

A STUDY OF WAYS TO STIMULATE CREATIVITY IN THE
LANGUAGE ARTS IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

by

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

We realize that a world as advanced as ours became that way because somebody had an idea for achieving better living conditions. Ideas for inventions were conceived of, improved upon, and made realities by people.

These people were independent thinkers or creative people. They had ideas and did something with those ideas. The advancement from the inventions of Thomas Edison to those used in the present day space program is one example of achievement made possible by creativity. Catherine Patrick pays tribute to creativity in the following passage:

Creative thinking of longer or shorter duration is behind every great work of art or science and behind every invention, which has advanced the progress of civilization. Without creative thinking we would have none of the luxuries and comforts of modern life.¹

In order to achieve the great works of art or science we need tomorrow, the education of today's children should encourage creative and independent thinking.

Does the American classroom include exercises in creativity? If so, what practices are employed to encourage creativity? These questions prompted the writer to make the following study.

¹Catherine Patrick, What is Creative Thinking, pp. 3 and 4.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

It is the purpose of this study to determine some current practices employed in the development of creativity in children through the language arts program of the fifth grade.

Importance of the Study

Not too long ago David Riesman sounded a warning to American society in a book called The Lonely Crowd. He described the American classroom as one of the agencies responsible for the destruction of creative imagination.² Mr. Riesman's observations of the classroom led him to conclude that American children were being trained for an adult society which operates on the principle that the ability to produce creative work is less important than a high degree of skill in the art of "gladhanding" and getting along with the company "family."³ Arnheim echoed Riesman's warning concerning the results of suppressing creativity in our country at the present time in the following statement:

We are a consumer society and to be in the attitude of a consumer is probably the very opposite of a creative attitude: That is, we are living here under conditions which make us all the time to be in the attitude of receiving.⁴

²David Riesman, The Lonely Crowd, p. 82.

³Ibid., p. 85.

⁴Summerfield and Thatcher, The Creative Mind and Method, p. 2.

Considering the above statement we may well ask: May today's creative child have difficulty in the American classroom? To accept Luella Foster's description of the creative child, we may well conclude that such a child may have difficulty in the classroom of a "consumer" society. She describes the creative child as having the following characteristics:

1. A sensitivity to problems and ideas for solutions to those problems
2. Self-direction
3. Work marked by originality
4. A tendency to ask questions.⁵

Ruth Carlson's review of E. Paul Torrance's study on the "priming" of creative thinking of primary children further substantiates the fact that the creative child may have difficulty in the American classroom. She states that,

...highly creative children frequently had difficulties in school, as creativity involved an independence of mind, non-conformity to group pressures, or breaking out of a mold. The highly creative child must either repress his creativity or learn to cope with tensions which arise from being a minority of one.⁶

American educators are aware of the problem of meeting the educational needs of the creative child. A general survey of the literature reveals that more and more educators are realizing the importance of providing additional outlets for creative thinking along the lines of

⁵Luella Foster, Kansas Schools, Dec. 1963. v 20, no. 46, p. 6

⁶Ruth Kearney Carlson, "Recent Research in Originality," Elementary School Teacher, Oct., 1963, p. 585

the pupil's special interests and aptitudes. Thus we may assume that the importance of creative thinking in our society is widely recognized among educational leaders. The need, however, is to implement methods that will foster creativity in the American classroom.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Creativity in General

The creative process is that it is the emergence in action of a novel, relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his life on the other.⁷

Creative Writing

...refers to a kind of expression that is highly imaginative, emphasizing feelings and emotions, employing many figures of speech and striving for especially vivid words and phrases...Creative work as a distinct kind of language activity takes the form of a story, verse, play, or article
...

Creative Thinking

The creative thinking development with which we are concerned refers to the analytical methods by which the human being may deal with solutions to reality problems. The product manifests itself in a course of effective action to achieve an end rather than in a piece of written work. This type of creative work emphasizes logic and reasoning rather

⁷Carl R. Rogers, "Towards a Theory of Creativity," A Source Book for Creative Thinking, p. 65.

⁸Tidyman and Butterfield, Teaching the Language Arts, p. 16.

than emotion.

III. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to a study of creativity in the fifth grade.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

I. WAYS TO FOSTER A CLASSROOM CLIMATE IN WHICH CREATIVITY MAY FLOURISH

Leading authorities consider the classroom climate in which creativity flourishes a factor of major importance. First the climate necessary for creativity to flourish is determined by the process of creativity itself. In this respect Youtz has described the process involved in creativity occurring in four stages with the following quotation:

1. Preparation. In "Preparation": the person finds out what the problem is, what the difficulties are, what methods have been tried and have failed, what other people have done in the situation, reads up on what has been done before, and talks with people who have worked on it. This would be very thorough preparation. The "Preparation" may consist of the person's total previous experience with a particular object or problem, with or without special study. This previous experience may be large, as with every day objects or situations experienced only once or twice before in a lifetime.

2. Incubation. "Incubation"...consists of the interval between the time when the person has completed "Preparation" and the time when a good idea comes to the person, or, as it is said, "illumination" occurs. This time interval before a good idea appears is sometimes only a few minutes, sometimes overnight, as when a person "sleeps on a problem," and maybe a week or several months.

3. Illumination. This is the appearance of a good idea or good solution to the problem. All the parts fall into a pattern that looks as if it would be successful. The "incubation" stage ends when "illumination" occurs.

h. Verification. This is the process of trying out and testing the good idea that is called the "illumination."⁹

The creative process demands allowances for research, time for unconsciously mulling over the problem, and time for verification.

Authorities interested in creativity and methods by which creativity can flourish in the classroom are concerned with determining the atmosphere, the environmental conditions conducive to the creative process, and teaching methods utilized by teachers successful in obtaining creative materials from children.

The atmosphere most conducive to the creative process is a feeling of freedom to create on the part of the child, with a minimal amount of formal guidance. In the following words Lyman Bryson verifies the importance of a feeling of freedom to create: "Freedom is the one condition which is most important to the development of the creative mind and method."¹⁰

Certain environmental conditions necessary for the creative process were evident in the pertinent literature. These environmental conditions are: 1) alternating periods of rest and activity, 2) time for day dreaming, 3) a place for individual work, 4) good models of creative work for examination, 5) and a receptacle for receiving creative gifts.

With regard to the above, Catherine Patrick suggests a period

⁹Richard P. Youtz, "Psychological Foundations of Applied Imagination," A Source Book for Creative Thinking, p. 72.

¹⁰Summerfield and Thatcher, op. cit., p. 112.

during the day for day dreaming after which the child is required to reproduce his thoughts in some manner.¹¹

Applegate suggests a quiet hour each week during which every one in class including the teacher paints, draws, reads, models in clay.¹²

E. P. Torrance advocates just doing something alone: reading, writing, drawing, or resting.¹³

In further explanation of one method employed to establish conditions necessary for the creative process it may be of interest to note that Applegate uses a little screened off corner called a Tower Room where the child may be alone while he writes.¹⁴

Because children are sometimes shy about presenting the results of their creative efforts, the following quotation by Hugh Mearns is pertinent:

One cannot say, 'Give it to me,' It requires a special kind of courage, which the creative life does not cultivate, to walk up to any person and present the things of one's private endeavor.¹⁵

Methods employed to encourage children to present the results of their creative effort were evidenced in the literature. For example,

¹¹Catherine Patrick, Creative Thinking, pp. 187-188.

¹²Mauree Applegate, Helping Children Write, p. 13

¹³E. P. Torrance, A Source Book For Creative Thinking, p. 43.

¹⁴Applegate, op. cit.,

¹⁵Hugh Mearns, Creative Power, p. 22.

Mr. Mearns employes a poetry drawer into which the child may drop his poem, story, or article if he has one and if he wants to.¹⁶ The poetry drawer bears mention because it has been widely adopted by many classroom teachers.

The teaching method used by Tidyman, Applegate, and Mearns, among others for obtaining and encouraging creativity in general may be summarized as follows: Receive all gifts, regardless of mechanical polish; find the one good thing that exists in all; administer criticism associated with strong general approval on an old work while the child is engaged in a new one; use indirect teaching methods which consist of giving formal instruction on mechanics to the individual child when he has learned it himself.

The importance of proper thought models in the medium of creativity which the child works has been stressed by Agnes DeMille, Robert Penn Warren and other leading creative artists. Lyman Bryson summarized the thoughts of creative thinkers this way:

We did get the repeated suggestion that youth cannot respond to ideals which have never been presented to them, that gifted young people must have the kinds of experiences, which will awaken in them whatever talent they possess and the best way to stretch out your powers is to enjoy as much as possible the kind of product you hope someday to produce. We can't expect young musicians to blossom in a society unless they have rich opportunities to hear and understand music. Potential young artists must see pictures. We can't expect young scientists to become great scientists unless they are well-acquainted with the advancing steps in the conquest of knowledge.¹⁷

¹⁶Ibid., p.

¹⁷Summerfield and Thatcher, op. cit., p. 113.

II. WAYS TO FOSTER CREATIVITY THROUGH STORY WRITING

Creative story writing involves helping students get ideas, learning to describe sense impressions, learning to characterize people, and learning to structure a story. In addition to these abilities a majority of thesis writers will admit, when questioned, that the ability to get started is a major skill in itself. In the following quotation Applegate verifies the difficulty of this last skill.

Many creative people are not self-starting. The need for food and shelter has been the none too gentle push that compelled many of our greatest adult writers to produce. Assignments are the teacher's particular type of push to writers who are not adult.¹⁸

Burrows, Ferebee, Jackson, and Saunders noted that children shared their creative story efforts freely with one another, but not with adults.¹⁹ For instance, children tell original ghost stories to one another in a camp dorm after lights out, but seem devoid of ideas or shy about telling these same stories in the presence of adults.

The experts mentioned above tried to duplicate the camp dorm storytelling situation and the method the children used there in order to inspire creative storytelling in a classroom situation.²⁰

¹⁸Mauree Applegate, op. cit., p. 30.

¹⁹Burrows, Ferebee, Jackson, Saunders, They All Want to Write, p. 69.

²⁰Ibid., p. 69.

Rather than reading a story written by an adult, the teacher reads a child-authored story aloud to the pupils. Unfavorable comments are discouraged. Burrows, Ferebee, Jackson, and Saunders give the following description of the point of writing readiness.

The short periods of reading stories for enjoyment are continued until two things happened: The children begin to show signs that they are ready to write stories, and the pattern of kindly acceptance is so firmly set that even the most humble effort will escape condemnation.²¹

The non-writers are not condemned, but those who do write stories receive special attention. The authors mentioned above have a group of original stories written by children which teachers can use to encourage interest in creative writing. The collection can be found on pages 203-233 of They All Want to Write.

Catherine Patrick advocates the use of masterpieces as inspiration for creative story writing. She makes the following recommendations:

The instructor should select several masterpieces and devote the time to go into great detail as to the methods and techniques by which they were produced. Thus the student can gain some comprehension of what he would actually have to do if he were to produce a masterpiece himself.²²

Miss Patrick's approach is more traditional than that of most current methodology leaders. The present majority view favors accepting any creative offering of the child. Little emphasis is given to formal instruction in grammar mechanics until the child's work shows that

²¹Ibid., p. 88.

²²Catherine Patrick, op. cit., p. 132.

he has unconsciously gained insight into some technique. The child is encouraged to use his own ideas with as little imitation of the teacher as is possible. Applegate's method of instruction is representative of the majority view. She hesitantly uses an instructor-prepared idea sheet which she reads only once to her pupils.²³ Other devices supposedly void of much teacher influence are book covers, story titles, a first sentence starter, a description of one character around whom the children weave a story, and a tableau device of an old shawl over a chair on which hangs a sign reading "I Have a Story to Tell."²⁴

Once the pupil has an idea and the desire to put it down on paper, the need for instruction methods showing him how to do this in an effective manner arises. Stories take place in an environment which the writer attempts to make the reader visualize through the senses of hearing, touching, seeing, smelling, and tasting. Applegate believes that developing a pupil's ability to record a vivid word description of sensory impressions is the most important contribution a teacher can make toward the child's creative development. The following quotation describes the method of sense tours she uses to develop the pupil's ability to describe sense impressions:

1) A sight tour may be taken via a window, and may be followed by group vocabulary work.²⁵

²³Applegate, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 42-51

²⁵Ibid., p. 39.

2) Another effective way of conducting a sight tour is to ask each member of the class to spend at least fifteen minutes by himself during the week under a bush or tree quietly watching.²⁶

3) Did you ever take a smelling tour? One spring or fall morning when the air is yeasty with many smells, go for a hike with your children. Pay particular attention to the smells in the air and try to identify them. Come back to the classroom and change the smells into words.²⁷

Indoor sense tours are utilized by Applegate as supplements to outdoor sense tours. She passes out a flower petal, a stone, a shell or some other small nature object. The child is instructed to touch it, examine it, smell it, and then write about it.²⁸

Through the exercises described above the child learns to create an interesting word environment in which his characters will play out a plot. The plot will be played out by characters. How can the pupil create a word picture of his characters? Applegate uses the following methods for teaching children the skill of character deliniation.

Before the children write a story that the picture tells, let them discuss the probable characteristics of the people. Let them guess what has gone before and what might come after.²⁹

Applegate also lists nine different ways of telling that a person is lazy so that children can develop the ability to characterize in a variety of ways.

²⁶Ibid., p. 40.

²⁷Ibid., p. 36.

²⁸Ibid., p. 39

²⁹Ibid., p. 36.

1. Simple statement of fact---Bob's lazy.
2. Describing how he does things.
3. Telling an episode to prove the point.
4. Telling of how little of his work is done.
5. Comparing him with other lazy persons or slow things.
6. Using synonyms of the word.
7. Telling what he is not.
8. Repeating his own characterization of himself.
9. Repeating what others say of him.³⁰

The "word-drawn" people the child has placed in an environment will have a problem to solve. Structuring or plotting the story involves a presentation of the problem to be solved and a description of its solution. Applegate's method of teaching such structuring is to take a picture and by asking questions that an adult author would ask himself, let the children build a cooperative story about the picture. The following phrases are illustrative of Applegate's group story structuring method:

- A. Guessing what is happening in the picture.
- B. Characterizing the people and suggesting possible names for them.
- C. Suggesting a few appropriate titles.³¹

Once the creative story is finished a vehicle for presentation is needed. Capitalizing on the fifth grade child's growing interest in adventure and humorous tales, Applegate utilizes the Tail Twirlers Club.

The one requisite for membership is the writing of a story. The stories are read aloud at each meeting and are discussed and evaluated by the group. Each yarn spinner keeps a notebook of his stories. At the end of the year a mimeographed little book of the best stories of all the members is prepared by the group.³²

³⁰Ibid., p. 104.

³¹Ibid., p. 41.

³²Ibid., p. 60.

Summary. In this chapter the writer has described the methods used to help students get ideas for stories, create the environment in which the story takes place, originate characters to play in the stories and structure a plot for these stories.

The authorities whose methods the writer studied represented various schools of educational philosophy. Catherine Patrick's method of teaching creativity represents a school of thought which advocates exposing children to adult-made masterpieces and giving the child a formal, detailed account of the technical process involved in producing such a masterpiece. Adult professionals in various fields of creative endeavor agree with Miss Patrick.

Leaders in education, however, favor the majority view taken by Applegate. Applegate places her instruction emphasis upon obtaining a maximum of creativity from the child with minimal adult guidance. Formal instruction in mechanics receives little emphasis.

III. WAYS TO FOSTER CREATIVITY THROUGH POETRY WRITING

A creative story is usually a prose narrative describing how a certain set of people solve a problem. Poetry, on the other hand, is usually the expression of one feeling expressed in rhythmic language which often rhymes. The teacher of poetry writing, therefore, must develop instruction methods which 1) arouse the pupil's interest in creating poetry, 2) bring about an understanding of the primary purpose of poetry, to express a feeling, 3) develop skills in the use of rhythmic,

rhyming language.

Applegate utilizes the human tendency to enjoy airing complaints about something as a springboard for arousing interest in creating a poem.

'The Plaint of the Camel', a humorous poem by Charles Edward Carryl, expressed a camel's disgust with his shape and his food and the world in general. After reading the poem to the children, discuss with them their favorite complaints. Ask them to write about their gripes in poems, stories, or songs.³³

Nichols and Stebens suggest a well-read poem about an experience or a feeling common to children as one way to encourage interest in poetic expression of ones own feelings.³⁴

The same authors recommend the following methods for creating interest in and an understanding of the expression of feeling as the primary purpose of poetry. "After hearing a song, ask the children to describe the story behind the song's words."³⁵

Read a short poem to the class and ask the pupils to guess the title or to make up a title. Encourage the children to give reasons for their choices.³⁶

Applegate uses the following idea sheet for poetry inspiration once interest in writing has been aroused. The reader will note that the sentences have been structured so as to call the pupil's attention

³³Ibid., p. 46.

³⁴Ralph Nichols and Leonard A. Stebens, Are You Listening, p. 214.

³⁵Ibid., p. 213.

³⁶Mauree Applegate, op. cit., p. 46.

to feeling.

A. You are making a test flight before you receive your wings. How do you feel? How does your plane look or feel? What thoughts are you thinking?

B. An airplane is like a bird. What does it remind you of? In what way?

C. There are many children in the airplane family. What are their names and how are they different? Where do they live?

D. You are up in the clouds on a mission over a foreign land. It is a beautiful morning. All at once you see an enemy plane coming toward you. What do you do? How do you feel? What happens?

E. I wonder how things look to an airplane far up in the sky?³⁷

In addition to arousing an interest in creating poetry and helping the pupil understand that the usual purpose of a poem is the expression of a feeling, the child needs to develop an understanding and ability to use the rhythmic language in which poetry is usually expressed. Helen B. Abernathy worked with the music teacher Earlene Burgett to instill a feeling for rhythm. The poem was written on the board.

Often the child whose poems had been selected for notation volunteered to sing the first phrase, or sometimes the whole poem became at once a song complete.³⁸

Children have fun with the question and answer games Applegate uses to develop a sense for rhyme:

³⁷Ibid., p. 42.

³⁸Helen B. Abernathy and Earlene Burgett, "Let's Write a Poem," Elementary English, February, 1962.

Teacher: Why is a rabbit's nose so twitchy?

Pupil: Do you suppose that it is itchy?

Teacher: Why are violets always blue?

Pupil: They look at the sky and get that way too.

Teacher: Why do leaves come out in the spring?

Pupil: They want to hear the blue birds sing.³⁹

No wonder John is wise; he asks so many why's. Let the group think of some why's John may have asked. Why can't we have pie every meal? Why does velvet have a plushy feel: Why can't I have a little brother? Why can't teacher be my mother? Why do woodpeckers knock on wood? Why does ice cream taste so good?⁴⁰

Summary. A survey of the literature revealed that although interest in reading poetry is high in the fifth grade, teachers need to arouse interest in writing it. The instruction problems discussed in current literature were those concerning 1) arousing interest in writing poetry, 2) developing an understanding of the major purpose of poetry, to express a feeling, and 4) developing the pupil's skill in handling the rhythmic rhyming language in which poetry is usually expressed.

IV. WAYS TO FOSTER CREATIVITY THROUGH

ARTICLE WRITING

The creative article like the poem stresses feeling; but in creating the article the pupil uses the prose language which is more familiar to him than the rhyming rhythmic language convention of the verse form.

³⁹Mauree Applegate, op. cit., p. 44.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 44.

For the purpose of this paper we define the creative article as an essay stressing opinion and/or feeling in prose language.

Fostering creative expression through creative article writing calls for supplying the child with a situation which will arouse his feelings to the point of his wishing to express his opinions on paper.

Laura Siel Swoboda and Mauree Applegate use the universal literary favorites of Evangeline and Huckleberry Finn to arouse children's feeling for people and their plights. Swoboda capitalizes upon the child's enjoyment of expressing his feelings through another character. These articles she calls viewpoint articles and explains them as follows:

...describing Evangeline from the viewpoint of a younger girl in the community. Or, we might describe her as one of the Creoles saw her the evening of the dinner in Basil's Louisiana home.⁴¹

Applegate, on the other hand, has children use their own identity and express their own opinion about others. Like Swoboda Applegate uses a literary favorite that is sure to arouse emotion in the students.

Children can come to know each other through understanding of book characters and why they did what they did. What do you think Huckleberry Finn would have done in this situation? Why do you think so?⁴²

Once the creative article has been written down, the teacher needs some way of displaying it. Publication in a school newspaper seems to be a favored way of displaying and rewarding creative effort.

⁴¹Laura Siel Swoboda, "Creative Writing and the Classics," Elementary English, XXXVIII, No. 1, p. 38.

⁴²Mauree Applegate, op. cit., p. 57.

Applegate gives her opinion of the school newspaper as a vehicle for presentation of creative articles:

A school newspaper capitalizes on the dramatic inclination of children. No one particular writing experience capitalizes on more of all the natural bents of children than does the school newspaper.⁴³

The writer found many other teachers using newspaper publication and printed books as a means of encouraging children to take pride in their creative efforts and to reward them publicly for doing so. However, the authors of They All Want to Write take a minority stand on such presentation. These authorities limited the sharing of the creative article to reading it aloud to the group for the following reasons:

Once it has been shared with the group its maker seems to forget it. Instead of mulling over what has been done, he turns instinctively to new effort. The publishing of an unusual poem in the school magazine or newspaper so focuses the spotlight of attention on it that it takes on the characteristics of a model. Often the child who created it no longer feels free to express his ideas as naturally and joyfully as he did before. It is as though he cannot compete with what he considers to be his own best self and in many instances the creative effort of the other children is snuffed out by the demon competition.⁴⁴

Summary. The writer's survey of literature describing ways of fostering creativity through article writing included the use of popular literary figures whose problems aroused enough feeling in pupils that the children wanted to express these feelings on paper.

A majority of teachers used publication in a school newspaper or printed anthology as ways of rewarding children for their effort.

⁴³Ibid., p. 153.

⁴⁴Burrows, Ferebee, Jackson, Saunders, They All Want to Write, p. 140.

Burrows, Ferebee, Jackson, and Saunders, however, felt that reading the article aloud was enough since the child had a tendency not to compete with his last written effort.

V. WAYS TO FOSTER CREATIVITY THROUGH PLAYMAKING

Drama has been a popular means of creative expression since the beginning of man's time on earth. The earliest form of it was an impromptu or extemporaneous re-enactment of tribal deeds of daring around a camp fire.

Since World War II extemporaneous acting has been used by industry, psychiatry, and the classroom teacher as a method of helping people to establish better interpersonal relations, to resolve emotional problems, and to remember scenes from history and literature.

The education-oriented authorities, Tidyman and Butterfield, make the following observation concerning the value of drama in the classroom.

It has been found that the dramatization of stories leads to a better understanding, to more vivid interpretation, and to increased enjoyment of incident, character, and style.⁴⁵

This classroom drama has been given two classifications by authorities: formal and creative drama. Formal drama implies a script with written lines which the children memorize and present for audience enjoyment. The purpose of such formal drama is assumed to be training for the profession.

Creative drama is the concern of this paper. Winifred Ward,

⁴⁵Tidyman and Butterfield, Teaching the Language Arts, p. 86.

author of the definitive work on creative drama, gives the following description of this extemporaneous playmaking in order to clear up a common misunderstanding that it too is to teach the fundamentals of acting:

The purpose of this informal drama when used in education is not the training of actors, not the production of plays for an audience, and not primarily the developing of an appreciation of great art. Its objectives are these:

- 1) To provide for a controlled emotional outlet.
- 2) To provide each child with an avenue of self-expression in one of the arts.
- 3) To encourage and guide the child's creative imagination.
- 4) To give young people opportunities to grow in social understanding and cooperation.
- 5) To give children experiences in thinking on their feet and expressing ideas fearlessly.⁴⁶

Miss Ward defines "playmaking," the term used interchangeably with creative dramatics, as:

An inclusive expression designating all forms of improvised drama; dramatic play, story dramatization, impromptu work in pantomime, shadow and puppet plays and all other extemporaneous drama. It is the activity in which informal drama is created by the players themselves.⁴⁷

The common method of constructing the creative drama is for children to re-enact a story told by the teacher. The children create their own dialogue. Verbatim memory of the author's words is not required; dialogue which furthers the plot and reveals the character is. The story is enacted several times by various groups of children until all have had an opportunity to play every role and any group can act out the story with competency.

⁴⁶Winifred Ward, Playmaking with Children, p. 3.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 2.

The major problem in the instructional procedure is to find story material which lends itself well to dramatization.

Winifred Ward's anthology, Stories to Dramatize (Copyright, 1952, Children's Theatre Press, Cloverlot, Anchorage, Kentucky) and Supplementary Materials for Use in Creative Dramatics with Younger Children by Agnes Haaga and Patrica A. Randles published in 1952 by the University of Washington at Seattle are two reference sources which will be of interest to classroom teachers working with creativity through the medium of the creative play.

Summary. Our survey of the literature reveals that information concerning methods of creative playmaking is just emerging into the common channels of literature available to the elementary classroom teacher. Always a favorite with man, the utilization of extemporaneous drama as an effective means for enactment of industrial, psychological, and classroom problems has experienced a rebirth of popularity since World War II. This popularity has resulted in the publication of works by specialists in the area of creative drama. Creative drama is for classroom use and not designed for professional training in theatre nor public performance. The greatest instructional problem facing the teacher of creative drama is to find stories suitable for dramatization. Bibliographies of these materials have been compiled by experts in the field and are just now finding their way into literature available to the elementary teacher.

VI. WAYS TO FOSTER CREATIVITY THROUGH THINKING

The creative thinking activities which are to be discussed in this chapter refer to the analytical method by which the human being may deal with solutions to problems concerning social activities or safety. The end product of this kind of creativity differs from that of the story, article, poem, or play in that it manifests itself in a course of action to achieve effective ends. The problem which serves as a stimulus will demand, furthermore, the utilization of courses of action which stress the use of logic rather than emotion.

The process involved in creative thinking is the same as explained by Torrance:

1) There is apparently the sensing of a need or deficiency, random exploration, and a clarification or 'pinning down' of the problem. Then ensues a period of preparation accompanied by reading, discussing, exploring, formulating many possible solutions, and critically analyzing the solutions for advantages and disadvantages. Out of all this activity comes the birth of a new idea—flash of insight, illumination. Finally there is experimentation to evaluate the most promising solution and perfection of the ideas.⁴⁸

Topics over which there is lively adult concern often will be of interest to pupils too. The writer used a debate about the slavery question following a unit of study on the Civil War and the problem of building a suitable fallout shelter during the Cuban Crisis as points of departure for creative problem solving exercises.

The exercises suggested by various authorities discussing creative

⁴⁸E. P. Torrance, "Creative Thinking Through School Experiences," Source Book for Creative Thinking, p. 40.

thinking were concerned with the organization of material and its arrangement which facilitated understanding. David Haimback recommended early exercises in outlining, finding the main idea in a paragraph and skill development in indexing and notetaking. He believes that every child can learn to categorize something alphabetically, arguing that the categories used for filing are not nearly as important as the habit of using some system of classification.⁴⁹

Catherine Patrick also advocates tangible classification: ".using methods of tabulation and graphic expression concisely, tentative conclusions reached from time to time during inquiry."⁵⁰

Learning a system of outlining so that thoughts fall into an order which is easy to understand is another procedure recommended to teach children how to think. Haimback describes a simple outline used by speakers and writers. It consists of Hey! You! See! So! The "Hey" section is, as it implies the statement or argument that calls the attention of the audience or reader to what the speaker has to say. The "You" section is devoted to connecting the argument with the personal life of the reader or listener. The "See" section presents facts. The purpose of the "So" section is to leave the reader in a state of wanting to do something or with a change of attitude.

The author found less classroom material suggestions on the topic of creative thinking for elementary school children than in the other

⁴⁹Catherine Patrick, Creative Thinking, p. 159.

⁵⁰David Haimback, Organizing Thinking, p. 117.

areas of creativity surveyed in this thesis. Most of the literature on creative thinking was written for adult use in industrial situations with a few suggestions which could be adapted for children in the classroom.

Summary. Fostering creativity in thinking involves exercises in ways to solve problems which concern personal or group safety and the utilization of logic and reasoning.

Exercises suggested for developing skills in this area were those of selecting the main ideas in a paragraph, learning to categorize items in an organized sequence, and simple speech outlines.

Specific ideas used by the writer to interest children in creative problem solving were debate topics and building a fall-out shelter.

Very little literature on creative thinking on the fifth grade level can be found in periodicals available to the regular classroom teacher. Most of the material is in books written for adult use in industry and including exercises which may be adapted for classroom use.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY

Leaders in various fields of creative endeavor have described America as a consumer society in which the people have become accustomed to receiving the creative work of others rather than producing it themselves. Studies within the last decade have indicated that the child who has characteristics commonly attributed to the creative person may have difficulty in the classroom of our predominately consumer society.

Realizing that no society can long endure or progress without the creative efforts of independent thinkers, the writer made this survey to discover what methods for encouraging creativity through the language arts were being recommended in the literature available to classroom teachers.

The survey revealed an abundance of information on the writing of creative stories, poems, and articles. The approach of the majority of experts in this field advocates the planning of a classroom climate which allows for the four stages of the creative process: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification.

Most leaders believe in methods which are designed to make maximum use of the students' ideas with a minimal amount of instructor guidance.

Literature on creative drama and creative thinking or creative problem solving was available, but mostly in literature outside that readily available to the regular classroom teacher. The most comprehensive

works on creative drama have been written by recognized experts in that area. Material on creative thinking has been prepared for adult use in industrial situations with a few suggestions which teachers can adapt for classroom use.

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A STUDY OF WAYS TO STIMULATE CREATIVITY IN THE
LANGUAGE ARTS IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

by

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B. S., Kansas State University, 1957

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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This study was made to determine some current practices employed in the development of creativity in children through the language arts school program at the fifth grade level.

The procedure was through library research.

Authorities in the field agree that the atmosphere most conducive to the creative process is a feeling of freedom to create on the part of the child with a minimal amount of formal guidance. A majority of experts suggest accomplishing this by accepting any creative gift the child offers and leaving formal instruction and criticism for a later time.

The classroom climate necessary for the development of creativity is determined by the four stages of the creative process: preparation, incubation, illumination, verification. The allowance for these four stages calls for environmental conditions which include: 1) alternating periods of rest and activity, 2) time for day dreaming, 3) a place for individual work, 4) good models of creative work for examination, 5) a receptacle for receiving creative gifts.

The writer found an abundance of material on the subject of creative story writing in the periodicals readily available to the regular classroom teacher. Sense tours, child-authored stories, adult masterpieces, tableaux, and idea sheets, are some of the methods used to help the pupils to get ideas for stories, to create the environment in which the stories take place, to originate characters to play in the stories, and to structure a plot for these stories.

The reading of poems, lists of questions, joint work with music teachers, and rhyming games are the primary methods described in the

literature to arouse interest in writing poetry, to develop an understanding of the major purpose of poetry, and to develop the pupil's skill in handling the rhythmic language in which poetry is usually expressed.

Letting children express their opinions about literary characters and publishing these opinions in a school newspaper are favored ways of encouraging creative article writing.

Creative drama, the extemporaneous drama form in which the child makes up his own dialogue, is primarily designed for classroom use rather than as a means of professional training. Most of the materials available have been written by the leaders in this field and, although plentiful, will not be found in any great supply in education periodicals readily available to the classroom teacher.

Exercises suggested for developing skills in the area of creative thinking or problem solving are picking out the main idea in the paragraph, outlining, debates, and practice in group solving of a common problem. Very little literature designed specifically for the fifth grade level is available on this topic.