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Poetry for Young Adults: A Textual Analysis of Poems by Mel Glenn and Paul Janeczko

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Poetry for Young Adults:
A Textual Analysis of Poems by Mel Glenn and Paul Janeczko

A Graduate Research Paper
Submitted to the
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the prevalent characteristics and elements of young adult poetry by examining a random sample of poems by Mel Glenn and Paul Janeczko. The characteristics and elements include themes, subjects, and other items of apparent relevance to teenagers' lives.

Because poems are the data being studied, a qualitative approach is utilized. More specifically, textual analysis is employed because this type of analysis is focused upon text.

The findings show that both sets of poetry contain similar elements and characteristics. All poems studied are of high poetic merit, contain imagery, are relatively simple, and are less than two pages in length. Most of the poems are direct and lyrical/descriptive, are about people, use conversational or contemporary language, contain fictional names of persons, and are very descriptive. Many poems contain some type of conflict, a story element, common experiences, a serious tone, and dialogue. None of the poems is very difficult, contain poetic diction or are of a prescribed form such as haiku or have a regular rhyme scheme.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

It takes only a minute to browse through collection development and selection tools to become aware of the numerous volumes of poetry anthologies that are recommended for young adults. Yet, it seems that too often teenagers do not read poetry on their own, and when assigned to do so in class, the moans and groans are deafening. Are there poems written specifically for teenagers that would have more appeal than the ones included in many of these anthologies? Because the turbulent years of adolescence demand much time and attention, many young adults put little or no priority on reading (Teens' Favorite Books, 1992). Perhaps, if poetry were more relevant to young adult life, teens would read it more frequently and even learn to enjoy it.

It is a generally accepted fact that students learn with more ease and retain the knowledge they acquire longer when they consider the items or subjects being taught as having some relevance to their own lives. If students can personally identify with the material being taught, they will learn it and remember it. Likewise, if students perceive the material to be learned as having no relevance whatsoever to their lives, they usually have trouble learning and remembering it. Because of these facts, it is important for educators to help students make connections between items

or subjects being taught in school with similar ones in their personal lives.

Adolescence brings rapid growth and radical changes to an individual; growth often accelerates to twice that seen in early childhood (Greydanus, 1991). Young adults differ from one another in many ways as one might expect of individuals with ages ranging from 10 to 20. Young adolescents are barely out of childhood while older adolescents have many attributes of adults (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1995). To belong and to be accepted are needs all teenagers have, and friendships often provide these needs. Adolescent friendships can provide the personal support, intimacy, or acceptance not found in their own families (Greydanus, 1991). Today's young adults differ from those of just a generation ago. They face more demands, expectations, risks, and temptations including fast cars, drugs, and sexual pressure. They have more personal freedom and money today but less responsibility ("West of childhood", 1990).

Even with the advantages of today's technology and resources, the outlook of young adults is not always positive; 45 percent of teens believe the world is getting worse while 62 percent believe their lives will be more difficult than their parents' (Gelman, 1990). Many adults mistakenly assume that today's teens develop strategies to cope with this additional stress; however, the 1987 teen suicide rate was nearly double that of 1970

(Gelman, 1990). When teens feel emotionally isolated, their pain can be overwhelming, causing them to perceive suicide as the only solution (Greydanus, 1991).

Young adulthood is a time of confusion; young adults have many questions and feelings that they do not understand. They can feel inexperienced and isolated. They push limits within their families and schools by wearing clothing, jewelry, and hairstyles that deviate from the norm; they also experiment with tattooing and body piercing. Because adolescents do not possess the experiences and wisdom of adults, they must learn through trial and error about such things as trust, betrayal, love, loyalty, stability, and maturity (Greydanus, 1991). Then, they must learn to convert these experiences into their own cache of wisdom. Reading can often provide vicarious experiences from which teens can learn.

Reading can be categorized into different types and stages. Rosenblatt (1989) divided reading into two types: an efferent stance and an aesthetic stance. An efferent stance is when the focus is on what the reader retains after reading, while reading for pleasure or to gain a personal understanding is an aesthetic stance (p. 159). Too often school assignments require so much efferent reading that young adults have little time to read aesthetically. It is aesthetic reading, however, which enables young adults to move to higher levels of understanding and become avid adult readers.

Reed (1994) states that all young adults can learn from and enjoy their reading if they are directed to books that are appropriate for them (p. 13). In order for teachers and librarians to do this, it is important for them to understand the different stages of reading growth and development.

The concept of three stages of reading growth was developed by Early in 1960. The first stage is characterized by unconscious enjoyment of language and books and begins at about three to five years of age. The second stage may start around 10 to 14 years of age and is characterized by an egocentric interest in reading and books. This third stage may begin at 17 years of age or older when readers develop an aesthetic interest in reading and books. Most young adults are at the second stage when their reading reflects their search of self and peer relationships. Early asserts that most readers never reach the third stage.

Carlsen (1974) proposed five stages of developing readers: unconscious delight, vicarious experience, seeing oneself, philosophical speculation, and aesthetic experience. *Unconscious delight* occurs when the reader reads for enjoyment. It typically includes students in late childhood and early adolescence. *Vicarious experience* includes the elements of action and escape, found in the genres of horror, mystery, romance, fantasy, and true adventures and dominates early junior high students.

Seeing oneself usually involves readers in middle adolescence who are egocentric. *Philosophical speculation* reflects a shifting focus from oneself to others and is seen in students in their late teens and beyond. *Aesthetic experience* occurs when critical awareness and universal themes are recognized and perhaps is the only satisfaction the sated reader has left. Unlike Early, Carlsen believes that all stages of reading development can occur simultaneously in varying degrees because readers float among the stages depending on subject matter.

The literature frequently presented to young adults by teachers or in school anthologies requires students to respond at an aesthetic level before they have reached that stage of reading development. Teachers may be too eager for adolescents to mature by choosing materials too difficult for them and for which they are not psychologically ready (Carlsen, 1974). It is here that teachers or librarians can help guide young people from an egocentric stage to an aesthetic level by recommending and encouraging them to read good young adult literature. Young adult literature is defined as "books whose main characters are teenagers or books written specifically for a teenage audience" (Herz, 1996; p. 9). Another definition of young adult literature is "anything that readers between the approximate ages of 12 and 20 choose to read (as opposed to what they may be coerced to read for class assignments)" (Donelson, 1989; p. 13).

Teachers and librarians must become familiar with the literature written for young adults and recommend it to teens in order to facilitate the transition from childhood to adulthood. Young adult literature allows students to progress beyond childhood books read purely for pleasure to the aesthetic, intellectual, mature reading of an adult (Reed, 1994). If a text is chosen for its suitability for age, maturity and interest, an adolescent can have a more productive literary experience than with less accessible texts (Probst, 1993). If the potential for awakening response and inviting dialogue with young adults is considered, perhaps the best works of young adult literature, even though less complex and less artistically sophisticated, would replace some of the classics currently being taught (Probst, 1993).

Young adults want literature that depict characters like themselves who wrestle with the same issues in a way that is not condescending nor so difficult that reading becomes a chore (Stover, 1997). Literature can provide vicarious experiences for young adults (Lukens, 1994). They can see how fictional people think, feel and react to situations, thus discovering more about themselves. Many times literature will provide the means for seeing a problem objectively through a character even though the reader may have been dealing with the same problem. Thinking about the difficult issues or topics within young adult literature and discussing them with knowledgeable adults can help the young adults move from

hopelessness and despair to acceptance and understanding (Nilsen, 1994). A novel can explore the commonalities that exist between persons, regardless of race and other differences. An adolescent may, therefore, feel as if he/she isn't the only one who is in a particular situation. Peck states that "novels are the biographies of survivors" (1993, p. 21). Carlsen believes, "we find comfort in discovering we are not alone, that others live and feel as we do, that someone, an author has understood us" (1974, p. 25).

Novels are only one type of young adult literature; teens also read short stories, articles, plays, essays, and poetry. These all differ from novels, obviously, because of their length but also because of their content. Short stories, like novels, are prose fiction but are much shorter. Articles are usually nonfiction presenting facts and information. Essays are generally analytic, speculative, or interpretive compositions. Plays are dramatic compositions made up of dialogue while poetry can be described as many different things.

Hopkins (1987) states, "there are as many definitions of poetry as there are poets" (p. 8). He goes on to define a poem as an experience captured in a minimum number of words and lines in a unique manner (Hopkins, 1987); Probst's (1984) definition is very similar explaining that a poem gives us an experience that is compressed and sustained by several

images but not fully disclosed and leaving much for readers to infer and conclude.

A poem, according to Rosenblatt, is the result of an exchange between a reader and a text where each contributes something to the interaction (1978). "Meaning does not reside ready-made in the text or in the reader; it happens during the transaction between reader and text" (Rosenblatt, 1989, p 157). After an author has selected specific words, his/her creative activity has ended. What is left is the text; to bring a poem into being again requires a reader. What is perceived (meaning) involves both the perceiver's (reader's) contribution and the stimulus (text) (Rosenblatt, 1978).

According to Thompson (1978), a poet's aim is to activate the mind of the reader and to provide a means of discovering truths about himself/herself and about human experience. Poetry enables people to externalize their emotions and push away intolerable pressures from life's stressful times.

The lyrics from rock and rap music are also considered to be poetry. Many teachers have had success teaching poetry through the use of lyrics from popular music. LouAnne Johnson, former teacher at the Carlmont High School in Belmont, California, used rap music lyrics with her at-risk students in order to teach them poetry. Johnson was so successful that she

wrote a book, My Posse Don't Do Homework, which was later made into the movie, Dangerous Minds (Reed, 1995).

From the previous definitions, one can infer that young adult poetry includes poems that characterize teenagers or those poems written specifically for a teenage audience as well as any poetry that adolescents read without coercion. Young adult poetry, like young adult novels, "sings of human experiences" (Janeczko, 1993, p. 176) and often mirrors adolescents' own experiences. Poetry should not only appeal to students but should also meet their interests and emotional needs (Hopkins, 1987). But just what are the characteristics of young adult poems? What elements are prevalent in young adult poetry?

Poems with special appeal to teenagers have been collected into anthologies and marketed specifically for young adults (Donelson, 1989). In 1966 editors, Dunning, Lueders, and Smith, selected poems along with the input of students to be included in an anthology entitled Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle... And Other Modern Verse (Scott, Foresman, 1966). The book had an appropriately green cover and pink endpapers, and the poems collected inside consisted of well-known, as well as unknown, poems and poets. The format was nonthreatening as well as appealing with only one or two poems on a page and a photograph on the opposite page. It was widely used as a text in schools because of the 21

pages of questions in an "Interpretation" section in the back, and "proved so popular in schools that it soon came out in paperback and sold even more copies" (Hoffecker, 1983 p. 18). The success of this book led to a second one, Some Haystacks Don't Even Have Any Needle and Other Complete Modern Poems (Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1969), which was well reviewed by literary critics but was not as popular as the first book (Donelson, 1989). The same is true of a third collection, Zero Makes Me Hungry: A Collection of Poems for Today (Scott, Foresman, 1976), which Lueders went on to do along with a new editor, St. John (Donelson, 1989).

"Writing poetry specifically for a young adult audience is a recent development" (Donelson, 1989, p. 291). Mel Glenn and Paul Janeczko are two poets whose names are more frequently listed in sources recommending poetry for young adults than any other poets. Both men were high school teachers who used their knowledge of young adults to write poems they believed would be more relevant, appealing, and accessible to adolescents than what was currently available (Chance, 1996).

Janeczko compiled his first book of poems for young adults in 1977 as a direct result of his teaching experience. "I realized that the poetry in the classroom literature anthology that I was supposed to use was not exciting the students about language" (Nakamura, 1994, vol. 18, p.159). Janeczko compiled several anthologies and selected poems that were

striking to him, often without background knowledge of the poets. One will find that a good anthology must contain poems that move the reader: "it can anger you, delight you, make you cry, but you must be moved by it" (Commire, vol. 53, p. 67). In 1989 Janeczko published a volume of his own poetry entitled Brickyard Summer (Orchard, 1989). Later, he published Stardust Motel (Orchard, 1993), another collection of his original poetry written for young adults.

In 1982 Glenn published a collection of original poetry for teenagers called Class Dismissed! High School Poems (Clarion, 1982) dealing with subjects such as divorce, abuse, and loneliness. Glenn notes that despite the differences among young adults, there are universal similarities as well. He states, "surrounding me were hundreds of stories--some sad, some happy, some tragic--but all terribly real and poignant... there are certain common denominators in being a teenager that connect all generations--the feelings of being alone, different, in love, in conflict with parents" (Commire, vol. 51, p. 72). Glenn's powerful use of simile within his free-verse poetry produces universal images with which teenagers can identify (Copeland, 1993). Glenn also published Class Dismissed II: More High School Poems (Clarion, 1986), Back to Class (Clarion, 1988), and My Friend's Got This Problem, Mr. Candler: High School Poems (Clarion, 1991) as collections of poetry written specifically for young adults.

Glenn's Who Killed Mr. Chippendale? (Lodestar, 1996) and The Taking of Room 114 (Lodestar, 1997) are also collections of original poetry, but each tells a singular story using poems.

Research Questions

Why is it that teens do not generally read much poetry? Is it because they encounter so few poems that are relevant to their lives? Or perhaps the lack of poetry written specifically for young adults is the reason. If more poetry was written just for teenagers about issues relevant to their lives, would they read poetry more often? What are the elements or characteristics which appear in poetry that would appeal to young adults?

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine young adult poetry by Glenn and Janeczko and to determine through textual analysis the elements or characteristics of their poetry, including themes, subjects or other items deemed relevant to teens' lives. Because their poetry anthologies appear on many recommended reading lists for young adults and because there are so few poets who write specifically for teens, this study will concentrate only on the poetry written by Glenn and Janeczko.

Assumptions

Most young people are required to read poetry at some time in their lives for some reason. When on their own, however, most do not choose to read poetry. Many feel that it is too difficult to understand because educators often teach classic or adult poems with language and subject matter far removed from that of today. The researcher assumes that all the poems in Janeczko's and Glenn's books were written specifically for young adults. This assumption is based on published interviews with Glenn and Janeczko and on the knowledge gleaned from notable young adult selection and collection development tools as well as standard critical literary sources.

Significance

The significance of this study of the characteristics of young adult poetry is to help educators become aware of the type of poetry that appeals to students. They may then be able to identify and introduce similar poems, and over time students may begin to see poetry in a new light. If students discover poems that have meaning for them, they will be more likely to enjoy poetry and read it on their own, thus reaping all the benefits poetry offers its readers.

Definitions

The terms adolescents, teens, teenagers, and young people are used interchangeably with the term "young adults" in this study.

Limitations

This study will be limited to the original poetry by Mel Glenn and Paul Janeczko. This study will also be limited by the ability of the researcher to conduct textual analyses on the sample of poetry from each poet.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Related Literature

This review will discuss research related to teenagers' interests in general, and more specifically teenagers' reading interests. The research is varied as some studies included different types of reading materials such as magazines and newspapers while others only focused on subject matter.

The types of reading materials young adults choose to read varies greatly, however a common desire with teen and even adult readers is to read books that project their own life patterns (Carlsen, 1974). Many books with such appeal exist for those adolescents up to age 14 because publishers supply them with many choices such as those receiving the Newbery Medal; those ages 14 to 18, often have less choice and face adult books exclusively (Aronson, 1995).

General Interests of Young Adults

An interest study by Gill (1980) involving 743 high school students from the Coral Springs High School and the Boca Raton High School, both in south Florida, in 1978 collected data on general interests by grade level and ability among ninth-, tenth-, and eleventh-graders. The researcher used an original instrument constructed from a pool of topics suggested by

students. The instrument was administered by teachers in individual classrooms where the only instructions provided to the teachers were those which appeared on the instrument itself. Students were asked to respond to each of the 28 items on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disinterested to strongly interested. The study revealed that *girls* ranked number one on all the boys' interest inventories whereas the girls' interest inventories varied by grade and ability levels. Ninth-grade girls, divided into basic, average and advanced levels, chose *sex*, *boys*, and *life*, respectively among their top interest, while tenth-grade girls chose *life* and *love* among their highest interests; eleventh-grade girls unanimously chose *love* among their top interest (Gill, 1980, p. 165).

Reading Interests of Young Adults

In a study by Scharf (1973) in the Watseka High School in Watseka, Illinois, a closed-choice questionnaire was used to determine the reading interests of 414 students. Scharf wanted to determine if differences in reading interests existed among grade levels, intelligence levels, and between males and females. She also wanted to find out if differences existed relative to the reading of hardcovers or paperbacks. The findings revealed that the most popular reading interests of males included war, sports, world, crime news, biographies, newspapers, and magazines; in

contrast, females preferred poetry, drama, autobiographies, and novels while all adolescents preferred paperbacks to hardcovers. The conclusions reflected that differences exist between grade levels and intelligence levels as well as those that exist between males and females.

The action-research study of 500 students in grades nine through twelve by Gallo (1980) was designed to discover what students read on their own over summer vacation. Teachers in the towns of Bolton, Bristol, Plainville, Southbury, South Windsor, Trumbull, and Watertown, Connecticut, were instructed to ask their students to list the books they read for their own enjoyment, and not any required for some class, starting with their favorite. The findings indicated that students in more advanced classes read much more than students in remedial or basic skills courses. Students' readings were extremely diversified, but a few titles were frequently listed; those titles tended to be in the horror/occult subject category and contained sexual themes as well as violence. Conclusions drawn from this study were that a majority of students did read on their own, even if the books read were mostly adult horror stories.

Another study by Gallo (1984) of 3,399 fourth- through twelfth-grade students was designed to find out if students liked the books they were assigned to read. The students were from 51 public, private, parochial and technical schools in 37 Connecticut towns and cities. In a

two-page questionnaire, students were asked if they liked the novels and other books that were assigned to read for school. The rating scale used the following criteria: always, usually, sometimes, seldom, and never. In addition, students were also asked the open-ended question about how their personal reading differed from their required reading. Gallo found that 40 percent of boys and 35 percent of girls in junior high and 41% of boys and 23% of girls in high school "seldom or never" liked the required reading selections. The study also found that only one of every five students stated that they "usually or always" like the assigned books. Other findings were that all the students who responded to the open-ended question about how their personal reading differed from their assigned reading said their choices were more realistic, exciting, and interesting. Most felt that the required books had nothing to do with them. Girls favored romance books while the top choice of boys were sports stories. The findings suggested that mystery/suspense novels would be the most successful choice for teachers to assign, but horror/supernatural, books about problems of growing up, fantasy, adventure/survival, and science fiction would also be successful choices. Gallo concluded that a balance of more contemporary pieces of literature needed to be in the curriculum, including books with teenage characters dealing with problems of interest to young adults.

Bank (1986) studied the reading interests of 844 students from ten

public and parochial secondary schools in the Bronx and Westchester County in New York. The teachers administered questionnaires in which students were to indicate the topics they selected for voluntary reading from a list of 58 topics developed by the researcher from consultation with students and teachers. The results disclosed "young people or teens" as the most popular topic; other popular topics among a total of 58 were mysteries, humor, adventure, love, and sex in order of their popularity among students. He concluded that teachers in these schools should use the information in this study to predict more accurately what a specific group of students would be interested in reading.

Poetry Interests of Young Adults

An early study by Kangley (1938) of 361 eighth-grade students in Bellingham, Washington on their poetry preferences assessed student reaction to six appeals: imagery, sound effect, nature poetry, didactic poetry, poetry of the commonplace and the romantic, and humorous poetry. Each student was given a prepared preference sheet containing specific poem titles to which the students marked their best liked and least liked choices after having read the poems in addition to having had the poems read aloud to them. Kangley found that most popular appeals were obvious sound effect, commonplace subject matter, and obvious humor

whereas least popular were complex imagery and straight didactic. It was concluded that less difficult material should be selected in order to achieve appreciation of poetry because students tended to prefer poetry that they considered to be below their grade level.

In other early studies by LaBrant & Heller (1939), two groups of students from the Ohio State University School were evaluated on the number of books they read along with the specific authors and titles which were read; one group consisted of students in grades seven, eight and nine which averaged 54 students per grade while the other group consisted of students in grades ten, eleven, and twelve and averaged 57 students per grade. The groups were asked to record summer reading as well as that done during the school year. Findings related specifically to poetry revealed that only 1.3 percent of boys and only 4.3 percent of girls in grades seven through nine read poetry; in grades ten through twelve, a ratio of one boy to 3.8 girls were found to have read poetry. Some conclusions were girls read more overall than boys, however, boys read more nonfiction. Very little poetry was read, but a free reading program increased the quantity of reading done by students and also improved their ability to discriminate.

Nelms (1967) studied the characteristics and subject matter of poetry most popular with 16 tenth-grade students from the University High School

in Iowa City, Iowa. Students were asked to rate 120 poems on a rating sheet which consisted of 29 scales defined by pairs of adjectives representing polar qualities, such as good-bad, sincere-false, clear-vague, among others to provide indications of the students' personal evaluations in addition to their perceptions of certain elements in the poems. The poems were presented to the students in written form and as tape recordings in ten different sessions in which 12 poems were presented at each session. Then, a panel of judges was asked to rate the poems on ten scales that were selected for their importance as elements in modern critical appraisal of poetry and as possible factors in the students' response to the poems. The judges were made up of seven individuals who each possessed a masters degree in English, had at least three years of experience teaching English at either the secondary or college level, and had done advanced work in theory of practice or criticism. A questionnaire was also devised to record the reactions of four experienced teachers to the poems in order to determine if any inappropriate poems were included in the sample. None were found to be totally unsuitable. The students' evaluations were related to the characteristics of the poems determined by the judges, descriptions of the poems as perceived by the students, and the classifications of the poems as to topical content. The results found that only two poems of the sample were significantly familiar to the students. Narrative poems were

found to have the highest interest among the students. Among non-narrative poetry, interest is limited to the presence of characterization, a dramatic situation, or an unplotted sequence of action. Students showed only a slight preference for light verse, but not marked preference for humorous poems over serious ones. Nelms concluded that students preferred narrative poems, subject matter was a considerable factor, students' interests in the topical content of poetry parallels adolescents' interests in other types of writing, style was of little concern, modern poems were preferred over classic poems, and the quality of poetry did not matter to students.

Norvell (1973) studied the reading interests of young people by using questionnaires with students in seventh through twelfth grades asking them to report on selections read independently. Information was collected on specific titles within a certain type of literature by 625 teachers in more than 200 schools of every size, representing every type of community and all geographical areas of New York; subsequent studies were done in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Illinois and Ohio. Expressions of students' opinions were tabulated according to the readers' grade, sex and intelligence level. The portion of the study that focused on poetry found that the relative number of disliked poems was great, but there were enough well-liked poems to provide satisfaction if teachers would make it a

primary objective. Norvell concluded that students who came to dislike poetry often had teachers who were intensely focused upon masterpieces. Teachers who wished to help their students enjoy poetry used other high quality poems that appealed to students.

Bryan and Agee (1979) conducted a study with 165 high school students in grades ten, eleven and twelve from the greater Atlanta metropolitan area to determine which of 100 selected poems were the most enjoyable. Students were given a booklet in which they were to respond to each of ten poems presented to them daily by using a five-choice rating scale; for two poems presented they were to write specific reasons for liking or disliking them. The researchers found that rhymed verse was the most-liked form while free verse and haiku were unliked. When looking at content, students tended to like humor and experiences to which adolescents can relate most and social commentary and/or commentary on life least. The conclusions drawn were that all young people tended to like the same kinds of poetry and tended to dislike the same poetic forms. It was also concluded that students did not like poems they did not understand.

In a study conducted by Ravitch & Finn (1989), 7812 students consisting of an equal number of male and female 17-year olds were asked 262 cognitive questions. The students were representative of the country's population as related to race, thus 76.5% white, 12.9% black, 5.9%

Hispanic, 2% Asian, 1.1% Native American, and 1.6% "other" students participated in the study. They were also proportionately represented by region; 24% from the northeast, 21% from the southeast, 26.2 % from the west, and 28.8% from the central region. Likewise, the students were from different types of communities; from public, private and parochial schools; and from parents who had differing levels of education. Of the 141 history questions and the 121 literature questions, 17 questions dealt with poets and poetry. The students overall performance on the poetry questions fell below the average of the literature assessment as a whole. When asked what students chose to read on their own, 45% said they read no poetry in the past six months. More girls read poetry than did boys, but a higher percentage of minority students read poetry when compared to white students.

Summary

The types of reading materials young adults choose varies greatly. Differences also exist between grade levels, intelligence levels, and males and females. Students in advance classes tend to read more than those in remedial or basic skills classes. Many students seldom or never like the books they are assigned to read for school while only one in five likes the assigned books. Female students tend to favor romance stories and male

students tend to favor sports stories, yet all students like to read books with teenage characters.

Research about poetry preferences among young adults shows that obvious sound effect, everyday subjects, and humor are favorites. Females read poetry more often than males, and minorities read poetry more often than white students, but very few young people read poetry at all on their own. Rhymed verse is liked most often whereas free-verse and haiku are least liked. Most importantly, students do not like poems they cannot understand.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology and Data Analysis

The purpose of this research was to determine the characteristics of and other prevalent elements in young adult poetry by studying a random sample of original poetry for young adults by Glenn and Janeczko. Because the texts of poems were the data being studied for this research, a qualitative, rather than a quantitative, approach was utilized. There are many definitions of *qualitative*, but this research reflects a product-type definition that results in descriptive data: people's own written or spoken words and observable behavior (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). In qualitative research, materials such as field observations, interviews, and documents are the sources of data; the field observations and interviews are often converted into transcripts. The text of the transcripts is then analyzed using a variety of specialized nonmathematical techniques as opposed to the statistics or other forms of mathematical operations used in analyzing data within quantitative research (Strauss, 1987). More specifically, textual analysis was employed because this type of analysis is focused upon text and searches for understanding from a literary point of view (Jensen & Jankowski, 1991).

A grounded theory approach was utilized for its method of

"discovering theories, hypotheses, and propositions directly from the data," rather than from prior assumptions or research (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, p. 126). Grounded theory includes "intensively analyzing data, often sentence by sentence, or phrase by phrase" (Strauss, 1987, p. 22). The two major strategies for developing grounded theory are constant comparative method and theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The constant comparative method was employed by this researcher and includes simultaneous coding and analyzing in order to develop concepts that are then refined, properties identified, relationships to each other explored, and integrated into a theory (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). The initial type of coding done was open coding, which is an unrestricted coding of the data by scrutinizing the document in order to produce concepts that fit the data (Strauss, 1987). Axial coding that focuses upon one category at a time and selective coding that pertains to coding systematically for the core category followed (Strauss, 1987). Analytic induction was used as well to help address the question of generalizability.

The basic procedure for carrying out this research was to acquire the necessary books, choose a random sample of the poems from each poet, read them, and develop coding categories. Then, all the data was coded and sorted into categories. These categories included literary elements such as character, voice, theme, and form. The coding process was

recorded in detail. After all the data were analyzed, generalizability was assessed.

Janeczko has published only two books of original poetry for young adults while Glenn has published six books. The eight books for this study were reduced to six when two books by Glenn were excluded because the poems within them are written in linear form to tell a story and are more like short novels than collections of poetry. Janeczko has 30 poems in each book for a total of 60; Glenn has one book with 63 poems, another with 65 poems, and two books with 70 poems each for a total of 268. The total number of poems was 328. A random sample was taken by consecutively numbering all the titles within each poet's population; then, a set of corresponding numbers was written out, cut so that only one number appeared on each slip of paper, and placed in separate containers for each poet. Twenty-five numbers were randomly drawn from each container. The poems that corresponded to the numbers chosen were studied. The poetry collections used for this study appear in Appendix A.

More specifically, all Glenn's poems were numbered from one through 268; corresponding numbers were written on paper, cut out, and placed into a container. The researcher then blindly selected 25 numbers out of the container. The poems that corresponded to the selected numbers were used for this study. Janeczko's poems were numbered one through

60, and corresponding numbers were placed into a container. Again, the researcher blindly selected 25 numbers, and those poems corresponding to the selected numbers were used for this study. A list of the poems selected appear in Appendix B.

The research that dealt specifically with poetry was reviewed; the elements and characteristics used in those studies were extracted for use in analyzing the current data. The research that contained specific lists of elements and characteristics included Bryan and Agee (1979), Kangley (1938) and Nelms (1967). These lists appear in Appendices C, D, and E, respectively. The extracted items were then coded using three different colors representing the researchers listed above and the letters of the alphabet representing each of the elements and characteristics gleaned from their research.

The data, 25 poems from each poet, were read and reread. Themes, interpretations, ideas, issues, and similarities were penciled in next to the text of each poem. Notations were also made on such characteristics as figurative language, including comparisons using similes and metaphors; use of dialogue; and sound patterns including repetition, alliteration, consonance, and onomatopoeia. Any other thoughts or observations of the researcher were also noted beside each poem.

The text was then analyzed, and the poems were sorted into coding

categories using those items extracted from the past research. The written notations of the researcher were reviewed for elements that were recurring but had not been represented by the coding categories. The list of these elements appear in Appendix F. These items were then coded, and the poems were resorted into these categories.

Tallies were made for individual coded categories within each researchers' list of elements and characteristics. Percentages of represented poetry were figured for each item and reported. Percentages appear in Appendix G.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis

Overview

Why is it that young adults do not read much poetry? Perhaps it is because they encounter few poems that are relevant to their lives, or perhaps the lack of poetry written specifically for teenagers is the reason. The purpose of this study was to answer the questions above by examining a random sample of poems from Mel Glenn and Paul Janeczko and to determine through textual analysis the elements and characteristics of their poetry.

Findings

The first sorting and coding of the randomly selected poem texts were based on the elements and characteristics identified in Appendices C, D, and E. As the first sorting was completed, new elements appeared and are indicated in Appendix F. Some of the elements and characteristics identified in this manner were structural, and some were context related. It is useful to separate these for discussion. Table 1 lists all the structural elements present in the 25 poems by each poet; Table 2 lists content items present.

Structural Elements

The structural elements from Bryan and Agee's research (1979) included the poetic forms of free or unrhymed verse, lyric-descriptive, narrative, rhymed verse, limerick, and haiku. Interestingly, at first glance, one would describe the poetry of Glenn and Janeczko to be free or unrhymed verse, but when using Bryan & Agee's definitions, almost all of the studied poetry fell under the lyric-descriptive category: personal and descriptive poetry with no prescribed length or structure that expresses feelings and emotions. Only one poem from Janeczko could be classified as strictly narrative. None of the poems were classified as free or unrhymed verse, rhymed verse, limerick, or haiku.

The structural elements from Kangley's research (1938) included clear rhyme scheme, relatively simple, dialogue, obvious sound effect, descriptive detail, story element, imagery, feeling of movement of action, and relatively difficult. Some of Kangley's elements were similar to Bryan & Agee's listed above; for instance, clear rhyme scheme is parallel to the specific poetic forms. Obviously the findings for these elements matched the earlier findings. All of the poems examined contained imagery and were relatively simple. Descriptive detail was also found in 92% of the poems. The poem "Gus," by Janeczko, provides an example of imagery and descriptive detail.

"Can't you hurry?"
 she asked, as Gus poured coffee
 into a white Styrofoam cup
 with Sweet Tooth Bakery
 swirled on it.

(Brickyard summer, p. 15)

Dialogue was prominent, as was a story element, in most of the poetry, as the narrator related a particular event or episode using conversations, either spoken directly to the audience or dialogued with oneself. Obvious sound effect was found in less than half of the poems and was interpreted as alliteration, consonance, onomatopoeia, or repetition of words or phrases. An excellent example of sound effect can be found in the poem "Dare," by Janeczko, in which the narrator is dared to kiss a gravestone.

I grinned back at my friends,
 huddled, holding their breath,
 turned to see Hannah had a face:
 a photo
 an oval set in the stone,
 caught her straight yellow hair...

(Stardust otel, p. 54)

The "h" sound is prominent, thus giving the reader the feeling that the

narrator is huffing, out of breath, perhaps from a mixture of fear and excitement. Another example of sound effect can be seen by Glenn's repetition of a phrase in the poem "Douglas Kearny" in which five lines of the 21-line poem begin with "I know."

Structural elements from Nelms' research (1967) included poetic merit, seriousness of tone, didacticism, directness of statement, narrative interest, formal regularity, poetic diction, and syntactic complexity. These elements differed slightly from the previous ones because in Nelms' study they were rated on a scale of high to low. Some elements, again, corresponded to earlier elements and similar findings were noted. Poetic merit was found to be high for all poems in this study; similarly, 98% of the poems were high on the directness of statement element. Narrative interest was found in the majority of poems by both poets as noted earlier. A serious tone was present in 64% of all the poetry studied. Didacticism and syntactic complexity were rarely found, and formal regularity and poetic diction were not found in any poems.

Once finished coding and sorting the elements from previous studies, the researcher reviewed the original notes that had been written beside each poem's text. Characteristics or elements that were prevalent but not addressed in previous studies were noted and listed. These items included the structural elements of a short length (less than two pages),

conversational/contemporary diction, comparisons using similes and metaphors, concrete/shape poem form, play on words/double meanings, direct questions asked by the narrator, and irony. All poems studied were less than two pages long, which is not surprising since short poems would seem less threatening to teens. Likewise, almost all of the poems used conversational and/or contemporary language as seen here in Glenn's poem "Walter Finney, Monday, Period 1."

Hi, Mr. Candler, how ya doin'?

Not much. What about you?

My weekend? Not too bad.

(My friend's got this problem, Mr. Candler, p. 7)

Half of all poems used metaphors or similes, but Janeczko used twice as many as Glenn. In "Glass-Eye Harry Coote" Janeczko writes:

Silent until we passed from the park,

Raymond muttered,

"Should be against the law

to take money

for telling something

as plain as bark on a tree."

(Brickyard summer, p. 10)

Approximately 30% of poems from each poet contained a play on

words, or a double meaning, as seen in Janeczko's "First Snow" in which the narrator talks about playing on the snow-covered baseball field with his girlfriend.

I shivered
 feeling the kiss
 of icy strawberries.
 ...
 Crawling,
 slipping,
 I followed,
 gaining on her
 until we slid home together,
 safe in our laughter.

(Stardust Motel, p. 43)

It could mean that the narrator shivered with excitement or shivered because of the cold, or both. "Slid home together" could mean sliding into home base as well as sliding in the snow as they walked home. Questions asked directly by the narrator is an attribute that Glenn uses in over half of his poetry, but one that Janeczko only uses 25% of the time. An excellent example of questions used by Glenn appears in the poem "Michael Ravenall" as the narrator asks his father many questions.

I don't know why you won't give me the car keys, Dad.

Are you afraid I'll drink and drive?

Are you afraid I'll total the car like Steven did?

Are you afraid I'm still too young?

Or too told?

What's the matter, Dad?

(Class dismissed, p. 61)

Irony is only found 20% of the time in both poets' work. One example of irony can be found in Janeczko's "Mail-Order Romance."

Although she worked
 at Four Winds Travel,
 Alice Singer never traveled
 except to the front porch
 to collect her latest shipment
 of mail-order romance novels.

(Stardust otel, p. 40)

Two of Glenn's poems were concrete poetry, or more specifically, shape poems. In "Greg Hoffman," Glenn writes of swimming laps and has each line numbered as a lap, with a word at each end of the line representing the ends of a pool with dots in between representing the water. In "Deidre Spector, Period 4, Gym," he writes of a volleyball game

with words written in between lines that represent a volleyball court, only this time the narrator speaks of being shuttled back and forth between parents instead of a volleyball going from side to side.

A table illustrating the number, and type, of structural elements present in Glenn's and Janeczko's poetry can be found on the next page.

Table 1: Structural Elements Present in Individual Poems

<u>Structural Items</u>	<u>Glenn</u> 25 poems	<u>Janeczko</u> 25 poems
<u>Bryan & Agee:</u>		
Free or unrhymed verse	0	0
Lyric-descriptive	25	24
Narrative	0	1
Rhymed verse	0	0
Limerick	0	0
Haiku	0	0
<u>Kangley:</u>		
Clear rhyme scheme	0	0
Relatively simple	25	25
Dialogue	18	13
Obvious sound effect	13	8
Descriptive detail	22	24
Story element	14	20
Imagery	25	25
Feeling of movement or action	8	6
Relatively difficult	0	0
<u>Nelms:</u>		
Poetic merit	25	25
Seriousness of Tone	18	14
Didacticism	3	4
Directness of statement	25	24
Narrative interest	15	20
Formal regularity	0	0
Poetic diction	0	0
Syntactic complexity	2	0
<u>Other:</u>		
Short length	25	25
Conversational/contemporary diction	23	25
Concrete/shape form	2	0
Play on words/double meanings	7	8
Comparisons (similes & metaphors)	7	18
Questions asked directly	13	1
Irony	5	5

Content Items

The content items from Bryan & Agee's research (1979) included people, experiences to which adolescents can relate, fantasy and science fiction, animals, nature, things, social commentary and/or commentary on life, and humor. A majority of both Glenn's and Janeczko's poetry contained images of people. All of Glenn's poetry focused upon fictional individuals as illustrated through the use of names as titles. Almost half of Janeczko's and almost all of Glenn's poems included experiences to which adolescents can relate. For instance, all teenagers will be able to relate to the narrator, in the poem "Donald Kaminsky," by Glenn, when he conveys his displeasure with being told what to do all the time by teachers or parents and asks:

How could I learn to make decisions for myself, I thought,

When every decision is made for me?

...

How could I learn to order my life, I thought,

When every order is given to me?

All my life I have been the last link in the

Chain of commands that never stopped.

(Class dismissed, p. 95)

Other content elements included fantasy and science fiction, animals,

nature, and humor, which were found in very few poems. The content item of things revealed that a small number of poems dealt with objects as their subjects. None of Glenn's and only seven out of 25 of Janeczko's poems contained humor. Surprisingly, 60% of Glenn's and 32% of Janeczko's poetry contained some type of social commentary and/or commentary on life despite a previous study's conclusion that such commentary is not popular with teens.

Content elements from Kangley's research (1938) were funny, relates to common experience, impossible or grotesque, mood of melancholy, and ethical import. The content item of *funny* parallels the item of *humor* in Bryan and Agee's research, as the content item of *relates to common experience* parallels *experiences to which adolescents can relate*. The findings matched the earlier parallel ones. None of the poems by Janeczko and only one poem by Glenn was considered impossible or grotesque as seen in "Russell Hodges, (The Usher)."

Did you see that movie where
 The monster ate the alien
 Who chopped up the zombie
 Who decapitated the creature
 Who strangled the werewolf
 Who tore apart the giant spider?

(Class dismissed II, p. 53)

A melancholy mood permeated almost twice as many of the poems by Glenn than by Janeczko and are illustrated by the end questions in many of his poems, as in "Jason Talmadge."

They both want a life of their own,

A life which doesn't include me.

If I am such a burden to both of them,

Why did they have me in the first place?

(Class dismissed, p. 39)

Only one poem by Janeczko and none by Glenn were found to contain an ethical import.

Content items from Nelms' research (1967) included only emotional appeal and elements of conflict. Emotional appeal was found in 17 of Glenn's poems and only 8 of Janeczko's. Elements of conflict were found in over three-fourths of all the poems. Only 16 of the 25 poems by Janeczko but almost all, 23 of 25, poems by Glenn contained some type of conflict as illustrated here in Glenn's poem "Nicholas Townshed, Period 6, Room 236."

The bomb dropped a year ago

When my parents told me

They were getting a divorce.

...

The fallout from the divorce

Still leaves me sick to my stomach.

I continue to suffer from the aftershocks.

(Back to class, p. 67)

Three content items noted that were not addressed in previous research included the use of specific personal names, recurring characters from poem to poem and passage of time. Interestingly, almost all the poems included a name; the names were fictitious yet gave the reader a feeling that the poem was about a real person. As a matter of fact, all of Glenn's titles are names. Also, noted in several poems was the use of a recurring image of a person, who had been introduced in another poem. Recurring characters were found in 36% of Janeczko's and 20% of Glenn's poetry. A majority of the poems had some form of time passage; in the poem "Raymond" by Janeczko the passage of time is evident.

best friend

since fifth grade

when he seemed to stop

growing.

...

In the Tattoo Emporium,

let me help him
 pick out the
 eagle-holding-thunderbolt
 he'd claim for his chest the day he turned eighteen.

(Brickyard summer, p. 8)

Other elements that were prevalent but not addressed in previous studies included references to abuse, divorce, death, employment, escapism, family life and relationships, friendship, future, income/socio-economic status, loneliness/not belonging, love and romance, peer relationships, respect and responsibility, school (academic and sports), self-esteem, and taboos such as drinking, smoking, drugs and sex. All are items of concern to many, if not all, young adults. Frequently a single poem would contain more than one of these items of concern. "Brothers," by Janeczko (Brickyard summer, p. 34), is about friendship as well as death. "Isabel Navarro," by Glenn (Class Dismissed II, p. 50), has elements of romance, friendship, school, family relationships and socio-economic status all included in one 19-line poem. Found most often were references to family life and relationships, the future, loneliness or a feeling of not belonging, and love and romance. Many poems included references to employment, friendship, school, and peer relationships. Less often, but still present, were references to death, self-esteem, escapism, taboos, divorce, abuse,

respect or responsibility, and income or socio-economic status. Glenn tended to have more poems about concerns for the future, family life and relationships, loneliness or feelings of not belonging, and school while Janeczko had more about love and romance, friendship, and death.

A table listing the number of specific content items present in individual poems by Glenn and Janeczko can be found on the next page.

Table 2: Content Items Present in Individual Poems

<u>Content Items</u>	<u>Glenn</u> 25 poems	<u>Janeczko</u> 25 poems
<u>Bryan & Agee:</u>		
People	23	25
Experiences to which adolescents can relate	20	12
Fantasy and science fiction	1	1
Animals	0	1
Nature	0	3
Things	4	9
Social commentary/commentary on life	15	8
Humor	0	7
<u>Kangley:</u>		
Funny	0	7
Relates to common experience	20	12
Impossible or grotesque	1	0
Mood of melancholy	14	8
Ethical import	1	0
<u>Nelms:</u>		
Emotional appeal	17	8
Elements of conflict	23	16
<u>Other:</u>		
Use of specific personal names	25	23
Passage of time	15	13
Recurring characters from poem to poem	5	9
Abuse	1	2
Divorce	3	1
Death	0	8
Employment	7	7
Escapism	3	3
Family life & relationships	12	7
Friendship	2	9
Future	15	1
Income/Socio-economic status	3	3
Loneliness/not belonging	11	5
Love & romance	6	9
Peer relationships	5	5
Respect & responsibility	4	0
School (academic & sports)	10	1
Self-esteem	7	0
Taboos (drinking, smoking, drugs, sex, etc.)	1	5

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Both sets of poetry from Glenn and Janeczko contain similar elements and characteristics. All poems analyzed were of high poetic merit, contained imagery, were relatively simple and were less than two pages in length. The voice of the poems spoke directly to the audience and were of a lyrical/descriptive form; most had images of people, used conversational or contemporary language, names of people (although they were usually fictitious names), and were very descriptive in detail. Many of the poems contained some type of conflict, a narrative or story element, common experiences, a serious tone, and dialogue. None of the poems analyzed were very difficult; contained poetic diction; or were of a prescribed poetry form, such as haiku, or limerick; or had a regular rhyme scheme.

All poems studied were written in a first-person point of view. This probably personifies the poem for the reader; a tangible person is relating his or her story within the poem. Most of the poems contained an image of a teenage character, concurring with the studies which concluded that teens like to read literature having young people or teens as main characters; likewise, many poems contained elements of conflict, perhaps mirroring

the experiences of teens. Studies showing students' preference to rhymed verse were not reinforced as none of the poems in this study rhymed. Studies showing students' interest in dramatic situations were consistent with the current findings. Narrative poems were of highest interest to students in one study, which correlates with the high percentage of narrative poems in the present study.

Published from 1982 to 1993, all of the poems used for the study are contemporary leading the researcher to believe that they would be preferred since modern poetry was preferred over classic poetry in a previous study. Other studies also indicated that students did not like poems containing social commentary or commentary on life, but almost half of the current poems studied were interpreted as having this type of commentary.

None of the poems were considered to be difficult, thus reinforcing earlier studies whereby students disliked poems they could not understand. At times it was difficult, however, to determine the concepts in some poems. For example, some poems were easily associated with experiences to which all adolescents can relate, such as a first kiss while abuse may only be an experience to which some but not all adolescents can relate.

One of the differences noted between Glenn and Janeczko included point-of-view. Each poet's poems are written in the first person, but all of

the poems in Janeczko's books are told by the same character image, whereas Glenn's poems are told by each title character image, thus representing a more diverse population. Janeczko's poems seem to use more poetic devices, even though they are relatively simple, such as comparisons using similes and metaphors. Janeczko also leaves a little something for the reader to infer, while Glenn tends to be directly straightforward with his poetry. Even though both poets use descriptive detail, Glenn tends to be more descriptive of thoughts and feelings while Janeczko is more descriptive of visible surroundings such as those found in the poem "Brickyard."

Four stories,
 two blocks long,
 the mill sat
 ...
 From the corner room on the top floor
 I watched
 workers with black lunch pails...

(Brickyard summer, p. 3)

The elements and characteristics that are prevalent in young adult poetry by Glenn and Janeczko have been found. Why teens do not read much poetry remains unanswered. Many educators still use textbooks that

contain classic poetry or believe it is important to teach students only the classics. It seems as if the lack of poetry written for young adults is becoming noticed, and a few more writers have published poetry appealing to teens. The number of poetry anthologies written specifically for young adults is still small compared to those written for children. The researcher believes that if the number of anthologies increased dramatically, the number of teens who read poetry would increase as well; however, this research only answers the question of the elements and characteristics present in some young adult poetry.

Suggestions for Further Research

It would be interesting to do more studies concerning the appeal of poetry to young adults. Questionnaires could be used with teenagers specifically asking them to rate poetry by Glenn and Janeczko as well as the poetry in their English textbooks. Most of the published studies were done long ago, before much was written specifically for young adults, so it would be beneficial to do similar studies now to see if teens' attitudes toward poetry has changed. According to several recent magazine articles, there has been a resurgence in poetry across the country; poetry readings are once again becoming popular in coffee houses, as are poetry slams in bars and cafes. Today television commercials for Obsession and Gap ads

contain poetry, and recently MTV showcased young poets on a series called Fightin' Wordz (Eden, 1993). Rap music is more prevalent than ever among teens with some experts calling it "aggressive, vehement, decidedly urban street poetry" (Whitaker, 1990, p. 42).

Studies on sequential or linear poetry would also benefit educators as more books of poetry are being written telling one story using a series of poems. As a matter of fact, the books used in this study contained poetry using recurring fictitious characters; some poems early in each book related information about a character who later appeared in another poem further on in the book. This would lead one to believe that the entire book was meant to be read, almost as if a novel, rather than individual poems selected at random.

More studies on how young adults react to poetry would be beneficial to educators. Poetry can mean many different things to different people. By reviewing past studies and conducting new ones, teachers and librarians may be able to facilitate student learning by selecting poems to which teens can relate, although some young adults will be able to relate to certain poems more than others. Negative attitudes might be changed into positive ones as students get comfortable with poetry. Once they feel at ease with it, teens might read it on their own and even learn to enjoy it.

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Appendix A

Poetry Collections Used in this Study

Glenn, M. (1988). Back to class. New York: Clarion.

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Appendix B

Poems Selected for Analysis

Mel GlennClass Dismissed:

"Jason Talmadge"

"Michael Ravenall"

"Annie Scarella"

"Donald Kaminsky"

Class Dismissed II:

"Jose Cruz"

"Robert Ashford"

"Juan Pedro Carrera"

"Greg Hoffman"

"Isabel Navarro"

"Russell Hodges"

"David Klein"

"Wendy Tarloff"

"Douglas Kearny"

"Mario Benedetto"

Back to Class:

"Mr. Eugene Worthington, Physical Education, Period 4,

Gym"

"Deidre Spector, Period 4, Gym"

"Jackie Grant, Period 5, Room 223"

"Nicholas Townshed, Period 6, Room 236"

"Bertha Robbins, Period 8, Room 249"

"Mr. Ted Sage, Accounting, Period 8, Room 219"

"Evan King, Period 8, Room 219"

My Friend's Got This Problem, Mr. Candler:

"Walter Finney, Monday, Period 1"

"Terrance Kane, Monday, Period 6"

"Wayne Buford, Tuesday, Period 4"

"Mr. Mark Candler, Friday, Period 8"

Paul Janeczko

Brickyard Summer:

"Brickyard"

"Raymond"

"Glass-Eye Harry Coote"

"Gus"

"Dancers"

"Walker"

"Brothers"

"Spider"

"Mail King"

"Bingo"

"Winner"

"The Kiss"

Stardust otel:

"History: Stardust otel"

"Becky"

"The Natural"

"Nesterenko"

"Drive-in"

"Mail-Order Romance"

"First Snow"

"Dancer"

"Mr. Loudermilk"

"Dare"

"So Many Days"

"Ghosts"

"Mrs. Talbot"

Appendix C

Elements from Bryan & Agee's Research (1979)

Content of:	People
	Experiences to Which Adolescents can Relate
	Fantasy and Science Fiction
	Animals
	Nature
	Things
	Social Commentary and/or Commentary on Life
	Humor
Form:	Free or Unrhymed Verse
	Lyric-Descriptive
	Narrative
	Rhymed Verse
	Limerick
	Haiku

Appendix D

Elements from Kangley's Research (1938)

Clear Rhyme Scheme

Relatively Simple

Dialogue

Obvious Sound Effect

Descriptive Detail

Story Element

Funny

Relates to Common Experience

Impossible or Grotesque

Imagery

Feeling of Movement or Action

Relatively Difficult

Mood of Melancholy

Ethical Import

Appendix E

Elements from Nelms' Research (1967)

Poetic Merit

Seriousness of Tone

Didacticism

Emotional Appeal

Directness of Statement

Narrative Interest

Formal Regularity

Poetic Diction

Syntactic complexity

Elements of Conflict

Appendix F

Characteristics Not Listed in Previous Research:

- References to:
- Abuse
 - Divorce
 - Death
 - Employment
 - Escapism
 - Family Life & Relationships
 - Friendship
 - Future
 - Income/Socio-economic Status
 - Loneliness/Not Belonging
 - Love & Romance
 - Peer Relationships
 - Respect & Responsibility
 - School (academic & sports)
 - Self-esteem
 - Taboos (drinking, smoking, drugs, sex, etc.)
- Use of Specific Personal Names
- Passage of Time
- Short (less than 2 pages)
- Conversational/Contemporary Diction

Recurring Characters from Poem to Poem

Concrete/Shape Form

Play on Words/Double Meanings

Comparisons (similes & metaphors)

Questions Asked Directly

Irony

Appendix G

Findings in Percentages of Elements or Characteristics
in Poetry by Mel Glenn or Paul Janeczko

100% High Poetic Merit

Imagery

Relatively Simple

Short (Less than 2 Pages)

98% Directness of Statement

Form: Lyric-Descriptive

96% Content of People

Conversational/Contemporary Diction

Use of Specific Personal Names

92% Descriptive Detail

78% Elements of Conflict

70% Narrative Interest

- 68%** Story Element

- 64%** Content of Experiences to Which Adolescents can Relate
Seriousness of Tone

- 62%** Dialogue
Relates to Common Experience

- 56%** Passage of Time

- 50%** Comparisons (Similes and Metaphors)
Emotional Appeal

- 46%** Content of Social Commentary and/or Commentary on Life

- 44%** Mood of Melancholy

- 42%** Obvious Sound Effect

- 38%** Reference to Family Life and Relationships

- 32%** Reference to Loneliness/Not Belonging
Reference to Future
- 30%** Reference to Love and Romance
Play on Words/Double Meanings
- 28%** Feeling of Movement or Action
Questions Asked Directly
Recurring Characters from Poem to Poem
Reference to Employment
- 26%** Content of Things
- 22%** Reference to Friendship
Reference to School (Academic and Sports)
- 20%** Irony
Reference to Peer Relationships
- 16%** Reference to Death

14% Didacticism

Funny

Humor

Reference to Self-Esteem

12% Reference to Income/Socio-economic Status

Reference to Taboos (Drinking, Smoking, Drugs, Sex, etc.)

8% Reference to Divorce

Reference to Respect and Responsibility

6% Content of Nature

Reference to Abuse

Reference to Escapism

4% Concrete/Shape Form

Content of Fantasy and Science Fiction

Syntactic Complexity

2% Content of Animals

Ethical Import

Form: Narrative

Impossible or Grotesque

0% Clear Rhyme Scheme

Form: Free or Unrhymed Verse

Form: Haiku

Form: Limerick

Form: Rhymed Verse

Formal Regularity

Poetic Diction

Relatively Difficult