Other outcomes of service-learning include developing character of the participants. Mason (1999) writes, “Service-learning programs promote the adoption of ethical attributes. Student attitudes and behaviors are elevated when they are introduced to moral concepts inherent in helping others” (p. 18). She further states, “Students learn about the need for ethical behavior while being exposed to a variety of cultures, backgrounds, and lifestyle perspectives.” The Josephson Institute of Ethics identified *Six Pillars of Character* which are universally acceptable and are evident in the outcomes of service-learning projects: trustworthiness, responsibility, fairness, respect, caring, and citizenship (Creech et al., 2000). One program at Clemson University (Weatherford & Owen, 2000) adopted a model from the early service-learning pioneers Conrad and Hedin (1982) and dubbed it the 3 C’s: Developing children’s *competency, coping, and contributory skills* in order to produce positive outcomes. Thomsen (2006), along with Eyler and Giles (1997), cautions us that a service-learning experience must be implemented with high-quality preparation and reflection to produce these types of outcomes.

Contemporary service-learning experts (Billig, 2000; Creech et al., 2000; Freeman & King, 2001; Kromer & Hitch, 2000; Mason, 1999; Weatherford, Duckenfield & Wright, 1997; Weatherford, Duckenfield, Wright, Owens, & Weatherford, 2001; Weatherford & Owens, 2000) agree that well-planned service-learning projects consist of four components: (a) *Preparation*- students are prepared to meet authentic community needs, (b) *Action*- students are given opportunity to use their knowledge and skills in real-life situations, (c) *Reflection*- students have opportunity for in-depth reflection, and (d) *Celebration*- students celebrate the success of the project. This model is referred to as the *PARC* method (Anderson, 2008). “The challenge is finding effective ways to demonstrate the impact or to tell the story that matters” (Weatherford et al. 2003, p.138). Once this story is told, the experience can be enriched or extended to other settings.

Reflection becomes integral in self-regulation and service-learning, as is demonstrated in two cycles developed by experts: *The Phases of Self-Regulation* (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998), and *The Service-Learning Cycle* (NYLC, 2009). In comparison, these cycles are very similar and demonstrate the importance of the reflection process. As one can conclude from examining these comparatively, participating in a service-learning experience is beneficial inasmuch as *The Service-Learning Cycle* includes the same components that lead to developing self-regulated learning skills.

Reflection, a common aspect of life, is a crucial component of a service-learning experience. Wade (1997) reminds us that conscious reflection focuses on experience—the substance of reflection. A study by McClam, Diambra, Burton, Fuss, & Fudge (2008)

reinforced the importance of students' reflections in determining the impact of the experience.

Quality reflection needs to be structured, age-appropriate, integrated throughout the experience, and integrated into the students' course work (Eyler & Giles, 1997; Shumer, 1997; Wade, 1997; Waterman, 1997). As this research unfolds to relate participating in service-learning and the development of self-efficacy, we find that Bandura (1997) and Pajares (2002) endorse the idea that students' self-efficacy is also enhanced through the reflection process—in the vicarious experience of self-modeling.

Similarly, according to Schunk and Zimmerman (1998), three cyclical phases seem to emerge in the acquisition of self-regulation skills. Phase One: *Forethought/preaction*- precedes any action; requires thought processes to set goals with specific outcomes such as where, when, how to start, and under what conditions. Phase Two: *Performance control*- occurs during the learning and utilizes various strategies such as assessing if the participants are progressing as they thought they would, if the conditions are conducive to the development of their goals, and how they can help keep themselves on task. Phase Three: *Self-reflection*- occurs after the process and includes self-evaluation of the accomplishment of the participants' goals. Additionally, developing self-regulation skills includes self-observation, self-judgment, and self-reaction. (See Figure 2.1.)



Figure 2.1: Phases of Self-Regulation

Downloaded from <http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/siegle/SelfRegulation/section6.html>

The National Youth Leadership Council’s Service-Learning Cycle (shown in Figure 2.2) reinforces that reflection occurs throughout a service-learning experience.



Figure 2.2: The Service-Learning Cycle

Downloaded from http://www.nylc.org/pages-resourcecenter-downloads-Meaningful_Service?emoid=14:865&null=1259460653652

In the “*What?*” component of the cycle, pre-service reflection occurs. In this step, the need is identified, along with planning and preparation. During the “*So What?*” action component of the experience, observations, reflections, and analyses are made by the participants. Finally, in the “*Now What?*” component, post-service reflection is utilized to celebrate, evaluate, and determine what new applications can be made. Additionally, to demonstrate the utilization of a variety of levels of cognition in service-learning experiences, Weatherford (1998) relates this framework of reflection from the Service-Learning Cycle to Bloom’s Taxonomy. For example, “*What?*” uses the process

of recall and basic description, addressing the knowledge level; “*So What?*” employs analysis and synthesis; and “*Now What?*” addresses the evaluation level in the taxonomy.

According to Learn and Serve America’s National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2008), the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) found that between 1984 and 1997, the use of service-learning as an educational approach increased—the number of K-12 students participating in service-learning projects increased from 900,000 to more than 12.6 million; and the percentage of high school students participating in service-learning projects increased from 2% to 25%. Recognizing the benefits of a well-planned project using this pedagogy, the International Partnership for Service-Learning and Leadership (IPSL), founded in 1982, provides many service-learning opportunities for college students to study abroad and volunteer their services in order to become “more civically engaged, interculturally literate, internationally aware and responsive to the needs of others” (ipsl.org, 2008). Resources on service-learning have become readily available as more projects are being documented. Waterman (1997) compiled the research papers presented in a national conference and organized the research in terms of methodology, elements, and contexts. The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (RMC Research Corporation, 2007) disseminates updated research which shows a variety of academic impacts on students. For example, data were given from the National Educational Longitudinal Study which showed increased graduation rates. California service-learning programs reported clarity in academic goals and higher scores on surveys about attitudes toward school. Michigan

students reported that their participation in service-learning experiences helped them understand what they were learning in school. Galati (2004) reported that a junior-level service-learning program increased English proficiency for high school students in a rural Southern Appalachian setting. Barnes (2002), director for the University of South Carolina Strings Project, regularly incorporates service-learning in her orchestra program by allowing high school students to go into feeder elementary and music schools to work with the younger musicians. She notes improvement in the theoretical knowledge gained in their courses as well as more comfort in teaching others, even those from different socio-economic or ethnic backgrounds. She states that “service learning and music teacher education are a winning combination” (p. 46).

Evidence indicates that service-learning is effective with young children as well. Swick (2001) cites the benefits of this type of service as engaging children in distinguishing self from others—an important process in developing empathy. He asserts that service-learning experiences promote social learning and socio-emotional development. Epstein (2007) reminds us that Piaget’s concept of “decentering” is just beginning to develop in preschool years. She states, “Because young children are more often on the receiving end of help, it is especially empowering for them to be able to give it” (Epstein, 2007, p. 73).

Bronfenbrenner (1979), founder of Head Start, developed a model of ecology of human development. In this model, human beings don’t develop in isolation, but in relation to their family and home, school, community, and society. Interactions among these environments, or ecosystems, are important to a child’s development. Service-

learning provides opportunity for social development through interactions in these various systems. Additionally, service-learning provides opportunity for students to participate in *curriculum for caring*. Bronfenbrenner notes that in this curriculum the purpose is not to learn *about* caring but to engage *in* it (p.53).

Contemporary service-learning practitioner, Swick (2001), notes that participating in the project approach leads to socially competent children who engage in fulfilling interactions and activities with adults and peers. Additionally, one of the expected outcomes of this approach, feelings, can be promoted as students have personal ownership in their project. Lewis (1995) encourages kids to participate in service projects. In a powerful persuasion, she notes that in 1992 there were 46,654,000 children between the ages of five and 17 in the United States. She posed a thought-provoking question: “What if all of them decided to start serving their communities?”

In an exemplary model which incorporates all four components of service-learning along with two types of service, Freeman and King (2001) developed an intergenerational project, *Lunch Time Book Buddies –Pass it On*. This experience connected preschoolers, senior adults, and at-risk elementary-aged students in an experiential literacy program. Preschoolers visited a senior center at lunch time and paired up to share books. Both the senior and the child signed the book when they finished it. This face-to-face interaction was an example of *direct* service. The “Pass it On” component of the project was having fifth graders come to the children’s center and take the books back to their schools to share with their peers who may not have books of their own—an example of *indirect* service by the preschoolers who never met the

recipients of their books. Direct and indirect are two of three types of service; *advocacy* is the third type, in which people campaigning can inform a community or policy makers about needed changes surrounding a community issue.

In 2001, the Wisconsin Department of Instruction conducted a survey with elementary students involved in service-learning projects. Table 2.1 shows results from the 1071 returned surveys, indicating that 76% of the students cited service-learning as contributing to their confidence, an important component of self-efficacy.

Table 2.1

What Elementary Students Say about Service-Learning

| Students said Service-Learning Activities... | AGREE | DISAGREE | DON'T KNOW |
|---|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Taught me new and different things | 86% | 5% | 9% |
| Taught me about jobs and careers | 55% | 23% | 22% |
| Allowed me to meet new people and visit different places | 82% | 11% | 7% |
| Taught me how to work with my classmates | 81% | 11% | 8% |
| Helped me better understand what I study in class | 63% | 19% | 9% |
| Made learning more interesting | 82% | 9% | 9% |
| Made learning fun | 83% | 8% | 9% |
| Encouraged me to be creative and use my own ideas | 77% | 7% | 16% |
| Helped me to see how what I study is used outside of school | 64% | 16% | 20% |
| Helped me better understand my community and how it works | 71% | 17% | 12% |
| Gave me more confidence in myself | 76% | 14% | 15% |
| Helped me to become better at solving problems | 66% | 18% | 16% |
| Made me want to continue volunteering and doing community service | 72% | 10% | 18% |

Retrieved from Wisconsin Department of Instruction: <http://dpi.wi.gov/fscp/pdf/slsustain.pdf>

Based on research findings by experts (i.e. Billig, 2000; Freeman & King, 2001; Swick, 2001; Weatherford & Owens, 2000), *Learn and Serve America National Service-Learning's Clearinghouse* (2008) has outlined the following recommendations for implementing this methodology into practice: (a) identifying an existing program or activity to transform into authentic service-learning, (b) beginning with standard curriculum and finding the natural extension into service, (c) identifying content and skill connections from a theme or unit of study, and (d) starting with a student-identified or a community-identified need. Similarly, Lewis (1995) outlines several steps for children to insure their success in a project: (a) research your project, (b) form a team, (c) find a sponsor, (d) make a plan, (e) consider the recipient, (f) decide where you will perform your service, (g) get permissions needed to proceed, (h) advertise, (i) fundraise, and (j) evaluate the project when it has ended. (pp. 8-11). Endorsements for these steps (i.e., researching the need, making a plan, and evaluating the projects) come from service-learning experts (Billig, 2000; Freeman & Swick, 2003; Mason, 1999; Thomsen, 2006). As with beginning any project, students should decide what they know and what they want to know, and then develop a plan which includes the resources necessary to implement the plan. This process was utilized in developing the project used in this study as the researcher collaborated with the nursing home administration and the participating students.

Implications for using service-learning students of all ages include further examining successful projects currently being implemented such as those in the early childhood teacher education department at the University of South Carolina (Freeman &

Swick, 2003) which places emphasis on using service-learning with pre-service teachers. The interns in this program are using service-learning in their early experiences with students. The current projects, along with those that have been documented in recent years, serve as exemplary models for those interested in achieving positive outcomes with service-learning experiences.

For schools interested in achieving status goals and meeting specific standards criteria, service-learning can be implemented effectively into their programs. For example, schools interested in achieving the International Baccalaureate (IB) status—a program which encompasses all grade levels—can utilize this methodology (Wilson, 2008). The component of “caring” in the IB Learner Profile demonstrates that students “show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment” (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2006). Additionally, service-learning experiences can be employed to meet the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies (NCSS, 2008) which include (a) providing for study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions, and (b) experiences that provide for the study of ideals, principles, and practices of citizenship in a democratic republic. Furthermore, Standard Two of the National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2008) can be met when this methodology is applied: “Children are provided with opportunities to... build their understanding of diversity... learn about the community in which they live... learn how people affect the environment in positive and negative ways.”

Although there are many benefits of utilizing service-learning, there are also cautions. For example, experts note that adequate preparation is crucial to the process. Poor preparation may reinforce stereotypes of a target group rather than focus on the genuine need. In this initial stage, students and leaders alike are encouraged to not only research the community needs, but to further investigate the characteristics of the population in the community in order to meet needs in a non-threatening manner. Himley (2004) reminds us that many times we do not face up to the “stranger” in the community. Populations are different, and many times because they have not fit into the accepted community (yet) their race, class, life chances, etc. afford them to be a part of a “need.” Additionally, Hironimus-Wendt and Lovell-Troy (1999) note that ...a sociologically uninformed service learning may hinder, rather than help...because students may objectify community residents and blame them for their problems.” Another critical reviewer, Sipe (2001) reminds us that assigning students a service-learning project may teach unintended lessons such as expectation of gratitude and credit. Many of the projects are shaped by what the student, teacher, or institution need to accomplish and not by the community need. In many cases, if the projects are not well planned and incorporated into the curriculum, a group of students can go into a community, perform a service, get their credit, or even experience a sense of altruism—yet leave the community still in need. Kahne and Westheimer (1996) further support those findings as they recommend critical thinking in reflection. They discovered that many of the descriptive reflections do not engage students in critical thinking that enables them to find a solution to problems. They further caution that there are implications in the political realm

inasmuch as many institutions use service-learning as a charity role. The dilemma in implementing service of this type occurs where there are values that are *not* shared among groups. Kezar and Rhoads (2001) also pose several questions about what role the university should play in the community as it relates to service-learning. They point out that many professors look at this methodology as a challenge to their schedules and feel that students should engage in such projects on their own—not as a course requirement. They further assert that the escalation in using this methodology in the late 1980s and early 1990s was an answer to societal questions of institutions being more involved in the community and that many instructors feel that the time for this methodology has come and gone.

Weatherford, Owens, Weatherford, and Fisk (2003), supported by other experts (Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Eyler & Giles, 1999), assert that service-learning “has the potential to help students grow and develop personally in several areas” (p.138). Hunter and Brisbin (2000) and a longitudinal study conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ireda, & Yee, 2000) confirmed the same results: Students who participate in service-learning view their experiences in a positive manner, develop their academic skills, learn more about their community, and are more likely to seek out future service opportunities. Additionally, this methodology can be utilized by teachers to facilitate the development of self-efficacy using social cognition theory. Research has shown that service-learning is associated with improvement in students, including more positive attitudes toward others and schools—a result of feeling capable. Service-learning positively impacts students across all grade-levels. Ultimately, their participation fosters

personal growth, especially a sense of self-efficacy, and civic responsibility—a foundation of our democratic society.

“Service is the rent we pay for our room on earth.”- Lord Halifax

Chapter Three

The Data and the Treatment of the Data

The Population of the Study

The students in this study consisted of third-graders from two general education classrooms in a small urban elementary school in southeastern United States. The school was located in a city (population: 25,514 according to the 2000 census) which was the center of an urbanized area of 70,530. The city was the principal city of a Metropolitan Statistical Area with population of 165,740. The median household income was \$27,716 (U.S. Census, 2000).

The school district in which this school was located included 17 schools that served just over 12,000 students: one Academy of the Arts, two early childhood centers, one extension campus, nine elementary schools with average enrollment of 624; three middle schools with average enrollment of 922; and two high schools with average enrollment of 1,676.

The elementary school from which the population was selected had an enrollment of 502 students, consisting of 117 White males, 98 White females, 105 Black males, 99 Black females, 20 Hispanic males, 23 Hispanic females, 20 males of other ethnicities, and 20 females of other ethnicities. Seventy-one percent of the students were on free/reduced lunch. Twenty-six students were enrolled in the academic gifted and talented program; 29 students were enrolled in the performing arts gifted and talented program; 24 students were enrolled in special education resource classes; 58 students were served with speech therapy services; and 45 students were served in the English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) program.

According to Jeynes (2002), because social economic status (SES) is correlated with many variables, it is desirable to control for SES in research studies. His research shows that SES is comprised of three main components: (a) family income, (b) parental education, and (c) parental occupation. The SES status of the students in this population was based on these items. The information was obtained from school records, teacher input, and survey forms.

The students in this population will be referred to as the participant group (experimental group) and the comparison group (control group).

The participant group. In the participant group, there were 18 students: ten male and eight female. There were seven Black, seven White, one White/Black, and three Hispanic. Four students were served in speech therapy; three were enrolled in the ESOL program. None of the students were enrolled in the academic gifted/talented program. Fourteen of the students qualified for the free/reduced lunch program.

Students were rated by their homeroom teacher at the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year on their reading, writing, and responsibility levels. Four students were rated with a high reading level, eight with a medium reading level, and six with low reading level. Their writing levels corresponded with their reading level, with one exception—one of the students who had a low reading level performed on a medium writing level. She rated responsibility levels; eight students received high ratings, eight were rated medium, and two received low ratings.

The students in the participant class, like all other third-grade classes in the school, participated in weekly, 45-minute music periods with the elementary music

specialist, who was the researcher in this study. During the month of December, their class combined with the other third-grade classes for extra rehearsals for the Christmas musical, presenting two full programs and one abbreviated encore program.

The students in the participant group, along with all other classes in the school, participated in two school-wide community service projects: collecting tennis shoes and canned goods. Both projects included *indirect* service in which they contributed to a community need but did not work directly with the recipients of the service. Although the service was action-oriented, it did not include the preparation, reflection, or celebration components of a full service-learning project.

Additionally, the students in this class participated in a service-learning project under the direction of their elementary music specialist (the researcher). This service experience was *direct* service, in which the students worked directly with the target population of residents at the nursing home. The project was named R.P.M.S. Music Club (Roadrunners Partnering in Music and Service). The student and teacher-researcher interactions for the service-learning project in this study included twelve regular, 45-minute, weekly music periods in which planning/preparation and action occurred. The planning and preparation sessions included selecting and learning songs to share with the residents of a nearby nursing home, creating instrumental accompaniments to teach to the residents, and selecting writing and other classroom work/projects to share with the residents who became the students' grandfriends. The intervention (the service-learning project) included five visits (treatments) to the nursing home, and one visit by the grandfriends to the participant students' school for a total of six treatments in this study.

Activities included singing, playing instruments, sharing writing with the residents in their activities room, and performing for and taking the residents on a school tour in their wheelchairs when the grandfriends visited the school.

Additional reflection sessions occurred in the participants' homeroom throughout the 3-month period of the study. These interactions included completing journal pages (writing paragraphs, writing letters, drawing pictures, and scrapbooking their experience with photos and mementos), answering open-ended questions in written and/or interview format, decorating/creating gifts and cards to share, and completing self-rating scales and pre/post-service surveys.

The Comparison Group. In the comparison group, the demographics were similar to the participant group. There were 18 students—ten male and eight female. There were six Black, seven White, two Black/White, and three Hispanic students. The exceptions included two students enrolled in speech therapy, one student participating in the academic gifted/talented program, and three students served in the ESOL program. Twelve of the students qualified for the free/reduced lunch program. The homeroom teacher described all students in this class as “eager to learn and participate.”

The students in this comparison class, like all other third-grade classes in the school, participated in weekly, 45-minute music periods with the elementary music specialist, who was the researcher in this study. During the month of December, their class combined with the other third-grade classes for extra rehearsals for the Christmas musical, presenting two full programs and one abbreviated encore program. The 18 students in this comparison group were part of a group of 80 third-grade students

performing on stage in the encore performance for the nursing home residents who had been invited to visit the school. These students had no other contact or interaction with the residents.

The students in the comparison group, along with all other classes in the school, participated in two school-wide community service projects: collecting tennis shoes and canned goods. Both projects were action-oriented and met a community need, but did not include the preparation, reflection, or celebration components of a true service-learning project.

In keeping with the design of this quasi-experimental action research, the students in this comparison group participated in a pretest and a posttest session in which they completed the same self-efficacy survey that was administered to the participant group. They did not participate in any other activities related to this project such as journal reflection, self-rating scales, preparation and planning, celebration, or visits to the nursing homes. These students were not participants in any other true service-learning projects during the three-month period of this study, or in the fall 2009 academic program prior to this study.

Table 3.1 shows the demographic characteristics of the two groups compared in this study.

Table 3.1

Demographic Characteristics of Population

| Characteristic | <i>n</i> Participant Group | <i>n</i> Comparison Group |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Students | 18 | 18 |
| Male | 10 | 10 |
| Female | 8 | 8 |
| Black | 7 | 7 |
| White | 7 | 7 |
| Black/White | 1 | 1 |
| Hispanic | 3 | 3 |
| Speech | 4 | 2 |
| ESOL | 3 | 3 |
| Gifted/Talented | 0 | 1 |
| Low SES | 6 | 4 |
| Medium SES | 9 | 10 |
| High SES | 3 | 4 |

The Teacher as Researcher. I am the teacher-researcher in this project. I was certified in both elementary education and music education. I was a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) in music education. My earned degrees are, as follows: Associate of Science from Anderson College; Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Clemson University; Masters' of Education in Elementary Education from Clemson University; and an anticipated Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction from Clemson University at the conclusion of this study.

At the time of the study, I was an elementary music specialist in my 29th year of teaching in the public school system—seven years in third, fourth, and fifth general education classrooms, and 22 years as an elementary music specialist for grades Kindergarten through fifth. I had been an adjunct instructor at a local university since 1993, teaching in the education department, but also having opportunity to serve as a guest instructor and an adjunct instructor in the music education department for one year.

I began implementing service-learning as a teaching methodology in the spring of 2000 as a result of a graduate course taken at the University of South Carolina. I used a reverse-mainstream model for implementing the project in which third-grade general music students planned and implemented music activities with students with profound mental disabilities. There were benefits for both populations— students from the general education class improved in their music skills, became compassionate and understanding of students with special needs, and became more responsible learners in their general education third-grade classroom; students from the special education classroom became more responsive to music and developed more social skills as a result of the project.

I had numerous opportunities to share the results from my premier service-learning project in local, state, national, and international conferences. Additionally, I conducted service-learning workshops with elementary general classroom teachers. During this time, I continued to offer the service-learning experiences to other general education students, allowing them opportunity to work with the special needs population at my school. After transferring to a new elementary school, I implemented a similar program with my fourth grade music students and two of the six special education

classes: a class with orthopedic disabilities, and a class with trainable mental disabilities—with similar results.

I began planning for the doctoral program at Clemson University in 2006. In the spring of 2007, I began coursework in which I repeatedly reflected on my successful experiences as a practitioner using service-learning methodology. I began looking at service-learning through a different lens—that of a researcher.

One of my research projects involved a study following up with the high school students, my former elementary music students, who served in the initial service-learning project. Upon completion of the research, I concluded that the overall experience from elementary school had contributed to the students' continued compassion toward special needs people, and encouraged them to continue participating in service-learning projects (Arrington & Weatherford, 2009b).

As I began developing my dissertation study, I reviewed literature promoting the benefits of music education alongside the literature describing the effects of service-learning. My passion for service-learning and interest in its effects became the basis for my research and subsequent study. I began with finding a need and choosing a population with which to implement a service-learning experience. At the time of this study, there was neither a self-contained classroom of students with mental disabilities at the school in this study to implement a similar project; nor was there a nearby special education population that was conducive to an elementary school's daily schedule and travel. After reviewing a dissertation on the effects of service learning on students' attitudes toward the elderly in an intergenerational project (Palkowski, 2006), I recalled

that there was a community need a few blocks from my school—a nursing home with elderly residents who desired companionship and interaction with other individuals. This was the beginning of the R.P.M.S. Music Club—Roadrunners (the school’s mascot) Partnering in Music and Service. Music students from a third-grade general classroom became the charter members of this prestigious club—partnering in music with grandfriends from the nearby nursing facility.

The Homeroom Teacher. The homeroom teacher of the participating third-graders was a young, single female. She had been teaching third grade for all of the four years of her career in elementary education. Her degrees included a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Clemson University in 2006. At the time of this study, she was working on a Masters’ degree in Agriculture Education at Clemson University, with one semester left before her anticipated graduation.

In addition to her interactions with the children in her own classrooms, she had worked at the YMCA for six years as a counselor, environmental and nature teacher, and an afternoon pick up counselor. She had worked in various tutoring programs, including those at four elementary schools near her home town.

This young teacher was no stranger to service-learning. During the academic year of this study, she served as a mentor to a male student in fifth grade and helped with his two sisters. She drove them to the school’s family skate night and other functions and was always there for them in times of need. She encouraged these children in their daily school activities.

The homeroom teacher was very cooperative during the tenure of this project, allowing the researcher to spend extra time with her students in reflection sessions in their classroom. She was readily available to respond to the researcher's questions and interviews.

The Parents. Seventy-seven percent of the families of the participant students qualified to participate in the free/reduced lunch program. The classroom teacher noted that only five of the parents had attended school functions regularly throughout the year. Even on the night that the students presented the musical performance, only seven parents brought students although eleven of them had signed participation forms indicating that their children would be there. One parent indicated on her form that her child would not be there. Six did not return any signed forms.

Most of the homes have only one parent who worked outside the home, and few of the parents had college education. One parent, the mother of a son in the participant class, volunteered to serve as chaperone for the trips to the nursing home. She had another son in Kindergarten and a daughter in seventh grade. She did not work outside the home and volunteered many hours at the school, assisting teachers and producing a weekly news show at the school.

The Senior Adults. The senior adults in this project were residents in a Living Center, a skilled nursing care provider that offers complete nursing services, including stroke, cardiopulmonary and orthopedic care. This facility also offered physical, occupational, and speech therapies. According to their website, "Our friendly staff provides professional care and supervision to all of our residents, preparing delicious

meals and monitoring any special dietary requirements. We offer daily individual and group activities for a well-rounded approach to our residents' quality of life—one that makes [this facility] a home away from home.” There were 88 residents in the home and 106 staff members working at the facility. The number of residents attending the activities during the visits ranged from 22 to 35. Five of the residents visited the school for the holiday performance.

The residents at this nearby nursing home were very typical of the elderly population living in long term care facilities. Several residents were usually sitting in the hallways, one or two were walking around, and there were some who remained in their rooms either sleeping or watching TV during the visits. The majority of those who attended the activities were brought in wheelchairs. Three were brought in their recliners and one was placed there on a cot; two of the residents sat in a regular chair during the visits.

I was in contact with an activities director prior to beginning the project. When the initial contact was made about the project, the director was very excited about the experience for both their residents and the children who would be participating. Two different activities directors were involved during the project due to the maternity leave of the director who initially set up the project.

The administrator of the facility was a very friendly and outgoing gentleman. He greeted the children on a couple of occasions, and was very cordial. He expressed his gratitude several times during the project.

The Data Needed and the Means for Obtaining the Data

As has been previously revealed in the literature, participating in a service-learning experience has been shown to impact students in many different areas. “However, documenting its effectiveness has been a slower process than documenting its practice. The challenge is finding effective ways to demonstrate the impact” (Weatherford et al., 2003). I, the teacher-researcher, in this study was challenged as well to find effective ways to demonstrate the effects of participating in service-learning on the self-efficacy for self-regulated learning by my third grade music students. Results of surveys can be utilized in measuring outcomes, yet reflection is an essential component of service-learning. Therefore, the data of this research are of two kinds: quantitative and qualitative.

The quantitative data. I began with the idea of constructing a survey with rated items based on traits of self-efficacy found in children. Twelve guidance counselors serving elementary-age students were contacted for their input. After coding the traits into themes, the researcher furthered her studies on the development of surveys by such experts as Bandura (2006), Czaka and Blair (2005), Fink (2003), Leedy and Ormrod (2005), Punch (2003), and Rea and Parker (1997). It was through this extensive study of designing and conducting survey research that the researcher discovered that the *Children’s Self-Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006) measured similar traits of self-efficacy that resulted from coding the themes from the guidance counselors’ input.

The experts in survey research (Bandura, 2006; Czaka & Blair, 2005; Fink, 2003; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Punch, 2003; and Rea & Parker, 1997) also suggest that it is

acceptable to use a previously-developed reliable and valid survey; to develop a new survey, or utilize a combination of the two. Inasmuch as Bandura's scale met the needs of this project, the researcher adapted the *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006) to the study.

The *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* addresses all of the activity domains in which a student may be involved while in school. In order to maintain the reliability of the instrument, an expert review panel—consisting of two elementary guidance counselors, one elementary school psychologist, and two third-grade teachers—were consulted to determine the items applicable to the population in this study. The panel concluded that a few items were not appropriate for this study. For example, the deleted items included statements about biology, algebra, and working on a school newspaper, unfamiliar subjects/activities to these students. The panel also decided that the statement about sexual activity was inappropriate for this population. A reliability analysis was conducted and Cronbach's Alpha of .9 on the pretest and .936 on the posttest indicated that the internal reliability of the instrument remained intact.

Six of the ten items in Bandura's self-regulated learning activity domain were established by the panel of experts as being applicable to third-graders participating in a service-learning experience through music and literature, an experience which provides students opportunity to interact with their peers, interact with community members who have a need, and to connect the experience with their academic subjects and goals. These items were as follows: (a) I can finish my assignments by deadlines, (b) I can take good notes during class instruction, (c) I can use the library to get information for class

assignments, (d) I can plan my schoolwork for the day, (e) I can organize my school work, and (f) I can get myself to do school work. The Reliability Analysis revealed that Cronbach's Alpha for these items (pretest: .67; and posttest: .784) were at an acceptable range of internal reliability.

The survey utilized single-judgment methodology (Bandura, 2006; Punch, 2003) in which participants simply rated the strength of their perceived efficacy from 0 to 100 for every item in the activity domain. A score was derived by summing and then dividing by the total number of items in the activity domain.

Two practice items were field-tested for clarity and understanding of the directions prior to administering the pre-service survey. Students in two third-grade classes with similar demographic characteristics as the participant group were given a chance to discuss the practice items, rate their beliefs, and provide input about the instrument. The students were excited to be chosen for this task. They took their assignment very seriously and provided honest input in the discussion prior to their completing the two items. An example of the school's running club was used in a class discussion. Through this example and the related discussion about what students believe they are able to do, the students appeared to comprehend the *I can* concept as it related to a task and seemed to understand the meaning of *belief* in the rating process.

The two-item scale was administered and collected. The sum of the answers to each item was averaged for each class. In the field test of students from Class 3-C (with 19 students), the average score for item A, "I can make myself fly around in the air by flapping my arms," was 13.33. The average score for item B, "I can jump rope 25 times

without missing,” was 77.22. In Class 3-A (with 18 students), the average score for item A was 2.63, and the average score for item B was 91.58. Class 3-C had a higher average score for item A, and Class 3-A had a higher average score for item B. Only one student in class 3-A rated him/herself higher than a zero on item A. In Class 3-C, one student rated him/herself 100 on Item A. In Class 3-A, all but three students rated item B at the 100 level.

Although there was a difference in the average ratings of each class, the understanding of their task and the directions was similar, as per their comments during the discussion after administration of the practice items. For example, the conversation with both groups following the completion of the two items included remarks such as, “Yes, I understood the directions well,” “It was easy to think about what I believe I can do,” “I liked doing this,” “The class that gets to have 50 of these is lucky!”

Each of the students in the participant group and in the comparison group completed a pre-service survey, the rating scale based on the *Children’s Self-Efficacy Scale*. The participant group, consisting of 18 third-grade students, was involved in a service-learning experience over a period of three months. The comparison group of 18 third-grade students with similar demographic characteristics (gender, race, and socio-economic level) did not participate in a service-learning experience during this time. Both groups participated in school-wide community service projects such as collecting tennis shoes and canned goods during this period. These projects, however, were not full service-learning experiences with all four components: preparation, action, reflection, and celebration. Additionally, both classes performed in a grade-level (four third-grade

classes) production of a musical during the evening Christmas Open House for their parents and friends, during the school day for the entire student body, and in an abbreviated encore presentation for the visiting grandfriends.

At the end of the three-month period in which the participant group visited the nursing home in a service-learning experience, the post-service scale (using the same items) was administered to both the participant and comparison groups. An analysis of the results from the participating group and the comparison group was conducted.

Throughout the three-month service-learning experience, rating sessions for the student participants occurred. These sessions occurred approximately two weeks apart, after each of the six treatments (visits with their grandfriends). Each of the sessions included completing a progress rating scale with six items measuring the construct of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning from the *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006). Additionally, the students rated themselves on two service-learning belief statements based on self-efficacy items from *The Profile of Learning Through Service*, an instrument developed for measuring various areas of impact of service learning on students in sixth through twelfth grade (Weatherford, Owens, Weatherford, & Fisk, 2003). The individual ratings were entered in a data collection file by the researcher in order to determine the levels of the self-efficacy beliefs of the children during their experience.

The qualitative data. The qualitative data includes information gained from students' reflections in their service-learning journals (see appendix A). Reflections consisted of responses to open-ended questions, descriptive writing, drawing and writing

a caption for a picture, and writing a letter. Data were used from interviews (see Appendix B, The Sample Interview Questions) conducted with a parent of a participating student, the homeroom teacher of the third-grade general education students, and some of the students. The music specialist wrote anecdotal notes of the experience. The qualitative data utilized by the researcher provided a picture of the whole experience of service-learning. Shumer (1997) contended that using qualitative data provides insight into the *process* of service-learning.

The Criteria for the Admissibility of the Data

Only the data completed by students with signed assent and parental permission was used, as per the Clemson Institution Review Board requirements.

Only the data submitted by teachers or parents with signed permission was used, as per the Clemson Institution Review Board requirements.

The Research Methodology

Multiple-methods research.

“...using multiple methods in researching children’s experiences is a valuable approach that does not merely duplicate data but also offers complementary insights and understandings that may be difficult to access through reliance on a single method of data collection” (Darbyshire, MacDougall, & Schiller, 2005, p. 417).

As a method, multiple-methods research can focus on collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, or can utilize a combination of different quantitative methods (Jacobs, 2005). In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data are analyzed—the qualitative data provide a supportive role in a study based primarily on the quantitative data. The quantitative data from the pre-and post-service surveys, along

with the results from the progress rating scales collected during the intervention, were the primary data sets utilized. The qualitative data was obtained from the teacher-researcher anecdotal notes; student responses to journal prompts, open-ended questions, and interviews; and homeroom teacher and parent volunteer responses to open-ended questions. The qualitative data, collected before, during, and after the intervention, served as the supportive role in the analysis.

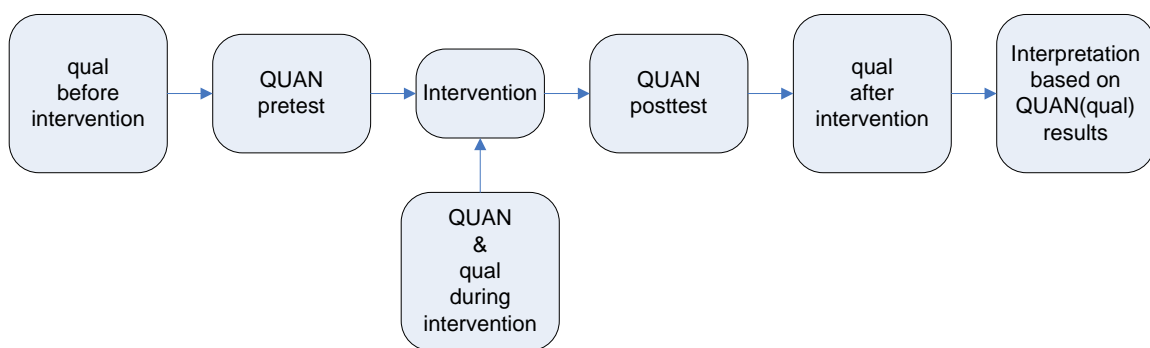


Figure 3.1: Multiple-Methods Research Design – Utilizing Both Quantitative (QUAN) Data and Qualitative (qual) Data

There are strengths of using multiple-methods research. Just as in mixed methods, this methodology can capitalize on the individual assets of both types—quantitative and qualitative—research; it allows the researcher to “create a multi-faceted picture of the phenomenon being studied” (Mertler & Charles, 2011, p. 322); it is appealing to funding agencies because the primary focus of the design is quantitative, a more traditional research method recognized by stake-holders. Jacobs (2005) reminds us that “sociologists view the social world as a multi-faceted and multi-layered reality that reveals itself only in part with any single method.” This study uses qualitative data to help clarify the meaning of the quantitative responses to survey questions. Additionally, the qualitative responses help better understand the setting in which the responses were made.

Challenges include having to be familiar with both types of research, and integrating the results of the quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions.

Additionally, it is usually more time consuming than using one approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Jacobs, 2005; Mertler & Charles, 2011).

Action Research. “Action research is a research approach which focuses on simultaneous action and research in a collaborative manner” (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005, p. 13). It is research *in* action—not *about* action. Action research has dual focus—both on the inquiry process and the implementation process. Additionally, “action research can include all types of data gathering methods. Qualitative and quantitative tools, such as interview and surveys are commonly used” (p. 12). As teacher-researcher, I implemented the service-learning experience with my third-grade music students and collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data.

Quasi-Experimental. The nonrandom sample included students from two third-grade general music classes that were similar in demographics. The participant class’ schedule was compatible with participating in this project. The comparison class’ schedule did not permit them to participate in the service-learning project.

Overview of the Design. Four distinct phases comprised this study. The first phase was contacting the activities director at the nursing home, classroom teacher, principal, and the school district’s assistant superintendent to explain the study. This phase also included working through a preliminary timeline, discussing the intervention, and obtaining permissions. (See the required permission forms in appendices C, D, and E.)

During the second phase, baseline data was collected. This phase continued for two weeks. The primary quantitative data source during this baseline phase was the *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006), administered to both the participant students and the comparison students. Qualitative sources were the participants' homeroom teacher's responses to interviews about her students' self-regulated learning skills and the students' journal responses to prompts prior to the intervention.

In the third phase, I implemented the intervention, in which I engaged the participant students in a service-learning experience with the residents of a nearby nursing home. The service-learning experience included four essential components: preparation, action, reflection, and celebration. These essential components were consistent with the existing literature on service-learning (Billig, 2000; Creech et al., 2000; Freeman & King, 2001; Kromer & Hitch, 2000; Mason, 1999; Weatherford et al., 1997; Weatherford et al., 2001; Weatherford & Owens, 2000). Throughout the thirteen-week intervention, data included the following: teacher and parent responses and observations; teacher-researcher reflective anecdotal notes; student responses to open-ended questions, interviews, and journal prompts; and student progress rating scales.

The final phase involved collecting and analyzing post-intervention data, which included the following: teacher responses and observations, teacher-researcher reflective anecdotal notes; student responses to open-ended questions; interviews, and journal prompts; and the post-intervention administration of the *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006) to both the participant group and the comparison group.

The quantitative data analysis. Regression analysis was the statistical procedure used to determine relationships between the service-learning experience and each of the six constructs within the activity domain of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. The dependent variables were general self-efficacy and self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. The independent variable was the service-learning experience (intervention).

Additionally, regression analysis was used to investigate the effects of the activities and attitudes of service-learning on the students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. Gender, ethnicity, and SES were controlled conditions from which data were collected.

Figure 3.2 shows the flow chart for the quantitative data analysis.

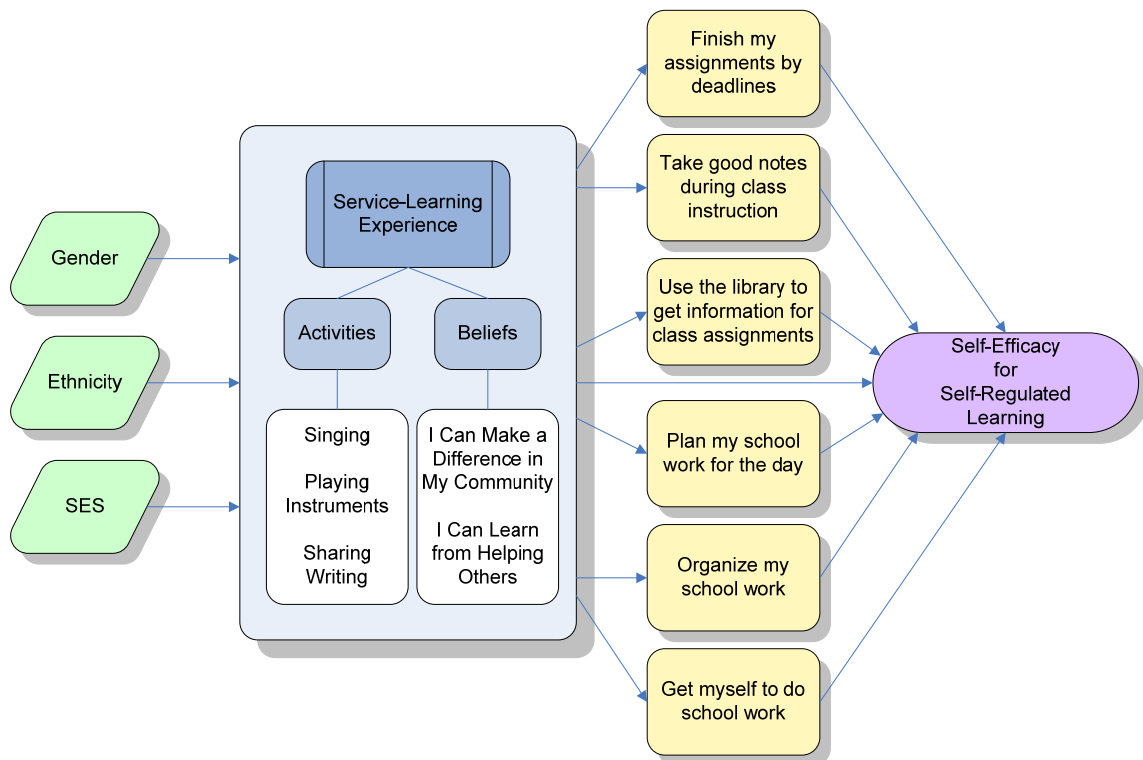


Figure 3.2: Flow Chart for Quantitative Data Analysis

The variables of gender, ethnicity, and SES were not being measured. They were influences that happened before the service-learning experience; screens through which the effects were occurring. The service-learning experience was a composite of the three activities (singing, playing instruments, and sharing writing) in which the children participated, along with the beliefs that the children held regarding the service-learning experience. The mean of each of the six statements of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning was regressed on the composite score of service-learning to determine the effect of service-learning on each of them. The mean of students' rating of their self-efficacy for self-regulated learning was regressed on the composite score of service-learning to determine the effect of participating in the service-learning. Additionally, a regression analysis was conducted to determine the effect of each of the three activities—singing, playing instruments, and sharing writing—on the students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning.

The qualitative data analysis. The qualitative data analysis included organizing the written and visual data, transcribing interviews and text, reading through the data, and coding—classifying and labeling recurring and emerging themes. A qualitative data analysis software program, Weft QDA, was utilized in analyzing my anecdotal notes. Additionally, member checking was used in which I confirmed accuracy with the students and teachers after their responses were transcribed.

The Specific Treatment of the Data for Each Sub-Question

Sub-question one. To what degree are self-efficacy traits of self-regulated learning demonstrated by the students, as indicated by their rating-scale surveys and as cited in their reflections?

The data needed. The data needed for answering sub-question one are the results of the pre-and post-service surveys, journal responses to prompts, responses to interviews, teacher's anecdotal notes, and the results of students' progress rating scale.

The location of the data. The responses were written on the pre-and post-service surveys and in the journals. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The music specialist made anecdotal notes throughout the experience. Notes included activity descriptions, results of activities, notes of students' physical reactions and oral responses related to their self-efficacy throughout the project.

The surveys, journals, anecdotal notes, along with the recordings and transcriptions were kept in a password-protected word-processing file or a locked filing cabinet in the music room during the study.

The students kept their journals at the end of the project, after the data were recorded by the investigator.

The means of obtaining the data. The students in both the participant and comparison groups rated their beliefs on nine self-efficacy activity domains in a pre-service and a post-service survey. The students in the participant group reflected on their experience at least six times throughout the project using prompted reflection entries in their service-learning journals and open-ended questions. After each treatment, the

students rated their progress on six statements related to self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. They responded to two service-learning belief statements, and they indicated in which activities—singing, playing instruments, or sharing writing—they participated during each visit. The music teacher typed and saved her anecdotal records in a word-processing file.

The treatment of the data.

How the data were screened. The completed journal entries and surveys were screened to eliminate any incomplete or blank responses.

How the item analysis was made. The investigator recorded the responses from the journal entries and the transcribed interviews, along with her anecdotal notes. Then she coded the self-efficacy traits and other character traits to discover recurring themes. The information was categorized by themes. The data were interpreted by consolidating the descriptions of the self-efficacy traits into a composite description of the development of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning by the participant students.

The results of pre-and post-service surveys by the participant group and the comparison group were analyzed. Each group's data were summarized by using the means and standard deviations from the survey results. Additionally, relationships were investigated using regression (simple linear regression) analyses. T-tests were also conducted on the two groups.

Sub-question two. What service-learning activities have the most impact on students' development of self-efficacy for their self-regulated learning?

The data needed. The data needed include the responses to journal writing, responses to interviews, responses to open-ended questions, and the students' tally of the number of times they shared skills in the three service-learning activities—singing, playing instruments, and sharing writing. Additionally, the music specialists' anecdotal notes were needed to describe the activities that the third-graders planned and implemented with the residents.

The location of the data. The journal responses were written in the students' service-learning journals, and the tally of activities along with the responses to the service-learning statements were recorded on the students' self-rating scales. The journals were kept in a locked filing cabinet in the music room during the project. The investigator made a copy of the students' entries and kept them in the filing cabinet or recorded the responses and kept them in a password-protected word processing file. The rating scale sheets were kept by the researcher in the locked filing cabinet. The students kept their journals at the end of the project.

Interviews were conducted with several of the students about their activities. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions were kept in a file in the music room.

The music specialist made anecdotal notes throughout the study. Notes included activity descriptions, results of activities, notes of students' physical reactions, and oral responses related to their activities throughout the project.

The means of obtaining the data. Reflection sessions after each visit provided the students with opportunities to write or draw in their journals, write answers to open-

ended questions about their activities, respond to statements about service-learning, and rate their progress on the six statements of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. Additionally, interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed. The music specialist typed her anecdotal notes in a word-processing file. The students' written responses were copied by the investigator. Oral responses were recorded and saved.

The treatment of the data.

How the data were screened. The completed journal entries and surveys were screened to eliminate any incomplete or blank responses.

How the item analysis was made. The responses from journals, surveys, and interviews were recorded by the researcher. She coded them to find recurring themes. The data were interpreted by consolidating the descriptions of the activities into a composite description of the music and literature activities planned and implemented by the participant students. The total number of times participating in the three activities (singing, playing instruments, and sharing writing) were indicated by the student. The analysis: Principal Components Analysis on the Correlation Matrix of singing totals, playing totals, and writing totals.

Sub-question three. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in finishing their assignments by deadlines?

The data needed. The data needed include the results of the progress rating scales, ratings of the two service-learning statements, responses to journal prompts and

open-ended questions, the music specialist's anecdotal notes, and responses from interviews with the students, the homeroom teacher, and the parent volunteer.

The location of the data. The journal responses to prompts and open-ended questions were recorded by the students in their service-learning journals. The journals were stored, along with the progress rating scales and recorded data, in a locked filing cabinet in the music room. The teacher's anecdotal notes and transcriptions of the interviews were saved in a password-protected word processing file. The students kept their journals at the end of the project.

The means of obtaining the data. Reflection sessions after each visit gave the students opportunity to write or draw in their journals, write answers to open-ended questions about their activities, respond to statements about service-learning, and rate their progress on the six statements of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. Additionally, interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed. The music specialist typed her anecdotal notes in a word-processing file. The students' written responses were copied by the investigator.

The treatment of the data.

How the data were screened. The journal entries and surveys were screened to eliminate any incomplete or blank responses.

How the item analysis was made. The researcher compared the results of progress ratings for item A, *I can finish assignments by deadlines*. Regression analysis was conducted between the service-learning score and the mean of the item. The service-learning score was derived from the tally of activities—singing, playing, and writing—

along with an average of the two belief statements, (a) I can make a difference in my community and (b) I can learn from helping others. A Likert scale rating was used for the two statements: 1= *Strongly Disagree*, 2= *Disagree*, 3= *Agree*, and 4= *Strongly Agree*.

Sub-question four. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in taking good notes during class instruction?

The data needed. The data needed include the results of the progress rating scales, ratings of the two service-learning statements, responses to journal prompts and open-ended questions, the music specialist's anecdotal notes, and responses from interviews with the students, the homeroom teacher, and the parents.

The location of the data. The journal responses to prompts and open-ended questions were recorded by the students in their service-learning journals. The journals were stored, along with the progress rating scales and recorded data in a locked filing cabinet in the music room. The teacher's anecdotal notes and transcriptions of the interviews were saved in a password-protected word processing file. The students kept their journals at the end of the project.

The means of obtaining the data. Reflection sessions after each visit gave the students opportunity to write or draw in their journals, write answers to open-ended questions about their activities, respond to statements about service-learning, and rate their progress on the six statements of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning.

Additionally, interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed. The music specialist

typed her anecdotal notes in a word-processing file. The students' written responses were copied by the investigator.

The treatment of the data.

How the data were screened. The journal entries and surveys were screened to eliminate any incomplete or blank responses.

How the item analysis was made. The researcher compared the results of progress ratings for item B, *I can take good notes during class instruction*. A regression analysis was conducted between the service-learning score and the mean of the item. The service-learning score was derived from the tally of activities—singing, playing, and writing—along with an average of the two belief statements, (a) I can make a difference in my community and (b) I can learn from helping others. A Likert scale rating was used for the two statements: 1= *Strongly Disagree*, 2= *Disagree*, 3= *Agree*, and 4= *Strongly Agree*.

Sub-question five. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in using the library to get information for class assignments?

The data needed. The data needed include the results of the progress rating scales, ratings of the two service-learning statements, responses to journal prompts and open-ended questions, the music specialist's anecdotal notes, and responses from interviews with the students, the homeroom teacher, and the parent volunteer.

The location of the data. The journal responses to prompts and open-ended questions were recorded by the students in their service-learning journals. The journals were stored, along with the progress rating scales and recorded data, in a locked filing

cabinet in the music room. The teacher's anecdotal notes and transcriptions of the interviews were saved in a password-protected word processing file. The students kept their journals at the end of the project.

The means of obtaining the data. Reflection sessions after each visit gave the students opportunity to write or draw in their journals, write answers to open-ended questions about their activities, to respond to statements about service-learning, and to rate their progress on the six statements of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. Additionally, interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed. The music specialist typed her anecdotal notes in a word-processing file. The students' written responses were copied by the investigator.

The treatment of the data.

How the data were screened. The journal entries and surveys were screened to eliminate any incomplete or blank responses.

How the item analysis was made. The researcher compared the results of progress ratings for item C, *I can use the library to get information for class assignments*. A regression analysis was conducted between the service-learning score and the mean of the item. The service-learning score was derived from the tally of activities—singing, playing, and writing—along with an average of the two belief statements, (a) I can make a difference in my community and (b) I can learn from helping others. A Likert scale rating was used for the two statements: 1= *Strongly Disagree*, 2= *Disagree*, 3= *Agree*, and 4= *Strongly Agree*.

Sub-question six. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in planning their school work for the day?

The data needed. The data needed include the results of the progress rating scales, ratings of the two service-learning statements, responses to journal prompts and open-ended questions, the music specialist's anecdotal notes, and responses from interviews with the students, the homeroom teacher and the parent volunteer.

The location of the data. The journal responses to prompts and open-ended questions were recorded by the students in their service-learning journals. The journals were stored, along with the progress rating scales and recorded data, in a locked filing cabinet in the music room. The teacher's anecdotal notes and transcriptions of the interviews were saved in a password-protected word processing file. The students kept their journals at the end of the project.

The means of obtaining the data. Reflection sessions after each visit gave the students opportunity to write or draw in their journals, write answers to open-ended questions about their activities, to respond to statements about service-learning, and to rate their progress on the six statements of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. Additionally, interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed. The music specialist typed her anecdotal notes in a word-processing file. The students' written responses were copied by the investigator.

The treatment of the data.

How the data were screened. The journal entries and surveys were screened to eliminate any incomplete or blank responses.

How the item analysis was made. The researcher compared the results of progress ratings for item D, *I can plan my school work for the day*. A regression analysis was conducted between the service-learning score and the mean of the item. The service-learning score was derived from the tally of activities—singing, playing, and writing—along with an average of the two belief statements: (a) *I can make a difference in my community*, and (b) *I can learn from helping others*. A Likert scale rating was used for the two statements: 1= *Strongly Disagree*, 2= *Disagree*, 3= *Agree*, and 4= *Strongly Agree*.

Sub-question seven. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students’ self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in organizing their school work?

The data needed. The data needed include the results of the progress rating scales, ratings of the two service-learning statements, responses to journal prompts and open-ended questions, the music specialist’s anecdotal notes, and responses from interviews with the students, the homeroom teacher, and the parent volunteer.

The location of the data. The journal responses to prompts and open-ended questions were recorded by the students in their service-learning journals. The journals were stored, along with the progress rating scales and recorded data, in a locked filing cabinet in the music room. The teacher’s anecdotal notes and transcriptions of the

interviews were saved in a password-protected word processing file. The students kept their journals at the end of the project.

The means of obtaining the data. Reflection sessions after each visit gave the students opportunity to write or draw in their journals, write answers to open-ended questions about their activities, respond to statements about service-learning, and rate their progress on the six statements of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. Additionally, interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed. The music specialist typed her anecdotal notes in a word-processing file. The students' written responses were copied by the investigator.

The treatment of the data.

How the data were screened. The journal entries and surveys were screened to eliminate any incomplete or blank responses.

How the item analysis was made. The researcher compared the results of progress ratings for item E, *I can organize my school work*. A regression analysis was conducted between the service-learning score and the mean of the item. The service-learning score was derived from the tally of activities—singing, playing, and writing—along with an average of the two belief statements, (a) I can make a difference in my community and (b) I can learn from helping others. A Likert scale rating was used for the two statements: 1= *Strongly Disagree*, 2= *Disagree*, 3= *Agree*, and 4= *Strongly Agree*.

Sub-question eight. To what extent does participating in service-learning activities affect the development of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in getting themselves to do their school work?

The data needed. The data needed include the results of the progress rating scales, ratings of the two service-learning statements, responses to journal prompts and open-ended questions, the music specialist's anecdotal notes, and responses from interviews with the students, the homeroom teacher, and the parent volunteer.

The location of the data. The journal responses to prompts and open-ended questions were recorded by the students in their service-learning journals. The journals were stored, along with the progress rating scales and recorded data, in a locked filing cabinet in the music room. The teacher's anecdotal notes and transcriptions of the interviews were saved in a password-protected word processing file. The students kept their journals at the end of the project.

The means of obtaining the data. Reflection sessions after each visit gave the students opportunity to write or draw in their journals, write answers to open-ended questions about their activities, respond to statements about service-learning, and rate their progress on the six statements of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. Additionally, interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed. The music specialist typed her anecdotal notes in a word-processing file. The students' written responses were copied by the investigator.

The treatment of the data.

How the data were screened. The journal entries and surveys were screened to eliminate any incomplete or blank responses.

How the item analysis was made. The researcher compared the results of progress ratings for item F, *I can get myself to do school work*. A regression analysis was

conducted between the service-learning score and the mean of the item. The service-learning score was derived from the tally of activities—singing, playing, and writing—along with an average of the two belief statements, (a) I can make a difference in my community and (b) I can learn from helping others. A Likert scale rating was used for the two statements: 1= *Strongly Disagree*, 2= *Disagree*, 3= *Agree*, and 4= *Strongly Agree*.

Chapter Four

The Results

The Quantitative Results

The first sub-question. Participants in the service-learning group had a general self-efficacy average ($M = 89.34$; $SD = 9.434$) which was significantly greater than that of the comparison group ($M = .69.21$; $SD = 13.681$): $t(34) = -5.14$; $p < .001$ (two-tailed). Similarly, participants in the service-learning group had an average on the self-efficacy for self-regulated learning ($M = 86.67$; $SD = 2.99$) which was significantly greater than that of the comparison group ($M = 73.39$; $SD = 23.682$): $t(34) = -2.096$; $p = .04$ (two-tailed).

The second sub-question. The results of six different regression analyses are presented in Table 4.1 where each of the six items was regressed on playing instruments, singing, and writing. Because none of the models resulted in an overall R^2 which differed significantly from zero, the activities did not appear to be related to any of the students' ratings on the six items.

Table 4.1

The Regression of Three Service-Learning Activities on the Mean Rating of Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning

| ACTIVITY | R | t(18) | p |
|----------|--------|--------|------|
| Singing | 0.098 | 0.242 | 0.81 |
| Playing | -0.044 | -0.141 | 0.89 |
| Writing | -0.064 | -0.177 | 0.86 |

The third sub-question. To address the third sub-question, a linear regression analysis was conducted where the mean of the first progress rating statement was

regressed on the service-learning score. Based on this analysis, there was no significant effect of the principal component of service-learning on *I can finish my assignments by deadlines*: $t(17) = 1.281$; $p = .218$. There was a low positive correlation ($R = .305$) between the two.

The fourth sub-question. To address the fourth sub-question, a linear regression analysis was conducted where the mean of the second progress rating statement was regressed on the service-learning score. Thus it appears that the principal component of service-learning had a main effect on *I can take good notes during class instruction* that was significant beyond the 5% level: $t(17) = 2.681$; $p = .016$. There was a moderate positive correlation ($R = .557$) between the two.

The fifth sub-question. To address the fifth sub-question, a linear regression analysis was conducted where the mean of the third progress rating statement was regressed on the service-learning score. Thus it appears that the principal component of service-learning had a main effect on *I can use the library to get information for class assignments* that was significant beyond the 5% level: $t(17) = 2.786$; $p = .013$. There was a moderate positive correlation ($R = .571$) between the two.

The six sub-question. To address the sixth sub-question, a linear regression analysis was conducted where the mean of the fourth progress rating statement was regressed on the service-learning score. Thus it appears that the principal component of service-learning had a main effect on *I can plan my school work for the day* that was significant beyond the 5% level: $t(17) = 2.241$; $p = .04$. There was a low positive correlation ($R = .489$) between the two.

The seventh sub-question. To address the seventh sub-question, a linear regression analysis was conducted where the mean of the fifth progress rating statement was regressed on the service-learning score. Based on this analysis, there was no significant effect of the principal component of service-learning on *I can organize my school work*: $t(17) = -1.184$; $p = .254$. There was a low negative correlation ($R = -.284$) between the two.

The eighth sub-question. To address the eighth sub-question, a linear regression analysis was conducted where the mean of the sixth progress rating statement was regressed on the service-learning score. Based on this analysis, there was no significant effect of the principal component of service-learning on *I can get myself to do school work*: $t(17) = -1.459$; $p = .164$. There was a low positive correlation ($R = .343$) between the two.

Table 4.2 shows the results of the regression of each of the six statements of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning on the principal component of service-learning.

Table 4.2

The Regression of the Principal Component of Service-Learning on the Mean Rating of the Six Statements of Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning

| STATEMENT | R | t(18) | p |
|----------------------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| Finish Assignments | 0.305 | 1.281 | 0.22 |
| Take Good Notes | 0.557 | 2.681 | 0.02 |
| Use Library | 0.571 | 2.786 | 0.01 |
| Plan School Work | 0.489 | 2.241 | 0.04 |
| Organize School Work | -0.284 | -1.184 | 0.25 |
| Get Self to do School Work | 0.343 | 1.459 | 0.16 |

Discussion of quantitative results.

The pretest self-efficacy ratings. During the pretest process, the participant group and the comparison group completed two practice items to insure understanding of the rating system. A pre-service survey was administered to both groups prior to the participant group's first visit to the nursing home.

The pre-service survey consisted of 50 items from the *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006). The *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* addresses all of the activity domains in which a student may be involved while in school. In order to maintain the validity of the instrument, an expert review panel—consisting of two elementary guidance counselors, one elementary school psychologist, and two third-grade teachers—were consulted to determine the items applicable to the population in this study.

The researcher administered the survey orally to the students. The students used the values 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, and 100 to rate their beliefs for being capable of doing the stated tasks. This standard methodology with the 100 point scale ranged in 10-unit intervals from “*Cannot do at all*” through intermediate degrees of assurance - “*Moderately certain can do*” to complete assurance - “*Highly certain can do.*”

The mean self-efficacy score of the participant group on the pre-service survey was 74.52. The mean self-efficacy score of the comparison group was 70.58. The students in the participant group rated themselves on the average of 3.95 points higher than those in the comparison group.

Inasmuch as this study focuses on the self-efficacy for self-regulated learning, the items in this activity domain were analyzed. The mean rating of the participant group in this domain was 65.11, for an average of 9.41 points lower than their general self-efficacy score. In contrast, the mean rating of the comparison group on self-efficacy for self-regulated learning was 77.17, which was an average of 6.59 points higher than their general self-efficacy score. The comparison of means of both groups for pre-and posttest is given in the next section in Table 4.3.

Although the students in the participant group rated themselves higher than their counterparts in their general self-efficacy, their mean rating for their self-efficacy of self-regulated learning was 65.11, which was on the average of 8.06 points lower than the mean rating of students in the comparison group of 77.17.

Gender, ethnicity, and SES were controlled for in this study for descriptive purposes only. It was not the intent of this study to draw any conclusions or make any implications about any subgroups. Gender, ethnicity, and SES were screens through which students came into the program—bringing various experiences they had encountered in their unique backgrounds.

Participant males and females scored themselves similarly in their general self-efficacy ratings, with a mean of 73.74 and 75.31, respectively. The same was true with the comparison males and females, with means of 70.16 and 71.10, respectively. The greatest mean differences within gender occurred in the ratings of self-efficacy for regulated learning domain: the comparison males scored themselves 72.60, an average of 10.27 points lower than the comparison females whose mean score was 82.87. The most

diversity in the gender comparisons between the general self-efficacy ratings and those of self-efficacy of self-regulated learning occurred within the comparison females. There was an average 11.71 point difference with means of 71.10 and 82.88. Both male and female participants rated themselves higher in the general self-efficacy construct than that of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. In contrast, the male and female participants in the comparison group scored themselves higher in their self-efficacy for self-regulated learning than in their general self-efficacy. Pre-and post-test results for gender are given in Table 4.4 in the next section.

There was only one Black/White student in each of the groups. The ratings were 94.40 on general self-efficacy and 83.00 on self-efficacy for self-regulated learning given by the student in the participant group, and 100 for both general self-efficacy and self-efficacy for self-regulated learning by the student in the comparison group. Inasmuch as there was only one student in each group with this ethnicity, this was the only analysis made utilizing this classification in ethnic groups.

Ethnicity comparisons revealed a similarity between the general self-efficacy ratings between the Blacks and Whites of the participant group, with means of 75.87 for Blacks and 75.75 for Whites. The participant Whites ($M = 67.5$) rated themselves similarly with comparison Whites ($M = 67.85$) in their ratings of self-efficacy of self-regulated learning constructs. At an average of 18.2 points less than the mean (75.87) of their general self-efficacy ratings, the lowest ratings in self-regulated learning came from the participant Blacks with a mean rating of 57.67. In contrast, the highest ratings in this same domain came from the comparison Black students with 23.47 points above their

participant counterparts. The comparison Hispanics' average rating in self-efficacy for self-regulated learning ($M = 82.00$) was the highest of all ethnicity groups. The participant Hispanics and the comparison Hispanics were very similar in their general self-efficacy ratings, with 61.93 and 64.27, respectively. The participant Hispanics were 14.34 points below the mean of the same ethnicity of the comparison group in self-regulated learning. The students in all ethnic groups of the comparison class rated themselves higher in their self-efficacy for self-regulated learning than they did in their general self-efficacy constructs. The participant group, with the exception of the Hispanic population, was the opposite—rating themselves higher in general self-efficacy. Means of both groups in pre-and posttests are given in the next section in Table 4.5.

Participant students with low SES rated themselves lower in general self-efficacy than both medium and high SES students. Comparison students with medium SES and high SES rated themselves on the average of 4 points lower than those with low SES. Self-regulated learning ratings were highest among the medium SES comparison students ($M = 78.80$) and lowest among the participants with low SES ($M = 58.83$). Medium and high SES levels in the comparison group scored themselves higher in self-regulated learning than in general self-efficacy. The results of means of SES for pre-and posttests are given in the next section in Table 4.6.

The posttest self-efficacy ratings. The posttest consisted of a post-service survey which the researcher administered orally to the students during the week after the participants' final visit to the nursing home. The same 50 items were used as in the pre-service survey and, as in the pre-service survey, the students used the values 0, 10,

20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, and 100 to rate their beliefs for being capable of doing the stated tasks. This standard methodology with the 100 point scale ranged in 10-unit intervals from “*Cannot do at all*” through intermediate degrees of assurance - “*Moderately certain can do*” to complete assurance - “*Highly certain can do*”.

The mean of the general self-efficacy of the participant students as indicated in the post-service survey was 89.34, which was 14.8 points higher than in the pre-service survey. The mean of the general self-efficacy of the comparison students as indicated in the post-service survey was 69.21, which was slightly lower (-1.37) than the pre-service mean rating of 70.58.

The mean of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning by the participants showed a difference of 21.56 between the pretest and posttest ratings. Table 4.3 shows the means and standard deviations for both populations’ pre- and post-test ratings for their general self-efficacy and self-regulated learning self-efficacy.

Table 4.3

Mean Ratings of the Participant (Part.) and Comparison (Comp.) Groups

| | <i>n</i> | General Self-Efficacy | | | | Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning | | | |
|--------------|----------|-----------------------|-------|----------|-------|---|-------|----------|-------|
| | | Pretest | | Posttest | | Pretest | | Posttest | |
| | | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Part. | 18 | 74.52 | 13.29 | 89.34 | 9.45 | 65.11 | 22.73 | 86.67 | 12.70 |
| Comp. | 18 | 70.58 | 16.57 | 69.21 | 13.68 | 77.17 | 17.44 | 73.39 | 23.68 |

In the posttest, the participant males rated themselves over 22 points higher in self-efficacy for self-regulated learning than did the comparison males; the participant females showed a four point higher rating than their comparison counterparts. The

participant Whites' mean of 87.00 was 22 points higher than the comparison's mean.

Table 4.4 shows the comparison means by gender.

Table 4.4

Mean Ratings of the Participant (Part.) and Comparison (Comp.) Groups by Gender

| | <i>n</i> | General Self-Efficacy | | | | Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning | | | |
|---------------|----------|-----------------------|-------|----------|-------|---|-------|----------|-------|
| | | Pretest | | Posttest | | Pretest | | Posttest | |
| | | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| <i>Male</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Part. | 9 | 73.74 | 12.03 | 91.42 | 7.1 | 65.67 | 24.63 | 92.22 | 9.59 |
| Comp. | 10 | 70.16 | 13.82 | 67.34 | 14.21 | 72.6 | 19.25 | 70.2 | 25.58 |
| <i>Female</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Part. | 9 | 75.31 | 15.13 | 87.27 | 11.36 | 64.56 | 22.15 | 81.11 | 13.48 |
| Comp. | 8 | 71.1 | 25.51 | 71.55 | 13.55 | 82.88 | 13.96 | 77.38 | 22.1 |

The comparison student of White/Black ethnicity duplicated a 100 rating for all her surveys. The participant White/Black student rated herself one point lower in general self-efficacy on her posttest, but six points higher in self-regulated learning than on her pretest.

Both the populations of Hispanic students rated themselves higher in general self-efficacy on the posttest. The comparison group of Hispanic students, however, rated themselves five points lower in self-efficacy for their self-regulated learning on the posttest. Of the ethnicities, the participant Hispanics showed the most increase in their general self-efficacy (by 25 points) and participant Blacks demonstrated the most increase in their self-regulated learning self-efficacy (by 30 points). Table 4.5 shows the comparison of means by ethnicity.

Table 4.5

Mean Ratings of the Participant (Part.) and Comparison (Comp.) Groups by Ethnicity

| | <i>n</i> | General Self-Efficacy | | | | Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning | | | |
|---------------------|----------|-----------------------|-------|----------|-------|---|-------|----------|-------|
| | | Pretest | | Posttest | | Pretest | | Posttest | |
| | | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| <i>Black</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Part. | 6 | 75.87 | 15.04 | 90.1 | 14.97 | 57.67 | 36.64 | 87.33 | 18.46 |
| Comp. | 7 | 76.6 | 16.56 | 72.36 | 13.86 | 81.14 | 20.68 | 76.57 | 21.07 |
| <i>White</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Part. | 8 | 75.75 | 9.53 | 89.45 | 6.73 | 67.5 | 12.36 | 87 | 11.36 |
| Comp. | 7 | 63.06 | 9.73 | 62.59 | 9.74 | 67.86 | 9.32 | 65.43 | 22.9 |
| <i>Black/ White</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Part. | 1 | 94.4 | | 93 | | 83 | | 89 | |
| Comp. | 1 | 100 | | 100 | | 100 | | 100 | |
| <i>Hispanic</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Part. | 3 | 61.93 | 13.06 | 86.33 | 3.97 | 67.67 | 11.93 | 83.67 | 7.09 |
| Comp. | 3 | 64.27 | 20.24 | 67.07 | 7.75 | 82 | 19.67 | 75.67 | 35.23 |

Students with low SES in the participant group made the most gains in their ratings, increasing from 71.60 to 93.30 in general self-efficacy and from 58.83 to 89.83 in self-regulated learning self-efficacy. Comparison students with medium SES went down from a mean rating of 69.80 to 66.27 in general self-efficacy and from 78.80 to 71.90 in self-regulated learning self-efficacy. Comparison students with high SES rated themselves similarly in self-regulated learning in pre- and posttests. Their general self-efficacy ratings increased slightly by an average of 2 points. Participant students with high SES increased from 73.54 to 90.87 in their general self-efficacy, and similarly from 75.33 to 93.33 in their self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. Table 4.6 shows the SES means comparisons.

Table 4.6

Mean Ratings of the Participant (Part.) and Comparison (Comp.) Groups by Socio-Economic Status (SES)

| | <i>n</i> | General Self-Efficacy | | | | Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning | | | |
|-------------------|----------|-----------------------|-------|----------|-------|---|-------|----------|-------|
| | | Pretest | | Posttest | | Pretest | | Posttest | |
| | | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| <i>Low SES</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Part. | 6 | 71.6 | 11.98 | 93.3 | 4.6 | 58.83 | 27.61 | 89.83 | 8.47 |
| Comp. | 4 | 73.9 | 5.1 | 74.48 | 12.99 | 73.5 | 20.47 | 74.25 | 22.97 |
| <i>Medium SES</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Part. | 9 | 76.8 | 15.74 | 86.2 | 11.97 | 65.89 | 23.15 | 82.33 | 15.85 |
| Comp. | 10 | 69.8 | 18.87 | 66.27 | 10.84 | 78.8 | 18.52 | 71.9 | 25 |
| <i>High SES</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Part. | 3 | 73.54 | 9.99 | 90.87 | 5.94 | 75.33 | 8.08 | 93.33 | 2.52 |
| Comp. | 4 | 69.2 | 21.05 | 71.3 | 21.61 | 76.75 | 24.63 | 76.25 | 27.5 |

The rating scale. The panel of experts employed in this study to select the relevant statements of the *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006) also established six of the ten items in Bandura's self-regulated learning activity domain as being applicable to third-graders at this school participating in a service-learning experience that involved music and writing activities. From these six items, a rating scale was developed that the children completed after each visit (treatment) with the elderly nursing home residents. The students rated themselves on each item using the values 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, and 100 to rate their beliefs for being capable of doing the stated tasks. This standard methodology, just as with their pre-and post-service surveys, utilized the 100 point scale ranging in 10-unit intervals from "Cannot do at all" through

intermediate degrees of assurance - “*Moderately certain can do*” to complete assurance - “*Highly certain can do*”.

The six items that were rated were (a) I can finish my assignments by deadlines, (b) I can take good notes during class instruction, (c) I can use the library to get information for class assignments, (d) I can plan my schoolwork for the day, (e) I can organize my school work, and (f) I can get myself to do school work.

Students also tallied the activities they shared with their grandfriends each week: singing, playing, or writing. In the data analysis, they received one point for each tally. There was an occasional absence. In those cases, the average of the absent student’s five other ratings was entered for the missed rating session.

Additionally, students were asked to examine their experience in terms of service-learning and use a Likert scale to rate the following items based on self-efficacy questions from *The Profile of Learning Through Service* (Weatherford, Owens, Weatherford, and Fisk, 2003): (a) By participating in service-learning I can make a difference in my community, and (b) By participating in service-learning I learn from helping others. The scale used for both statements ranged from one to four points: 1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Agree*, and 4 = *Strongly Agree*.

Data from *Rating One* resulted in an average of 70.99 for the six constructs. For each of the statements from the activity domain of self-regulated learning, the means are: A = 64.06, B = 77.81, C = 71.88, D = 64.06, E = 71.25, and F = 76.88.

Fifty percent of the students strongly agreed that by participating in service learning they can make a difference in their community; 38% agreed, 6% disagreed, and

6% strongly disagreed with the statement, for a 3.31 mean rating. Fifty-six percent of the students strongly agreed that by participating in service learning they can learn from helping others; 32% agreed, 6% disagreed, and 6% strongly disagreed with the statement, for a 3.38 mean rating.

After the second treatment, the mean of *Rating Two* of 73.06 was slightly higher than that of *Rating One*. The means for each of the statements A-F were 76.39, 65, 75.56, 68.06, and 84.44 respectively. Item B averaged 12 points lower in the second rating, whereas Item A received an average of 12 points higher in the second rating. Item E rated slightly lower after the second intervention, and all others rate higher. The average rating for the belief that they can make a difference was 3.39, only slightly higher than in *Rating One*; for the belief that they can learn from helping others, the average rating was 3.25, slightly lower than in *Rating One*.

Rating Three generated a comparable mean (73.04) as the second rating. Items A and F were rated lower on the third rating than on the second. The overall average was two points higher than at the beginning of the project. The average rating for making a difference went down to 3.09, but the average rating for learning from helping others rose to 3.62.

Data from *Rating Four* produced an average of six points higher than the previous two sessions, for a mean of 79.61. All six areas received higher ratings. The highest increases were in items C (78.24 to 90) and F (75.88 to 84.71). From the beginning of the project the mean rating had increased by almost nine points. The average rating for

students believing they can make a difference went to its highest thus far, at 3.53. The students' ratings went down slightly for learning from helping others: 3.32.

Rating Five produced the following results: mean of 83.32 (an increase of 12 points over the initial rating); average of items A through F were 77.06, 77.06, 88.82, 88.24, 80.59, and 91.19 respectively. The mean rating was four points higher than from the previous rating. Item C was down slightly, but all other items were rated higher than in the previous session. The average for both service-learning statements was similar to *Rating Four* results. Students' belief that they can make a difference was higher than in the beginning, but students' feeling that they can learn from helping others had not increased.

The results of *Rating Six* included the highest belief averages of all ratings in both making a difference and learning, with 3.63 and 3.93 respectively. Items A, B, and E received their highest overall ratings during this session. Item C was down by six points from its highest rating during *Rating Four*. Item D was down three points from the previous session, as was item F. The mean of this final progress rating was 83.02.

Figure 4.1 demonstrates the progression of means through the six progress rating session.

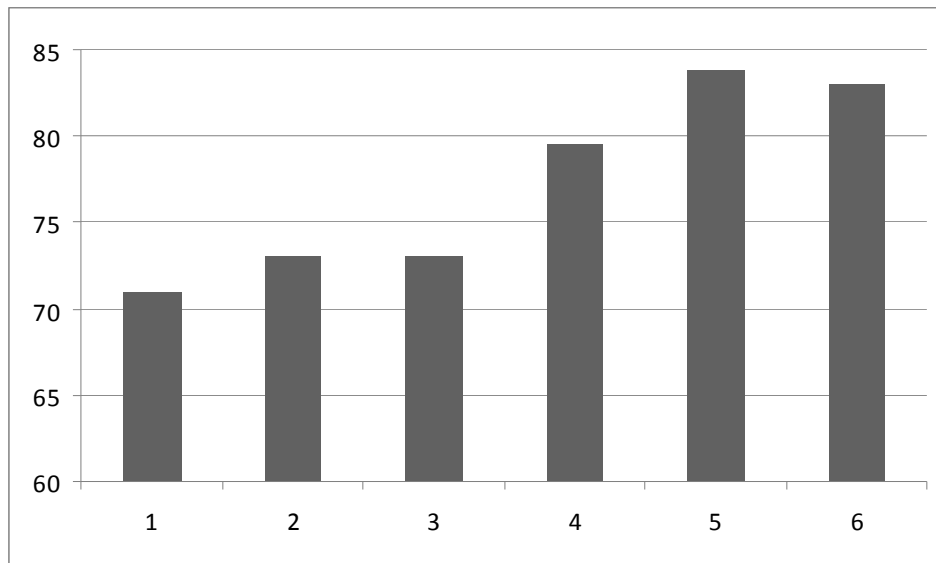


Figure 4.1: Graph of the Means of the Six Progress Rating Sessions

The Qualitative Results

“It meant to me two hearts going together and making a bigger heart”

(Trina, Black/White female).

“I felt like an angel with a warm feeling inside and I felt great” (DeMario,

Black male).

The first sub-question.

The student response.

The first and fifth reflections. The journal prompts for these two sessions were similar regarding students’ feelings about their meeting their grandfriends and sharing their activities—*Reflection One* was completed before the first treatment and *Reflection Five* was completed after the fourth treatment. Less self-efficacious feelings such as “nervous” and “scared” appeared in the first session. The themes from the first question on *Reflection One* were: (a) excited, (b) nervous, (c) happy, (d) scared, (e) good, (f) great, and (g) other comments. Figure 4.2 shows how three of the themes from question one in

Reflection One—excited, nervous, and scared— disappeared, and one new theme—fun— emerged in *Reflection Five*. The number of students exhibiting the self-efficacious feelings of good and great increased, and the same number of students wrote various other comments as in the first question. Two new themes—fun and great—emerged in question two in *Reflection Five*, and one theme—scared—disappeared.

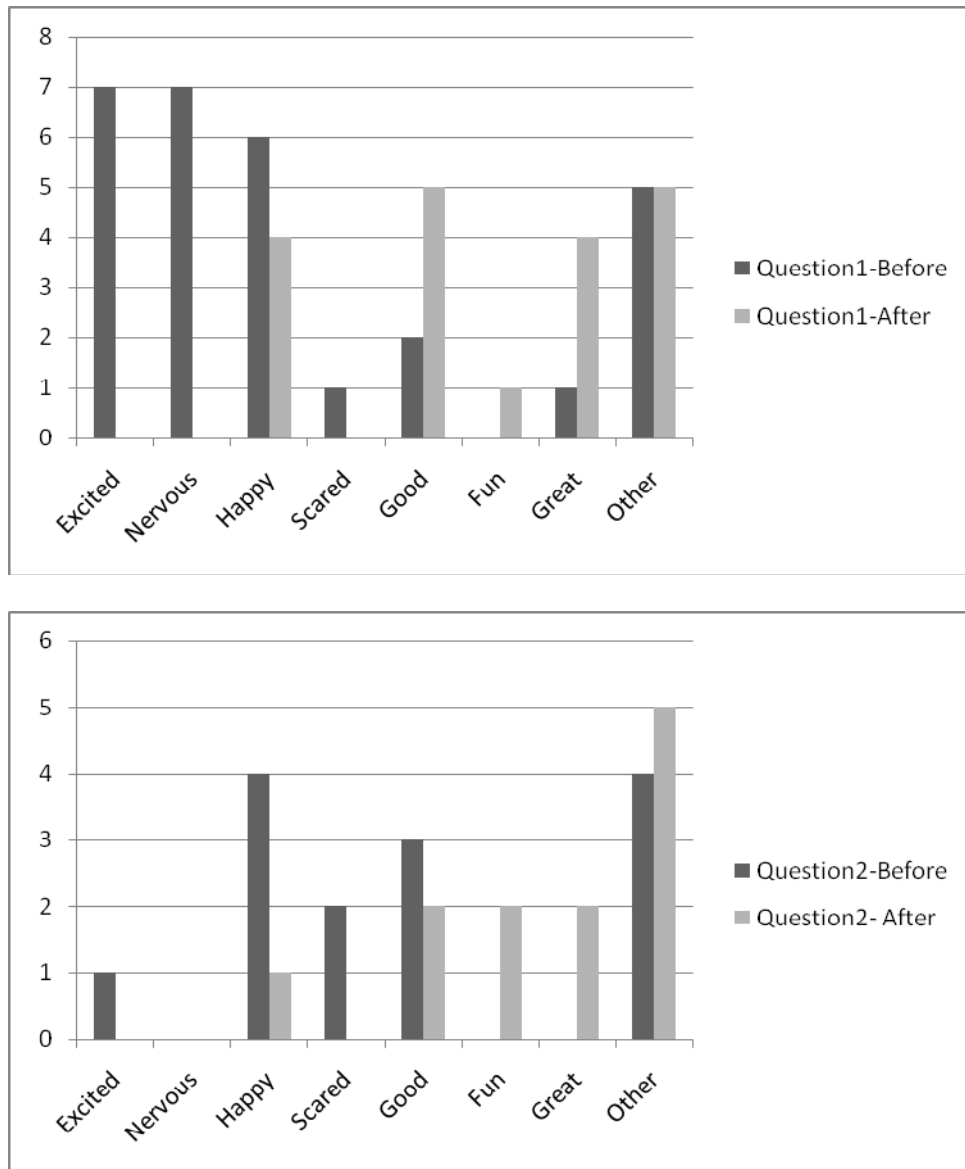


Figure 4.2: Graphs of the Coded Themes from *Reflection One* and *Reflection Five*

Reflection One responses to the first prompt, “Before you go to the nursing home, tell how you feel about meeting your new grandfriends,” included the following:

- “I’m excited to meet my new grandfriends” (several responses).
- “I will be happy because I will make them happy because they love children” (Juan, Hispanic male).
- “I would feel like I can really help those people and so I want to meet them” (David, White male).
- “I feel very nervous and scared” (Jeremy, White male, and several others). After several visits, Jeremy’s response was, “I feel happy and glad.”
- “I never met grandfriends in my life” (LaShay, Black female).
- “I feel a little nervous. I feel that they may need more friends and be happy when they see what we do” (Bri, White female).

Reflection Five responses to the first prompt, “Now that you have visited the nursing home several times, tell how you feel about meeting your new grandfriends,” included the following:

- “I felt good” (several responses).
- “I feel happy. They are nice” (Juan, Hispanic male).
- “I feel that they love us and want to hug” (Bri, White female).
- “I had fun visiting all different kinds of grandfriends” (LaShay, Black female).

The homeroom teacher response. The homeroom teacher, Miss Hill, was interviewed prior to the intervention with her students. In her response to questions about the participant students’ self-regulated learning habits in her classroom, she noted,

“About 25% of my students complete all their assignments, plan accordingly to complete their school work during the day, and have organized desks. The others rarely complete assignments, even projects on time. Their desks are continually the product of a tornado, and [the students] are constantly off task.” When asked about her expectations for her students as they relate to their self-regulated learning, Miss Hill responded, “I would like to see my students actually attempt projects, turn them in on time, and develop organizational strategies. I would also like to see my students develop good note taking skills so they can have something to study at home.”

After the intervention, she wrote, “Some students are still lazy, but most of the girls and [Juan] have started taking more notes.”

At the end of the project she noted that most of the children still did not organize their school work.

The parent volunteer response. The parent volunteer admitted that she was not in the classroom very much, so she felt inadequate in judging the children’s self-efficacy for their self-regulated learning. She expressed her frustration with the lack of the other parents’ participation in their children’s school activities. Her overall observation was that the children became more comfortable and compassionate in their interactions with the elderly residents.

The second sub-question.

The student response.

The first and fifth reflections. According to Bandura (1997), experience is the most powerful contributor to a person’s self-efficacy. The students’ responses in the

following reflections indicate that they were actively involved during the intervention. Their activities included singing, playing instruments, and sharing their writing.

Reflection One responses to the second prompt, “Before you go to the nursing home, tell how you feel about singing, playing instruments, and sharing your writing with others,” included:

- “I feel shy because I was born like that” (DeMond, Black male). In the second reflection he wrote, “I was feeling shy, but then I was feeling special.” In Reflection Five, after visiting several times, he responded “I feel wonderful about playing,” demonstrating more confidence and efficacy about the specific activities in the intervention. In a later reflection, DeMond wrote, “I sing[sic] with a grandfriend and we saw pictures of us it was beautiful [sic].”
- “Good because some probably never get to hear people sing and play instruments” (Gray, White male).
- “I would be happy to do that” (Several responses).
- Reflection Five responses to the second prompt, after several visits, included:
- “I feel like a better person and they sing really good [sic] when we play” (Melody, Hispanic female).
- “I was happy when I got to hand out presents [sic] to the people and sing songs fore [sic] the people we playD [sic] bells [sic]” (Pressley, White male).
- “I was singing and doing other stuff with my grandfriends. I had so much fun I wanted to stay” (LaShay, Black female).

Reflection two. The students wrote about their visit in their journals. Figure 4.3 depicts the main themes from their writing.

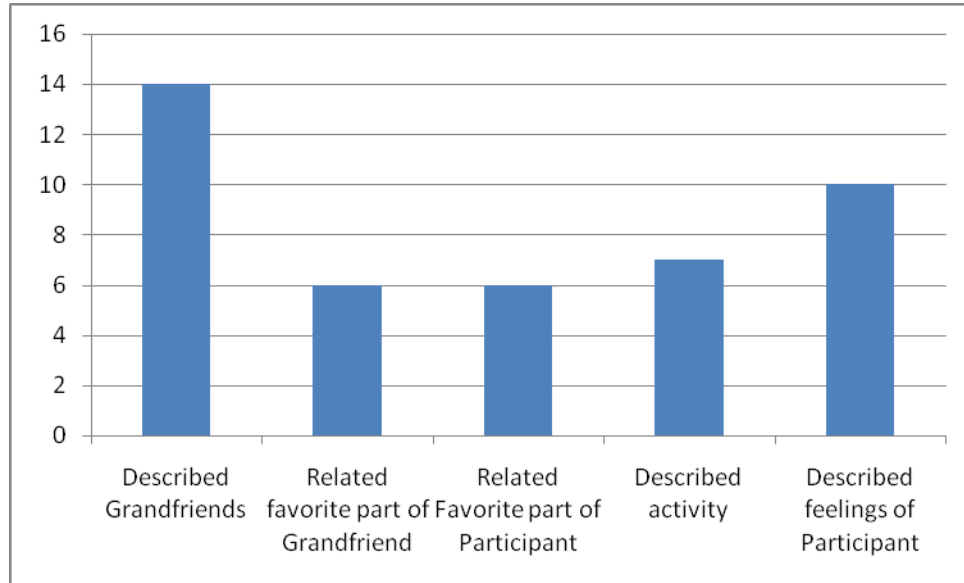


Figure 4.3: Graphs of the Coded Themes from *Reflection Two*

Responses included:

- “The other people responded by clapping and saying “hi” back” (Trey, White male).
- “I worked with the guy who kept scraping his wrist” (Jeremy, White male).
- “I had a blast exploring the nursing home and getting to meet new people and making friends with new people that we didn’t know before” (DeMario, Black male).
- “My favorite part was when we sang” (several responses).
- “My favorite part was when they played the pancake drum” (several responses).
- “The ones I like are all of them” (DeMond, Black male).

- “We sing, dance and meet all of our grandfriends, and then we sing again—but we sing right beside them. Oh, and it’s not a long trip to the nursing home” (Melody, Hispanic female).
- “I feel like singing is good for my heart” (LaShay, Black female).

Reflection three. Each student drew a picture and wrote a descriptive sentence about his/her experience. Some of the students drew pictures that included the scenery from the nursing home such as the bird cage and the mural on the wall. Most of the students drew the residents in their wheelchairs. Juan (See Figure 4.4), LaShay (See Figure 4.5, and Bri (See Figure 4.6) depicted singing activities.



Figure 4.4: Juan’s Reflection Three picture

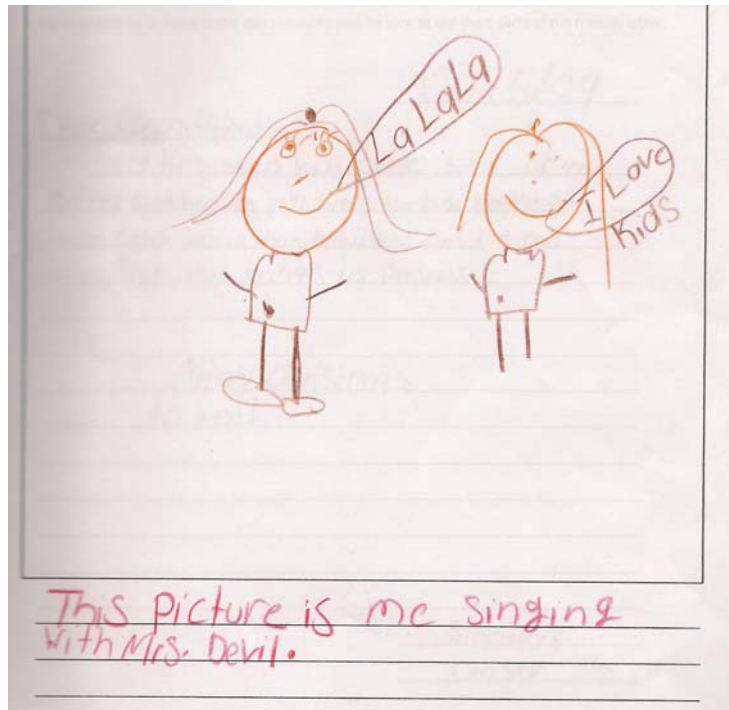


Figure 4.5: LaShay's Reflection Three picture

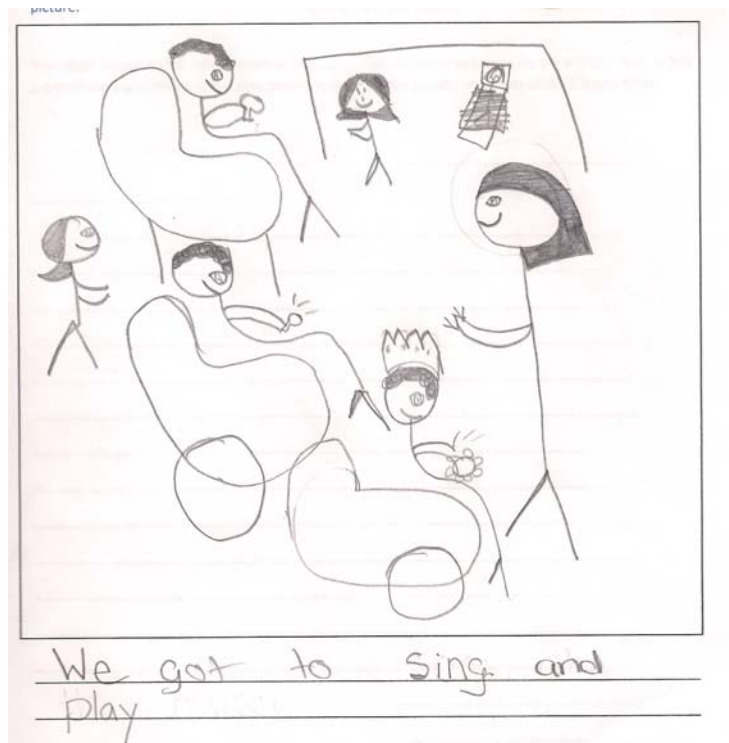


Figure 4.6: Bri's Reflection Three picture

Gray's picture captured a common feeling of the children as was evident on the bus ride home. They were abuzz about how excited the residents were that they came.

See Figure 4.7.



Figure 4.7: Gray's Reflection Three picture

Reflection four. The students wrote letters to their grandfriends as part of reflection four. Eight of the students wrote about the activities that they had shared at the nursing home as well as when the residents came to their musical performance at the school. The activities that emerged in their reflections included singing, playing, and dancing. The letters from this writing activity were mailed to the grandfriends.

Examples include:

- “I like coming and surprising you, seeing the birds in their cage and seeing new faces. I was so happy that you came to our school. You danced and we went around and shook your hands. I’m glad you came. You really made my day” (Trina, White/Black female).
- “The last time you came you saw us in a show. It was Friday. We enjoyed having you here. I hope you can come back to our school and see us again. Can you come at the end of the school year so we can tell you goodbye? I will miss you” (Zytia, Black female).
- “Last time when we came, some of ya’ll did not sing because ya’ll were too busy sleeping” (LaShay, Black female).
- “I like to come here to the nursing home. I like to meet the people here and it is more fun when we sing, dance, and play instruments. We just love it here” (David, White male).
- “I love singing and writing for my grandfriends. I wrote a poem for Miss Aleen and she liked the poem” (Melody, Hispanic female).
- “I enjoyed singing and playing insterments [sic], reading, writing” (LaShay, Black female).

The third sub-question.

The student response. After the third treatment, students reflected on the progress scale items. The responses in reference to finishing assignments by deadlines

included:

- “It’s getting easier to finish assignments” (Gray, White male).
- “I am not getting better at finishing my assignments” (Hannah, White female).
- “I am getting worse at everything” (DeMario, Black male).

At the end of the project, DeMario was doing better than he had at the beginning of the year, according to the teacher. He told me that he was “doing pretty good” at finishing his assignments.

The teacher-researcher response. The children did not focus on their assignments. For example, when they were writing their first drafts for their friendly letters, DeMond walked around in the room aimlessly, Kayla never did start writing, several students did not have pencil or paper, and Melody was the only one who had finished her rough draft by the next day when I went to their room to collect them. I had to constantly remind DeMario and Gray to get back on task. This was the typical behavior each time there was a R.P.M.S. Music Club project assignment deadline.

I also discovered that the teachers’ satisfaction and pleasure did not seem to be a factor in how/when the students completed their assignments.

The homeroom teacher response. At the halfway point during intervention, Miss Hill commented, “These are the laziest [students] I have ever taught.” After the intervention, she wrote, “[Kayla] doesn’t know what a deadline is, but the rest of the class usually turns in work on time (Except for projects...usually only 50% actually do it).”

At the end of the project, she stated, “[Kayla] is still slower than Christmas and rarely finishes assignments. She has more zeros than I can count. The rest of the class usually does all their work and turns it in.”

The fourth sub-question.

The student responses. After the third treatment, students reflected on the progress scale items. The responses in reference to taking good notes during class included:

- “I feel like I take good notes in class better” (Trina, White/Black female).
- “I am kind of better” (Hannah, White female).
- “I am better at taking notes” (Pressley, White male).

At the end of the project, Bri (White female) said that she was best at taking notes and Kayla (White female) said that she was not good at it.

The homeroom teacher response. After the intervention, Miss Hill wrote, “Some students are still lazy, but most of the girls and [Juan] have started taking more notes.”

The fifth sub-question.

The student response. The students reflected on their use of the library to get information for their assignments. Their responses at the midpoint of the intervention included:

- “I am not so good at using the library” (Hannah, White female).
- “It’s getting easier to use the library” (Gray, White male).
- “I can use the library to see what books are in it. (LaShay, Black female).

By the end of the intervention, DeMario was the only one who indicated that he was “not good at using the library.” The other students were either neutral in their responses or felt that they were getting better.

The teacher-researcher response. Before the third trip, several students went to the library and checked out books to take to share with their grandfriends. This was not an assigned project, but was their choice to do so.

The homeroom teacher response. At the end of the project the homeroom teacher wrote, “They know they can use the library, but they don’t actually go and research...mainly b/c they haven’t had the opportunity.”

The sixth sub-question.

The student response. During the intervention, some of the responses related to planning their school work included:

- “I’m working on planning my school work” (LaShay, Black female).
- “I feel that I can plan my school work better” (Trina, White/Black female).
- “I am getting better” (Kayla, White female).

At the end of the intervention, all students indicated they had improved in planning their school work. DeMond said, “I am good at writing down my assignments, but I just do not finish them.”

The homeroom teacher response. Miss Hill wrote, “[Melody], [Hannah] and [DeMond] have demonstrated planning their school work by writing assignments during spare time.”

The seventh sub-question.

The student response. Throughout the intervention, several students wrote about organizing their work. The responses included:

- “I am getting better. Look—I am cleaning out my desk” (DeMario, Black male).
- “I am really good” (Hannah, White female).
- “I’m good at organizing my school work so nobody can say ugly like at that desk” (SirVale, Black male).
- “I am good at organizing my school work” (Melody, Hispanic female).

At the end of the intervention, the same students who had previously responded that they were good at organizing were the only ones who contended that they were good at organizing by the end of the project. The others were neutral on the subject or said they were not really good at it.

The teacher-researcher response. Throughout the project, including the last reflection session, the students were very disorganized. They could not find their papers and pencils. They wasted time looking for materials related to their assignments. They did not listen to instructions carefully. For example, when the clipboards, pencils, and papers were distributed in the music room for a written assignment, many of them still did not get everything they needed.

The homeroom teacher response. In Miss Hill’s final response regarding organizing their work, she wrote, “This hasn’t really changed. [DeMond] still writes down all his assignments in his planner. The rest don’t.”

The eighth sub-question.

The student response. The students overall felt they could get themselves to do their school work throughout the intervention by responding positively about their ability to do so. Pressley indicated that he had improved in that area, and Hannah said she was really good at it.

The following interview with DeMario indicates his improvement, specifically in this area. DeMario had rated himself zeros in all six statements of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning on the pre-test, and on the first three progress rating sessions. He had indicated in his written reflection at the midpoint that he was doing worse in everything. The interview was conducted a few days before the fourth visit to the nursing home. It is transcribed as follows:

Researcher: What's your ID number?

DeMario: 106

Researcher: Okay, um...what's your favorite part about being in the RPMS club?

DeMario: Having fun, dancing, visiting my friends.

Researcher: Okay. And, I noticed when you were doing your ratings you started out with all zeros and the last time you, uh, had some different numbers on your paper. What are you thinking about?

DeMario: I'm improving on all of 'em.

Researcher: Okay. And which one do you think you're doing the best on so far?

DeMario: Getting myself to do my school work

Researcher: Okay. And, is there anything else that you want to say about what you're doing with these ratings?

DeMario: I'm like, um, when I was at zero and I started improving and then I went up on all of 'em and I just felt like I should keep trying to reach 100—my goal.

Researcher: All right. Thank you

DeMario: You should always fight for your goal...

Researcher: (unintentionally interrupting his statement) Oh, all right. Thank you very much.

DeMario: ...And you'll sooner or later reach it.

Teacher: Okay...'anything else you want to say before I stop this?

DeMario: No.

Teacher: Thank you.

The homeroom teacher response. At the end of the project, Miss Hill wrote, "The children have become more self directive with their school work. They are beginning to self reflect and build better study habits. Perhaps this is a direct result in their increase in self esteem from working with the elderly."

The Comparison of the Quantitative and Qualitative Results

The multiple methods approach used in this research design allowed for comparison of quantitative and qualitative results. The multiple-methods research question asked: How do the qualitative results explain, support, or contradict the results from the quantitative survey research?

Explanation and support. Emergent coding was used to extract the themes from the qualitative data. Several themes provided evidence that helped explain the quantitative results of increased self-efficacy. For example, the students began the project with less self-efficacious feelings such as scared and nervous—emotions which evolved by the end of their participation into more self-efficacious feelings such as wonderful and fun.

All qualitative data collected related to the students' general self-efficacy supported the quantitative results of their general self-efficacy ratings. The responses from the students, homeroom teacher, and the teacher-researcher substantiated the quantitative results of their ratings of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning.

Quantitative data demonstrated the intervention's significant correlation with the outcomes of students' taking good notes, using the library, and planning their school work. The qualitative responses from the students, the homeroom teacher, and the teacher-researcher supported the results on these three constructs.

The homeroom teacher and teacher-researcher responses corroborated the quantitative results of students' deficiency in organizing their work. The activity director and parent volunteer responses supported the students' increased confidence in their participation as the project progressed.

Contradictions. Some quantitative and qualitative findings did not converge. For example, although no individual activity appeared to be related to any of the students' ratings on the six items, the students' responses indicated that singing was more influential than any other activity during the intervention.

The homeroom teacher indicated that most students had improved in turning in their work. The other data collected, however, indicated that students did not improve in finishing their assignments by deadlines.

The students' responses indicated that they were becoming better organized, but the homeroom teacher responses, teacher-researcher responses, and quantitative data were contradictory for that statement.

The responses of the students, and homeroom teacher indicated that the students' participation in the intervention affected them positively on getting themselves to do their school work—a construct that did not demonstrate significant improvement in the quantitative analysis.

Overall, the qualitative data supported the quantitative results, with few exceptions. Table 4.7 summarizes the comparison of the data.

Table 4.7

Comparison of Quantitative (QUAN) and qualitative (qual) Data

| Variables | QUAN | | qual | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Significance | Correlation | Student Response | Homeroom Teacher Response | Teacher-Researcher Response | Parent Volunteer Response | Activity Director Response |
| | <i>p</i> | <i>R</i> | | | | | |
| General Self-Efficacy | < .001 | No Analysis | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning | 0.04 | No Analysis | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | n/a | n/a |
| Finish my assignments by deadlines | 0.218 | 0.305 | ✓ | X | ✓ | n/a | n/a |
| Take good notes during class instruction | 0.016 | 0.557 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | n/a | n/a |
| Use the library to get information for class assignments | 0.013 | 0.571 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | n/a | n/a |
| Plan my school work for the day | 0.04 | 0.489 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | n/a | n/a |
| Organize my school work | 0.254 | -0.284 | X | ✓ | ✓ | n/a | n/a |
| Get myself to do school work | 0.164 | 0.343 | X | X | ✓ | n/a | n/a |
| Other Finding: Helping others | Not measured | Not measured | E | E | E | E | E |
| Other Finding: Love | Not measured | Not measured | E | E | E | E | E |

Note: The qualitative data that corroborates the quantitative results are indicated with a check (✓). The qualitative data that contradicts the quantitative results are indicated with an "X." The themes in other findings were discovered in qualitative data only through emergent coding, and are indicated with an "E." The parent volunteer and activity director did not observe the students in their general classroom. Therefore, it was not appropriate for them to respond to questions regarding the self-regulated learning statements. This is indicated with "n/a."

The Other Findings

Two additional themes emerged from the qualitative data in this study: *helping others* and *love*.

Helping others.

Student response. The students wrote of their experiences from various perspectives. Their responses included:

- “I learned to help others- people in my community” (Trent, White male).
- “I learned to help others. Some people need help taking care of themselves” (Jeremy, White male).
- “I learned to be kind to them. Make them happy when they’re sick” (Juan, Hispanic male).
- “I felt like an angel with a warm feeling inside and I felt great” (DeMario, Black male).
- “It’s good to help others” (David, White male)
- “When I grow up I am going to work at the nursing home. It will be really fun and I will do everything for you” (David, White male, writing to his grandfriend).
- “I felt special to help people. I like making them happy” (Ansha, Black female).

The homeroom teacher response. “My students have started showing greater concern towards one another. They help one another when falling, scold others when name calling occurs, and encourage others to try their best. This is a giant step in the right direction from the days in August when they constantly found each other’s flaws and tormented others by flaunting others’ flaws. Seeing these elderly, helping them, and

feeling their love has help these children and their character grow” (Miss Hill, homeroom teacher).

Love. The theme of love that emerged was two-fold: Love emanating from the students toward the residents, and from the students toward their experiences during the service-learning project; love emanating from the residents toward the students and their experiences during the project.

Student response. The children spoke often of loving their grandfriends. They wrote many times in their journals about loving their grandfriends. Some other responses included:

- “I love your clothes. I love your hair.” (Hannah, White female, writing to her grandfriend.)
- “I loved meeting the grandfriends” (Several responses).
- “I love this club. It meant a lot to me” (Gray, White male).

The resident response. The residents responded with smiles, laughing, and with uninhibited participation in the activities. They hugged the children and begged them to stay. David, with a sheepish grin, boarded the bus after one visit, and told of Miss Helen’s reaction: “She kissed me on the neck three times!”

Some other resident responses included:

- “I love that song, I love these children, and I love my country” (Miss Mabel, one of the most outspoken residents, after singing America).

- “I don’t know if you noticed it or not, but these children swarm on me like flies when they come” (Miss Mary, one of the children’s favorite grandfriends, speaking aside to me as I was leaving on our last visit).

The activities director’s response. The director took the children into the hallway on their fourth visit to point out the bulletin board she had made of their letters and pictures they had sent to the grandfriends. She spoke to the children about how much they had meant to the grandfriends. With tears in her eyes, she conveyed uplifting news to the children: “I want you to know what you mean to these residents and how much they love you....Mr. James is one of our new male residents. We’ve not been able to get him to participate in any activities since he’s been here, but today he was smiling, clapping his hands and singing.”

The homeroom teacher’s response. In addition to addressing the self-efficacy for self-regulated learning outcomes, she offered this statement: “The class has learned to encourage each other rather than tear each other down (with a few exceptions). For the most part, they have develop [*sic*] more compassion, honesty, and integrity.”

Chapter Five

The Narrative

“We need to listen closely to teachers and other learners and to the stories of their lives in and out of classrooms. We also need to tell our own stories as we live our own collaborative researcher/teacher lives. Our own work then becomes one of learning to tell and live a new mutually constructed account of inquiry in teaching and learning. What emerges from this mutual relationship are new stories of teachers and learners as curriculum makers, stories that hold new possibilities for both researchers and teachers and for those who read their stories” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 12).

The descriptions of the process, setting, participants, activities, setbacks and victories all contribute to a better understanding of the overall service-learning experience and its accompanying outcomes in this study. *The Story of the R.P.M.S. Music Club* is a narrative, or telling case, of the entire experience. Emergent coding was used in identifying the recurring themes, and member checking was conducted with the participants to confirm the meanings of their responses.

This story was developed through analysis of my teacher-researcher reflective anecdotal notes alongside the extracted themes from the responses of the students, homeroom teacher, residents, activities director, and parent volunteer. My goal in telling this story is to make sense of the experience—one goal of action research, as concluded by Coghlan and Brannick (2005). “Telling the story, making sense of it, applying a rigorous methodology to that sense-making are directed towards the generation for useful knowledge which must produce outcomes which are of value to others” (p. 133).

The story of the R.P.M.S. Music Club

Service-learning experience. I am the general music education teacher of the Whitefield Elementary School students participating in this study and the researcher in this project. I was introduced to service-learning in the year 2000 by Dr. Martin, an energetic, passionate, service-learning expert who formerly served as an education professor at the University of South Carolina. She inspired me to develop and implement my very first service-learning project. This experience consisted of third-grade general education music students working with a group of precious students with profound mental disabilities. The results were phenomenal. Both groups benefitted: the general classroom students developed their music skills, became more responsible students in their homeroom, and become more sympathetic and understanding of special needs population; the students with profound mental disabilities became more responsive to music and to other students. As a practitioner, I continued implementing similar service-learning experiences with general education students and special needs students for the next six years. The results continued to astound me as both populations benefitted from the experience.

Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein (2006) remind teachers: “Each time we wonder what works, we’re setting the stage for inquiry. We care about our subject matter, and we care about how we and our students learn” (p. xviii). I began to question what worked with service-learning experiences with my students and how to disseminate this information to my colleagues. Using the lens of a researcher, I began to explore the *why* and *how* of the results of my students’ participation in service-learning, and embarked on a search for a

way to implement a service-learning study with students in a small urban school in which I had begun teaching three years prior to this project— a school which did not include young special needs children as did my previous schools. .

My first challenge for this project was to find a community need and to match it with a group of students who would potentially benefit from participating in a direct service-learning experience. My second challenge was to solve logistical problems of transporting elementary children off-campus.

As I examined my teaching schedule, I determined that on Tuesdays, Miss Hill's third-graders came to music class at a time suitable for implementing an off-campus experience. There would be time following our return to campus for immediate reflection during my planning period which coincided with the writing block of their English Language Arts (ELA) class.

As I researched needs in our community, I discovered a nearby nursing home, Brookstone Living Center, with elderly residents who needed socialization and various forms of stimulation during their weekly activities periods. Third grade music and language arts standards could be addressed in a project and this third grade class could potentially benefit from participating in an intergenerational service-learning experience.

My initial contact by phone with Miss Cindy, the activities director of the nursing home, was very productive. She was very supportive and excited that we would be able to partner with them in this service-learning experience. She confirmed the residents' love for music and writing activities and their needs for interactions with young people. We established dates and times for the project. A few weeks later, with permission forms

in place, the Roadrunners Partnering in Music and Service (R.P.M.S.) Music Club was born. The title reflected our school mascot, the Roadrunner, along with our goal for the project.

Preliminary activities. As was described in chapter three, I worked through the research process to develop an appropriate survey to administer to this group of children. After discovering the *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* developed by Albert Bandura (2006), I employed an expert review panel to provide input and choose the items appropriate for our population. From this process, I created the pre- and post-service surveys, as well as a progress rating scale for students to complete at the end of each of the six interactions with the residents.

I administered the pre-service self-efficacy survey before I told the children about the project. Although we completed two practice test items and it seemed the students understood their task at hand, I became concerned during the administration as I noticed several children kept erasing and changing their answers. I stopped and reviewed the purpose of the survey and checked for understanding. Judging by their oral responses, I felt that they did understand their task, and a few of them said that they were just excited or nervous at first when they began the survey. They finally settled into the routine of completing the survey, pondering carefully over each item.

I could hardly wait for the students in this participant group to turn in their papers so that I could announce our special project. They were very excited when I told them about it. Our next few times together were spent in discussing the meaning of service-learning, the characteristics of nursing homes and residents who live there, and plans for

our activities for our first visit with our grandfriends, the fond name given to our soon-to-be elderly friends. I visited the students' homeroom, distributed a copy of *My Service Learning Journal* to each of the students, and assigned their student numbers. The students' first task was to design the covers of their spiral bound journals with a picture of their choice in order to be able to quickly identify their own journals (and to reinforce remembering their number for this project.). One of my favorites was the cover on which LaShay wrote: "Dear Grandfriends, I am glad that I am going to sing. I hope that you'll enjoy doing it with us." She was already focusing on the action of the project. Another favorite was Kayla's picture which depicted a resident in a wheelchair. She was already focusing on the needs of the residents.

All students in Miss Hill's class did not get to participate in this project. Devon, a tiny, quiet Black male was pulled out during the music period for his LD resource special education class. Miss Betty, his resource teacher, did not encourage him to participate. She simply said, "It's up to his mama to sign him up." Due to his pull-out schedule he would not have been able to participate in the planning and reflection sessions, even if the parents had signed a permission form.

First Journal Entry. The first journal entries with the participant class occurred during the preparation period prior to their first visit to the nursing home. As was evident from their first writings, some of the youngsters weren't sure what to expect because they had never been to a nursing home.

The first prompt in this reflection session was, "Before you go to the nursing home, tell how you feel about meeting your new grandfriends." The reflections were

coded into themes. Most of these students wrote that they were excited and nervous. The students who knew someone in a nursing home or who had heard a brother or sister tell about a similar experience seemed less nervous about their first visit. None of the students were hesitant about participating in the project. Jeremy, a quiet White male who expressed nervousness, also expressed being scared in his writing. Several expressed that they felt good about helping others. One student admitted that, “I never met grandfriends before in my life.” Another added, “I never had grandfriends.” LaShay, a small and quiet Black female proclaimed, “It would be sad because they are in wheelchairs.” To further demonstrate the caring attitude of the class, Pressley—a tall White male with short, curly, dirty-blond hair—shared, “I feel that they maybe need more friends, and they will be happy when they see what we do.”

The second prompt of the session was, “Before you go to the nursing home, tell how you feel about singing, playing instruments, and sharing your writing with others. Almost all of them expressed that they would be happy to share, but two students confessed that they would be really scared to do so. DeMond, a tall, Black male with a beautiful singing voice and great sense of rhythm admitted, “I feel shy because I was born like that.” The students overall said that they thought that it would be fun to share because they thought the residents would like the music activities. They also thought that the residents would like having children talk to them.

During our first planning session, the children decided that they would like to sing *She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain* and teach the hand motions to the residents. Zytia, an energetic, thin, tall, Black female, suggested that we make a poster with the

words for the motions: *Toot Toot*, *Whoa Back*, *Hi*, *Babe*, *Yum Yum*, and *Move Over*. They also selected some of their favorite classroom rhythm instruments—white and red hand drums of various shapes and sizes, along with their accompanying multi-colored beaters, the red tambourines, and the orange maracas— to share with the residents to play on the beat during a listening selection. They discussed several other ideas before settling upon *John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt* for another fun song. A Black/White female, Trina, suggested that they should add a more serious song. The others agreed wholeheartedly and chose *America* for that part of the repertoire.

I downloaded the accompaniments to our iPod; the students packed a bag with the instruments; and we all anxiously waited for Tuesday morning, November 3, 10:00 a.m.—our appointed time to board the big yellow school bus for the first excursion of this wonderful and rewarding journey.

The day before our first scheduled experience, I visited the student’s classroom to remind them of their visit and to check on “My Little RPMs,” as I fondly addressed this special group. The students’ desks were grouped with four desks in each section. The teacher had isolated Gray’s and DeMario’s desks away from the other groups due to their behavior problems and inattentiveness. The children were wandering around in their classroom, sharpening pencils, putting away bookbags, talking with friends, etc. Miss Hill reminded them several times to sit down and begin their morning work. The principal’s bass voice boomed over the intercom, “Good morning, Roadrunners!” Finally, they found their way to their seats as the morning announcements were made.

Lucena, a little Hispanic girl with big, dark eyes and who hardly spoke a word to anyone, was the only student who hadn't returned her field trip permission form. She had, however, brought all other permission papers signed. Miss Hill sent the field trip permission form home again with a large note, "SIGN THIS", attached so that the parents could better understand the importance of this piece of paper.

I coded the homeroom teacher's responses to questions about her students. She felt that only about 25% of her students had developed self-regulated learning skills and the majority of them had desks through which a "tornado" had blown. At this point, I felt we really had our work cut out for us!

First visit. I visited the participant students' classroom on the morning of the first trip and discovered that Lucena still did not have her field trip permission form signed. I offered to call her parents, but Miss Hill said they would not have a way to bring it to the school. I was saddened that she would not get to go on this most-important first trip. I sent her to art with another class that morning because I had to account for all children in that class, whether or not they were going on the trip. We gathered our equipment and lined up, with Miss Angel's help. Miss Angel was the room mother for the class and was our trip chaperone.

At our appointed time of departure, the students marched themselves right out of the building toward the bus in a line looking like they were *important!* They were all abuzz and chattered with excitement. They all wanted to help, but I assigned a few captains to help with the equipment. I had previously told DeMario, a student with whom I had concerns, to work really hard because if Miss Hill confirmed that he deserved it, he

could be an equipment captain. (As was previously noted, he was one of the children isolated in his homeroom away from everyone. He was always getting into trouble, spoke out inappropriately, did not stay on task, and had a puddle of books and papers around his desk.) Miss Hill confirmed that he'd had an okay morning, so he was able to help, marching proudly out the door with equipment in hand.

It was a short ride to the Brookstone Living Center. There were only 20 people on the bus besides the driver, so the sound echoed loudly as the children excitedly discussed the upcoming visit. When we arrived at the nursing home, an employee was out front and graciously offered to take a group picture of us. We lined up on the front porch of the nursing home for our Kodak moment before embarking down the hallway on the first voyage of this important journey.

We entered the small lobby. Melanie, the receptionist with a headset, nodded through her cubby window for us to come on in and that she'd call for the activities director. To my dismay, Miss Cindy was out on maternity leave and wasn't there to meet us. But another delightfully energetic director, Miss Peggy, greeted us and became the leader of the troops. In the lobby, I gave last minute instructions to the students about being on their best behavior and reminded them to always speak to the residents or staff members when they saw them.

As we entered the main hallway, we were pleasantly surprised at the brightness of the corridor. The building was old, yet it had a fresh look, along with a fresh smell—not the odor that I had anticipated in this type of setting. On the left was a large bird cage. The students stopped to “Ooh” and “Ahh” at the fluttering of the brightly-colored birds in

the cage. Even the small birds chirped with excitement as they welcomed these young guests. The director led the group through the hallway past a nurses' station on the way toward the activities room. The nurses, wearing smocks with bright colors and designs, smiled and nodded as the procession moved further down the hallway, passing several residents sitting in their wheelchairs. Most of the residents in the hallway were sitting with their head down, and several appeared to be sleeping. It took awhile for the parade of anxiously excited and somewhat apprehensive eight-year-olds to get to the doorway of the activities room—not because it was far away, but because there were several residents and staff members to which the children stopped to speak. The children slowly began to exhibit smiles of delight and stances of confidence as they moved to the assigned space.

There were approximately 22 smiling wide-eyed residents waiting for us in wheelchairs, on mobile cots, or in recliners in the activities room in which we set up our equipment. The activities room was bright and cheery, with ceiling-to-floor picture windows alongside one wall. A mural with a peaceful theme—a cool blue stream, luscious green grass and beautiful flowers—was painted on the wall directly across from the windows. An old upright piano with medium-brown stained wood was placed against the wall that was opposite the door through which we entered. There was an extension cord near the piano, so this became the station for our equipment.

The less responsive residents were placed in the day room. This smaller room had fewer windows and the walls were painted solid light blue. It adjoined the activities room with a wide doorway. Most of the residents in this crowded room were lying in beds, cots, or large recliners.

While I was setting up the iPod with the speaker system, I encouraged the children to introduce themselves to the smiling and eager elderly residents. The students were a bit hesitant at first, so I suggested that they go with a buddy, which helped them feel more comfortable. Miss Angel, our accompanying parent volunteer, also encouraged them. The children began warming up to their newfound grandfriends

It didn't take long for the children to pick out their favorites among the residents and begin congregating in groups around them. Miss Mary was sitting very alertly in a wheelchair as she talked to the children. She related that her grandsons had attended Whitefield Elementary when they were young. The children were delighted to have made a connection. Miss Mary was very lively and amiable, and several children immediately latched on to her.

There was a tall, grey-headed Black gentleman, Mr. Joe, sitting in the first row of wheelchairs. He liked to snap his fingers, and several boys congregated around him and tried to outsnap him. Sitting in a regular chair directly behind Mr. Joe was a very happy lady, Miss Mabel. She was a thin lady with her white hair pulled back in a tiny little bun. She was quite alert and loved to sing with us, as was evident in her expression and strident voice that did not miss a word or pitch. She told us that her favorite song of the day was *America*. At one point she stood up and stated emphatically, "I love that song... and I love my country." One of our favorite photos captured her smile as she held her drum up proudly, evidence of her enjoyment of the activities.

DeMario and Trey chose to go into the adjacent room, in which the less-responsive residents were placed. It was interesting to me that these two boys, who were

two of the main attention-seekers in the class, made the decision to go into that particular space to share where there was little response by the residents. Most of them were lying on cots; some were curled into a fetal position; others appeared to be sleeping.

The children sang *She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain* with all the hand motions and sounds that make it fun. Most of the residents gleefully sang with us and attempted to perform the motions with their frail arms and hands. We sang *John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt*, which tickled the residents. They giggled and sang the *DA DA DA DA DA DA DA DA*'s loudly with us, even though they didn't sing the other parts of the song correctly.

I played a recording of an instrumental selection called *Country Gardens*, and we all practiced clapping the beat before passing out instruments. The staff members even joined in with the clapping and helped encourage the residents to participate. Next, the children distributed the hand drums, tambourines, and maracas to the residents. Miss Catava, a sweet, Black lady with amputated legs, never missed the beat the whole time as she gently played her little round drum with the beater. Some of the residents were able to keep the beat for part of the song but would get distracted on other parts. The children very obligingly modeled the beat in front of them and assisted them with their instruments.

All too soon, it was time to collect everything and line up to return to our bus. The children were not timid to go and tell their new grandfriends goodbye in the activities rooms, although they seemed shy to speak to the residents and staff in the hallway as we were leaving. I couldn't help but wonder if they were already reflecting on the experience

as they left the room. Overall, the first visit was very successful as was evident by complimentary comments by the staff there. They said the children sounded great and that their actions inspired the residents to respond more than they had in a long time.

First reflection. The bus ride back gave us a brief time for reflecting. I asked the children to tell about their experiences. They were all chatting at the same time, but the main discourse included tales of Miss Mary talking and playing the tambourine, about Mr. Joe snapping his fingers, and of Miss Mabel who stood up and declared that her favorite song was *America*. They all said that they enjoyed it and couldn't wait to go back again.

We returned to their homeroom and the students completed *Rating 1*, the rating scale which included six belief statements from the activity domain of self-regulated learning, along with two belief statements about service-learning. I collected the sheets, and the students spent the remainder of their time before lunch writing their reflections to the second prompt in their journals: "Write a description of today's activities. You may want to include what you did, how you felt when you were doing the activity, who you worked with, and how others responded to the activity."

The students who wrote about a specific grandfriend included expressions such as that their grandfriend was nice, sweet, and fun. Several were intrigued by Mr. Joe and referred to his snapping fingers in their writing.

Many of the students wrote about Miss Mary because she was very alert and vocal. They wrote of her playing the tambourine and doing the motions to our songs.

They described her clothing, and retold the stories she related of her childhood and playing tea party.

Themes emerged from the feelings described by the students, which included, “I felt happy,” “I felt nervous,” “We had a great time,” “It feels good,” “I like the grandfriends,” and “It was fun.”

DeMario explained, “I had a blast exploring the nursing home and getting to meet new people and making friends with new people that we didn’t know before. It feels good.” I couldn’t help but notice that this very positive reflection came from the same boy who had rated himself zero on all of the self-regulated learning statements, not only on the pre-service survey, but also on *Rating #1* after the first visit.

DeMond, who had previously expressed his shyness, wrote after this first visit, “I was feeling shy, but then I was feeling special.” Overall, the students stated that they enjoyed this visit, and they felt that the grandfriends also enjoyed the visit. They wanted to go there again.

The next few days were spent preparing for visit two. Luceno brought her field trip permission form the day after our first visit. Although she missed the first visit, she was able to go with us on future trips.

Second preparation. The next meeting of the R.P.M.S. Music Club occurred in music class, during which we spent half of the music period brainstorming and planning our next visit. The children made decisions about what worked best. I suggested that we learn *Amazing Grace* because that was such a favorite of the residents there. They loved

learning that song to sing. I played it on the piano and they sang it like they were in church!

We made a list of activities and materials needed for our next visit. We had to stop and rehearse for our upcoming Christmas musical. Before they left my room, I told the students to plan to bring some of their writing to share on this next trip. I explained the assignment to Miss Hill so that she could monitor the students' writing in their homeroom and remind them to prepare something to share.

A few days later, Bri, a White girl, enrolled in the participants' class. I met with this new student privately to administer the pre-service survey and discuss the project with her. When I asked her how she felt about participating (*Reflection One*), she told me that her brother had gone to a nursing home before. She said she needed to think on it a day or so before she was ready to write her own feelings.

Second visit. It was finally time for our second visit with our grandfriends. To my delight, everyone was present in school that day and all 18 of the students were able to go with us on this trip. Bri completed her first reflection just before we left for the trip.

Due to a hustle-bustle morning, we were a little late boarding the bus; group pictures being made. Upon arrival at the nursing home, we were met by the administrator, Mr. Rick, a medium-build gentleman with dark hair and dark-rimmed glasses. He introduced himself and spoke with the children. Then, he asked for something for which we had not planned—he asked DeMond if he knew how to dance. He couldn't have asked a more qualified student. This previously-shy boy started doing some Michael Jackson moves with a song that I had downloaded on the iPod. The dance was

later referred to as *The Jerk*. The residents laughed and clapped with glee at this very entertaining impromptu dance.

As we entered the activities room, we were very pleasantly surprised—the staff had been so excited about the residents’ response from our first visit that they had brought in many more residents for this second performance. There were about 35 grandfriends in the two rooms, plus extra staff members. There were two activities directors present that day—Miss Peggy and Miss Kris. Also in our presence was a king—Mr. Quincy wearing a Burger King crown. When I asked if it was his birthday, Miss Peggy replied very matter-of-factly, “No, he just always wears something different on his head.”

After the excitement following the dancing demonstration, we finally settled into our songs for the day. Several children brought writing to share. They eagerly found a grandfriend with whom to share their writings. I accompanied the group on the upright piano for the singing of *Amazing Grace*. The staff joined the children and residents in singing this song from their hearts. The beautiful melody and words resounded as if angels were singing.

At one point during this visit, I was concerned about children swarming around Miss Devin, who was passing out candy. I had mixed emotions because I didn’t want them to look for a treat or reward and wanted them to realize that they were there to bring their gifts of song and writing to the residents. The activities director, however, told us that Miss Devin would get upset if the children didn’t take the candy because giving gifts gave her pleasure. I cautioned the children to be polite and respectful but not greedy.

As we were leaving I told Miss Peggy about our upcoming holiday performance at our school and invited our grandfriends to come to the program.

Second reflection. The students completed *Rating 2* when we returned, and we discussed the trip. The children were excited that the residents loved their writing. They spoke of the beautiful song, *Amazing Grace*. The children planned what they would draw in their journals, which was their morning assignment for the next day.

The students drew pictures of themselves singing. Many of them put their grandfriends in the picture. Several wrote about singing *Amazing Grace* because the residents were so responsive with that song. Although there were misspelled words in his descriptive caption, Gray's work summed it up—"I think that they fludered [*sic*] with excitement [*sic*]"—as is shown in Figure 4.7. (Juan's, Bri's, and LaShay's pictures are included in Figures 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 respectively.)

During music class, we discussed our progress in the project as it related to the items they had been rating. Two students said they were getting better at finishing assignments; Trey said that he needed to get better at it, and DeMond said he was not getting better at finishing assignments. Six students stated that they were doing better in taking notes. SirVale said that he was getting so much better at organizing that nobody could say he had an ugly desk. Hannah reported getting better at math, but not so good at Social Studies. LaShay stated that it was "getting easier to get rid of habits." Four students said that they were getting better at doing their homework.

Again, I was very concerned about DeMario because he said that he was getting worse in everything. I spoke with him privately and asked him why he felt that way. He

just shrugged his shoulders. He would not talk about it. Then, he drew a vampire on his sheet after writing that he was getting worse in everything. I related to Miss Hill and Mr. Jay, the school psychologist, my concern that DeMario seemed to have very low self-esteem and that I was also concerned about his hearing—I wasn't sure if he wasn't hearing well or was just good at "tuning out."

Holiday program. The participant group did not meet with me in a small-group session during the next week due to the rehearsal for our upcoming musical. In days leading up to the performance, it was frustrating that the students in this class did not bring their signed participation forms at the rate of students in the other third-grade classes. On the evening of the performance, it was equally disturbing that only seven parents from Miss Hill's class brought students, although eleven of them had signed participation forms indicating that their children would be there. One parent indicated on her form that her child would not be there, and six did not return any signed forms. When I reflected on the students' lack of responsibility for their own assignments, I realized that many of them did not have any reinforcement or positive role-models from their homes to affect their habits.

On Friday morning of that week, we performed the musical for the student body. As the time approached for the performance to begin, Miss Peggy phoned from the nursing home to let us know they were running late—it was taking them longer than they had anticipated to load the van with the residents in wheelchairs. We delayed the start of the performance as long as we possibly could, but we had to go ahead and start—and we were just finishing when they arrived. Our third-graders, however, declared that they

wanted to perform for our special guests. Five of our grandfriends, along with the kindergarten classes were our audience for this encore performance. When our third-grade Santa went down to visit with the grandfriends during one of our songs, many were deeply touched by the act. I had tears in my eyes and was unable to sing with the children during this song. The children looked so loving and innocent as they sang from their hearts for our guests. The grandfriends were touched by Santa's visit, as was evident from the smiles and hugs.

After the performance, the entire third grade showered our guests with handshakes, hugs, and words of holiday cheer. It was a very touching scene. The students involved in the R.P.M.S. Music Club, having already made acquaintance with the grandfriends, stayed behind to assist moving their wheelchairs to the buses. They were very eager to be helpers for this occasion. They were proudly telling the other children that these were *their* grandfriends that they had been visiting during music class.

As the procession of third-graders, grandfriends, and wheelchairs rolled through the hallway, the children beamed with pride and the grandfriends vigilantly analyzed all the scenery and displays in the hallway. Miss Mary commented, "These children sure do work hard at this school." When we discovered that the bus had moved near the gym entrance, we had to do a u-turn in the hallway with the wheelchairs. At this point Miss Mary added, "You're just taking us on a detour."

The children very tenderly guided the wheelchairs through the hallway toward the buses. Although there was a cast party going on for the children in the cafeteria, several of the R.P.M.S. Music Club members wanted to remain with their grandfriends in the

gym as they awaited their turn to board the bus. I eventually had to shoo them away so that they could catch up with their classes. Zytia gave special attention to Miss Catava, hugging her and making sure her lap was covered with her crocheted throw. Zytia didn't seem upset that Miss Catava didn't have legs.

The students spoke of this special visit throughout the day. A few talked about how they felt sad for the residents. After speaking with them and taking their words into context, I discovered that they meant that their hearts were touched by their acts toward the grandfriends. I reminded them of how important their actions were on that day and how beautifully they had brought cheer and happiness to our grandfriends, meeting their needs as set forth in our service-learning mission.

Third visit. I was disappointed that DeMond was unable to attend on our third trip due to being suspended from school that day. This same boy who had entertained so energetically on our last visit had, only a few days later, threatened to bring a gun and shoot another child. Questions began running through my mind about the outcomes of our experience—questions for which I had no answers.

On our next visit to the nursing home, we invited some third-graders from another class (not from the comparison class) to help sing the songs from our musical and perform a Sugar Plum dance for a larger group of residents and the staff.

When we arrived, the R.P.M.S. Music Club members demonstrated to the other children how to interact with their grandfriends. Astonishingly, without any prompts, several of the members of the R.P.M.S. Music Club had brought items to proudly share with their grandfriends. For example, a few brought library books which they read to the

residents. Some students brought and shared their fossils that they had made in science class.

When the students began singing, they were standing in staggered rows in front of the residents. During the song, *Reindeer on the Roof*, the students mingled with the residents and distributed reindeer antlers to some of their grandfriends. The residents beamed with glee as they sang this upbeat song alongside their young friends and performed the hand jive and other movements. They especially took pleasure in wearing the big red reindeer antlers.

As Santa visited the residents, they were eager to tell him what they would like for Christmas. Miss Helen, particularly, was very vocal toward Santa. Even though she could hardly see due to the large patch over one of her eyes, she called Santa over, shook her finger at him and informed him emphatically, “I want you to bring me some GOOD bedroom slippers!” This same lady demonstrated much affection toward the children and tried to hug them all. David, a small, White boy with a bashful smile, was a recipient of her affection, getting trapped in her doting arms. He was ecstatic when he got on the bus, saying, “She kissed me on the neck THREE times!”

Miss Devin told me that she wanted me to send the little girl wearing blue over to her. I pointed to one of the girls in a blue sweater, but she said, “No, I mean the one with the blue balls in her hair.” I sent Zytia to her and she presented this lively, thin, Black girl with a beautiful blue beaded bracelet that she had made. It was a very touching moment to see this intergenerational bond and note the pride displayed by the elder as she presented the bracelet to young Zytia.

Today, Mr. Quincy was not a king. He was Uncle Sam, sitting up tall and proudly in the back corner of the room sporting a red, white, and blue top hat!

The children were very keyed up on this day with the holidays approaching, so I had to remind them several times to exhibit appropriate behavior and of their task at hand. I was glad they were able to share the seasonal songs from the musical but was disappointed that we didn't have as much time to interact personally with the residents.

Third Reflection. My most rewarding experience during this session was my interaction with DeMario. I had a private conference with him about his zero ratings because I was afraid he didn't understand the task. He was isolated in his classroom, and I felt that this was contributing to his inattentiveness. He didn't seem to care about his participation in the rating and reflections sessions. So, taking my cue from Shunk's research (1991), I encouraged him to set a personal goal for the remainder of this project. I decided to do this since nothing else seemed to draw his attention to the task at hand. Shunk found that setting goals led to higher self-efficacy, skill, and motivation over those students who did not set goals. I felt that perhaps this would motivate DeMario to at least try.

After discussing each of the items, I suggested that he might like to start with just one thing on which he thought he could improve his "I can" rating. He said, "Organizing." I asked him where he thought he was right now and he said, "Zero." I asked him where he would like to be and he said, "One hundred." I spoke with him about being realistic and asked if he thought that would be attainable. At that time, his "light bulb" illuminated. He said, "Oh, you mean that I can move up to a ten, and then later to a

twenty, and then maybe up to forty, and so on?" I said, "Yes, that sounds very reasonable to me." He seemed ecstatic that he had figured it out. He had some papers on the floor around his desk, and I said, "Let's take a first step in your organizing." We looked down, and he began picking up his papers. He performed an excellent mime of an old man walking on a cane for me, and when I left the classroom he was beaming!

I visited Miss Hill's homeroom early the next morning. I noticed that DeMario had been moved. He had been moved to a location beside the teacher's desk and nearer to the front of the room. He seemed happier already! I sneaked over to his desk and whispered, "How's the organizing going?" He answered with a smile, "It's good. I've been cleaning out my desk."

As a class, we brainstormed to whom we would write our friendly letters. I reviewed the form for a friendly letter from the poster displayed in their class and directed the students to start by writing their greeting. I reminded them that they needed to complete their rough drafts by the next day.

I went by the following day to collect those who'd finished and was disenchanted that Melody was the only student who had completed her rough draft. Several showed me what they were working on. Some students either had not started theirs or had lost them. I reminded them that we would meet the next day and start writing our final copies.

Cancelled trip. On the morning of our next visit, we got everything together to participate in a Christmas sing-a-long with our residents. We had packed the jingle bells and other equipment. The students had made their Christmas cards and put Christmas bows on tissue boxes that had been donated by one of our business partners. They had

packed a beautiful quilt that was made by our school's student council members, along with some colorful hand-knitted hats donated by our school librarian. About 10 minutes before we were planning to leave, the secretary called the music room through the intercom system and asked if we were supposed to go on a field trip that day. I told her that we were almost ready to leave. She said, "I'm sending you an email in a few minutes." My heart sunk because I felt something must be wrong or that some detail had been overlooked. My fears were confirmed with the email. Something was wrong—there was illness in the nursing home and they had just locked the doors to visitors. The children were very sad that they couldn't go.

Friendly letters. We met in the music room to regroup and make some decisions. We decided that the tissue boxes, quilt, and hats could be given as "Happy New Year" gifts on our next visit. Then we began the task of completing our friendly letters, which was our *Reflection 4* assignment. As I was assisting them with their editing, I was touched by their thoughtfulness in their writing. When they were revising their letters, some of them included wishes that the residents would be well soon.

SirVale wrote about himself through his entire letter, which was perfectly acceptable by the directions given them. He had celebrated his birthday the day before and chose to write to a specific resident, Miss Mary, and tell her all about his birthday. He told of having dinner at Ryan's, having a sleepover, and receiving a snuggie that he could put on in the mornings and be warm.

All of the other letters addressed the project or the residents in some way. One especially touching letter was written by David, the little boy who was kissed three times

during the previous visit. He wrote to the grandfriends, telling them that he wanted to work in the nursing home one day and that he would do everything for them.

Some of the students chose to ask their grandfriends questions. Their inquiries included asking about their favorite colors, foods, holidays, animals, TV shows, cars, and sports.

Trina described her visits as being fun and how she liked surprising the grandfriends and looking at the birds; she concluded with, “You really made my day.” Several wrote notes about loving their grandfriends or loving something about them. One student wrote, “I love you because you are special.” LaShay very observantly wrote, “The last time we came some of ya’ll did not sing because ya’ll were too busy sleeping.” One child inscribed, “I love coming here because it is joyful and kind.” Trey was planning ahead for the next visit as he wrote, “The next time we see you we will be singing, but we probably won’t be doing the Christmas songs. We will probably sing a new song,” Gray, the son of our parent volunteer, was thinking toward the future: “I have enjoyed you and hopefully I’ll get to see you in fourth grade.”

Melody chose to write her letter to her mother, inviting her to come along on the next trip with her. She proceeded to tell her mother about the activities: “We sing, dance and meet all of our grandfriends, and then we sing again—but we sing right beside them” She added a little afterthought, “Oh, and it’s not a long trip to the nursing home.”

I had been concerned about DeMario’s low self-efficacy ratings and lack of completing assignments in his classroom. He did not write a lot due to wasting a lot of

time talking, but his brief writing was coherent and was basically a get well wish for the residents.

The main themes that emerged in the letters were *telling about oneself, telling or asking about something specific about the grandfriends, relating something about the experience or the project, writing poetry, and making Christmas wishes.*

Although we weren't interacting at the nursing home that day, the students were talking among themselves about the project, relating specific stories as they worked on the letters. We mailed them our letters, along with the cards we had made. I also included a set of photos from the previous interactions.

Reflection four. The R.P.M.S. Music Club met once more before our holiday break. We sat around in a circle and got very serious for a few minutes as we thought about that special day when the residents came to our school. The students immediately started planning how we could invite them to come to the school again. They wanted to invite them at the end of the year.

We completed *Rating 4*, talked about the experience for both the residents of Brookstone Living Center and the students of Whitefield Elementary School, and circulated some recently-developed photos. DeMario was especially delighted that I had captured him at work pushing Mr. Quincy, a tall, Black, wheelchair-bound gentleman through our school gymnasium. Both males wore beaming smiles, and when DeMario saw the picture, he said, "Well, look at that!" Then as we began completing the rating sheet, I noted that he began rating himself at levels other than zero. I was encouraged by

that fact until I analyzed his sheet later; his ratings were given as 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80. I wondered if he had just been making a pattern with the responses.

Happy New Year. After the holidays, I met with the participant class during their music period the week before their fourth visit, and they eagerly planned their next activities to share. I made a point to speak with DeMario about his pattern of response on *Rating 4*. When I spoke with him, without the rating scale in front of him, he was actually still thinking along the same ratings. This was very encouraging. He hadn't just been drawing a pattern on his paper after all.

I also interviewed several of the children. When I brought out my digital recorder for interviews, the students enthusiastically volunteered to be interviewed. Although they had all been abuzz in their groups as they planned their visit and activities and were eager to volunteer to come up to my table for their interview, they clammed up when I pressed the record button. Thankfully, I was able to get five of them to speak intelligibly. Ansha said that her favorite part about the project was helping others and that she had learned to be nice. LaShay cited playing instruments as her favorite part and stated that she had gotten better in division in math since being in the club. David spoke briefly about writing the letter about working in a nursing home. When I asked him if he had thought about working in a nursing home before this project, his response was, "No."

Bri said her favorite part was singing the Christmas songs when the residents came to our school. She said that she really hadn't learned anything about herself yet by being in this group, but that she was getting better at doing her work. DeMario began speaking about how he had started improving in everything, and when I asked him what

his thoughts were on the ratings, he said that he felt like he should start trying to reach his goal of 100. He added that “You should always fight for your goal” and “You’ll sooner or later reach it.” I was astonished by such profound words spoken in such a confident manner from a little boy who, only a few weeks before, had rated himself with all zeros and had only shrugged when asked to share his thoughts about the statements. The transcription of his interview is included in the qualitative results of the eighth sub-question in chapter four.

As I was in the hallway, creating a display with the student’s letters and photos of the R.P.M.S. Music Club activities, several teachers passed by and said that they were impressed by the children’s willingness to participate with elderly residents in wheelchairs. Miss Hill came by and I pointed out some of their writings. When I mentioned the profound statements made by DeMario, she told me that he was very articulate in class. I was surprised because he had really never spoken out much in music class or during our sessions until the interview. I also asked her if she’d noticed any improvements in his self-regulated learning and she said he did seem to try harder to complete his assignments, and he was making a conscious effort on organizing his desk. She attributed the organizing of his desk partly to the fact that she had moved him away from the counter on which he was spreading out all of his things. I silently recalled when he told me that he was working on keeping his desk clean.

Fourth visit. On the morning of our fourth visit, Hannah was absent. The children were extremely excited, active, and talkative that day. They had been taking benchmark tests all morning before we left, which contributed to their keyed up behavior.

This was also a four-day week with a four-day weekend coming up. Their teacher said they had been exhibiting this out-of-control behavior in her classroom all week.

Upon arrival, we were directed to enter the activities room through the day room door, and we found fewer residents due to an ongoing nursing home inspection. Our first item on the agenda was to present the beautiful quilt to the administrator of the home. As the children held it up, there was a commending sigh of acceptance from the residents and staff. Each white square contained a print of art work by a Whitefield student and was tied to the adjacent squares with cheery, red ribbon. The bright red ribbons not only held the quilt pieces together but made the designs pop. Next, we distributed tissue boxes on which the children had stuck shiny bows. Although these were very small and practical gifts, the residents treated their prizes very sacredly and possessively. The students wished their grandfriends “Happy New Year” as they distributed them. It didn’t seem to matter that there were Christmas bows on the boxes. My heart warmed as I realized that the children were as delighted to give these gifts as the residents were to receive them. I was proud of their progress and the fact that they were unselfishly performing service with the best interest of others in mind.

We listened to a recording of Leroy Anderson’s *Sleigh Ride*. The residents clapped very happily on the beat before the third-graders gave them instruments to play. The children had evolved into true mentors as they helped the residents grasp the instruments and patiently instructed their grandfriends on proper technique for playing. The elderly especially enjoyed ringing the jingle bells with the beat of the song. Several of them were able to use both hands and play the woodblocks with the children during the

designated spot in the music. DeMario was supposed to play the whip instrument at the appropriate time in the song. He was quite inattentive during the music and did not play the whip correctly on the beat as he had done during the rehearsal in music class.

DeMond, who had volunteered to make the horse sound at the end, missed his cue. He was distracted by helping a grandfriend ring his jingle bell—at least he had an acceptable reason for being distracted.

During the next activity, Gray and Trina read a book to the residents. One of the first-time attendees was Miss Lucy, a sweet lady cuddling a baby doll very tightly and who kept talking very loudly and excitedly throughout this activity. Miss Peggy said that she was prone to speak out inappropriately, so they had been cautious in the past about bringing her. The children were delighted that Miss Lucy was there—her facial expressions exhibited sheer happiness and, thankfully, she did not utter anything inappropriate during our time there.

After the book about snow was read, the students shared sheets containing the lyrics of *Frosty the Snow Man*, along with the pictures of snowmen that they had created to distribute to the residents. They all sang *Frosty the Snow Man* together. Several residents read the words meticulously from the lyric sheets as they sang. Whether they were reading the words or not, everyone in the room was engaged in this activity. Ansha was very kind to share her lyrics and singing with a little white-haired lady who was all cuddled up on a cot. Although the elderly resident was not very responsive, Ansha was as compassionate toward her as she had been with the more alert residents.

Miss Nellie kept motioning for Pressley to come to her. She kept saying, “He’s such a pretty boy.” Although he appeared to be a bit embarrassed at first, pride took over his countenance, as was evident with his grin. Miss Mary asked, “Where’s my little buddy?” She described her buddy as the little girl with the long hair. We concluded that she was referring to Hannah, whose straight, brown hair was long enough for her to sit on. Alas, Hannah was absent that day. Miss Mary reminded us several times to be sure to tell Hannah that she missed her. The friendship bond was growing tighter between the residents and the children.

At the end of the visit, the children distributed hand knitted caps to the residents selected as recipients by the director. They beamed as the children took these caps and placed them on their heads. Mr. Quincy was a funny sight—he plopped his knitted cap right on the top of the baseball cap that was set upon his head. It didn’t matter that the temperature in the room felt like a hundred degrees, those knitted caps did not come off their heads!

After all the hats were distributed and the goodbyes had been said, Miss Peggy led us into the hallway and showed the bulletin board displaying all the pictures and the letters that we had sent to them just before Christmas. She spoke to the children about how much they had meant to the grandfriends. With tears in her eyes, she told about one of the new male residents, Mr. James. He had not participated in any activities since being there, but after the children arrived he began smiling, clapping his hands and singing.

Distracted reflection. When we arrived back at the school, the children moved very noisily through the hallway to their classroom. It took them a few minutes to get settled down to reflect on their experience. It both amazed and disappointed me that many of them were not prepared to do their work at school. Several did not have notebook paper or pencils. Trey and Zytia wasted a lot of time playing with their papers, tearing off the sides where they ripped it out of a composition notebook. DeMond had gone to the restroom and began wandering around in the classroom after he came out of the restroom. It took awhile to get them all focused on their task at hand—reflecting on the activities of that morning. In the meantime, I was distributing the *Rating 5* sheets and their colored pencils. Devon, the little boy who did not attend the field trips due to his resource class, chose computer as his alternate activity during this time. DeMario kept turning around to look at the screen of the computer on which Devon worked, so I finally moved him to another location so that he could focus on his paper. I encouraged him several times telling him that I wanted some beautiful writing from him. To my dismay, he had a pencil about two inches long with no eraser, so I found him another one to borrow. Again, I was astounded by the lack of attentiveness and was shocked that students would be sent to school without any supplies. I very frankly let the children know that I was upset that they were not prepared. I tried to rationalize some possible reasons for the students' excitability and lack of concentration: the children had been tested with benchmark tests daily for several days since returning from the holiday and due to the frigid weather they'd had limited outdoor activity.

When they were finally ready to complete the progress rating sheets, I read each item and paused for them to mark their ratings. I couldn't help but notice DeMario. He was marking 100 for all of his items. I was both surprised and intrigued at this response because Miss Hill had already told me that he had been having a hard time doing his work earlier that morning. Later, I mentioned to her that he indicated that he believed he could do better than he'd thought at first, and then she angrily blurted out, "No, he doesn't." I must've looked dumbfounded because she added, "But he IS having more good days than he had at the beginning of the year." She added, "He is very intelligent and has learned to play the system. He's probably figured out that he is supposed to rate himself higher and is just doing it. He does that in other areas. In addition to being intelligent, he is good at tuning people out, which is why everyone thinks he can't hear." Feelings of disenchantment overcame me, and I began to feel let down.

To add to this setback, Kayla did not have a reflection written when they were lining up for lunch. At first she'd said she didn't have time to write it, then she claimed that she had thrown it in the trash can. Inasmuch as she had contradictory excuses, Miss Hill told her that she could write her ideas during recess. She basically hadn't done her assignment, which, according to the teacher was her very typical behavior. It was with displeasure that I received this report.

Adding to my dismay were children who had to go back to their seat for their papers, although they were being asked to bring me their work as they lined up for lunch. It seemed their focus was elsewhere. Miss Hill was present during all of this chaotic activity, and she commented that it is like that all the time in her room. I began

wondering again about the outcome of this service-learning experience—were these students getting it?

Later that day, Miss Hill sent Kayla to my room to complete her assignment during recess. She did not focus very well on her task at hand due to being distracted by my Kindergarten music class. At least she wrote a few thoughts on her paper.

Compared experience. The next day I went to the students' classroom to conduct additional interviews and allow them to reflect in their journals. *Reflection 5* contained the same questions as *Reflection 1*, but now based on experience: "Since participating in the R.P.M.S. Music Club, how do you feel about meeting your grandfriend," and "Now that you've had a chance to visit the nursing home several times, how do you feel about singing, playing instruments, and sharing your writing with others?" When coding the responses, the resulting themes were compared to *Reflection 1*. Two new themes emerged: "fun" and "great." Two previous themes disappeared: "nervous" and "scared." The students who wrote about being nervous in *Reflection 1* wrote about feeling good or great after working with the grandfriends several times. DeMond, who previously wrote, "I feel shy because I was born like that," wrote, "I feel wonderful about playing," in the fifth reflection. Jeremy, who felt very nervous and scared before the first visit, wrote that he was happy and glad after several visits. In addition, he said that he was feeling pretty good about singing, playing instruments, and sharing his writing; according to his first response thinking about those actions made him feel scared. Ansha who first wrote that she was excited but sad that they were in wheelchairs began to feel good. She continued, "Helping others is good because some of

the grandfriends were sad and we made them happy.” She also responded that she was eager to play instruments because she loved instruments.

There were a few comments that fit in the *other* category. These comments addressed the actions of the grandfriends or the fact that they liked or loved their grandfriends. One student observed that the grandfriends loved them and wanted to hug them. Another child wrote, “I feel like singing is good for my heart.”

The next day, I visited their classroom for them to complete *Reflection 5*. After reviewing the directions with the students and getting them started on their assignment, I called several students up for their interviews. Again they clammed up and nodded, shrugged, etc. I was able to get only a few responses.

To add to my dismay, during the 15-20 minutes that the students were given to work on this short reflection, four students had not written anything in their journals, and one student had only written three words. I spoke with Miss Hill and expressed my concern. She, too, was very aggravated and commented that these were the laziest [students] she’d ever taught. She was quite perturbed by their lack of concern for completing their tasks. She mentioned that several students never worked on their assignments or they never completed them. This was very disappointing and frustrating news to the researcher!

Final preparation. The next meeting of the R.P.M.S. Music Club occurred in music class and the students brainstormed ideas for their last visit. In celebration of this experience, they decided that we should have refreshments. They decided that cookies would be better to share with the grandfriends since cupcakes would be messy. Several

volunteered to bring cookies. They also decided that they would like to invite their parents, the principal and assistant principal.

They chose their songs, *America*, *Amazing Grace*, and *She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain*—favorites from past experiences. For their instrumental activity, they chose a boomwhackers game, which features tubes of various lengths and pitches. This preparation meeting was disrupted twice: Students receiving the H1N1 vaccinations had to leave early and then the principal announced over the intercom for me to check my email. I was directed to take the remaining students back to their classroom early to enable me to cover another class for an absent teacher. I felt that this very important planning session for the last visit was not very productive due to the interruptions. We had not been able to spend as much time as I deemed necessary to make all the decisions needed before our final visit.

During the next few days, I was in contact with Miss Angel, a parent volunteer who had been accompanying us on all of our visits. She expressed her frustration over the lack of responses from parents of these students when she asked for help with classroom activities. She didn't think it would do any good to ask them to send cookies.

Additionally, Miss Angel had a family crisis of her own, in which she was truly an angel intervening by keeping her two nephews and dealing with her ill mother—all resulting from poor choices by her adult sister to take drugs. I told her not to worry about the cookies—I would cover them!

When the students said they wanted to invite some other adults for the final visit, Bri volunteered to write the inside portion of the invitation. Melody and David were

voted by their classmates to create the design for the front of the invitation. Bri immediately turned in her written invitation. When I checked on the status of the cover design the next day, to my dismay Melody and David had not even started on their designs. It was too late to begin this project, so at the suggestion of Miss Hill, I copied the R.P.M.S. Music Club logo onto the front of the invitations and let each student color his/her own.

Final visit. On the morning of our last visit, I went to the students' homeroom to distribute the new R.P.M.S. Music Club t- shirts. I was disappointed to find that Kayla and DeMond were absent on that day. Bri was the only student who brought cookies—homemade cookies. Luckily, Miss Angel and I both brought cookies from the grocery store.

The school administrators acknowledged their invitations, but were unable to attend due to a meeting. None of the parents acknowledged their invitations. No adults went on this trip with us except Miss Angel, our faithful parent volunteer.

The school building was quite aglow as the youngsters pranced through the hallway on their way to the bus, proudly displaying their new bright orange t-shirts. They were very excited and were chattering so loudly when they boarded the activities bus that the bus driver had to ask them to quiet down.

At the nursing home, the students were greeted by Mr. Rick. He complimented the new shirts. He expressed disappointment that DeMond, the dancer with whom he had made connection several weeks before, was absent. Although the activities directors were not in the lobby, Mr. Rick directed us to go ahead and move down the hallway since we

knew where to go. Miss Cindy, the activities director with whom I had worked to set up the program, had returned from her maternity leave and surprised us by being at the activities room door. She had returned to work just in time to be involved in our last visit. At my request, she selected the residents to receive the extra t-shirts that we brought, and the children began distributing them. The residents were taken aback by the bright orange shirts as we entered the room, as was evident from the “Oohs” and “ahhs” were heard across the room. Miss Mabel stood up and offered her seat. “Here is an extra seat if anyone needs it,” she proclaimed as we came through the doorway. She was the most excited of all the grandfriends when she received her shirt. She repeated several times with a loud voice, “Thank you for my beautiful t-shirt.”

We started out with the familiar *She'll be Comin' Around the Mountain* tune. There were several residents who were coming to participate in our activities for the first time. One first-timer, a white-haired, solemn-faced gentleman, carefully watched Gray's hand motions. He gradually raised his feeble hands and tried to duplicate Gray's motions.

Our next activity was quite a hit. The boomwhackers were passed to the residents, and each third-grader, holding the same color boomwhacker as his/her grandfriend, worked diligently with the grandfriend to demonstrate tapping the boomwhackers in one hand on the cue. We sang *If You're Happy and You Know It* and substituted the boomwhacker colors instead of “clap your hands.” The residents and students tapped their boomwhacker two times in the hands each time their color was called. The staff was amazed to hear the different pitches. The residents were eager to hear their color called. To the crowd's delight, we repeated the song before collecting the boomwhackers.

Next, it was time for the cookies. Since Bri brought homemade cookies, I let her distribute them first. Then, I gave packs of the store-bought cookies to some of the other students to distribute. I played the music for *You've Got a Friend* as the R.P.M.S. Music Club members interacted with their grandfriends for one last time. The director said, "Only, one cookie for each resident," but it was too late. They munched the cookies so fast that we could only determine by the tell-tale crumbs on their faces and hands if they had been served. I know that several of the residents (and the children, too) received two or three cookies.

We could always count on Miss Mabel to say something. She held up cookies in each hand and proclaimed repeatedly, "These are the very best crackers."

We wanted to end with one of their favorite songs. I went to the piano and played *Amazing Grace*. Heavenly voices rang out with the beautiful words and melodies of the great hymn. Several of the residents asked the children to stay. LaShay commented later, "I didn't want to leave." Zytia reported afterward that her grandfriend had said, "Don't leave us." The child said she didn't know exactly what that meant but they had fun.

The last visit came to an end so quickly, we could hardly believe it. We gathered our equipment and said our last goodbyes. As I was saying my own goodbyes, Miss Mary affectionately reminded me that the children always swarmed on her like flies when they came.

The staff was very appreciative of our time there. They requested more pictures to be sent. They also asked the children to write more letters to them and promised that the

grandfriends would write back to them. Miss Cindy begged us to let them know when we had other musical performances, for they would like to attend.

When we boarded the bus, the children were unusually quiet. I think that realization had sunk in—they would not be going back there again as a group. Juan hung his head as he told Miss Angel that he would really miss going to see our grandfriends.

Final reflections. Miss Hill was absent on the final reflection day. Due to budget cuts and no allotment for substitute teachers, her students were split between different third-grade teachers. I gathered the participants from their respective assigned classrooms and marched them to my room for this final reflection session. They were not only glad to be with me, but they were delighted to be together for this important time of reflection.

I shared a slide show of their last visit and they were excited to see their grandfriends and themselves together. The students began writing their final reflections in their journals. They wrote more than usual as they reflected on their wonderful experience. I reminded them that the next time they came to music class, we would create our scrapbook pages using the photos of our activities and interactions with the grandfriends.

Later in the day, I was extremely disappointed to hear that several of the children had misbehaved for the other teachers. DeMario was sent home early that day for taking his shoes and socks off and throwing them under the teacher's desk. Pressley was in trouble for taking a knife from Devon, the resource student who was not in the R.P.M.S. Music Club. Both students were suspended.

At times during this experience, I felt as if we took two steps forward and one back due to all of the outside influences on the children's lives. I just kept hoping that this experience would mean enough to them that in the future, they will stop and weigh the consequences of their actions carefully before following through, and that they will choose a more appropriate alternate action—perhaps helping others.

When I read their final reflections later that evening, I was encouraged. Their reflections flowed straight from the heart. The *Reflection 6* prompt asked, “What have you learned from being in the RPMS Music Club?” Four of the students wrote about learning to help others and how it's good to help others and that others need help taking care of themselves. It was touching to read in several entries what they learned about old people. They learned such things as that the old people were nice, sweet, and funny. Pressley admitted that he'd found out that the old people could do some things that he'd thought they could not do. Half of the students wrote specifically about learning from singing, playing instruments, and from their writing activities. Gray and Melanie both agreed that you can make a difference with others in your community—those that you don't know. The majority of the students wrote that it was fun being in the club and getting to go on field trips.

The students also learned how to treat others. For example, Juan wrote that he learned to be kind and we should make the old people happy when they are sick. Trent proclaimed that we should treat elders with manners. Several students wrote very profound and personal statements. Trina wrote, “It meant to me two hearts going together

and making a bigger heart.” And finally, DeMario poured out from his heart, “I felt like an angel with a warm feeling inside and I felt great!”

The homeroom teacher, Miss Hill, became very frustrated many times with her students throughout the duration of the study. During her last reflection, she stated, “I got rid of them for extended periods...thank you.” Although this attitude toward her students concerned me, I felt optimistic when I read her last comments on the project. She said that she had always thought service-learning was important. She also stated, “The class has learned to encourage each other rather than tear each other down (with a few exceptions). For the most part, they have develop [*sic*] more compassion, honesty, and integrity.” She added, “The children have become more self directive [*sic*] with their school work. They are beginning to self reflect [*sic*] and build better study habits. Perhaps this is a direct result in their increase in self esteem [*sic*] from working with the elderly.”

As I reflected personally on the experience, I felt gratitude toward the children for being themselves with the grandfriends. They had expressed genuine concern and care in the activities. I learned that, as an educator and a researcher, I can’t force actions to happen even though at times I would like to be able to do that. I discovered that I can set the example, demonstrate my own caring and love toward my students and others, provide experiences such as this service-learning project, and hope that it will positively impact their lives—not only for the present but in to the future.

I, along with the children, was sad that our project had ended. But then, I thought...maybe this was not really the end of the R.P.M.S. Music Club. Perhaps it was

only the beginning of a great intergenerational relationship between The Whitefield Elementary students and the residents of Brookstone Living Center for years to come.

After analyzing the data from the student surveys and ratings, I was jubilant to find there was a significant effect of participating in this service-learning experience on their self-efficacy for their self-regulated learning. I immediately set forth new hope: that their “I Can” statement would turn into “I Will.” My ultimate wish was for them to be able to reflect on their self-regulated learning and proclaim, “I Did!”

Surprise mail. A few days after we thought the project had ended, we were surprised by the delivery of a large manila envelope from the Brookstone Living Center. I eagerly ripped open the envelope and was ecstatic to find that our grandfriends had responded to the children’s letters. They had written (or had a staff member serve as their scribe) letters to the children. In addition to the writing, which was displayed on beautiful, blue, floral-bordered paper, they had attached photos of themselves. I was so excited I could hardly contain myself. I showed the principal and the instructional specialist because of our school’s emphasis on writing and the upcoming Literacy Spot Award visit for which we were displaying writing and reading activities. Due to a student holiday and the weekend, it would be a few days before I would see the children again.

Tuesday finally arrived and the third-graders from the club came to my door for their regularly-scheduled music class. I tried to contain my excitement about sharing the letters. First, the children very confidently put their names in a basket for the drawings of the door prizes—trinkets I had been collecting for the past few weeks to give as rewards for their hard work in the project. As I displayed the prizes across the front of the room

and drew the names, the excitement soared. The children took their treasures to their seats and hoarded them under jackets and in pockets with pride. Then, I went to the file cabinet with my keys and told them I had one more surprise. As I unlocked the drawer they cheered and applauded, although they had no idea what the mystery was. I laid out their letters and then placed the letters from the residents beside theirs. I read each student's letter first, then the responding letter from a grandfriend. I gave each child a copy of the resident's letter written to him/her. The excitement turned from one of loud chatter and movement to a still, awestruck moment. The children seemed speechless as I read the letters.

As I read aloud, "Dear Gray," this heavy-set White male, who was twirling around and giggling, suddenly stopped, blushed, and sat up straight and tall. He held on to every word written by Miss Nellie. When I read the part about her saying he was cute and sweet and how she enjoyed his singing, he beamed. Mr. Quincy, the hat man, wrote him a letter, too. He had received two letters! He took the copies and protected them with his other prizes.

SirVale grinned from ear to ear when Miss Mary wrote him back about his snuggie. Trey, who is usually very timid, stood up with a big grin when he received a letter from Mr. James. Chuckles came from all the students when I read Miss Mabel's letter of apology about sleeping. She had explained that they were on medication that made them sleep a lot but they would wake up to see a little.

Miss Helen wrote to David and complimented him on his goal to work with them when he grows up. The class all looked at David and very affectionately "oohed" and

“ahhed” his ambition. He displayed his reserved grin the whole time, affirming his belief in his goal.

When I read the letter from Miss Devin to Zytia, the child had a very humble expression on her face. After I gave the letter to her, she put her head down. Another student exclaimed that she was crying. After class, I asked her if she was okay, and she said, “Yes.” She was crying sentimental tears—and already missing her grandfriend.

The children were pumped now. They decided that they wanted to write again, so to my delight this project was not ending after all!

Chapter Six

The Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this action research was to determine the effects of participating in a service-learning experience on the self-efficacy for self-regulated learning of the third graders in the participant group. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in this multiple-methods research design. A comparison of the data was performed in order to increase the confidence of the results, as indicated in Table 4.7. A summary of the results, along with conclusions and recommendations for future studies, is included in this chapter.

Adding to the literature base (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler, 2009; Freeman & King, 2001; Galati, 2004; Swick, 2001; Weatherford et al., 2003), this study has shown that service-learning has proven to be an effective methodology for educators to use in order to improve students' general self-efficacy. Additionally, this study demonstrated that participating in a service-learning experience contributed to an increase in the participating third graders' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. The qualitative data included teacher-researcher anecdotal records, responses to interviews and open-ended questions. The conclusions drawn from the emergent coding of the qualitative data supported the resulting quantitative data analysis from the rating scales.

The constructs from the self-regulated learning domain were measured quantitatively through six progress ratings, one after each of the interventions. The results indicated that the three constructs that were impacted most were taking good notes in class, using the library to get information for class assignments, and planning school

work for the day. Consistent with other service-learning projects (Galati, 2004; RMC Research Corporation, 2007), the findings confirm that students participating in service learning improve in their academic skills. In addition to the service-learning experience, the instruction by the homeroom teacher and media specialist most likely contributed to the development of these study skills, leading to increased self-efficacy. The students' responses to journal prompts and interview questions confirmed the quantitative results.

The quantitative results indicated that the constructs least impacted by the service-learning experience were students finishing their assignments by deadlines, organizing their school work, and getting themselves to do their school work. These three constructs appeared to be linked more to the students' motivation than the previously-discussed three items. Professional studies have shown that motivation is a contributing factor to the development of self-efficacy (Zimmerman et al., 1992). Although the students in this study were motivated by their experience in this project, as is indicative from their journal responses, they received little motivational support by their homeroom teacher and parents during the project. It is possible that the homeroom teacher's negative and non-supportive attitude were contributing factors to the non-significant quantitative results from these three items on the progress ratings. Further studies are warranted for studying the effect of teacher attitudes on students' motivation and development of their self-efficacy.

Additionally, the lack of parental support for the children's school activities may have contributed to reduced motivation in students developing their self-regulated learning skills. Bronfenbrenner (1979) indicates the family is the most influential part of

the child's mesosystem (the system that includes family, school and religion—areas in which children generally have the most interactions) in their ecological development. These influences extend to all aspects of the child's development, including their beliefs. The *Children's Self-Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006), which measures the activity domain of "Self-Efficacy for Enlisting Parental and Community Support," could be utilized in future studies to demonstrate outcomes in this area.

This service-learning experience broadened the students' exosystem (system which includes the mesosystem connecting to surrounding communities, society, and cultures) contributing further to the ecology of the students' development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). During this project, their interactions between school and community were strengthened. Additional research should be conducted to determine the effects of increased numbers of interactions and amount of time spent participating in service-learning on the students' ecological development.

As the literature review revealed, self-esteem and self-efficacy are directly related—self-esteem is a feeling of self-worth, and self-efficacy is truly knowing what one can do because that individual has made an effort, experienced success, and developed inner pride because of the accomplishment (Bandura, 1997; Carrera, 1999; Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Thomsen, 2006). The students became more confident in sharing their singing, playing instruments and writing skills with others as was evident in their actions, along with their responses to open-ended questions, interviews and journal prompts. This self-assurance was corroborated by the responses from the teacher,

teacher-researcher, activities director, and the parent-volunteer. Implications are for practitioners to encourage students to share their talents and skills with others.

The students were motivated in this study due to their opportunity to have a voice in the project. As is an inherent strength in the process of service-learning, the students contributed to the planning and preparation of the executed activities they deemed important for their visits with the grandfriends. This ownership in the project contributed to their self-efficacy, consistent with findings by Zimmerman et al. (1992). Their pride for making decisions was evident from their journal responses and their eagerness to begin planning for their next interaction as soon as they returned from a visit. Further evidence indicated this motivation when, without a prompt from a teacher, several students brought their library books and/or their fossils from a science project to share with their grandfriends. This may have been the contributing factor to the classroom teacher's ending remarks that "the children had become more self-directed, perhaps as a result of this project."

Other findings which emerged from this study concurred with the results from the studies by Freeman and King (2001), and Palkowski (2006), reinforcing that there are benefits of having young children interact with elderly in an intergenerational, direct, service-learning project. The students' participation in *curriculum for caring*, in which the purpose "is not to learn *about* caring but to engage *in* it" (Bronfenbrenner, p.53), contributed to increased empathy in the children. The children became more compassionate toward the elderly, consistent with the findings of Palkowski (2006) and Freeman and King (2001). The majority of the children indicated that they had learned to

help others, and had learned from helping others. They indicated they felt glad to be able to help their grandfriends.

Not only did the students engage in caring for their grandfriends, the grandfriends reciprocated caring toward the children. These results should encourage other researchers and practitioners to facilitate intergenerational projects with their young students.

Additionally, these outcomes of service-learning should be explored further as they relate to “caring relations as the foundation for pedagogical activity,” a contemporary philosophy of caring contributed by Nel Noddings: “We should educate all our children not only for competence but also for caring. Our aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving, and lovable people” (Noddings, 2005, p.3; 1992, p. xiv).

Just as Galati (2004) demonstrated through *The Profile of Learning Through Service* (Weatherford et al., 2003) that high school students felt they could make a difference in their community, this study confirmed that elementary students believed they can make a difference in their community and can learn from helping others when participating in service-learning experiences. These results add to the literature base and can be used in advocacy for continuing the implementation of the methodology of service-learning.

Service-learning proved to be an exciting teaching-learning strategy as evidenced by final student reflections. Using descriptors like “It was fun—I really liked it,” “I learned to help others,” “It felt great to make our grandfriends feel special,” “It made my day,” “I felt like an angel with a warm feeling inside and I felt great,” “I felt special to help people,” and “ I like making them happy,” students’ reflections after the intervention

did not include the feelings of nervousness, fear, intimidation, and insecurity about themselves that dominated their writings prior to the intervention. Rather, the post-service writings reflected an awareness of others, acknowledgement of deficiencies or continuing challenges, and “a new confidence” in self. The unique nature of the service-learning experience contributed to the students’ self-efficacy outside of the formal classroom setting.

As a result of my findings, I join Freeman and Swick (2003) in recommending further research with service-learning experiences and elementary-age children. Various outcomes can be explored such as students’ attitudes toward helping in their communities, their development of self-efficacy in other areas, and the effects on participating in service-learning on their academic subjects and grades.

In order to conduct additional research with young students, instruments similar to *The Profile of Learning through Service* (Weatherford et al., 2003) need to be developed for measuring outcomes and development of young students. Additionally, longitudinal studies are warranted in which young students participating in service-learning activities are assessed to determine the long-term effects of their experience, and to determine their motivation to participate in future service-learning projects.

The Limitations

Context Limitations. The findings of this study are specific to the context in which it was conducted. This research was conducted at one elementary school and its results are particular for those students participating in the study. Therefore, it is important for future research to consider other programs and contexts. Despite the

obvious limitations due to only examining students in one school, the attempt to reach the didactic goal of this study helps inform classroom teachers and future researchers.

Design of the study. To further assess the validity of the present study's findings, future research should consider a number of design-related issues. Future replications, for example, should ensure that participants in the control group complete progress rating sessions. This would allow researchers and practitioners to obtain an estimate of the average effect of the service-learning experience. Additionally, to increase internal validity, the progress rating scale should include all ten of the statements from the activity domain of self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in the *Children's Self Efficacy Scale* (Bandura, 2006).

Hawthorne Effect. Due to the nature of service-learning it was inevitable that I, being the teacher-researcher, spent more contact time with the participant group—not just during the action in which we were involved, but in everything that constitutes the service experience. The planning/preparation and reflection processes were as vital in the success of the project as the action itself. Thus, to insure that this was an exemplary direct service-learning experience, I interacted frequently with the participant students. This strength of the service-learning process brought me close to the students involved.

Therefore, I attempted to reduce the Hawthorne effect by using the weekly music period with the participant group for planning/preparation and for the activity—to make this experience a part of their normal activity. For example, the field trips were scheduled during their regularly-scheduled music period. We had at least one music period in between each visit to plan and prepare for the next visit. The reflection process was the

component in which we had extra contact time, although much of their reflection was self-directed when they were writing in their journals.

Bias. Even though there was a non-random assignment of subjects, I did not introduce bias into the results based on the school administration's equal distribution of students in each of the classes.

My passion for service-learning was very evident throughout this study. Positive results from my past experiences as a practitioner utilizing service-learning contributed to this passion. This outlook affected both mine and my students' attitudes positively during this experience, possibly causing me to overlook any negative aspects of the experience.

Subjectivity. My subjectivity awareness was heightened throughout this project as I collected and analyzed the results of the study. The statement of my subjectivity is presented in appendix F.

The Final Thoughts

I became a teacher-researcher in order to seek validation of the benefits of employing service-learning as a teaching methodology with young children. As a practitioner, I had previously experienced first-hand the benefits of my elementary students' participation in service-learning projects. As a researcher, I was able to confirm those benefits, and, as a result, I have become more passionate about utilizing service-learning and sharing its benefits with other teachers and researchers.

My future plans are to conduct additional research with elementary students participating in service-learning projects, implementing longitudinal studies with the

participants; and to design instruments for measuring the impacts of participating in service-learning on elementary-age students' development.

My goal in this pedagogical study was to portray an exemplary model of service-learning after which practitioners and researchers can pattern as they implement this teaching/learning strategy with their young students. I recommend that elementary teachers take advantage of this methodology and implement service-learning experiences that are well-planned and reflection-enriched—two crucial components of the process. My aspiration is that these teachers experience similar life-changing results—within themselves and in their students—as I have through the years.

Appendices

Appendix A
The Service-Learning Journal

R.P.M.S. Club



"Roadrunners Partnering in Music and Service"

**MY SERVICE-
LEARNING JOURNAL
2009-2010**

Student # _____



REFLECTION #1



1. Before you go to the nursing home, tell how you feel about meeting your new grandfriends.

2. Before you go to the nursing home, tell how you feel about singing, playing instruments, and sharing your writing with others.

Student # _____

Date _____

REFLECTION #3



Draw a picture about what you did today. Write a caption to describe your picture.

Student # _____

Date _____



REFLECTION #5



1. Now that you've had a chance to visit the nursing home several times, tell how you feel about meeting your new grandfriends.

2. Now that you've had a chance to visit the nursing home several times, tell how you feel about singing, playing instruments, and sharing your writing with others.

Student # _____

Date _____

REFLECTION #6

What have you learned from being in the R.P.M.S. Club?



The lines below are for any other comments that you would like to make about the R.P.M.S. Club.

Student # _____

MY SCRAPBOOK PAGE

of pictures and mementos of the

R.P.M.S. Club 2009-2010



Appendix B
The Sample Interview Questions

The R.P.M.S Club: Roadrunners Partnering in Music and Service

For the Homeroom Teacher:

(Before the project begins)

1. What are some self-efficacy traits that you are seeing in your students?
2. What are some self-efficacy traits that you would like to see more fully developed in your students?

(During the project)

3. Are you noticing any changes in your students as a result of their participating in this project?
4. If so, what are some of those changes?

(After the project)

5. What are some self-efficacy traits, if any, you have seen develop in your students during this project period.
6. Did the project meet your expectation in terms of students' self-efficacy for self-regulated learning?
7. If so, how? If not, what would you suggest to improve the experience?
8. Do you have any other comments you would like to share about this project?

For the Parent of the General Education Students:

(Before the project begins)

1. How do you feel about having elementary students working with elderly residents in the nursing home?
2. What do you expect the impact of participating in the nursing home service learning experience will be on your child?

(After the project)

3. What were some of the effects of participating in this experience did you see, if any, on your child's behavior and attitude?
4. Did you identify any benefits for your child? Did you identify any disadvantages?
5. What would you like to see happen in the future with similar experiences?
6. Do you have any other comments you would like to share about this project?

For the General Education Child:

(Before the project begins)

1. What do you think you'll learn in this program?

(During the project)

2. What are some activities in which you participated with your grandfriend today?

(After the project)

3. What was your favorite part about the music club?
4. What did you learn about yourself while participating in this project?
5. What did you learn about music by participating in this project?
6. What did you learn about service-learning?
7. What did you learn about the senior adults?
8. Would you like to participate in another service-learning experience some day?
9. Was this program what you expected?
10. How did participating in this experience make you feel?
11. Would you like to participate in another service-learning experience some day? If so, what are some types of projects you would like to consider?
12. Do you have any other comments you would like to share about this project?

Appendix C
The Student Assent Form

STUDENT ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

R.P.M.S. Music Club: Roadrunners Partnering in Music and Service

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Below you will find answers to some of the questions that you may have.

What is it for?

- To allow you to participate in a Service-Learning Experience
- To give you an opportunity to plan music and literature activities and share them with elderly residents at [REDACTED] Living Center.

Why me?

- You are a third music student.

What Will I Have to Do?

- Attend music classes on a regular basis.
- Discuss and prepare music and literature activities to share with the residents
- Go on the field trips to [REDACTED] Living Center
- Complete surveys, and
- Reflect in your *Service-Learning Journal*.

Did My Parents Say It Was Okay?

- Your parent has already signed a consent form for your participation

Who Will Be Helped By This Research?

- You will be able to practice responsibility and plan activities that you would like to share. You will become knowledgeable of needs and abilities of the elderly. You will be able to help the nursing home residents participate in music and in literature activities. You will make new friends, and you will have lots of fun.
- At the end of the program, we will celebrate with a party and share our scrapbook pages from our journals.

What if I do not wish to participate? What If I Want to Stop? Will I Get In Trouble?

- Your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time
- This research will not be used to positively or negatively impact grades, participation in programs, etc.

By signing below, I am saying that I have read this form and have asked any questions that I may have. All of my questions have been answered so that I understand what I am being asked to do. By signing, I am saying that I am willing and would like to participate in this study. I also have received a copy of this form to keep.

Signature of Child/Student

Date

Appendix D

The Parental Permission Form

Parental Permission Form for Participation of a Child in a Research Study Clemson University

R.P.M.S Club: Roadrunners Partnering in Music and Service

Description of the research and your child's participation

You and your child have been invited to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Carol G. Weatherford and Nancy M. Arrington. The purpose of this research is to determine the effects of participating in a service-learning experience on the self-efficacy of self-regulated learning of third grade students. In this service-learning project the children will be sharing singing, drumming, and writing activities with elderly residents in a nursing home. This study will be in partial fulfillment of her PhD requirements.

Your child's participation will occur during their music class time during October 2009 through February 2010, and will involve sharing activities with residents at [REDACTED] Living Center. Your child will be completing a survey and reflecting in a journal on that experience. In addition, the music teacher will write anecdotal notes of the activities of the children during this project.

You may be interviewed about how you perceived your child benefited from participating in this program.

The amount of time required for your child's participation will be, as follows: Six 45-minute music periods in preparation and reflection; six 45-minute music periods in which they will travel on district buses (Field Trip Permission Forms required) to the [REDACTED] Living Center to engage in the service-learning experience.

The amount of time required for your participation will be 5-10 minutes if you are asked to answer interview questions.

Risks and discomforts

There are possible risks and discomforts associated with this research. Your child may feel uncomfortable if an elderly person does not respond in the way he/she expected. In order to minimize any discomfort, Mrs. Arrington will prepare the students for these possibilities before they begin participating with the residents. The nursing assistant and the activity director from the nursing home, along with Mrs. Arrington, will be present at all times during their sessions.

Potential benefits

Potential benefits include the development of increased responsibility and self-regulated learning in your child as he/she plans and prepares activities for this experience. Other possible benefits include increased awareness of special needs of others, increased music

and reading participation, and having lots of fun with the elderly residents when involved in the activities. This research may help us to understand how children develop the belief that they can accomplish goals and make a difference in the world.

Protection of confidentiality

We will take measures to protect your child's privacy by not revealing his/her identity in any publication that might result from this study. Anything that your child says will not be discussed with any other teachers or school personnel. Information that your child provides will be kept locked in a file cabinet.

In rare cases, a research study will be evaluated by an oversight agency, such as the Clemson University Institutional Review Board or the federal Office for Human Research Protections, that would require that we share the information we collect from your child. If this happens, the information would only be used to determine if we conducted this study properly and adequately protected your child's rights as a participant.

Voluntary participation

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You may refuse to allow your child to participate or withdraw your child from the study at any time. Your child will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to allow your child to participate or to withdraw your child from this study.

Other information

There will be approximately 30 students involved in this study. There is no fee for participating in the program. Parents are responsible for returning field trip permission forms for transportation. Students who participate will be invited to a celebration at the end of the experience in which they will share their scrapbooks and receive prizes.

Contact information

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Dr. Carol G. Weatherford at Clemson University at 864-656-5117. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's rights as a research participant, please contact the Clemson University Institutional Review Board at 864.656.6460.

Consent

I have read this parental permission form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give my permission for my child to participate in this study.

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

I give permission for my child to be photographed/videotaped while participating in this experience. The photographs/videotapes will only be used in documentation of the research.

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

I am willing to participate in this study by answering an interview question.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of this parental permission form should be given to you.

Appendix E

The Consent Form

Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study Clemson University

The R.P.M.S. Club: Roadrunners Partnering in Music and Service

Description of the research and your participation

You have been invited to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Carol Weatherford, along with Nancy M. Arrington. The purpose of this research is to determine the effects of participating in a service-learning experience on the development of self-efficacy of self-regulated learning of third grade students. In this service-learning project the children will be sharing singing, drumming, and writing activities with elderly residents in a nursing home. This study will be in partial fulfillment of her PhD requirements.

Your participation will involve answering a few questions in a brief interview and to allow the students time to reflect in their journals.

The amount of time required for your participation will be approximately 10-15 minutes for interview. The time for student reflection will be incorporated into the daily ELA schedule.

Risks and discomforts

There are possible risks and discomforts associated with this research. A student may feel uncomfortable if an elderly person does not respond in the way he/she expected. In order to minimize any discomfort, Mrs. Arrington will prepare the students for these possibilities before they begin participating with the residents. The nursing assistant and the activity director from the nursing home, along with Mrs. Arrington, will be present at all times during their sessions.

Potential benefits

Potential benefits include the development of increased responsibility and self-regulated learning in your students as they plan and prepare activities for this experience. Other benefits include increased awareness of special needs of others, increased music and reading participation, and having lots of fun with the elderly residents when involved in the activities. This research may help us to understand how children develop the belief that they can accomplish goals and make a difference in the world.

Protection of confidentiality

We will protect your privacy. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication that might result from this study.

In rare cases, a research study will be evaluated by an oversight agency, such as the Clemson University Institutional Review Board or the federal Office for Human Research Protections, that would require that we share the information we collect from you. If this happens, the information would only be used to determine if we conducted this study properly and adequately protected your rights as a participant.

Voluntary participation

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

Contact information

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Dr. Carol Weatherford at Clemson University at 864-656-5117. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's rights as a research participant, please contact the Clemson University Institutional Review Board at 864.656.6460.

Other information

There will be approximately 30 students involved in this study. There is no fee for participating in the program. Parents are responsible for returning field trip permission forms for transportation. Students who participate will be invited to a celebration at the end of the experience in which they will share their scrapbooks and receive prizes.

Consent

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give my consent to participate in this study.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of this consent form should be given to you.

Appendix F

The Subjectivity Statement

“Subjectivity can be seen as virtuous, for it is the basis of researchers’ making a distinctive contribution, one that results from the unique configuration of their personal qualities joined to the data they have collected” (Peshkin, 1988, p. 18).

As I reflected throughout the project on my subjectivity, I discovered that several personal attributes contributed to my interpretation of activities and events. These included my sensitive, compliant, conservative, and sympathetic nature, along with my experience in teaching, my passion for utilizing service-learning, and my eclectic teaching style.

“Jolly Green Giant” was my childhood nickname – not by my choice, but given by those who taunted me because of my stature. For example, when I was in first grade, I was the size of a fourth grader. In the seventh grade I was a six-foot tall girl – taller than all other students (and all teachers) in my school. I became very sensitive to name-calling and teasing. Because of these very hurtful experiences, I have always strived to defuse name-calling and teasing with my students and help them learn that people are the way they are for a special reason. I am very sensitive to the needs of others and encourage the use of acceptance and respect by my students—a possible influence on the outcomes of the study.

I possess a very conservative and compliant nature, partly due to my upbringing. Therefore, I sometimes find it hard to critically analyze a situation rather than take it at face value. I must admit that becoming a researcher has helped me develop a more critical lens in which I examine my students, my teaching, and myself.

As a sympathetic person, I want everyone to be happy and can easily feel sorry for others who have apparent difficulties or challenges. I must be careful not to allow my emotions make me partial or judgmental of their situations.

At the time of the study, I had been teaching elementary-age students for 29 years. I felt frustration several times during this project when I saw inappropriate behaviors escalate with my participant students due to the inexperience of their young homeroom teacher. I wanted to intervene, yet I had to remain nonjudgmental.

My passion for this project most likely affected the children's interest in participating. After being introduced to the teaching/learning strategy of service-learning 10 years ago, I became zealous about its implementation. The project in this study resonated with my personal interest. Inasmuch as I have seen many positive outcomes with service-learning projects, I have to caution myself to examine the process more objectively, making sure I do not overlook any negative aspects.

I tend to be eclectic in my philosophy and teaching styles, rather than embracing one strict philosophy or methodology. I am flexible and adapt my styles and strategies as needed to suit the situation.

I am who I am, but in regards to my subjectivity statement, I must continually reflect upon how my subjectivities influence my research, and be prepared to add to and/or change them.

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