

A STUDY OF FEASIBILITY OF  
USING INSTRUCTIONAL MODULES IN  
A CHILDREN'S LITERATURE CLASS

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## ABSTRACT

### A STUDY OF THE FEASIBILITY OF USING INSTRUCTIONAL MODULES IN A CHILDREN'S LITERATURE CLASS

By

Joan Trezise

The present study concerned an approach to teaching Children's Literature at the university level that focused on the use of a set of instructional modules. The study was conducted with a group of thirty-three undergraduates at Michigan State University from March 21 to June 10, 1971. The purpose of the study was to determine the feasibility of using the modules as an instructional approach. Three questions were raised concomitant to this study: (1) As a result of the instruction, would the students learn a satisfactory amount of content concerning children's literature? (2) Would the students finish the course with positive attitudes towards the modules? (3) Would the students finish the course with positive attitudes towards children's literature?

Combined with the use of the instructional modules were instructional techniques generally associated with the open classroom. The various instructional techniques



used in the study were based on the following assumptions:

- (1) that individual differences should be accommodated;
- (2) that students should respond in an individualistic way to what they read and experience; (3) that multi-media approaches are appropriate in a class intended to reach individual differences; (4) that students should be involved in evaluation procedures; (5) that student involvement is important in the learning situation itself; and
- (6) student interaction is important to the development of ideas.

A search of the literature revealed that university students react positively to teachers who show concern for their students, who are enthusiastic, and who have knowledge of their subject matter. The literature also indicated that students tend to teach the way they have been taught. This research, then, would attempt to provide for students who will become teachers an effective model of teaching behavior in a course of Children's Literature.

Certain evaluation instruments were devised to ascertain the success of the class in terms of subject content assimilated by the students, attitudes toward the use of instructional modules as a means of instruction, and attitudes toward the approach of the classroom instruction. On the basis of these instruments, it was determined, first, that the students did seem to acquire a substantial amount of factual, specific information

about children's literature. Second, the students' attitudes toward the use of instructional modules were strongly on the positive side. Third, the students' overall attitudes towards children's literature as a whole field, toward the Children's Literature class, and towards the various approaches used in the class were also very strongly on the positive side. Comparatively few students expressed through the instruments administered to them at the conclusion of the term, negative attitudes towards children's literature and related areas.

As a result of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Students do seem to be able to acquire a substantial amount of factual data and specific information about children's literature through the instructional approaches used in this study.
2. When used as the instructional base of a Children's Literature class, most students do think positively about the use of a set of instructional modules.
3. Two instructional approaches of a somewhat diverse nature--the open-classroom technique and a set of instructional modules--can be successfully combined in a university classroom setting.

4. It does seem to be possible to combine an open-classroom and instructional-module approach so as to accommodate a variety of learning styles.
5. A combined open-classroom and instructional-module approach used in a course in Children's Literature does result in the students carrying away from that course a positive attitude, not only to the class itself, but to children's literature as a whole.
6. It does, then, seem feasible to use the set of instructional modules developed at Michigan State University as a basis for instruction in a Children's Literature class.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

#### Need

Children's books of excellent literary quality are becoming more and more available to educators and their pupils. Great quantities of books for children and young people are being published in all areas, and some of our finest writers are devoting their talents to writing for this public. And not only are our best writers engaging in this activity, but, also, gifted and creative artists are turning their skills to illustrating books for young people.

Unfortunately, too few adults are aware of the recent developments in books for children, and many parents and teachers still think that books for this age group are exclusively the traditional classic titles and serve only the recreational needs of young readers. The unhappy aspect of this situation is that all too often when teachers--both at the elementary and secondary level--wish to help their students find books of interest and value, they themselves tend to be unaware of this fertile area from which they can draw books.

They often know neither the contemporary authors nor contemporary titles, nor are they aware of the nature of the new books. They are, therefore, inclined to refer their students to the traditional titles they read as young people or to adult books.

Thus, in teacher training programs today, it is of particular importance that prospective young teachers be introduced to the world of young people's literature. But if they are to lead their students to the excellent books that are appearing continually, they must first learn something about current developments in children's literature themselves. New trends in children's books have produced changes which require close attention and a thorough perusal of the literature. It is, indeed, an area in which "keeping up" with new materials is a formidable task for even the most knowledgeable student of this field.

It perhaps would not be an exaggeration to say that one of the best teaching tools a teacher will have available to her is trade books or non-text books. Individualized reading programs are often standard procedure in today's schools, and elementary teachers must have preparation for this approach. As Huck and Huhn have stated:

Trade books are increasingly used for instruction as reading programs become more individualized. Educators recommend a minimum of four to six different books for each child in the classroom

for individualized reading instruction. It is assumed that this collection would be changed frequently. The science and social studies curricula also draw upon many trade books as children demand more information than can be contained in one textbook.<sup>1</sup>

More and more, educators are turning away from the question, "What does the book teach us?" to the recognition that the pleasure and satisfaction of reading is a desirable end in itself. Prospective teachers are faced with learning "not primarily about authors and subject matters and reading generally, but about specific books and their readers--what goes on in books, what goes on in the people young and old who read them."<sup>2</sup> Thus, it is incumbent upon teachers' training institutions to offer young teachers programs of excellence in this area.

Considering, then, the importance of this aspect of a teacher-training program, and also assuming that more effective ways must continually be sought to improve teacher preparation in the area of children's literature, children's literature specialists are seeking to undertake new and dynamic kinds of programs. It would seem to be vital, therefore, to develop and conduct courses in children's literature for future teachers which will

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<sup>1</sup>Charlotte Huck and Doris Young Kuhn, Children's Literature in the Elementary School (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968), p. 6. (Hereinafter referred to as Children's Literature.)

<sup>2</sup>Sheila Egoff, et al., Only Connect: Readings on Children's Literature (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 18.

stimulate interest in this area and will prepare these educators to lead their students into the best possible literature experiences.

As is true of other endeavors to improve educational programs, children's literature specialists are taking a number of different approaches. One of these is an attempt to do more in the way of individualizing instruction by emphasizing the affective response to literature. In other words, is it possible to find ways of presenting a study of children's literature in a more individualized way? Also, educators in all fields are today focusing more than ever on clearly stated objectives. That is, can goals in children's literature classes be stated more precisely and in more behavioristic terms?

The present study focuses on these two approaches. In short, it will be a description of a course in children's literature in which an attempt has been made to somewhat individualize instruction and offer types of learning experiences and materials (trade books) which one may use effectively with children. Further, the class goals have been presented in instructional objective terms.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this study is to establish a model which demonstrates procedures for the implementation of

a group of instructional modules in a teacher-training program in the area of literature for children in order to ascertain the feasibility of using the modular approach to instruction in the area of children's literature.

#### Questions to be Explored in Study

The following questions are to be explored in the study:

1. As a result of the instructional approaches used in the study, can students achieve a satisfactory amount of information of a factual nature about children's literature?
2. As a result of these instructional techniques, will the students complete the class with favorable attitudes toward the instructional modules?
3. At the end of the term, will the students' attitudes toward children's literature as a whole be favorable?

Assuming that this study does achieve its purpose--that using certain instructional techniques in the class can be considered to be feasible, then the above questions should be answered in the affirmative on the basis of the data gathered in the study. That is, if it can be said that students studying children's literature under the instructional techniques used in this study do indeed

learn approximately as much about children's literature as they do in a more content-centered course, carry away from the class a favorable attitude toward the modules, and end the term thinking positively about children's literature, then it may be said that the approaches used in the class should be considered feasible.

### Theory

Certain basic assumptions are an intrinsic, though perhaps a tacit, part of this study. These can be stated as follows:

1. Considering the great span of individual differences among students, the most effective educational programs attempt to individualize instruction.

Since the advent of the intelligence test in the 1920's, when psychologists and educators first began to measure and, therefore, began to be more aware of the enormous differences in human intelligence, educators have been conscious of the difficulties of meeting individual differences in educational programs. In that era, different programs were attempted to accommodate individual differences, including grouping children "homogeneously" by ability. But no matter how carefully students were grouped, individual differences in any one group remained. In more recent times, as learning theorists have begun to explore other factors of the intellect besides verbal ability, even greater individual



differences among learners have emerged. As psychologists suggest, one individual may have high order divergent thinking skills, another may have high order convergent thinking skills. Or, one individual may do very well in fluency skills; another may do very well in critical thinking skills. Further, educators are now discussing differences in whole learning styles, and at such institutions as Oakland Community College, programs are planned for students on the basis of their various total learning styles.<sup>1</sup>

In short, the more that is discovered about how individuals learn--in the cognitive and affective domain--the more educators become aware of the tremendous differences between total learning styles. As this type of knowledge increases, it is little wonder that educators on all levels--from the kindergarten level to the college and university level--have begun to despair of meeting educational needs without taking seriously into account what we are learning about the great differences in the way individuals learn. Thus, nearly all innovative educational programs do include attempts to accommodate individual differences in some way.

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Hill, Personalizing Educational Programs (Bloomfield Hills, Mich.: Oakland Community College, 1971). (Hereinafter referred to as Personalizing Educational Programs.)

2. Since individual response is an essential aspect of education in the area of literature, a modified open-classroom approach in a course in children's literature must be considered highly appropriate, since in an open situation, students are encouraged to respond to what they read and experience in individualistic ways.

For centuries educators have been aware that one way to facilitate learning is to attempt to get students to respond in an individualistic way to what they learn. In Rousseau's description of the education of Emile, the instructor is continually attempting to find ways to make the child respond to what he is learning.<sup>1</sup> Learning theory has reinforced what educators such as Rousseau sensed; that is, learning is strengthened if the learner can be encouraged to say in his own words and put in his own frame of reference whatever it is he is supposed to be learning.

If there is any part of the curriculum where this kind of "learning" is the most appropriate, it is, perhaps, literature, for if one who reads a poem or a story does not respond to it in any individual way, one would question the very purpose of reading it at all. The point of literature is, after all, to evoke an individual response. The participants in the Dartmouth Conference, as reported by Moffett and others, emphasized again and

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<sup>1</sup>Jean Jacques Rousseau, Emile (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1911).

again the importance of the individual response to literature.<sup>1</sup>

Hence, considering the fact that educational theorists have for many years, if not for centuries, been suggesting to teachers that they provide an opportunity for their students to respond to what they learn in order to strengthen the learning; and also considering the appropriateness--indeed, the necessity--of individual responses in literature, it would seem appropriate in a course on children's literature to provide opportunities for students to respond to what they read in an individualistic way. Insofar as a basic idea in the open-classroom approach is a focus on individualized response, the open approach can be considered appropriate to this kind of instruction.

3. Since it must be considered true that individual learning styles vary from individual to individual, and that different individuals learn best from various types of media (some learn best by listening, some learn best from reading, some learn best from discussion), educational programs that employ a multi-media approach will by their very nature tend to take into account the phenomenon of individual differences. Also, various elements of any course of study may be most effectively presented by means of various media.

Concomitant with an increasing awareness of individual differences and differences in whole learning styles is an increasing understanding of a variety of

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<sup>1</sup>James Moffett, A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-13 (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1968). Hereinafter referred to as Language Arts Curriculum.)

teaching styles. In fact, at Oakland Community College, for example, once an individual's learning style has been identified through a series of tests, then that learning style is matched with a certain teaching style. In addition, a variety of teaching devices are made available. Some students listen to tapes; some look at film strips; some follow programmed learning courses; some work in small groups; some work almost entirely alone.<sup>1</sup> The point is, if there are, actually, differences in learning styles, it is incumbent upon the instructor to find different approaches to accommodate these differing styles, or the purpose of defining the learning differences in the first place would be mitigated.

Beyond this, McLuhan has made us aware that youngsters today may learn in quite different ways as a group than did their elders.<sup>2</sup> Bombarded with mass media on all sides, students may be learning less well today in the traditional linear way; and gleaning meaning from the printed page sometimes seems to be a lost art. This has been proclaimed the "era of the medium" to the extent that the medium has become the message, and the method of presenting anything has become as significant as the content being presented. It seems important, then, that

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<sup>1</sup>Hill, Personalizing Educational Programs.

<sup>2</sup>Marshall McLuhan, The Medium is the Message (New York: Bantam Books, 1967).

in any course of instruction today, the multi-media approach be used to the fullest, since through a variety of media a wide variety of learning styles may be best accommodated. Further, using a variety of media in the learning situation will tend to create in the student a greater awareness of the importance of providing many different types of learning environments.

4. In attempting to evaluate any education program, it is of particular importance that the students themselves be included in the evaluation process. Further, in using students for evaluation, it is well to allow students open-ended means of evaluation, so that their comments, criticisms, and suggestions may be put in their own terms and according to their own individual styles.

A general principle of current educational thought is that students will find their education to be of greater value to them if they become involved in their educational programs. In other words, students who have a voice in formulating the curriculum, choosing their materials, and in electing the educational methodology to be employed may get more out of the course because they have been involved in it. A part of this involvement may come through self-evaluation. If students can have some responsibility in the evaluation procedures, this may also increase their sense of involvement in the course itself.

5. Since educational theorists seem to agree that students learn more effectively if they take an active part in the educational enterprise, a teacher-preparation course is likely to be more successful if attempts are made to actively

involve the students in class projects and other class activities.

Related to several of the above, this basic assumption suggests that encouraging students to take part in their own class projects will not only increase the students' sense of involvement, but will also accommodate differences in learning styles and interests. Students with different learning styles will choose projects that will allow them to exercise their learning strengths, and they will choose projects that will focus on topics of special interest.

6. Assuming that learning will be facilitated if opportunities are given to students to interact with each other in the classroom and to respond to each other's ideas, a class in children's literature that allows for this kind of student exchange will be a more effective one.

Implicit in this assumption are several theories already suggested. In student discussions, students are encouraged to put what they are learning in their own words and in terms of their own frames of reference. Thus, what they are learning will be reinforced not only by expressing the idea in their own way, but also by hearing it expressed by others in different ways. Also, discussions tend to increase a sense of student involvement.

### Overview

In Chapter II a review of the literature is presented which is pertinent to the areas of methods of teaching children's literature on the college level, uses of materials in this subject area, ways children respond to literature, methods of applying a modified open-classroom approach to teaching, and general concepts in the area of individualized instruction. These sources formed the basis for the philosophy and procedures which were undertaken in this study.

Chapter III will describe in detail Education 325c, called Children's Literature at Michigan State University. It was with one section of this subject that the educational strategies described in this paper were undertaken. The methodology of this study which involved these two strategies will be included. These two strategies are: First, the basis of the course was a set of instructional modules; and, second, the overall style of the class in which the modules were used might be described as similar, in some ways, to a modified open-classroom approach. The subjects of the study, the modules used, the role of the instructor, classroom activities, and the role of the students, plus evaluation techniques and materials, will be discussed in depth.

Considering the many facets, then, of this study, a rather broad and all-encompassing task of research was

required as well as a closer more in-depth investigation of the most relevant studies. Children's literature and methods of teaching it to prospective teachers has not been explored to any extent, but the broader aspects of this area are many and varied.

### Summary

If teachers in training are to learn about the wide variety of children's books available today and how these books may be used in the classroom, more effective means of teaching prospective teachers about children's literature need to be explored. The present study concerns an approach to teaching children's literature at the college level that focuses on the use of a set of instructional modules. The purpose of the study is to determine, then, the feasibility of using these modules as an instructional approach. Three questions may be raised concomitant to this study: (1) As a result of the instruction, will the students learn a satisfactory amount of content concerning children's literature? (2) Will the students finish the course with positive attitudes towards the modules? (3) Will the students finish the course with positive attitudes towards children's literature? Combined with the use of the instructional modules will be instructional techniques generally associated with the open classroom. The various instructional techniques used in the study are based on the following



assumptions: (1) that individual differences should be accommodated; (2) that students should respond in an individualistic way to what they read and experience; (3) that multi-media approaches are appropriate in a class intended to reach individual differences; (4) that students should be involved in evaluation procedures; (5) that student involvement is important in the learning situation itself; and (6) student interaction is important to the development of ideas.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction

A set of instructional modules was used as a basic approach in the class described in this study. However, the modules were used in the class in combination with techniques generally associated with the open-classroom concept. Therefore, it is necessary in this chapter to review the literature in the area of the open classroom. In order to satisfactorily cover the area, one must first examine some of the roots of the open-classroom school of thought, and, second, the publications of several of the theorists and practitioners in the field. This literature will be described in the first section of the chapter under the heading "The Open Classroom."

The second section, "Teaching Literature in the Open Classroom," presents a description of the research that has appeared regarding how the open-classroom techniques might be applied to the teaching of literature in the classroom.

Since the study described in this paper involved the application of the open-classroom approach to a

university classroom, it is also necessary in this chapter to describe the literature that has appeared in the area of instructional approaches used at the level of higher education. As anyone who has examined such listings as the Education Index and ERIC is well aware, the literature on various aspects of elementary and secondary education is voluminous; but the literature on educational approaches in college and university classes is sparse by comparison. However, some of the literature that has appeared in this field is described in the third section of this chapter under the heading "Theories and Models of Effective College Teaching."

Another area of the literature to be described in this chapter is a sub-area of the above; that is, the literature that deals with teacher-training programs, especially in regards to preparing future teachers to include children's trade books in their school programs. This research will be discussed under the heading "Preparing Future Teachers to Handle Children's Literature in the Classroom."

### The Open Classroom

Proponents of the open-classroom approach to teaching refer to the research of Piaget for the basic

philosophy. Brearley<sup>1</sup> and Richmond<sup>2</sup> are two current Piaget interpreters who have published guides to his research. Both of these writers stress the relevance of the Piaget approach to the experimental schools that are appearing today. Piaget emphasizes that the child builds each new learning experience upon former experiences and that teachers must present developmental situations which will cause the child to adapt new contexts to old experiences. There is structure here, as well as non-structure, as the teacher presents the situations and the child automatically organizes the new experience in terms of the old. The child, then, determines his own rate of growth. This approach precludes compartmentalizing and determining where the teacher thinks the child should be strictly on the age level, as many schools have been so prone to do.

The idea of the open classroom or the informal classroom or the free school is not necessarily a new one. Tolstoi, in the late eighteenth century, established a peasant school on his estate that incorporated many of the ideas and techniques that are used today.<sup>3</sup> Nor is

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<sup>1</sup>Molly Brearley and Elizabeth Hitchfield, A Guide to Reading Piaget (New York: Schocken Books, 1967).

<sup>2</sup>Peter Richmond, An Introduction to Piaget (Richmond, N.Y.: Basic Books, 1971).

<sup>3</sup>Leo Tolstoi, Tolstoi on Education (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1967).

the idea of the open classroom indigenous to America, as the British schools have gone much further with their free schools or infant schools.<sup>1</sup> Featherstone has described the current phenomenon of American educators rushing to emulate the British free schools.<sup>2</sup> It seems that because of the concrete example that these schools are providing, they have become a model for some American educators who are attempting innovative approaches to teaching.

The pressure in this country has mounted for a more human approach to schools, and this is reflected in an outpouring of writing on this need and the reasons for it. It has resulted in some vitriolic attacks that in spite of perhaps some unfair and irrational statements, have pointed out the urgent need for change. Silberman has accused the schools of mutilating a child's natural joy in learning and of being preoccupied with order and control.<sup>3</sup> Holt not only is a critic of the schools, but he does offer some prescriptions for the ills which he

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<sup>1</sup>Vincent Rogers, Teaching in the British Primary School (London: MacMillan Company, 1970). (Hereinafter referred to as British Primary School.)

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Featherstone, Schools Where Children Learn (New York: Liveright, 1971). (Hereinafter referred to as Schools Where Children Learn.)

<sup>3</sup>Charles Silberman, "How the Public Schools Kill Dreams and Mutilate Minds," Atlantic, June, 1970, pp. 83-95.

feels are plaguing them.<sup>1</sup> In regard to the nagging questions of freedom versus license, Holt says that compulsion is wrong, but so is the vacuum of free choice. He suggests that the teacher take a very active role, but that he must establish a good relationship with the students before he can make any insistence on learning. These are ideas that he expressed in his review of Dennison's book in which he stressed the need for teachers to interact with and provide continuity for the children.<sup>2</sup>

Others have taught in the traditional schools and found their current practices unpalatable. Herndon put the ideas of the open or informal classroom into practice and reported on the results in his popular account of an elementary classroom.<sup>3</sup> Later he moved to a junior high school, where he found the same lack of stimulation for learning among the students. Many of the practices which he tried there were unsuccessful, but his account of his trials are provocative.<sup>4</sup> Kozol achieved limited success

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<sup>1</sup>John Holt, The Underachieving School (New York: Pitman Publishing Co., 1969).

<sup>2</sup>George Dennison, The Lives of Children: The Story of the First Street School (New York: Random House, 1969).

<sup>3</sup>James Herndon, The Way It's Spoized to Be (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968).

<sup>4</sup>James Herndon, How to Survive in Your Native Land (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970). (Hereinafter referred to as Native Land.)

with similar techniques in the Boston schools until his dismissal for introducing the poetry of Langston Hughes.<sup>1</sup> These then are some of the critics who have described their negative feelings about the current school situations and have, in some cases, attempted to right these wrongs in the classroom.

Herbert Kohl, one critic of the schools, has become almost synonymous with the open classroom. He first encountered the negative aspects of education when he taught in an elementary school. He recounted his experiences and offered his experiences as a model for other teachers who wished to attempt a more open approach to classroom learning. He particularly stressed the need for choices and for the children to discover their own "human preferences."<sup>2</sup> He further refined his philosophy of teaching and presented this in his book on the open-classroom approach.<sup>3</sup> He particularly emphasized in this general outline of open-classroom philosophy that the ideas were adaptable to a variety of situations. He explained that no one need adopt all of the ideas. Instead, he

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<sup>1</sup>Jonathan Kozol, Death at an Early Age (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967).

<sup>2</sup>Herbert Kohl, 36 Children (New York: American Library, 1967).

<sup>3</sup>Herbert Kohl, The Open Classroom (New York: New York Review Book, 1969). (Hereinafter referred to as Open Classroom.)

suggested that each teacher must incorporate the techniques which were most relevant and usable to his own situation.

The new ASCD Yearbook reflects this growing concern for a more open approach to teaching on all levels of education.<sup>1</sup> In this volume, Squires discussed the pressures which have caused educators to examine the nature of freedom in the schools. As is stated in this volume, freedom is not possible without choice, and the schools must be prepared to offer alternatives in learning.

Because of the pressures that Squires has discussed, there had been a rush to adopt the so-called open classroom. As Barth has stated, there have, in some instances, been changes which have really represented no basic change at all. He maintains that many schools have altered appearances without really understanding the rationale of the open classroom.<sup>2</sup> As so often happens in education, there is a compulsion to innovate without really comprehending the basic assumptions about knowledge and learning.

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<sup>1</sup>Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, A New Look at Progressive Education (Washington, D.C.: ASCD, 1972).

<sup>2</sup>Roland Barth, "So You Want to Change to an Open Classroom," Phi Delta Kappan (October, 1971), 97-99.



Teaching Literature in the  
Open Classroom

The Dartmouth Seminar, which was held in 1967, put forth many of the basic ideas which appear in the open-classroom theory, namely the centrality of the pupil's exploring, the need for more listening and speaking experiences, the presentation of different systems from which to choose, and the elimination of stultifying examination patterns.<sup>1</sup> The teacher's role in all of this was explored extensively by the Conference participants. Pointed differences emerged between the American and British view of this role--the American teacher tends to be more impersonal and less involved except in the subject matter.<sup>2</sup> Moffet has published a detailed account of how language experiences can be encouraged in the informal approach.<sup>3</sup> Dixon, too, as an outgrowth of the Dartmouth Seminar, has written of new techniques in the area of language arts. As he has stated, the Dartmouth Seminar replaced the dais with a round table, and he maintains this is true from the primary grades to the university level.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Albert Marckwardt, "The Dartmouth Seminar," NAASSP Bulletin (April, 1967), 101-06.

<sup>2</sup>C. Glyn Lewis, "Postscript to Dartmouth--Or Poles Apart," College English (March, 1968), 426-34.

<sup>3</sup>Moffett, Language Arts Curriculum.

<sup>4</sup>John Dixon, Growth Through English (London: National Association for the Teaching of English, 1967).

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In the specific area of reading, the open approach has been explored and supported. Featherstone has described his observations of reading in the British primary schools.<sup>1</sup> The children are introduced to reading through rich exposure to books in the classroom long before they have mastered the mechanics of reading. Rogers, too, describes the book corners in the infant school where a wide range of fiction and nonfiction on all reading levels are displayed.<sup>2</sup> Herndon has described his vision of a reading class this way: "A good reading class is when kids come in with their books, sit down and read them and don't stop until the bell rings."<sup>3</sup> Williams has described reading in an informal classroom where a child's individuality and uniqueness are stressed. She states that the teacher's responsibility is two-fold: (1) basic attitudes are encouraged to be positive; and, (2), the skills are presented. The environment, according to Williams, is rich with books of all kinds, and the teacher's choice of stories and the value she places on them all are basic to the child's experiences with the written word.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Featherstone, Schools Where Children Learn.

<sup>2</sup>Rogers, British Primary School.

<sup>3</sup>Herndon, Native Land.

<sup>4</sup>Rosemary Williams, Reading in the Informal Classroom (Newton, Mass.: Education Development Center, n.d.).

The teaching of literature continues to be a rather structured matter in many classrooms in spite of the Dartmouth Seminar, and the emphasis on more openness in general. In fact, Judy has stated there is almost no student-centered teaching going on in this area at all.<sup>1</sup> Shugrue, too, has voiced his criticism of the teaching of literature, and has chastised teachers for wanting to present information rather than gaining personal responses to the reading.<sup>2</sup>

#### Theories and Models of Effective College Teaching

The Eight-Year Study demonstrated quite effectively that there is no single approach to learning.<sup>3</sup> Through this extensive study, it became apparent that high school students need not be forced to learn specific subjects to become effective college learners. Conversely, there is probably no single approach to effective teaching on any level including the college level. Many studies have been done, however, to focus on general aspects of effective college teaching. Following are a few of these studies.

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen Judy, The Michigan English Teacher, Michigan Council of Teachers of English (September-October, 1970), 6-7.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Shugrue, ed., English in a Decade of Change (New York: Pegasus, 1968).

<sup>3</sup>Wilford Aiken, The Story of the Eight-Year Study (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1942).

Musella and Rusch have done a study which had a two-fold purpose: (1) teacher behaviors which promoted thinking were identified, and (2) qualities of teachers of greatest importance were identified. In the thinking area one-third of the students who responded said interest and enthusiasm best promoted thinking, one-third said concerned attitude toward students, and one-quarter said knowledge of subject. Regarding teacher qualities three of the most specified qualities were: (1) encouragement of thinking, (2) enthusiastic attitude, (3) expert knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

Finn has stated that in an overall perusal of empirical studies concerning effective college teaching, he found these qualities occurring most often: (1) encourages independent thinking, (2) conveys enthusiasm, (3) has good knowledge of subject. The least emphasis was put upon scholarly activities, research, and campus activities.<sup>2</sup>

Quick and Wolfe conducted a study at the University of Oregon among 483 students in a search for most highly ranked qualities of college teachers. The three

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<sup>1</sup>D. Musella and R. Rusch, "Student Opinion on College Teaching," Improving College and University Teaching, 1968, pp. 137-40.

<sup>2</sup>Stanley Finn, ed., Characteristics of the Effective College Teacher (Hempstead, N.Y.: Hofstra University, 1969).

highest ranked characteristics were: (1) encourages independent thinking, (2) has a well-organized course, and (3) has a deep and sustained enthusiasm.<sup>1</sup>

Hildebrand has conducted a similar study and has noted that a disproportionate number of the highest ranked teachers taught seminar courses rather than lecture courses.<sup>2</sup>

These, then, are some of the characteristics of college teachers that are deemed to be most desirable by their students. The enthusiasm, concern, and encouragement of independent thinking ranks high on all studies--higher than knowledge or information. In addition to the concern for the personal characteristics of effective college teachers there is also concern for new approaches and methods on teaching on the college level. Various models of these experimental techniques are presented here.

Maslow has described a program at San Joaquin Delta College where the emphasis is on student centeredness. It is required there that the teachers know and

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<sup>1</sup>F. A. Quick and A. D. Wolfe, "The Ideal Professor," Improving College and University Teaching, 1965, pp. 133-34.

<sup>2</sup>Milton Hildebrand, "Effective University Teaching and Its Evaluation" (unpublished paper, University of California at Berkeley, 1970).

communicate with each individual student in his class and that he put student interests and needs first.<sup>1</sup>

McKeachie has addressed himself to the need for more research to discern trends in student learning and to relate student responses to different teaching methods. The trends that have been established, according to McKeachie, seem to infer that small classes are more effective than large, discussions are preferred over lectures, and student-centered discussions are preferred over instructor-centered ones. The author concludes that teachers should be encouraged to develop a repertoire of skills to allow students enough options to maximize their motivation and learning.<sup>2</sup>

Combs has suggested some guidelines for humanizing college teaching. Some which are particularly relevant to this discussion of openness are: (1) people learn when they are able to make choices from alternatives, (2) it is more appropriate to learn a few concepts rather than many facts, and (3) learners need concerned and caring teachers.<sup>3</sup> Blume has discussed the impact of

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<sup>1</sup>Richard Maslow, "A Positive Stand on Student-Centeredness in Teaching; A Matter of Definition" (unpublished paper, 1970).

<sup>2</sup>Wilbert McKeachie, Research on College Teaching: A Review, Report No. R-6, ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, 1970.

<sup>3</sup>Arthur Combs, The Professional Education of Teachers (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1965).

Combs' ideas and their implementation at the University of Florida where traditional classes have been largely replaced with individual study and small discussion groups.<sup>1</sup>

The need for the development of models in teacher education has been stressed by several researchers. Yee has said in his discussion of models in the seventies: "Objectives should be clear and definite enough to allow development of specific procedures to attain them and their specification is the first major step toward intelligent planning of an education strategy."<sup>2</sup>

Spodek has spoken of the need for teacher preparation to take into account different learning patterns of the clients. He states that individual differences cannot and should not be ignored. These factors are vital, as he sees it, in constructing models for a teacher education program in early childhood education.<sup>3</sup>

Mills has issued a precautionary note to potential model builders not to rebuild institutions. She contends

<sup>1</sup>Robert Blume, "Humanizing Teacher Education," Phi Delta Kappan (March, 1971), 411-15. (Hereinafter referred to as "Humanizing Teacher Education.")

<sup>2</sup>Albert Yee, "A Model for the Development of Teacher Education Relevant to the 70s," The Journal of Teacher Education (Spring, 1971), 10-14.

<sup>3</sup>Bernard Spodek, "Constructing a Model for a Teacher Education Program in Early Childhood Education," Contemporary Education (January, 1969), 145-49.



that the only way to construct successful models is to devise those that will concentrate on making changes in people. She contends that "teacher-persons" must be trained who can cope effectively with the problems they will face in their own teaching.<sup>1</sup>

Townsend has presented a model for the training of teachers in the open-classroom method. This model was constructed at Amhurst in 1969 with a group of practicing teachers. The first event in this workshop involved the arrangement of the room itself:

Rows of desks facing a raised dais or the teacher's desk are appropriate to a classroom in which the teacher is considered the source of knowledge about a subject, but as the subject receded the desks had to be moved into a circle and the teacher, now a facilitator or catalyst or resource person had to make his place in the circle.<sup>2</sup>

Townsend goes on to say that the training involved the class becoming an ideal class themselves. They were, in fact, constructing their model for their own classrooms.

Johnson and Seagull have emphasized the relationship of teacher behavior in the college classroom to the future behavior of the student. That is, the example is perhaps as important as the content of the course itself.

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<sup>1</sup>Patricia Mills, "Which Way Is Up? Some Cautionary Notes to Model Builders in Teacher Education," The Journal of Teacher Education (Winter, 1970), 494-97.

<sup>2</sup>R. C. Townsend, "Training Teachers for an Open Classroom," College English (April, 1970), 711.

They state that since teachers tend to teach in the form in which they were taught, a dichotomy between actions and words is perpetuated.<sup>1</sup> Blume has stressed this point in his study also:

Teachers teach the way they have been taught--not the way they have been taught to teach. If we want them to be warm, friendly people who relate positively and openly with people then we must treat them that way in our college programs.<sup>2</sup>

Cianciolo, too, has stated that the professor's style of teaching, his choice of materials, and his attitude about the use of literature and the relationships between literary study ultimately influence the kind of literature program implemented by the elementary school teacher.<sup>3</sup>

Cronbach, in his discussion of models, has described the model or identifying figure as one who seems to know what to do. The person who identifies with this figure seems to say, "If I do as he does, I will be more likely to attain my goals."<sup>4</sup> The model is a leader who

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<sup>1</sup>John Johnson and Arthur Seagull, "Form and Function in the Affective Training of Teachers," Phi Delta Kappan (November, 1968), 166-70.

<sup>2</sup>Blume, Humanizing Teacher Education, p. 412.

<sup>3</sup>Patricia Cianciolo, "The Example is Vitally Important," English Education (Winter, 1971), 75-83. (Hereinafter referred to as "The Example is Vitally Important.")

<sup>4</sup>Lee Cronbach, Educational Psychology (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962), p. 425.

deliberately or inadvertently demonstrates to the learner how he might behave.

The model, then, is one who is apt to be emulated by those who come into contact with him. Potential teachers who view their teachers in education courses are assimilating techniques of teaching which they will probably implement in their own classroom situations. It seems to be imperative then to present the very best model of teaching to prospective teachers.

Preparing Future Teachers to Handle Children's  
Literature in the Classroom

As Huck and Kuhn have discussed in their comprehensive coverage of children's literature, the rate of growth in published juvenile books has increased tremendously over the past years. There are many more books available for children which are of excellent quality, and there are many more mediocre titles too. The process of selection requires a great fund of skill, training, and perception. Curriculum changes have been a factor in this explosion of materials--the trend toward individualized reading has called for a great increase in trade books in elementary schools.<sup>1</sup>

Teachers who are preparing to teach in the elementary and middle school grades are in need of instruction in this very basic and important area of their training.

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<sup>1</sup>Huck and Kuhn, Children's Literature.

Odland has reported that the Commission on the English Curriculum of the National Council of Teachers of English recommends a course in children's literature. The recommendation was made in its report on the training of elementary school teachers. This organization also stated that more time should be spent on literature in the elementary school.<sup>1</sup>

Huus has said in her discussion of developing taste in literature that the teacher is a major factor in this development. That is, children tend to prefer material also preferred by the teachers.<sup>2</sup> Paige, too, put the responsibility for stimulating interest in literature on the teacher:

In order to achieve a measure of success, however, it is necessary for the teacher to be familiar with the variety and scope of children's literature. . . . One must feel and taste of books before selecting those which have greatest appeal and whose total effect incorporates literary and aesthetic values.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Norine Odland, Teaching Literature in the Elementary School (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1969).

<sup>2</sup>Helen Huus, Development of Taste in Literature in the Elementary Grades (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1963), pp. 8-26.

<sup>3</sup>M. L. Paige, "Building on Experiences in Literature," Young Children (December, 1969), 88.

Groff has stated the same point this way: "The teacher of literature must show his pupil the way to good books."<sup>1</sup>

The elementary teacher, then, will be confronted in her teaching with a plethora of children's books from which to choose and a variety of children's needs and interests. It is incumbent upon the teacher-training institution to provide the background for coping with this very large responsibility in the education of children.

Perhaps the most comprehensive survey of how various colleges and universities are presenting Children's Literature as a course was made by Landau in 1967. A survey was made of 573 teachers of Children's Literature in colleges all over the country. The study was a checklist of methods and materials which might prevail in a Children's Literature course. Some of the results were:

1. Most teachers used a basic text.
2. More than one-half the respondents gave examinations.
3. More than one-half required the reading of from 21-60 childrens' books.
4. More than one-half required individual reports.

Teachers who participated in this study recommended that accessibility of children's books be increased as the

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<sup>1</sup>Patrick Groff, "Non Structured Approach to Children's Literature," Elementary School Journal (March, 1970), 315.

scarcity of materials seemed to be a problem in some colleges.<sup>1</sup>

The American Library Association also surveyed teachers of Children's Literature courses in 1967 and their results were quite similar to those of Landau. Respondents stressed the need for the students to actually handle and read children's books as the best way to gain knowledge about the area. Most of these teachers, too, used a basic text and supplemented this with required reading of children's books.<sup>2</sup>

There is virtually no research available that goes beyond the scope of these studies. There is a dearth of information about the classroom approaches that the teacher of Children's Literature might use. Dr. Patricia Cianciolo has approached this phase of the topic and her statements appear to be the only published material that deals with classroom techniques in the teaching of Children's Literature. In this research, she has issued a set of suggested guidelines for the teaching of this course and has stressed the importance of using good teaching techniques as a model for her students.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Elliot Landau, Teaching Children's Literature in Colleges and Universities (Champaign, Ill.: National Council for Teachers of English, 1968).

<sup>2</sup>E. H. Gross, "Teaching of Children's Literature," Wilson Library Bulletin (October, 1967), 199-205.

<sup>3</sup>Cianciolo, "The Example is Vitally Important."

The term "children's literature" infers the use of trade books, and trade books are the center of instruction in this research. However, this study has stressed the need for and use of multi-media approaches in presenting literature to children. Camp has stressed the fact that the print culture is rapidly being replaced by media culture and that audio-visual media are a good support of literature for children.<sup>1</sup> Schwartz stated that the use of film and other media can be the source of introducing children to literature.<sup>2</sup> Foster, too, has stressed the need to incorporate all media into the teaching of literature.<sup>3</sup>

A teacher of Children's Literature who was a respondent to a questionnaire issued by the American Library Association summed up very succinctly what teaching Children's Literature meant to her:

Children's Literature cannot really be taught. It is a process of instilling a knowledge of basic values and at the same time creating an enthusiasm that will endure through the years, keeping students reading, seeking the best instead of the mediocre.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Susan Camp, "AV Media Support Children's Literature," Instructor (November, 1969), 64-66.

<sup>2</sup>Sheila Schwartz, "Introducing Literature Through Film," Elementary English (March, 1971), 304-15.

<sup>3</sup>John Foster, "Audio-Visual Materials for Teaching Children's Literature," Wilson Library Bulletin (October, 1968), 154-59.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

### Summary

The teaching techniques which were used in this study were that of an open classroom approach. The literature that has been explored has emphasized that this approach is flexible and adaptable to individual teaching styles. The present researcher adapted the techniques which seemed to be most feasible for this study and combined them with the basis of the course-- instructional modules.

It was hoped by the researcher that a model of teaching behavior would evolve which would be accepted in a very positive way by the students. The literature reiterates that college students react positively to teachers who show concern for their students, who are enthusiastic, and who have knowledge of their subject matter. The literature also demonstrates that students tend to teach the way they have been taught.

Researchers have shown the need for capable teachers in elementary schools who are well-trained in the content of children's literature. There has been little written concerning the philosophy and techniques of teaching Children's Literature courses on the college level. The studies that have been done are involved with course content and materials. There is an evident need, then, for more philosophical studies in this area as well as more descriptive studies of models for the teaching



of children's literature. The present study has attempted to present this kind of research.

## CHAPTER III

### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

#### Introduction

The educational strategies described in this paper were undertaken from March 21 to June 10, 1971, when this researcher taught Children's Literature (Ed 325c) to undergraduates at Michigan State University. It is set up on the basis of the following objectives:

To provide students with:

- a familiarity with the literature that is available for children
- a set of criteria for evaluating the broad categories of literature for children
- a set of skills for using children's literature in the total elementary school program
- some methods for guiding children in their study of literature
- a wider knowledge of and a more skillful means of appraising book illustrations
- a general overview of significant contemporary authors and illustrators of children's books
- a sense of appreciation, if not love, of the best in children's books<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cianciolo, "The Example is Vitally Important," pp. 75-83.

Two basic strategies were used in order to accomplish the objectives cited above. First, to use a set of instructional modules from which the students would select and share learning experiences pertaining to some aspect about literature for children. The modules were developed originally by Dr. Patricia Cianciolo for Phase II of the Behavioral Science Teacher Education Program with Literature for Children as a "Scholarly Mode of Knowledge."<sup>1</sup> From that date to the time of this study, the modules were edited, and numerous other modules were added by several children's literature specialists at Michigan State University.

Second, the overall instructional style of the class was a "modified" open-classroom approach. That is, class sessions were informal, student participation and interaction were encouraged, activities and projects were stressed, the teacher role was that of a resource person, and individual learning styles were, as much as possible, accommodated.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Patricia J. Cianciolo, "Literature for Children," Behavioral Science Elementary Teacher Education Program, Vol. II, Project No. 89025, Contract No. OEC-O-089025-3314 (010), Office of Education, Bureau of Research (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1968), pp. 84-135.

<sup>2</sup>Kohl, Open Classroom.

### Purpose

The purpose of the study was to determine the feasibility of using instructional modules in an actual classroom situation, particularly when that classroom is based upon the open-classroom instructional technique. Thus, while "learning by objective" and the instructional modules techniques are approaches sometimes criticized because they seem to suggest overly structured and rigid classroom situations, this study was intended to demonstrate that learning-by-objective techniques, when applied to teaching children's literature, can permit variations in response and can be combined with open-classroom approaches. And if these techniques could be demonstrated to be successful, they might serve as a model for use in other Children's Literature classes, both at Michigan State and generally in other institutions of higher education offering courses in the study of Children's Literature.

### Subjects

Thirty-three juniors and seniors who were majoring in Elementary Education and were selected through the standard university enrollment procedures served as subjects of this study. These subjects represented a cross-section of people who were enrolled in Children's Literature (Ed 325c) at Michigan State University, spring quarter, 1971. These students had no previous background

in the subject of Children's Literature other than their own personal childhood reading and their general experience, perhaps as parents or as older siblings who had read to younger brothers and sisters. None of the students had any formal teaching experience, although some had completed student teaching. Thirty-one women and two men participated in the study; that is, they were enrolled in the one section of ED 325c Children's Literature, which was used to determine the feasibility of the modular approach in an open-classroom discussion.

### Class Procedures

#### Modules

Each student was asked to complete during the ten-week term at least one instructional module within the following ten areas of children's literature:

1. Realistic Fiction
2. Picture Books
3. Historical Fiction
4. Biography
5. Informational Books
6. Folklore
7. Fantasy
8. Poetry
9. Motivational and Interpretative Activities
10. History of Children's Literature

Each individual module included the following five elements:

1. Objective
2. Experience
3. Materials
4. Level
5. Evaluation

1. Objective: Each module contains a statement of the purpose of the activity to be undertaken by the student. This statement of purpose is the objective of the module. The objectives are always stated with specific outcomes in mind, so that when the student has completed the module, he and his instructor can readily determine through an evaluation process whether or not the objective was attained.

2. Experience: The experience element relates to the actual activity that the student is directed to perform. In most cases the modules suggest several activities that will help the student attain the objective. Possible experiences might suggest working with groups of children, the use of audio-visual materials, and/or perusal of children's books. The most important element of the module is the objective--in other words, at the completion of the module, one must ask if the student attained the understanding or information contained within the objective?

3. Materials: The materials are suggested within the module in a rather general way--that is, realistic fiction might be suggested as a kind of material, but the student would be free to select the appropriate titles for himself. Sometimes specific titles are given as especially good and appropriate for a specific objective, but normally choices are left up to the student. Extensive bibliographies containing titles of books exemplifying each type of literature and literary themes are also available to the student, thus providing a wealth of suggestions for the student to consider when completing his modules. [Certain audio-visual materials are included to be used to attain objectives, and these materials might include tape-recordings, records, films, filmstrips, and other similar materials. In addition, professional publications (articles, books, bibliographies, etc.) on many aspects of children's literature are suggested to the students. All of these materials were readily available to the students in the Instructional Resource Center.]

4. Level: The level element suggests the approximate grade levels children would be, were they interested in reading a particular literary selection or engaging in a designated activity that involved the use of literature.

5. Evaluation: In the evaluation element of the instructional module the specific task to be accomplished by the student is defined. That is, the student is told the details of the task he is to perform to obtain the objective of the module. Therefore, the objective and the evaluation elements represent essentially the same statements. The specificity of the evaluation element allows both the student and the evaluator to ascertain quickly and easily whether or not the objective of the module has been reached.

The following are samples of instructional modules:

- OBJECTIVE:** To become more familiar with film versions of picture books. To recognize the many uses that the teacher can make of the films. To appraise the film versions of picture books according to specific criteria.
- EXPERIENCE:** View film interpretations of picture books. Appraise the extent that each film version is harmonious with the content, style, and mood of the book itself. What would be advantages, disadvantages of using this film with children before or after they read the book upon which it is based. Some films available: "Time of Wonder," "Little Blue and Little Yellow," "The Snowy Day," "This is New York," "The Doughnuts," "Alexander and the Car," "A Bell for Ursli," etc.
- MATERIALS:** Films of children's literature available in Instructional Media Center at Michigan State University.
- LEVEL:** All grades
- EVALUATION:** Films will be viewed and appraised according to the following criteria: (1) version is harmonious with the content, style, mood of the book; (2) version is interesting, well



presented, tastefully used and skillfully produced; (3) version will fix the child's impressions of the story and the art work included in the book; (4) version will idealize beauty and appreciation of art; (5) version will take the reader beyond that offered in the book; (6) version will motivate child to read the book.

- OBJECTIVE:** To develop criteria for evaluating fantasy (personification of inanimate objects and animals) as a type of literature for children.
- EXPERIENCE:** Read at least one fantasy in which the imaginary element is due to the personification of inanimate objects and animals. Evaluate the selection in terms of how well it exemplifies each of the characteristics of modern fantasy as a type of literature for children.
- MATERIALS:** Any fantasy of this type.
- LEVEL:** All grades.
- EVALUATION:** Aspects considered will include internal consistency exists within imaginary framework. Impossible seems plausible. Particular attention given to details of setting. Magic is simple, completely matter of fact.

The instructional modules provided a set of specific objectives to be accomplished by the students enrolled in the course. They were designed to fulfill several purposes. First, they were to provide for the student a set of objectives stated in behavioral terms. In other words, given the objectives at the beginning of the term, the students knew at the outset specifically what the expected outcomes of the course included--the skills they were expected to acquire, the bodies of

knowledge that were to be considered, and the basic conceptual understandings they were to acquire.

Second, the modules were to provide for a diversity of abilities and interests within a heterogeneous university group. Given a set of definitely stated objectives, the students were then provided with a structure whereby each individual could accomplish the stated objectives in terms of his interests and abilities and talents.

Third, the modules contained activities designed to elicit both cognitive and affective responses. It must be pointed out, however, that though the affective and cognitive domains have been separated by the taxonomists, in the study of literature these two domains are not easily kept discrete. Nor should they be. Thus, the instructional modules used in this study have been designed to elicit both affective and cognitive responses, but not necessarily in discrete ways.

Fourth, the modules have been constructed so that they will call forth from the student both single responses and multiple responses. In other words, the modules are intended to encourage both convergent thinking, and divergent thinking. In the case of the former, factual answers are required. In the latter, the students are in some cases expected to give a number of possible answers. Therefore, in this sense, the students

are expected to give fairly specific responses, but also more creative and open responses.

### Open Classroom

Parallel to the module approach to instruction was the use of certain aspects of the open classroom. That is, the class was to demonstrate a combination of instructional modules and the open-classroom technique. The open-classroom approach is based upon the following general assumptions:

1. The instructor acts as a facilitator of classroom activities, rather than a purveyor of information.
2. The emphasis is on interaction among the students themselves, so that they learn from each other rather than primarily from lecture presentations.
3. Individualized contributions are encouraged in all activities.
4. The approaches are basically inductive in nature; that is, students arrive at concepts and understandings through their own activities and contributions.
5. Class sessions involve mainly small-group activities.
6. Students are given an option of activities as to how objectives may be reached.

7. Both small groups and individuals learn from multi-media presentations.
8. The instructor encourages student feedback throughout the course in order to keep abreast of the students' perceptions of class and individual progress.
9. Students are involved in evaluation processes.
10. A variety of learning styles among the students is acknowledged, encouraged, and accommodated.

#### Instructor

The instructor of the course was the present researcher who had previously taught Children's Literature but had not previously employed the procedures described in this study. But in this study the researcher, as the instructor, viewed her role in the class as a facilitator of student learning and served as a discussion leader with the class as a whole and in small groups. An attempt was made to develop an instructional model for prospective teachers to emulate in their dealings with their own students. In essence, the researcher tried to demonstrate the teaching of Children's Literature to a class of prospective teachers who would, in turn, adopt these methods in their own teaching experience. In short, example was to be stressed over precept.

### Classroom Activities

Classroom activities were conducted in an open and free way with the encouragement of individual response and pursuits. An attempt was made to set the class tone in the initial class meeting with a demonstration of the Hilda Taba method of discussion, in which an open, yet focused, question drew forth a variety of responses with the leader taking a completely non-judgmental role.<sup>1</sup>

The question asked was: "What comes to your mind when you think of children's literature?" All of the responses were listed on the board, and they covered a wide spectrum of attitudes, biases, and information. Use of this particular strategy is especially helpful in gaining broad class participation in a discussion. The leader accepts all responses and the students feel free to contribute to a discussion which lacks the restraint of "right and wrong" answers. Group discussions generally followed this pattern throughout the term. That is, the discussions were designed to allow the free flow of ideas among the students with common learnings occurring through an inductive method.

General class discussions always were based on children's books, with both the instructor and the students contributing specific examples. That is, when a

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<sup>1</sup>Hilda Taba, Teaching Strategies for Developing Children's Thinking: Teacher's Manual (Miami: Institute for Staff Development, 1970).

general area of literature such as realistic fiction was discussed, books which represented examples of this area were read and shared by the class members. Films illustrating methods of guiding children's reading or children's books on film were used to enhance group activity in the area of picture books, informational books, folklore, and poetry. Other common learning experiences occurred with outside speakers, including a group of high school students who demonstrated their project of telling folktales to elementary school children. The instructor demonstrated methods of working with children and books by using the class itself in role-playing situations.

Small group activities were used extensively, as this technique is the essence of an open approach to teaching.<sup>1</sup> Students gathered in small groups to share their reading with each other. They also met in pairs to interview each other and prepare biographies written in the style of a children's biography. Small groups were also formed to formulate plans for motivational and interpretative activity modules as a cooperative effort. These modules were then presented to the group as a whole and called forth a maximum effort in terms of group planning and creativity.

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<sup>1</sup>Kohl, Open Classroom.

### Student Responsibilities

Each student was asked to keep a journal of his responses to each piece of reading done. He was asked to respond in a personal way, much as he might request from his own students later on. Each person was also asked to record in the journal his response to the class activities in which he had participated. In other words, during the quarter that they studied children's literature, the students kept a running written account of their own unique contributions to the class in terms of materials, presentations, and interactions.

In addition to the journals, each student completed ten modules. These were the suggestions for independent study; as many as fifty options within a given area of study were offered. The student selected the option that interested him and he completed the objective as directed.

### Evaluation of Students

Each module was evaluated by the researcher in terms of the quality and depth of response. A scale of one to five was used. An objective that was fulfilled making maximum use of materials and a complete evaluation technique would have rated a superior score. Those students who fulfilled the minimum expectations of the module would have received approximately a three. Any student who failed to fulfill the objective in any way received

a lower score. The total number of scores were tallied at the end of the course and this portion of the grade was determined.

The students did not receive a number or letter grade on the journal itself. Rather extensive written comments which indicated areas in which he might do more thinking, reading, or responding were written on each student's journal by the researcher. The researcher entered in her own records some written comments about each journal.

Although grades were not given on the journal, each time the researcher read the journals, she recorded in her own files her overall judgment of the student's work. Her judgments were recorded in terms of superior, average, or below average. The students knew they were being evaluated in this way and realized that the written comments reflected what the instructor's overall judgment would be. The students knew that the journals were to be evaluated in terms of their open and personal responses to all aspects of the class--procedures, the instructor, classmates, reading, and discussions.

The joint scores achieved on the journals and on the modules were tallied to determine an approximate grade. Each of the two elements (modules and journals) were equal factors in the evaluation. Class participation was another factor. That is, a student gained a higher



grade if he had been an active and productive class member.

The students took an active part in this evaluation system. They were aware throughout the term that they would be responsible for suggesting, on the basis of their modules, journals, and contributions to class, their final grade. This was to be a number evaluation supported by a written rationale. The journals were of great importance in preparing this rationale as it provided the students with a review of their activities throughout the term.

### Materials

All forms of media were used to facilitate the learning of children's literature and realization of the major objectives of the course. The modules employed the use of slides, tapes, filmstrips, records, video tapes, magazine articles, and a great variety of children's books. Frequently, these materials were also used by the entire group through the common learning experiences they had during discussions and demonstrations. Students were encouraged and did use many kinds of materials during small and large group efforts. These materials included many children's books as well as great numbers of visual aids created by the students when they prepared the motivational and activities that were designed for use with children in elementary and junior high school

classrooms. The researcher often shared the very latest in materials relating to children's literature which were not always readily available to the students using the local school and public libraries and Michigan State University Resource Center.

### Evaluation Procedures

The basic purpose of this study was to explore some means of using a set of instructional modules in an actual university classroom situation when teaching Children's Literature. Essentially descriptive in nature, the study was to focus more on a presentation of the various techniques used with the teacher education students studying children's literature than on a formal, statistical evaluation of hypothesized results. However, certain evaluation procedures of an informal nature were carried out in order to determine in a general way how successful the teaching techniques seemed to be. These procedures may be summarized as follows:

First, an attempt would be made to ascertain the extent to which the students had achieved a certain level of information about children's literature as a result of the instructional techniques that were implemented by the researcher.

Second, an attempt would be made to ascertain the students' attitudes toward the instructional modules themselves as a means to study children's literature.

Third, an attempt would be made to ascertain the students' general attitude toward children's literature--the assumption being that if the students seemed to carry away from the course positive attitudes toward children's literature, then one might postulate that the instructional methodology had been somewhat successful.

These three means of evaluation will be discussed in more detail below.

#### The Children's Literature Multiple Choice Test

One might argue that it may be more important for students to carry away from a course of instruction positive attitudes about the subject matter covered than a given portion of knowledge about the subject itself. Specific information soon goes out of date and is quickly forgotten by the learner while positive attitudes may tend to be more enduring and will tend to make the learner want to continue to learn. Others would probably claim that students should complete a course of instruction with both positive attitudes toward the subject matter and a certain amount of specific knowledge. In this study, while the greater emphasis was placed on encouraging positive attitudes toward children's literature, it was also considered to be important and desirable that the students complete the course with information about children's books. For this reason a Children's Literature

Multiple Choice Test was given to the students at the end of the term in order to get some indication of whether or not the students had acquired some specific knowledge during the course of their study of children's literature.

The Children's Literature Multiple Choice Test was an objective, teacher made test given previously in Education 325c at Michigan State University. The test contained sixty-five items. The items required, in the main, factual recall. The test was administered to the students at the end of the term in order to determine if the average score attained by the group would be approximately that which an instructor might expect from a group that had received more traditional instructional techniques.

The students were not told that they would be given the test, either at the beginning of the term nor on the day preceding the administration of the test. When they were given the test, they were told that this was the usual "Education 325c" test, but that since no attempt by the researcher was made during the term to focus on specific books or content reflected in the instrument, the grades earned on the test would in no way affect their grades. As a matter of fact, the students were told that the researcher would not even look at the test until she had submitted the final grades to the Dean's office. In addition, the researcher did not examine the

test at any time during the term. Nor had she ever used this particular test in any class she had instructed previously. Thus, there was no possibility that the researcher was directly or indirectly "teaching to the test."

The question was, "Do students who are taught children's literature by means of instructional modules in an open classroom situation seem to do about as well on a test that was used in Ed 325c when more traditional teaching methods were used?"

After the final grades had been submitted, the researcher scored the tests and then calculated individual test grades on a percentage basis. A student who made no errors on the sixty-five item instrument would receive a score of 100 per cent; a student who made ten errors would receive a score of 85 per cent; and so forth. After calculating the individual percentage scores, mean and median scores were derived. No letter grades were determined. Nor was there any attempt to arrange the scores according to a "normal" curve.

#### Attitudes Instruments

The major concern of the researcher in terms of the evaluation process focused upon the attitudes that the students carried away from the class: their attitudes toward both the instructional modules and children's literature in general. In order to determine these

student attitudes, three instruments were devised: (1) the Module Rating Form, (2) the Student Attitude Instrument, and (3) the Journal Evaluation Instrument. These will be discussed below.

1. The Module Rating Form consisted of four items designed to elicit from the students their attitudes toward the modules. Since the course was designed to explore the feasibility of using a set of instructional modules in a Children's Literature class, the students' attitudes as reflected in this instrument should be considered quite crucial. The Module Rating Form contained the following items:

1. The modules were interesting to do.
2. Their objectives were clear.
3. They motivated me to read and evaluate children's books.
4. I recommend that they be retained as a part of this course.

The students were asked to respond to these items on the basis of a Likert-like scale; that is, they were asked to indicate that they strongly agreed (SA), agreed (A), neither agreed nor disagreed (N), disagreed (D), or strongly disagreed (SD). The instrument was administered at the end of the term. Following is the instrument as it was given to the students.

Please rate the following four statements on the basis of the following scale:

SA Strongly Agree  
A Agree  
N Neutral (neither agree or disagree)  
D Disagree  
SD Strongly Disagree

- |   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. The modules were interesting to do.                              | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 2. The modules' objectives were clear.                              | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 3. The modules motivated me to read and evaluate children's books.  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 4. I recommend that the modules be retained as part of this course. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

General comments:

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

For each of the items, five percentage scores were derived: the percentage of students who indicated SA, the percentage of students who indicated A, the percentage of students who indicated N, the percentage of students who indicated D, and the percentage of students who indicated SD. Thus, percentage data would be calculated for each of the items. In addition, average percentages for all four items was determined. In other words, on the basis of all four items, the percentage of the students that indicated SA, the percentage who indicated A, the percentage that indicated N, the percentage that indicated D, and the percentage that indicated SD were determined. These latter data would indicate the students' attitudes towards the modules as a whole, based upon their responses to the total instrument.

2. The Student Attitude Instrument was constructed so as to ascertain the students' attitudes toward children's literature in general and toward certain related topics, such as the art work in children's books, the language used in them, and so on. In addition, one item in this instrument related to the modules. This item was included not only in order to provide an additional measure of the students' overall attitude, but also to verify the results on the Module Rating Form. In other words, did the students respond about as negatively or positively toward the modules on an open-ended instrument, as they did in the Module Rating Form?



Also, one item was designed to ascertain the students' attitudes toward their classmates in the course, since this attitude might indirectly, at least, suggest their overall attitude toward the course and to children's literature.

This attitudinal instrument was in sentence-completion form and was administered at the end of the term. The twelve items contained in it are as follows:

1. Children's Literature is . . .
2. Art work in children's books is . . .
3. Instructional modules are . . .
4. Children's poetry is . . .
5. Picture books are . . .
6. Language in children's books is . . .
7. Education 325c is . . .
8. Options or choices of study areas are . . .
9. Children's books are . . .
10. Realistic books are . . .
11. Children's authors are . . .
12. My classmates in 325c are . . .

In order to evaluate the students' responses on this instrument, three judges were chosen to evaluate each student response in terms of whether it seemed to be Very Positive, Mildly Positive, Neutral, Mildly Negative, or Very Negative. One judge is the Director

of School Libraries in Lansing, and two judges are staff members in the Michigan Department of Education.

The judges' ratings were evaluated in two ways: First, for each item, the total number of student responses an individual judge had placed in one of the five categories was determined. Percentages for each of the categories on each of the items and for each judge were then determined on the basis of thirty-three, the total number of students. These five percentage figures for an individual judge indicate the percentage of students who, according to his judgment, responded in either the VP, P, N, MN, or VN category. When these figures were determined for each of the three judges, their averages were then determined. In other words, the percentage figure that is presented represents the average judgments of the three judges in each of the categories on all of the items. (Although the students had been asked not to skip any item, in a few cases they did; hence, it was necessary to have a "No Response" category.)

After the averages for the three judges had been determined for each of the items, total averages for all of the items were then determined.

Thus, on the basis of the Student Attitude Instrument, it could be determined the percentage of students who responded either VP, P, N, MN, or VN, on each of the items (according to the three judges), but also the

percentage of students who responded in each of these five categories on the total instrument.

3. The Journal Evaluation Instrument was designed to ascertain the students' attitudes about the same twelve topics included in the student Attitude Instrument, except in this case, there were to be attitudes as revealed in the journals that were kept by each student. One additional item was added concerning the instructor. This instrument was used in the following manner: The researcher placed before her the following list of student attitudes toward:

1. Children's literature
2. Art work in children's books
3. Instructional modules
4. Children's poetry
5. Picture books
6. Language in children's books
7. Education 325c
8. Options or choices of study areas
9. Children's books
10. Authors of children's books
11. Realistic fiction
12. 325c classmates
13. Instructor

She then proceeded to read through each of the student's journals, and whenever she came to a reference

to any of the thirteen items, she indicated next to the number of that category whether the reference seemed to be Very Positive, Mildly Positive, Neutral, Mildly Negative, or Very Negative. Thus, each journal was submitted to this content analysis procedure in order to determine what the attitudes of the students seemed to be about some aspect of their study of children's literature when they wrote in their journals. Percentage scores for each item and in each category were then determined.

In addition, average percentage figures for each of the five categories were derived. It could then be said that on the basis of the journals, a certain percentage of the total references seemed to be VP, a certain percentage MP, a certain percentage N, and so on.

When the students were given instructions in how to keep their journals, they were asked to be honest in the expression of their opinions. They were asked to state their personal reactions about many aspects of the class--the books that were read, the events and discussions in the class, class activities, the modules, the instructor, and other related topics.

### Individual Reactions

On all of the instruments described above, the students were asked to sign their names so that certain analyses and correlations of results and expressions of

attitudes could be made. The purpose of the procedure to be described in this section was to determine if the students who received high scores in the class also seemed to have the most generally positive attitudes. Conversely, it was to be determined if the students who received the lowest scores in the class tended to have less positive attitudes, at least as compared with the attitudes of the higher scoring students.

In order to ascertain this, ten students who received the highest scores on the Children's Literature Test were identified, and the five of those ten who also received high final grades were chosen. These students were then designated as the highest scoring students in the class. The criteria being their scores on the Children's Literature Test and their final grades. Conversely, the lowest scoring students were in the same way identified. Ten students who received the lowest scores on the Children's Literature Test were identified; from these, five were selected who also received the lowest final grades. This second group was designated as the lowest scoring group of students on the basis of these two criteria.

For each of these groups of students the average number of responses on each of the five feeling levels on the Module Rating Form and the Student Attitude Instrument were determined. With the five highest

scoring students it was determined the percentage of responses they indicated on both instruments in the very positive area, in the positive area, in the neutral area, in the negative area, and in the very negative area. The same procedure was followed for the lowest scoring students. Having obtained the average responses in the five areas on these two instruments, the total average response for each of the two groups was determined. After following this procedure, it could be said that the highest scoring students felt on the average very positive, positive, neutral, and so on. The same could be said for the lowest scoring students. Then the total averages of the two groups of students could be compared.

The purpose of this procedure was to determine whether or not the highest scoring students in the class also seemed to have the most positive attitudes and whether or not the lowest scoring students had less positive attitudes, at least as revealed by the two instruments.

#### Limitations of the Study

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the feasibility of using instructional modules in a Children's Literature class. It is to be hoped that some of the strategies used in this study would serve as a model and thus be used when teaching children's literature to undergraduate teacher education students. However, it is

apparent that this study is not one of an experimental nature. No attempt has been made to conduct the study on a comparative basis with a control group and an experimental group.

The instruments being used have not been standardized nor tested for validity or reliability. The objective test used to measure the students' understanding of the content is one that has been used a great deal by other Michigan State University Children's Literature instructors. It has been found to be satisfactory for helping to determine grades for other students during other terms. It is not a commercial instrument and no forms for this test were established by students who used this test previous to this study.

### Summary

The purpose of this study which was conducted with a class of Children's Literature students was to ascertain the feasibility of using instructional modules in such a class. Class instruction and class activities were set up in such a way that the atmosphere would be open and conducive to freedom and independent study. Instructional modules were a basic instructional means for the purpose of stimulating independence of choice and study. The goals were defined through these modules, and students related their own unique styles of interest and learning to the accomplishment of these goals.

Interaction among class members and between instructor and students supplemented and enriched the process of completion of the instructional modules. The openness of choice and activity was based upon the precepts of the open-classroom approach to teaching and learning. Certain evaluation instruments were devised to ascertain the success of the class in terms of subject content assimilated by the students, attitudes toward the approach of the classroom instruction, and attitudes toward the use of instructional modules as means of instruction. In the following chapter the results of these techniques will be discussed.



## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

#### Introduction

The present study was undertaken to determine the feasibility of using instructional modules in a university classroom. An adapted form of the open-classroom approach was used in presenting class activities and procedures. Certain questions were to be answered, at least in part, by the end of the study. These were:

1. Would students achieve a satisfactory amount of information about the content of "Children's Literature?"
2. What would be the students' attitudes toward the use and content of the instructional modules?
3. What would be the general attitudes of the students toward children's literature?

Certain evaluative instruments were devised to ascertain some indicative answers to these questions. They included: (1) the Children's Literature Multiple Choice Test, (2) the Module Rating Form, (3) the Student Attitude Instrument, (4) the Journal Evaluation Instrument.

Also included in the evaluation were the instructor's own observations and impressions about the students' accomplishments and behaviors (responses) during each class session, as well as the students' written comments on the Student Attitude Instrument and in their journals.

### Instrumentation Results and Discussion

#### Children's Literature Multiple Choice Test Results

The following results were obtained from the administration of the Children's Literature Test. The mean percentage score obtained by the thirty-three students who took the test was 73 per cent. The median percentage score obtained by the thirty-three students was 74 per cent. The student who attained the median score answered forty-eight questions correctly out of a total of sixty-five items. Thus, the students revealed that they knew the majority of the answers to the multiple choice questions that dealt with the content of "Children's Literature." Table 1 indicates the range of scores obtained by the thirty-three students on the Children's Literature Multiple Choice Test.

Discussion of Results on the Children's Literature Multiple Choice Test.--The mean score on the Children's Literature Test was 73; the median, 74, while the scores ranged from a high of 92 per cent to

TABLE 1.--Scores<sup>a</sup> on the Children's Literature Multiple Choice Test arranged from the highest to the lowest.

Score	Number of Students Earning Score
92%	1
89%	1
82%	2
80%	3
78%	2
77%	1
75%	4
74%	3
72%	2
70%	1
69%	3
68%	1
66%	3
65%	1
63%	2
62%	1
60%	1
55%	1
N = 33	

<sup>a</sup>Scores on the sixty-five item test were obtained by dividing the number of correct answers by the total number of items.

a low of 55 per cent. Considering the fact that the test was taken by a group of students who had had no advance knowledge of the test, nor had they in any way been directly prepared for the test, these scores seem to be high. When they took the test, the students were told that their scores on the instrument would in no way affect their final grade, so there was no motivation from a grade standpoint to do well on the test. It must also be recalled that the test examinees

the student on the basis of quite specific, factual information. In this study one must assume that the students assimilated much of the information called for on the test through their work with the modules, through their general reading of children's books, and through class discussions--and perhaps through their own reading when they were children. Though no direct attempt was made to "cover the material," a good share of the material did "get covered" through the students' own activities.

It might be said that the students may have known a good deal about children's literature before they ever came to the course and that their rather high scores on the test reflected what they knew before the term began, rather than what they learned during the term. If a pre-test had been given, perhaps this factor might have been more strictly controlled. The researcher did not wish to establish a "test atmosphere" at the beginning of the term by giving a pre-test. It can be added here, though, that the initial Taba discussion did serve as something of a pre-test of the students' knowledge of children's literature. The focusing question was, "What comes to your mind when you hear, 'Children's Literature?'" The instructor was struck at the time at how little the students seemed to know about the topic then. Other than the traditional titles, the students as a group seemed to know almost nothing about current titles, authors, and so on.

It is gratifying to note here that a test apparently need not be the motivation for studying and learning. The students were aware from the beginning of the course that no testing would be done for the determination of a grade. Their class attendance was excellent. Many students did not miss a single class meeting. The researcher noticed throughout the term that the students kept prodigious notes--obviously for their own use. Many of them commented that they had learned what they had wanted to learn and because they had wanted to learn. As the final scores indicated, at least three-quarters of the information on a traditional objective test in this area was assimilated by at least half of the class. No one in the class scored less than one-half. It would seem that students can and do learn specific content when they are motivated to do so through effective instructional procedures. The students suggested that the threat of testing for grades had been, in their experience, a hindrance.

#### Module Rating Form Results

The Module Rating Form contained four items relating to the modules, and the students were asked to respond to each of these items in terms of Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree. The first item stated, "The modules were interesting to do." To this statement, 18 per cent of the students (an actual number of six students) indicated that they Strongly

Agreed, 67 per cent (twenty-two students) indicated that they Agreed, 12 per cent (four students) indicated Neutral, none indicated that he Disagreed, and 3 per cent (one student) indicated that he Strongly Disagreed. The second item stated, "The objectives were clear." To this statement, 30 per cent of the students (ten actual students) indicated that they Strongly Agreed, 55 per cent (eighteen students) indicated that they Agreed, 6 per cent (two students) indicated Neutral, 9 per cent (three students) indicated that they Disagreed, and none indicated that he Strongly Disagreed. The third item stated, "The modules motivated me to read and evaluate children's books." To this statement, 33 per cent of the students (an actual number of eleven students) indicated that they Strongly Agreed with this statement, 46 per cent (fifteen students) indicated that they Agreed, 12 per cent (four students) indicated Neutral, 9 per cent (three students) indicated that they Disagreed, and none Strongly Disagreed. The fourth item stated, "I recommend that they be retained as a part of this course." To this statement, 33 per cent of the students (eleven students) indicated that they Strongly Agreed, 49 per cent (sixteen students) indicated that they Agreed, 9 per cent (three students) indicated Neutral, 6 per cent (two students) indicated that they Disagreed, and 3 per cent (one student) indicated Strongly Disagree. These data are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2.--Percentages of student responses of the Module Rating Form.

Item No.	Degree of Responses <sup>a</sup>	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	The modules were interesting to do.	18% <sup>b</sup> (6)	67% (22)	12% (4)	0% (0)	3% (1)
2.	The modules' objectives were clear.	30% (10)	55% (18)	6% (2)	9% (3)	0% (0)
3.	The modules motivated me to read and evaluate children's books.	33% (11)	46% (15)	12% (4)	9% (3)	0% (0)
4.	I recommend that the modules be retained as a part of this course.	33% (11)	49% (16)	9% (3)	6% (2)	3% (1)

<sup>a</sup>SA = Strongly Agree  
A = Agree  
N = Neutral  
D = Disagree  
SD = Strongly Disagree

<sup>b</sup>Number in parenthesis indicates the actual number of students who reacted in this category.

Figure 1 presents the averages of the percentage figures contained in Table 2. These averages suggest the percentage of students who reacted in the five categories on the Module Rating Form as a whole. In other words, considering all four items together, it can be said that 29 per cent of the students reacted in the Strongly Agree category, 54 per cent in the Agree category, 10 per cent remained Neutral, 6 per cent indicated that they Disagreed, and 2 per cent indicated that they Strongly Disagreed.

These figures are presented in Figure 1 on page 78.

#### Discussion of Results on the Module Rating Form.--

The Module Rating Form was designed to determine the students' attitudes towards the modules. On the basis of this one instrument, it would appear that the students did carry away from the class positive attitudes towards the instructional modules. Combining the Strongly Agree (18 per cent) and the Agree (67 per cent) categories, 85 per cent of the students felt that the modules were interesting to do, while only 3 per cent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed with their use. Combining the Strongly Agree (30 per cent) and the Agree (55 per cent) categories, 85 per cent of the students felt that the modules were clear. Combining the Strongly Agree (33 per cent and Agree (46 per cent) categories, 79 per cent of the



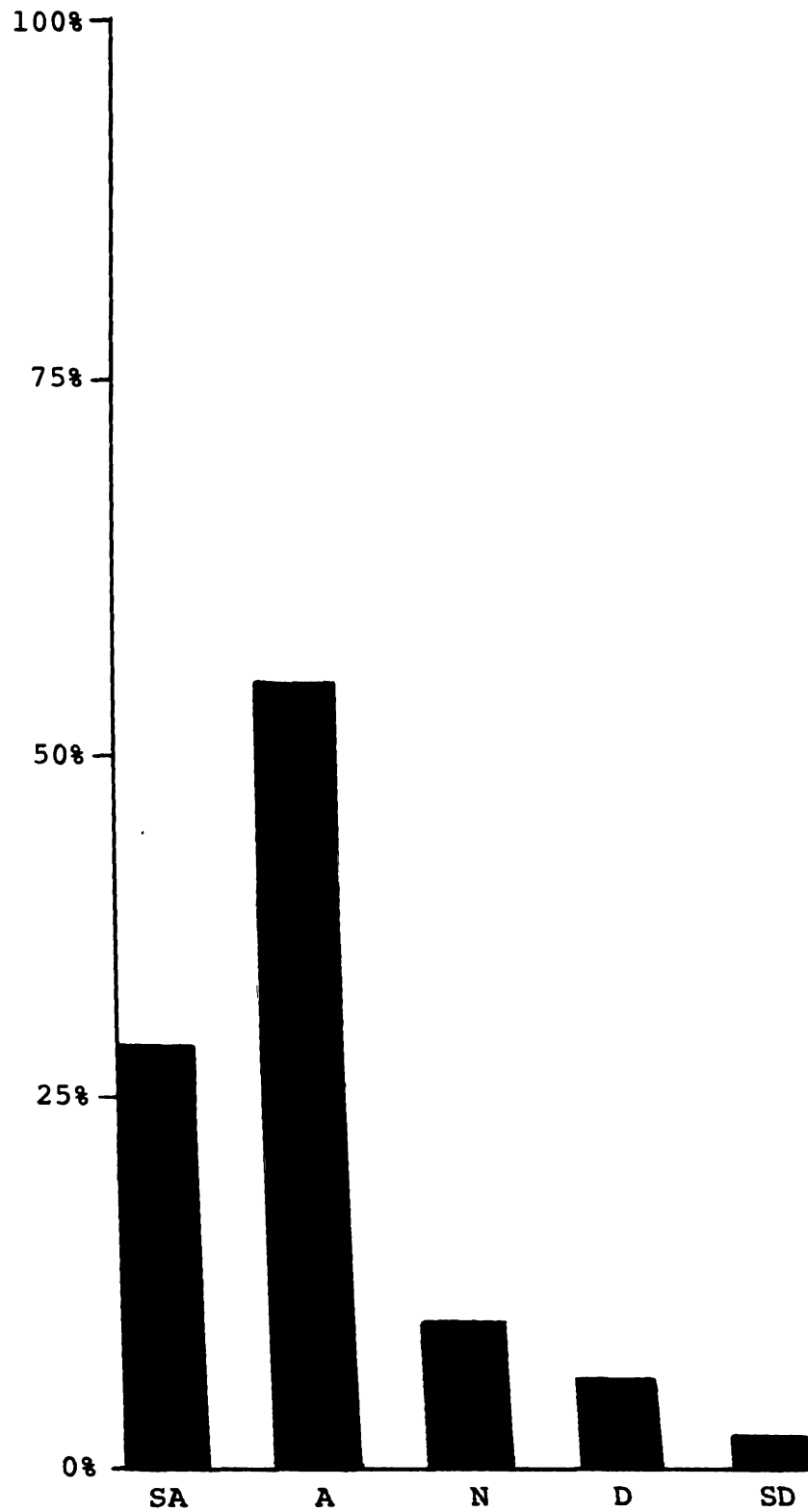


Figure 1.--Averaged degrees of student response on the Module Rating Form.

students indicated that the modules motivated them to read and evaluate children's books. When asked if they would retain the modules as a part of the course, 82 per cent of the students (33 per cent Strongly Agree and 49 per cent Agree) indicated agreement with this statement. And when the four items of this instrument are considered as a whole, 83 per cent of the total number of responses are on the positive side (29 per cent Strongly Agree and 54 per cent Agree).

Considering the fact the students had no reason to react mendaciously to these items, these are rather impressive figures in support of the use of the instructional modules.

The Student Attitude Instrument  
and the Journal Evaluation  
Instrument Results

The Student Attitude Instrument was designed to ascertain the students' attitudes towards the Children's Literature course and to various aspects of children's literature as a whole. The results of the administration of this instrument are presented in Table 3. This table indicates that in terms of Item Number 1, for example, that when asked to react to "children's literature, 76 per cent of the students (an actual number of twenty-five students) indicated a Very Positive response, 22 per cent (seven students) indicated a Positive response, none indicated Neutral, 3 per cent (one student) indicated

TABLE 3.--Percentages of student responses on the Student Attitude Instrument.

Item No.	Degree of Response <sup>a</sup>	VP	MP	N	MN	VN	NR
1.	Children's literature is . . . .	76% (25) <sup>b</sup>	21% (7)	0% (0)	3% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
2.	Art work in children's books is . . .	79% (26)	21% (7)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
3.	Instructional modules are . . . .	49% (16)	33% (11)	9% (3)	9% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)
4.	Children's poetry is . . . .	73% (24)	24% (8)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	3% (1)
5.	Picture books are . . . .	88% (29)	12% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
6.	Language in children's books is . . . .	67% (22)	33% (11)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
7.	Education 325c is . . . .	82% (27)	15% (5)	3% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
8.	Options or choices are . . . .	70% (23)	21% (7)	3% (1)	3% (1)	0% (0)	3% (1)
9.	Children's books are . . . .	85% (28)	15% (5)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
10.	Realistic fiction is . . . .	73% (24)	21% (7)	0% (0)	3% (1)	0% (0)	3% (1)
11.	Children's authors are . . . .	79% (26)	12% (4)	3% (1)	3% (1)	0% (0)	3% (1)
12.	My classmates in 325c are . . . .	70% (23)	15% (5)	6% (2)	3% (1)	3% (1)	3% (1)

<sup>a</sup>VP = Very Positive; MP = Mildly Positive; N = Neutral; MN = Mildly Negative; VN = Very Negative; NR = No Response.

<sup>b</sup>Actual number of students who responded in category.

Mildly Negative, and none indicated a Very Negative response. All the students responded to this item. A similar interpretation may be made of all of the other items in this instrument, as presented in Table 3. Whenever necessary, percentages have been rounded off to the next highest number.

Figure 2 presents the averages of the percentages included in Table 3. In other words, taking all of the twelve items on this instrument into account, 74 per cent of the responses were in the Very Positive category, 20 per cent of the responses were in the Mildly Positive category, 2 per cent were in the Neutral category, 2 per cent were in the Mildly Negative category, and 1 per cent were in the Very Negative category. Although the students had been asked not to omit any items, some did; and 1 per cent of the total number of responses were in this category. These data are presented in Figure 2, page 82.

The results of the Journal Evaluation Instrument are presented in Table 4. As indicated in the Design chapter, each student's reaction to each item was ranked on a five-point scale (Very Positive, Mildly Positive, Neutral, Mildly Negative, and Very Negative) by the researcher. The figures presented in Table 4 represent the percentage of references the students made in their journals that were judged to fall into one of the five categories. In other words, Item 1 on the instrument, "Children's Literature," was referred to directly by a

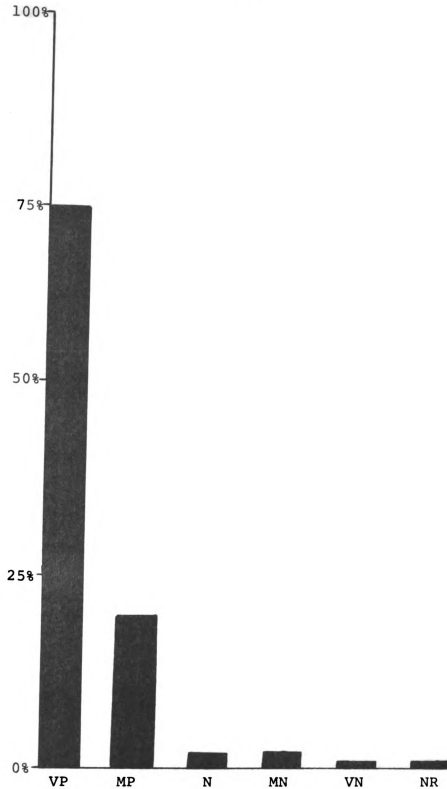


Figure 2.--Averaged ratings of student response on the Student Attitude Instrument.

TABLE 4.--Percentages of journal references as indicated by the Journal Evaluation Instrument.

Item No.	Researcher's Evaluation of Reference <sup>a</sup>				Total No. of References	No. of Students Who Made References
	VP	MP	N	MN		
1. Children's literature	92% <sup>b</sup> (25)	8% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	27	21
2. Art work in children's books	90% (18)	10% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	20	16
3. Instructional modules	52% (32)	27% (17)	2% (1)	16% (10)	62	33
4. Children's poetry	72% (13)	28% (5)	0% (0)	0% (0)	18	16
5. Picture books	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	2	2
6. Language in children's books	100% (10)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	10	10
7. Education 325c	80% (107)	12% (16)	0% (0)	6% (8)	134	33
8. Options or choices	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	1	1
9. Children's books	75% (36)	13% (6)	0% (0)	10% (5)	48	33
10. Realistic fiction	60% (15)	28% (7)	0% (0)	12% (3)	25	22
11. Children's authors	61% (11)	28% (5)	0% (0)	5% (1)	18	17
12. Classmates in 325c	75% (41)	18% (10)	2% (1)	5% (3)	55	32
13. The instructor	83% (25)	13% (4)	4% (1)	0% (0)	30	26

<sup>a</sup>VP = Very Positive; MP = Mildly Positive; N = Neutral; MN = Mildly Negative; VN = Very Negative.

<sup>b</sup>Actual number of responses in each category.

total of twenty-one students. Since some of these students referred to "children's literature" more than once, the total number of references may be higher than the total number of students. In the case of Item 1, there were twenty-seven references to this particular topic. Of these twenty-seven references made by twenty-one students, 92 per cent of them were judged by the researcher to be Very Positive, 8 per cent were judged to be Mildly Positive, and none of them were judged to be either Neutral, Mildly Negative, or Very Negative. To take another example, Item 2, "Art work in children's book," was referred to by sixteen students in their journals, and the total number of their references was twenty. Of these, 90 per cent were judged to be Very Positive, 10 per cent were judged to be Mildly Positive, none were judged to be Neutral, Mildly Negative, or Very Negative.

Figure 3 presents the averages of the percentages included in Table 4. In other words, taking all of the thirteen items together, 72 per cent of the references in the journals were judged to be Very Positive, 22 per cent were judged to be Mildly Positive, 1 per cent were judged to be Neutral, 4 per cent were judged to be Mildly Negative, and 1 per cent were judged to be Very Negative. These data are presented graphically in Figure 3 on page 85.

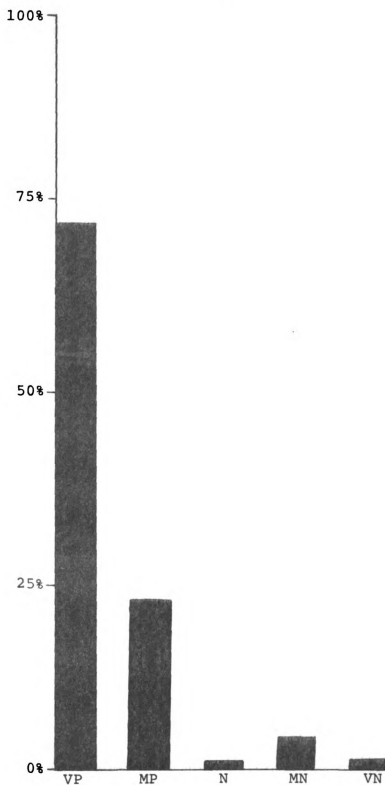


Figure 3.--Averaged ratings of journal references on the Journal Evaluation Instrument.



Item 3 on both the Student Attitude Instrument and the Journal Evaluation Instrument relate to the instructional modules. On the Student Attitude Instrument, Item 3 reads: "Instructional modules are . . . " On the Journal Evaluation Instrument, Item 3 reads: "Instructional modules." This item on both of the instruments may be considered separately, since the students' reactions to these items may serve to informally validate the results of the Module Rating Form.

For this item on the Student Attitude Instrument, 49 per cent of the students reacted Very Positive, while 33 per cent reacted Mildly Positive--a total of 32 per cent. For this item on the Journal Evaluation Instrument, 52 per cent of the journal references were judged to be Very Positive, while 27 per cent were judged to be Mildly Positive--a total of 79 per cent. Thus, the favorable student attitudes reflected on the Module Rating Form tended to be supported by a reflection of favorable attitudes as shown on the Student Attitude Instrument and the Journal Evaluation Instrument.

Further considering Item 3 on the Journal Evaluation Instrument, all of the students (thirty-three) referred to the modules in their journals, and the total number of references was sixty-two. This was the second most commonly referred to topic in the journals, ranking next to "Education 325c." Thus, the favorable results

suggested on the Journal Evaluation Instrument in terms of the modules are based on a substantial number of references.

Discussion of Results of the Student Attitude Instrument and the Journal Instrument.--It is interesting that the findings tend to be consistent on both of these instruments. On both, the students' attitudes seem to be remarkably positive. Considering that the students were told that their opinions as expressed on these instruments would in no way have an effect on their grades, the positive results seem especially gratifying.

In terms of the modules, even in their journals the students took time to discuss these instructional instruments, and 78 per cent of their references were on the positive side. Similarly, 82 per cent of their responses in terms of the modules on the Student Attitude Instrument were positive.

Although it is interesting to note the students' reactions to the individual items on these instruments, it is, perhaps, of greater interest to consider their reactions to the instruments taken as a whole--results that are graphically presented in Figures 2 and 3. If all of the items taken collectively can be assumed to represent something similar to the students' overall attitude to children's literature, then these total figures strongly suggest that the students carried away from the class predominantly positive feelings.

### Results of Individual Reaction Analysis

The purpose of this analysis was to determine if the higher-scoring students tended to have the more positive attitudes toward the instructional modules and toward children's literature generally, at least as measured by the Module Rating Form and the Student Attitude Instrument. Conversely, it was to be determined if the lower-scoring students had less positive attitudes towards the modules and towards children's literature on the basis of the two instruments.

Table 5 presents these data for the high-scoring students, referred to here as Group I. The table indicates the percentage of responses in the various categories for each of the high-scoring students on both the Module Rating Form and the Student Attitude Instrument. In other words, on the Module Rating Form, Student 1 responded Strongly Agree 25 per cent of the time, Agree 75 per cent of the time, Neutral 0 per cent of the time, Disagree zero per cent of the time, and Strongly Disagree 0 per cent of the time. On the Student Attitude Instrument, this same student responded Very Positive 75 per cent of the time, Mildly Positive 25 per cent of the time, Neutral zero per cent of the time, Mildly Negative zero per cent of the time, and Very Negative zero per cent of the time. The averages for these five students was then calculated. Hence, on the Module Rating

TABLE 5.--Percentages of high-scoring students' responses on the Module Rating Form and the Student Attitude Instrument (Group I).

Student	Module Rating Form					Student Attitude Instrument				
	Degree of Response <sup>b</sup>					Degree of Response <sup>b</sup>				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	VP	MP	N	MN	VN
1.	25% <sup>b</sup> (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	75% (9)	25% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
2.	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	75% (9)	25% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
3.	0% (0)	100% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	75% (9)	17% (2)	8% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
4.	100% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	50% (6)	17% (2)	33% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)
5.	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	75% (9)	25% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Average	55%	45%	0%	0%	0%	70%	21%	8%	0%	0%

<sup>a</sup>SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; N = Neutral; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree.  
VP = Very Positive; MP = Mildly Positive; N = Neutral; MN = Mildly Negative.

<sup>b</sup>Actual number of responses in the category.

Form, the high-scoring students responded Strongly Agree 55 per cent of the time, Agree 45 per cent of the time, Neutral zero per cent of the time, Disagree zero per cent of the time, and Strongly Disagree zero per cent of the time. On the Student Attitude Instrument, the high-scoring students responded Very Positive 70 per cent of the time, Mildly Positive 21 per cent of the time, Neutral 8 per cent of the time, Mildly Negative zero per cent of the time, and Very Negative zero per cent of the time.

Similar data are presented for the five low-scoring students in Table 6. Again, the percentage of responses for the five individual students are presented for the Module Rating Form and the Student Attitude Instrument, and the average percentages for these five students are also included.

The differences in the average scores for Group I and Group II are presented in Figures 4, 5, and 6. Figure 4 presents the average scores for the two groups on the Module Rating Form. In other words, as indicated in Tables 5 and 6, the high-scoring students' responses were, on the average, Strongly Agree 55 per cent of the time, while the lower-scoring students' responses were, on the average, Strongly Agree 15 per cent of the time. These two percentages, as well as the percentages in the other categories, are presented side by side on the figure for comparative purposes.

TABLE 6.--Percentages of low-scoring students' responses on the Module Rating Form and the Student Attitude Instrument (Group II).

Student	Module Rating Form					Student Attitude Instrument				
	Degree of Response <sup>a</sup>					Degree of Response				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	VP	MP	N	MN	VN
1.	0% (0)	25% (1)	50% (2)	25% (1)	0% (0)	17% (2)	33% (4)	33% (4)	8% (1)	8% (1)
2.	0% (0)	100% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	25% (3)	33% (4)	33% (4)	0% (0)	8% (1)
3.	0% (0)	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	58% (7)	25% (3)	8% (1)	8% (1)	0% (0)
4.	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	25% (3)	33% (4)	25% (3)	17% (2)	0% (0)
5.	0% (0)	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	25% (3)	33% (4)	25% (3)	17% (2)	0% (0)
Average	15%	60%	20%	5%	0%	30%	31%	25%	10%	3%

<sup>a</sup>SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; N = Neutral; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree.  
VP = Very Positive; MP = Mildly Positive; N = Neutral; MN = Mildly Negative VN = Very Negative.

<sup>b</sup>Actual number of responses in the category.

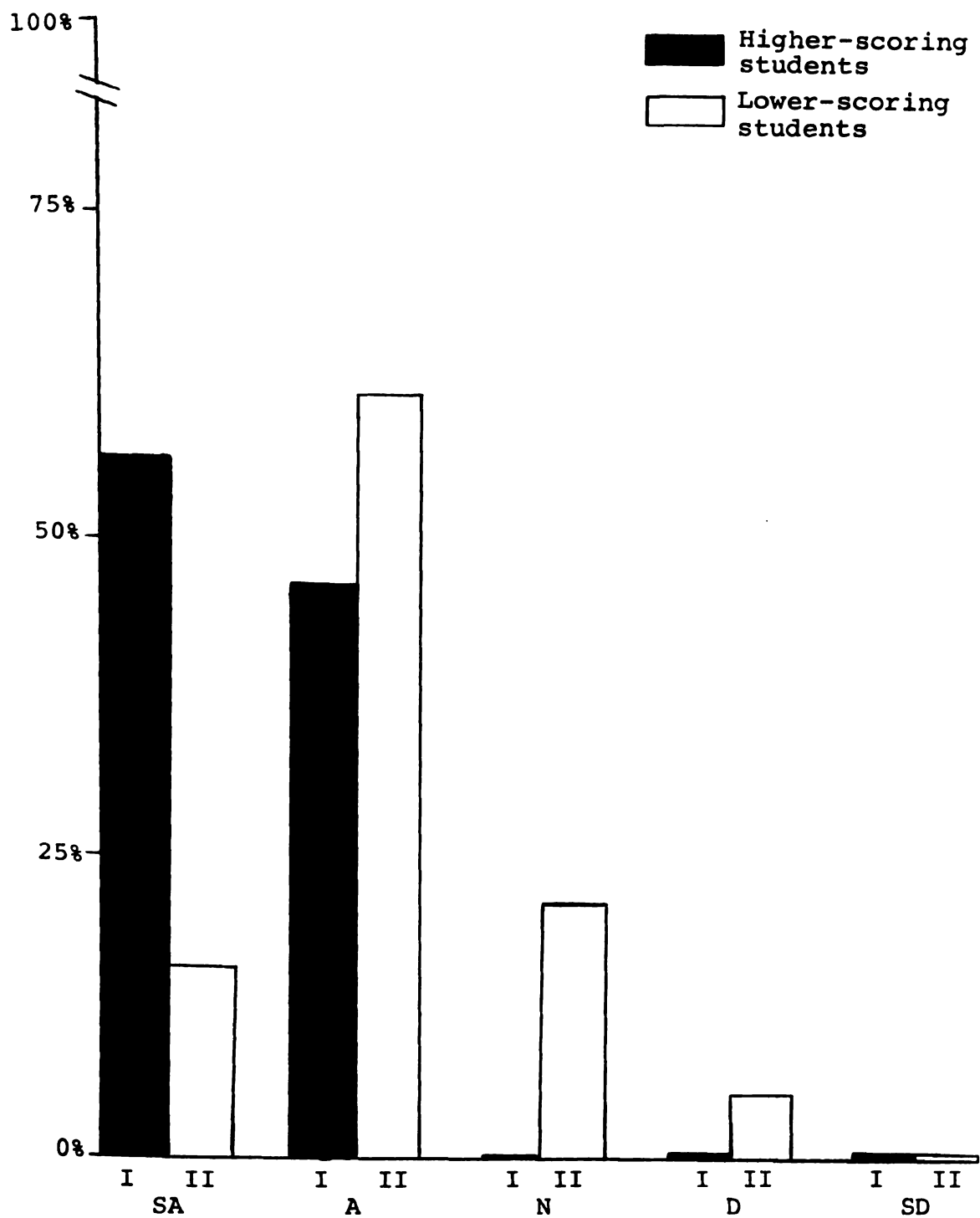


Figure 4.--Group I (high-scoring) and Group II (low-scoring) averaged percentage scores on the Module Rating Form.

Figure 5 presents the same comparative data in terms of the students' responses on the Student Attitude Instrument. In other words, on this instrument, 70 per cent of the higher-scoring students' responses were in the Very Positive category, while 30 per cent of the lower-scoring students' responses were in this category. Again, these data have been presented side by side in the various categories for comparative purposes.

Figure 6 presents the averages of the averages on the two instruments for the two groups. In other words, for Group I--the higher-scoring group--the average of the Strongly Agree category (55 per cent) was averaged with the average of the Very Positive category (70 per cent), and this result was 63 per cent. The average of the Agree category (45 per cent) was averaged with the Mildly Positive average (21 per cent), and this result was 33 per cent. The average of the Neutral category on the Module Rating Form (0 per cent) was averaged with the average for the Neutral on the Student Attitude Instrument (8 per cent), and this result was 4 per cent. The average for the Disagree category (0 per cent) was averaged with the average of the Mildly Negative category (0 per cent), and this result was 0 per cent. The average for the Strongly Disagree category (0 per cent) was averaged with the average of the Very Negative category (0 per cent), and this result was 0 per cent.



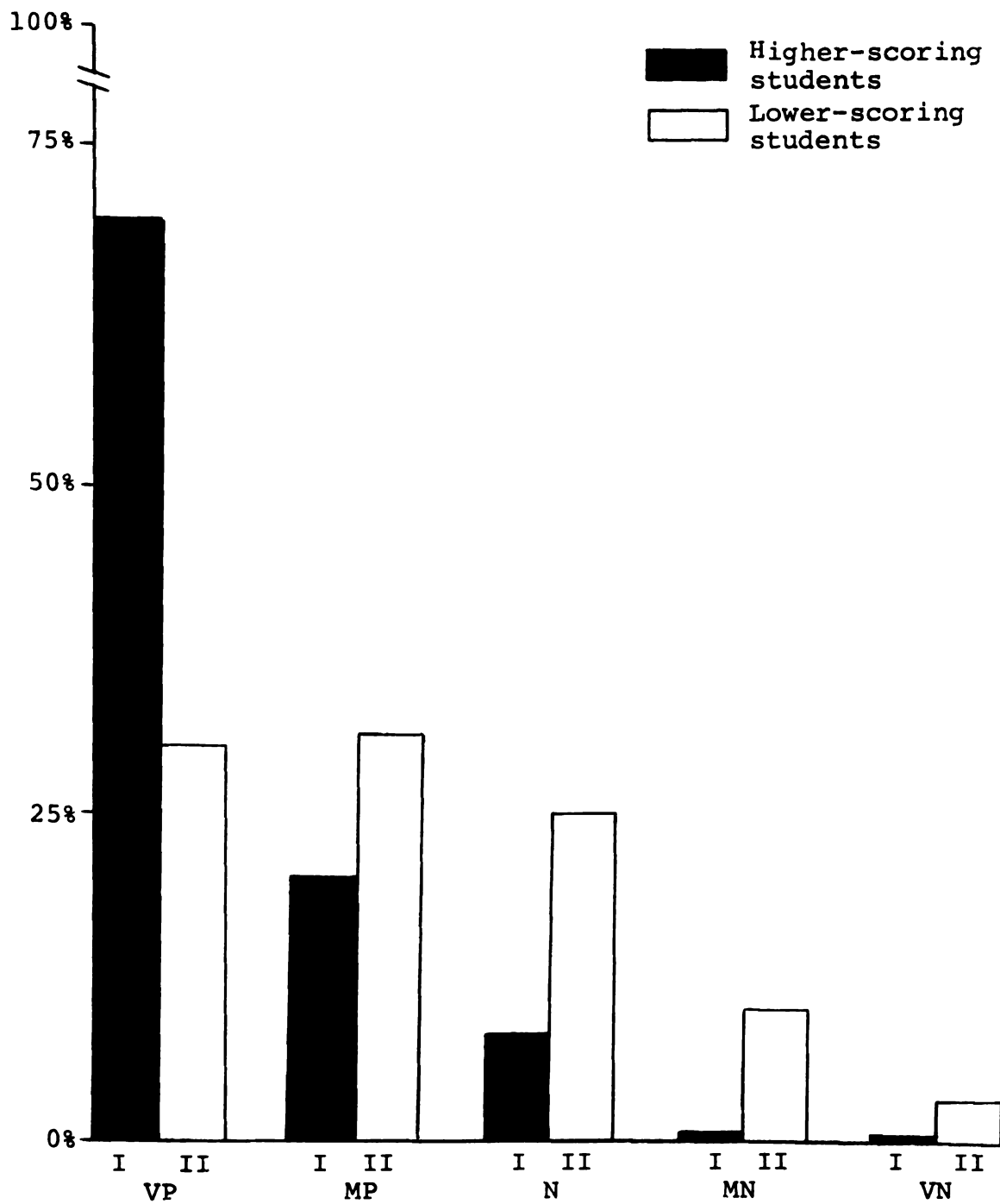


Figure 5.--Group I (high-scoring) and Group II (low-scoring) averaged percentage scores on the Student Attitude Instrument.

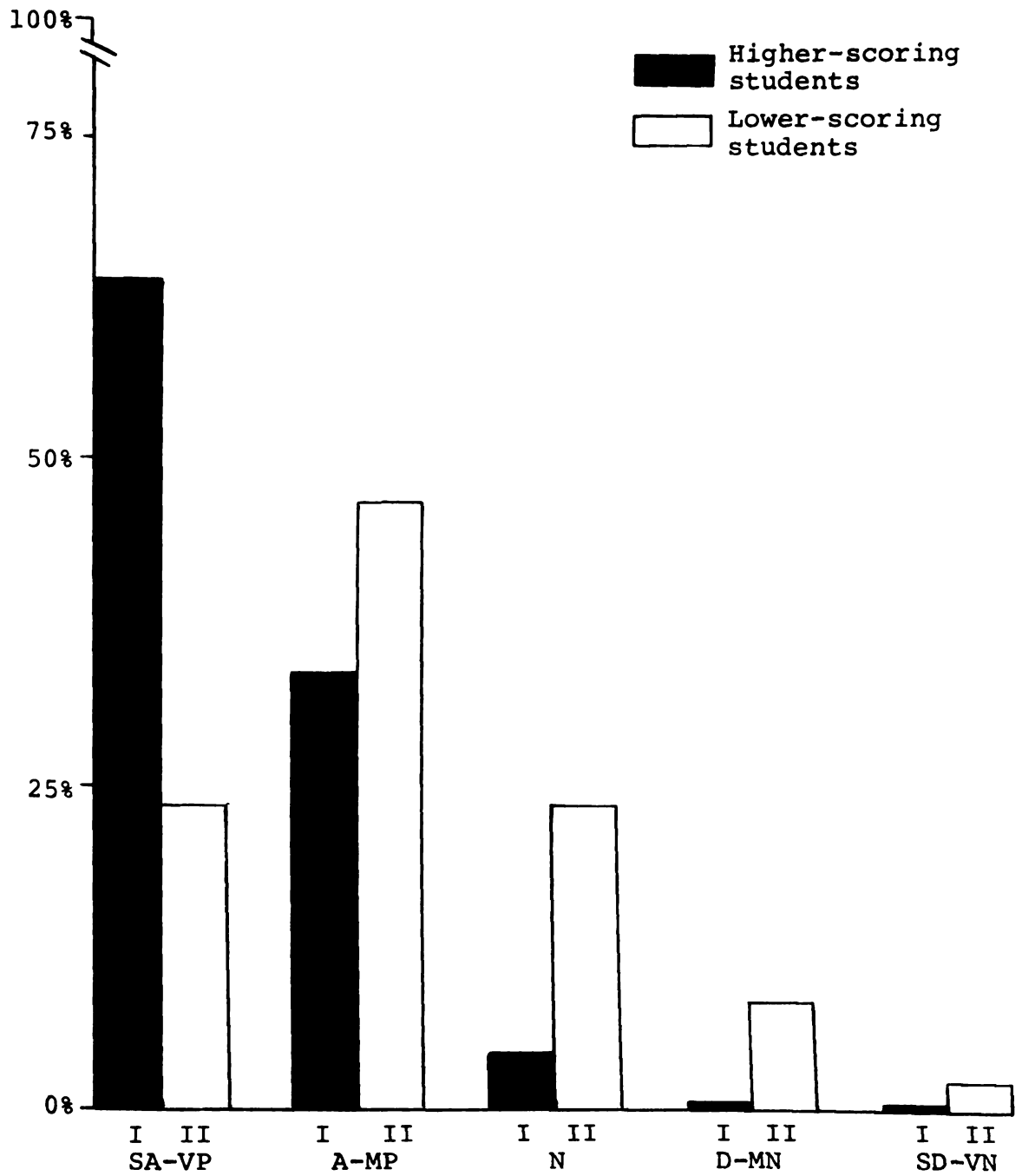


Figure 6.--Averaged Module Rating Form and Student Attitude Instrument scores for Group I (high-scoring) and Group II (low-scoring).

Averages for Group II--the lower-scoring group--were obtained in the same manner.

Discussion of Individual Reaction Analysis.--

The percentages derived from the individual reactions analysis indicate that the higher scoring students did tend to have more positive attitudes, as indicated on the Module Rating Form and the Student Attitude Instrument. On both instruments, the high-scoring students made considerable more Strongly Agree and Very Positive responses. On the Module Rating Form, 55 per cent of the students made Strongly Agree responses, while 15 per cent of the lower-scoring students did. This same trend was revealed in the Student Attitude Instrument. On this instrument, the higher-scoring students responded Very Positive 70 per cent of the time, while the lower-scoring students did so 30 per cent of the time. However, on both instruments the lower-scoring students indicated more Agree and Mildly Positive responses. Thus, the two groups both seemed to be on the positive side in their responses, but the high-scoring group was considerably more likely to respond more strongly positively. On the negative side, the lower-scoring students were more likely to make negative responses, especially on the Student Attitude Instrument.

Perhaps these figures indicate that students who are the most enthusiastic about what they are doing in

a course are likely to achieve the highest in that course.

But the most gratifying aspect of this result is not so much that the higher-scoring students tended to have more positive attitudes than the lower-scoring ones, but that both groups seemed to carry away from the course a heavy preponderance of positive attitudes. Oftentimes it seems to be true that enthusiasm for a course varies in proportion to how well the student feels he is doing in the course: those who feel they are doing well in the course tend to like the course; those who feel they are not doing as well often tend to not like the course, nor the content, nor the materials, nor the instructor. In this case, the five lower-scoring students expressed positive or very positive attitudes on the two instruments a total of 69 per cent of the time. Only 10 per cent of their responses were on the negative side, although since 23 per cent of their responses were in the Neutral category (as compared to 4 per cent of the Group I responses), one might say that there were considerably more students in the lower-scoring group who seemed to be tentative in their attitudes. But, still, as a whole this group was nearly as much on the generally positive side as the higher-scoring group.

### Informal Evaluations

In addition to the evaluative instruments, indications of student attitudes were also obtained through their written comments in their journals and on the Student Attitude Instrument. These responses will be reported in the three general areas of the original questions of the study pertaining to the attitudinal portion of the study--that is, the students' attitudes toward: (1) instructional modules, (2) children's books, and (3) the class in this particular study. The following are all direct quotations extracted for the purpose of illustrating certain attitudes.

#### Instructional Modules-- Positive Attitudes

I think the modules are a very important part of the class. They give the instructor a means of evaluation and the student also. Many of the module ideas serve as good actions of resources when we are teaching. Out of these, teachers can get many motivational and instructional ideas.

Its (the class) independent study approach for me has been a great benefit. For the first time I could learn at my own rate and learn because I wanted to. Another important factor was that I didn't have to worry about a test hanging over my head. Yet in a sense it's too bad a final grade has to be determined still.

I completed all of my modules and handed them in. I was glad we could choose our objectives. They became more meaningful to me because of that freedom.

I've both positive and negative feelings about this part of the course. My immediate response would be to say they have been "busy work" for the purpose of supplying grade material. Thinking a bit more about it I can see that they have a few values:

1. They show approaches that can be taken in familiarizing students with the materials of Children's Literature.
2. They emphasize important elements to be aware of in literature.
3. They offer a opportunity to plan lessons.

I feel that the modules are a very worthwhile learning experience.

I don't think it's asking too much to write the modules, especially in view of the fact that we don't have a final exam. They are not hard to do and they do compel me to read children's books I might not read otherwise.

I think the modules are an excellent guide as to what to look for when evaluating children's books, or any book for that matter.

I feel that the modules are good in that they offer a wide variety of topics that we can work on. As well they can be selected to meet our own needs and interests. They also make us look at some books in more depth than we have otherwise. For this reason I feel they are very helpful. However, I question the value of having us do so many of them. However, I still believe that they are valuable. Also being able to work at my own speed is good for a change, instead of trying to meet a due date or a deadline.

The modules are worth the work. I have learned how to evaluate books which is extremely important. Also I have been exposed to a wide variety of children's books that I would otherwise have no idea of. I'm more conscious of the book realm for kids and I'm very interested.

I think the modules were not only beneficial, but interesting to do and a good experience all around. They made you look at a book in a different prospective, more analytical, which I think is an excellent objective especially since we are prospective teachers and will have the responsibility of recommending books of good caliber to our class.

I liked the modules and tried to vary my work in them from lesson plans to analysis so as to later know the whole rope of children's literature. The modules seem a necessary part for understanding what to look for and what to do with what you find in books.

The first few modules were a drag somewhat as I really didn't know what I was doing. But as I advanced in class, I began to understand the importance of evaluating a child's book and how the modules made me do this.

As for the modules--I felt it was good that we were not pressured to get them in on a certain date. They were also good to get us thinking about the different criteria and characteristics of children's literature. They also forced us into reading a variety of children's books. The only thing I have against the modules is that I felt I would have read more books if we hadn't had to write the modules.

I think they (the modules) are necessary. While I was reading or listening to tapes I've always felt that it was contributing to my future in the classroom. The modules are a means of encouraging students to read children's books and about children's books. The experiences aid in how to evaluate children's literature and books. They should definitely be kept as part of the class.

#### Instructional Modules-- Negative Attitudes

Never before have I dreaded doing such a simple task as I have dreaded or despised writing modules. My main reason for disliking that task so much is because it all seemed like a bunch of just busy work. I got no value in just writing up the modules but I must admit that they got me on the track for reading the literature.

The work in the class wasn't difficult yet I do feel the journals were of more benefit to me than the modules. The journals were more independent and you worked in them because you wanted to. The modules were the same structured materials encountered in every class. I learned from them yet when I think of this course I associate a free and creative atmosphere, and modules don't quite fit the picture.

I would like to dispense with the modules and just keep a journal.

The modules were often helpful and often not. Sometimes the objectives were unclear--or repetitious.

I feel the modules were a little specific but I learned more from just reading and coming to class than from the modules. I will keep them for future reference though.

The journal was more beneficial to me than the modules. It was more subjective--I could say what I wanted, and I got to read a lot of the books that interested me.

Discussion--Responses to Modules.--Even though students did have some negatively critical things to say about the modules, the overwhelming majority felt they should be retained as a part of the course. This suggests that even though some may have not entirely enjoyed doing the modules, they felt that they were a valuable instructional technique.

Children's Books:  
Positive Attitudes

Everyone brought their historical fiction books to class to share them with others in the class. I really like this idea because of the exposure to a lot of books which I know nothing about. I have a whole list of books which I want to read in the future even after I have finished this course.

I really enjoyed our discussion and introduction to poetry. I hated poetry when I was in junior high school and high school. But now I love it. I can look back and see what I hated it--and hopefully keep these factors in mind when I teach poetry. I have gained a lot of good ideas about how to present poetry to children.

Once I started reading the children's books I never walked out of Erickson or the Public Library without several books. There are still many books I want to read and I plan to read them this summer.

I enjoyed class discussion today because when we discuss what different stories are about, it makes me interested and anxious to read them and others.



I feel I've really learned a lot about children's books and have been stimulated to read oodles of them myself.

There have been many things I have learned in this course, and a lot I can't put down in words. A changing of attitude has taken place. One is poetry, which I never liked.

Realistic fiction was a real eye-opener to me. I know that kids are well educated in social areas but I had never realized that books for them were so open. I never had a book which talked sex, racism, war, and so forth. It is great to see that the kids of today are getting such an honest outlook on today's world.

I've found the reading material very interesting and worthwhile. I know I will continue to read children's books and hopefully by the time I teach, I will have a good knowledge of books and can pass it on. I never realized how important books are and how much fun.

Most of all I'm so glad to have been able to explore the world of children's books. With the help of you Mrs. Trezise and the text which I used often. It was such a relaxed experience.

I have learned how exciting literature for children has gotten to be. I hope to give kids a good start in enjoying literature.

I think the most important thing to come out of this has been the change in attitude toward poetry. Most were really surprised at the good poetry that has been and is being written today. The poetry for children is really for children.

I started out reading them (books) for my modules and ended up reading them for me.

I have gotten into children's books enough to know that I like what's happening in the realm of this literature. This summer I intend to spend as much of my time reading more books as possible. Sometimes when you finish a course you never want to see another book again. I don't think the kids in this class will feel that way. We've had an encouraging introduction to this literature--not discouraging.

Before I took this course I had never really stopped to think about children's literature. I was really suprised to find that there is such an abundance of excellent books for children.

The other day I picked up a few modern fantasy books. I've really had fun reading these and reverting back to my childhood.

Our discussion on realistic fiction was really beautiful. I really got deeply involved in imagining how helpful this type of story can be to children. It can really aid in their understanding of themselves and others.

I have enjoyed this class especially since I love to read. I have found a whole better world of children's literature than I knew as a child. I'm sure I could generate my enthusiasm for reading to my students and this course has helped provide me with a basis from which to work.

#### Children's Books: Negative Attitudes

In this area there were no negative responses of a substantive nature except a very few comments which expressed a negative reaction to one particular title with no qualifying remarks.

Discussion--Responses to Children's Books.--In their written comments the students spoke of their lack of knowledge before entering the course and of their surprise over the abundance of books which were available. There seemed to be a general feeling that changes of attitudes had taken place. For instance, several students mentioned that poetry had been an anathema to them in their own experience, but, through this class, they had come to enjoy and appreciate current trends in poetry

for children. There was excellent involvement in realistic fiction, as its relevance seemed to be of special appeal. And the art work stimulated very positive responses on all the instruments which measured that particular attitude.

The attitude toward children's books was, then, very positive. This researcher can only hope that this attitude may carry over to the students' own classrooms. To some extent it appears this hope will be realized for there were many comments made by the students which stated that they were looking forward to introducing their own students to the books which they had encountered in Education 325c. It would appear that their enjoyment and enthusiasm motivated them to keep careful records of titles which they wanted to remember for future use.

#### The Class--Experiences: Positive Attitudes

The format of the class was good and I especially appreciated the fact that the modules had only tentative deadlines.

This is my first contact with keeping a journal and I think it is a beautiful method of communication. It opens a line between student and instructor and also provides a memory for the student.

At first I was very down on group presentations but I think they turned out very well, this was probably due to the fact that everything was casual and not elaborately done. I really enjoyed the class, in some ways I wish it was longer.

I really liked the idea of the Taba method of discussion. Though I still didn't contribute I felt much more relaxed knowing that I was free to say

anything and have it accepted. I'm not always such a quiet person but I've always been silent in groups of any type.

I have become quite aware of and familiar with children's books and authors, but this is not the most important thing to me--because this is something I could have done and would eventually have to do anyway. I see the real value in a class like this, for me, coming from discussions where I could hear of other's ideas and experiences. And this is exactly what has happened with me in this class.

This is the best education class I've had at M.S.U.

Write a biography. What an assignment! It sounded like an awful load for two weeks. But after interviewing my partner for a few brief minutes and having her interview me we came upon an awful lot of experiences we enjoyed as children and I could picture these very clearly. I am excited about the assignment and think it would be an excellent means of instructing children about biography.

The class as a whole was fun to come to. I always hated the thought of having to miss a class because everyday we talked about something else and shared so many ideas and experiences. I feel a little more confident when I get that full-time teaching job just because of the different ideas that were discussed that I can use in my classroom.

Motivating activities are fun to do and I'm really looking forward to presenting our theme to the class. It enables you to get involved, literally, and those are the types of experiences I enjoy the most. Getting into small groups helps you to get to know at least 3 new people. You know you are depended upon to come and help your group.

Making a biography like we are doing in class will be a riot, I think. Good way to get the feel of that type of book too. I'll have to remember it for my kids.

I am excited about my student teaching in the fall--this has a lot to do with Education 325c.

I just really enjoy this class and have never found it boring like many others I attend. Even though I don't verbally participate very much I feel I am very much involved in the topics and the learning process.

The Class--Experiences:  
Negative Attitudes

There were no negative attitudes expressed by the students toward their experiences in class. The "mildly negative" responses which are indicated in the Journal Evaluation Instrument refer to mechanical problems such as the class meeting time and other items of this nature.

The Class--Multi-Media Materials:  
Positive Attitudes

The film (Paddle to the Sea) we saw today was good, so good I found myself identifying with the hero--a little carved Indian. The photography was super-fine too. Since I'm from up North, it really made me kind of homesick.

The film media were exciting!

I am beginning to realize the profound effect visual aids can have upon the student. I really enjoy them myself and would like to see more.

I really enjoyed the film (The Pleasure is Mutual) in that it really presented "story-telling" time in the classroom as a vital experience for children.

The movie we saw in class today had the most beautiful photography in it that I think I have ever seen (Paddle to the Sea).

The John Henry film emphasizes bigness and strength a value in our culture. The sound effects were good but the voices are overdone.

The movies were okay. The Japanese folktale was beautifully done. I thought the "John Henry" folktale was a little too much but I can see it for lower elementary. The Japanese one (The Moonbeam Princess) reflected the culture very well whereas John Henry was quite out of perspective. It was a good experience to become aware of the good and the bad media on folktales so when you do go out as a teacher you will choose good ones.

The Class--Multi-Media Materials:  
Negative Attitudes

The responses to the multi-media materials which were presented in class were very positive with the exception of one film--"John Henry." Several students expressed a negative attitude to that particular film.

The Class--Atmosphere:  
Positive Attitudes

I respect and admire the casualness you have given the class. And feeling the results has proven the importance of casualness within the classroom to me.

It's hard to say things about the class and not give the impression of trying to say good things to get a good grade. I really don't want to give this impression, but quite frankly it's difficult to think of a negative criticism. The class just didn't come off that way. It was a very liberal class--no required attendance, tests, quizzes, and so on. I think this class has encouraged me to attend, work, and to read more than I normally would.

I like the relaxed atmosphere in the classroom--no pressure for anything. Makes it seem as though you feel we can pace ourselves--which college students should be expected and able to do.

I think the informal atmosphere allowed students to be more relaxed which was more conducive to learning. Most of all I just loved doing the biography. Also, this was an excellent way to meet a new friend in the class. I immediately, in my mind, applied new knowledge that I learned to a classroom situation. This should be the aim of every class, which is to apply the knowledge.

First of all I'd like to clarify how I feel about this course. Its independent study approach for me has been a great benefit. For the first time I could learn at my own rate and learn because I wanted to. Another important factor was that I didn't have to worry about a test hanging over my head. Yet in a sense it's too bad a final grade has to be determined still.

I have enjoyed this class very much, and for this reason I've come to all the meetings and have done all the modules--all because I wanted to.

The thing I like best about this class is that it is so open, free, and easy-going. This is the way literature is supposed to be.

The Class--Atmosphere:  
Negative Attitudes

There were no negative responses in this area.

The Class--Classmates:  
Positive Attitudes

I felt good about today's activities because we got to talk with the other students in the class in small groups. I enjoy getting their views and feelings about books they have read. We are free and relaxed in our small groups.

I learned a lot from listening to the other kids in the class and getting their opinions on things. I think that I have formed many more opinions on the way I want to teach.

I know I learned a great amount from others in the class and I did work at the various activities not because I had to but because I was interested enough to do it.

Today we broke up into groups of four to discuss motivational activities for reading. We skimmed through all the modules and narrowed them down to two. I really enjoy the group I'm with because they all have some really good ideas.

I especially like the small group discussions. This gives us the opportunity to talk to the other students and get to know them a little better. I so enjoy listening to their comments in class discussions. They put voice to thoughts I have already voiced at one time or another. We do have a lot of student participation which is not the usual thing in so many classes.

My classmates seem to be very enthusiastic and sincere concerning the teaching profession.

My classmates are open-minded and enthusiastic.

My classmates are very enthusiastic about the class.

The Class--Classmates:  
Negative Attitudes

The only negative response in this area was expressed by one student who at three different times criticized the other people in her small group activity.

The Class--Instructor:  
Positive Attitudes

In the first place I had a good time while learning. I guess because of this, hopefully, I can expose someone to literature and get the same results. I enjoyed you as a teacher and feel that you were very flexible with us and the classroom situation.

The class in general I really enjoyed. Seemed to be a great bunch of kids--everyone worked for the class. Of course without a good instructor it could have been a tedious ten weeks.

This course is excellent and I plan to tell my friends when they take Children's Literature who they should look for. I feel you have done a good job.

By watching you come up with ideas to motivate us, and the manner in which you did, well I simply learned a lot from that aspect of the class. I guess it goes way back to our first day of class when you were using the Taba method. I was aware of what you were doing, and while you were employing the method I could find reasons for it. This kind of observation has helped me learn more than just about children's literature from Education 325c.

I have found myself discussing with friends a lot of what was brought up in class. This shows how much the class has led me to form definite opinions in regards to children's literature today. By the way I would like to let you know you are one of the best instructors I've had on this campus. Your attitudes expressed in class have influenced me a great deal and I hope to make a good teacher like you some day.



The Class--Instructor:  
Negative Attitudes

There were no negative attitudes expressed in this area.

Discussion--The Class.--

Experiences: The activity which was referred to perhaps most frequently was the discussion activity. Whether it was a general group discussion or small groups, they very much enjoyed talking and interacting.

When students commented on their class experiences in general, they conveyed a feeling of well-being and satisfaction and an admiration for the format and style of the class. The day-by-day journal entries generally reflected a very pleasant experience.

Multi-media: The films and filmstrips were responded to in most student journals. On the whole, the attitudes were very positive toward these media. When criticisms were voiced, they were constructive and revealed a depth of perception about the media.

Atmosphere: Students referred in their journals to the open and free atmosphere which had evolved in the class. They expressed their willingness to participate because of the air of acceptingness which prevailed. In their responses, the students used terms such as "easy," "free," "relaxed," "casual," and "beautiful" when describing the atmosphere of the classroom. Another

response that prevailed was that they had encountered this kind of atmosphere in very few of their classes.

Classmates: A very positive attitude was also expressed by the students toward their fellow classmates. This may have been the result of much small group activity and the general openness and freedom in the classroom environment. In their journals, there were many responses which mentioned how much had been learned from fellow classmates. They admired the work done by each other and seemed to take pleasure in the accomplishments of their peers.

Instructor: The attitudes which were expressed toward the instructor were generally very positive. The written responses were quite personal and quite direct. Students often remarked that they felt hesitant to praise the instructor because their motives might be misunderstood. Most of their positive statements came when they were expressing good feelings about the class in general. At this time, they were apt to comment that the success of the class was the success of the instructor. Others talked about the techniques of instruction, which they had admired and hoped to emulate in some way. Primarily their responses indicated an appreciation for the easiness and openness which they felt existed in the relationship between the instructor and the students. They felt comfortable in this situation, and this was reflected in what they described as a good learning situation.

### Summary

The present study was undertaken to determine the feasibility of using instructional modules in a university classroom. An adapted form of the open-classroom approach was used in presenting class activities and procedures. Certain questions were to be answered, at least in part, by the end of the study. These were:

1. Would the students achieve a satisfactory amount of information about the content of "Children's Literature" through the approaches used in the course?
2. What would be the students' attitudes toward the use and content of the instructional modules?
3. What would be the general attitudes of the students toward children's literature?

Certain evaluative instruments were devised to ascertain some answers to these questions. They included: (1) the Children's Literature Multiple Choice Test; (2) the Module Rating Form; (3) the Student Attitude Instrument; and (4) the Journal Evaluation Instrument.

On the basis of these instruments, it was determined that the students did seem to acquire a substantial amount of factual, specific information about children's literature during the course of the term. The students' attitudes toward the use of the instructional modules was strongly on the positive side. Very few students

expressed negative attitudes towards the modules either on the Module Rating Form, the Student Attitude Instrument, or in their journals. The students' overall attitudes towards children's literature as a whole field, towards the Children's Literature class, and towards the various approaches used in the class were also very strongly on the positive side. Comparatively few students expressed negative attitudes towards any of these areas through the instruments administered to them at the conclusion of the term.

It was determined that those students who were the higher-scoring members of the class (higher-scoring on the basis of their final grade and their score on the Children's Literature Multiple Choice Test) also seemed to have the most highly positive attitudes towards the modules and towards children's literature. While the lower-scoring students did not seem to have as highly positive attitudes towards the modules and towards children's literature, this group did indicate attitudes very much on the positive side.

The students' written comments in their journals and on the open-ended sections of the instruments were presented in this chapter to relay to the reader the substantive nature of their attitudes. Although a few of the students' written comments reflected negative attitudes towards the instructional modules, by far the

greater proportion of the comments were positive. The students' written comments were predominantly positive too in the areas as children's literature, the class procedures, the multi-media approaches used in the class, the instructor, and their classmates.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, DISCUSSION, AND SUMMARY

#### Conclusions

As a result of this study, the following conclusions may be suggested:

1. Students do seem to be able to acquire a substantial amount of factual data and specific information about children's literature through the instructional approaches used in this study. This would include such aspects as the history of children's literature, the characteristics of each genre, trends in the field, and issues in publishing and using children's books in the elementary school curriculum. Even though this specific information was not focused upon directly by the instructor, the students apparently acquired a substantial amount of information in these areas.
2. When used as the instructional base of the Children's Literature class, most students can

think positively about the use of a set of instructional modules. Even though the modules call for a very specific kind of response or set of responses, most students liked the number of choices and options that were offered. Another aspect of the modules which evoked favorable response was the specific objectives included in each of the modules.

3. Two instructional approaches of a somewhat diverse nature--the open classroom technique and a set of instructional modules--can be successfully combined in a university classroom setting. The open classroom techniques tend to promote divergent thinking and freedom of expression, while the instructional modules provide specific objectives for learning. Each approach, then, satisfies in its way a different essential ingredient of a learning situation--one, the need to establish specific objectives; the other, the need to allow for options in learning.
4. It does seem to be possible to combine an open classroom and instructional module approach so as to accommodate a variety of student learning styles. An essential technique for so doing seems to be the use of a multi-media approach to instruction, both on an individual basis and for

group situations. Through the variety of options available in the module experiences, the learner has the opportunity to select the learning method which will be most appropriate to him.

5. A combined open-classroom and instructional module approach used in a course in Children's Literature can result in the students' carrying away from that course a positive attitude, not only to the class itself, but to children's literature as a whole. The feasibility of this combination seems to allow the student enough freedom and options so that his interest and enthusiasm are quite strong for the subject itself as well as the class procedures.
6. It does, then, seem feasible to use the set of instructional modules developed at Michigan State as a basis for instruction in a Children's Literature class. The positive results achieved and the evaluation procedures tend to verify this conclusion.

#### Implications

1. Students do seem to assimilate a substantial amount of information through the instructional modules. Each module calls for the use of some kind of media combined with an experience which



results in the acquisition of a specific set of information. Over the course of the term each student completed ten of these modules over ten different aspects of children's literature. Through completion of these tasks, a substantial amount of information apparently had been acquired by most of the students. This approach, combined with extensive class discussion, small group activities and discussions, and individual reading, would seem to account for a substantial amount of content being assimilated.

2. An important aspect of the instructional modules which may explain the students' positive attitudes is the great variety of experiences which are included in the modules. Each student can design his own particular independent study as he pursues the sets of modules. His interests, abilities, and learning style are likely to be compatible with several of the possible modules for each genre. It would seem, then, that if the modules do individualize the learning of the subject, they will evoke positive attitudes.
3. The instructional module approach and the open classroom technique both received positive evaluations from the students in this study. Learning is not as likely to occur without the

stimulation of an evocative environment and appealing materials, and most students seem to respond to direction in their learning experiences. These needs were satisfied by the modules. Students also need to interact and express themselves freely and openly. This need, too, was recognized and served by the open classroom approach. The students felt neither stifled nor disoriented; rather, they expressed good feelings for both classroom approaches.

4. The positive response to the multi-media approach to the class was due to two factors: First, the audio and visual aids were selected carefully for their relevance and artistic quality. Students were exposed to the very best that was available in this area. Second: in the case of the modules, the individual student selected modules with a media experience when and if he wanted. If visual experiences were most effective, then he might choose this media several times. The student had the privilege of selecting the means by which he learned. This combination of good quality media and the freedom to choose produced good results as shown by the students' responses.

5. Students expressed good reactions to the class. But perhaps more important, they expressed good feelings for children's literature as an area of study. This might be true for the following reasons: (1) the instructor's enthusiasm was noted by the students in their journals, and this was a positive force for student interest in the subject; (2) the books which were read by the students were usually from bibliographies of recommended books representing the very best and latest of children's books; (3) their interacting in class acted as a catalyst for interest in children's books as they listened to and observed their classmates' interest in reading.
6. There was a large collection of children's books and professional literature available in the building where the class meetings were held. This allowed for self-selection of books which contributed to the individualized nature of the class.
7. Because the content of the course seemed to be substantially assimilated by the students, because the students reacted to the instructional modules with favorable attitudes, and because the students expressed positive attitudes toward the

class and toward children's literature, then it would seem to be entirely feasible to use the instructional modules in a children's literature class.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

1. A study might be conducted to determine the effectiveness of using instructional modules in a Children's Literature class with other class approaches for example, one exemplifying a teaching technique, or one using a more fully open-classroom approach.
2. The evaluation instruments used in this study might be administered in a Children's Literature class where the approach is traditional. That is, a class in which students are required to attend, the focus is on the lecture approach, and final examinations are used. The attitudes in such a class might be distinctly more or less positive than in the class conducted in the present study.
3. The open classroom technique might be implemented as a classroom technique combined with various sets of instructional modules in a teacher education course. (This might be particularly appropriate in the various methods courses in

the Elementary Education Department.) Since this study has suggested that open classroom techniques do seem to be a successful approach in the university classroom, both from the standpoint of the amount of information the students were able to acquire and the standpoint of the general attitudes with which they completed the term, then perhaps the approach should be attempted with other education classes. The fact that so many students wrote in their journals that they had never experienced this kind of approach before in their college careers, and, what is more, that they liked the approach exceedingly well, tends to reinforce the idea that this combination of approaches might be more commonly used at the university level.

4. Models of instructional techniques and procedures might be devised and implemented in other aspects of teacher education. Students in this study often expressed the idea that they are continually concerned about how they are going to translate theory into practice. If they are able to observe their education instructors acting as models of educational excellence--that is, employing the instructional techniques they describe, then this might give them a much

idea of how various educational techniques may be actually implemented in the classroom.

### Discussion

From a personal standpoint, the researcher looks back over the term's work in Education 325c with genuine pleasure. Partly because the experience has been so completely pleasant for her in so many ways, but mainly because she genuinely felt the students found so much pleasure--and even excitement--in their study of children's literature through the various instructional approaches undertaken for the purposes of this study. The attitude instruments designed for the study all indicated the students' positive response to the class and to the content "covered" in the class. The researcher is happy to be able to say that her observations of the students during the course of the term and her conversations with them at its conclusion definitely support these more formal indicators of the students' feelings. The students did indeed seem to find real satisfaction in the course and also seem to learn a good deal about children's literature.

Perhaps all teachers find their content area exciting, but it seems to the researcher that the area of children's literature offers particularly stimulating fare for students. The books themselves, in the main, are attractive, beautifully illustrated, well written,

and filled with concepts and ideas that make for interesting discussions, even for adults. Many of the new children's books are remarkably different in approach from the more standard titles, and some might even be called controversial. Not only the books themselves, but the new directions and trends of the field of children's literature as a whole offer provocative topics for discussions. If the course turned out to be stimulating for the students, some of the credit must undoubtedly go to the instructional approaches used in this study. But it must be said that the children's books themselves stimulated a great deal of interest in and of themselves.

When positive attitudes begin to develop within a class, that attitude sometimes becomes infectious. At least in this study that seemed to be true. The small group sessions allowed the students first to get acquainted, then many became friends--and began to "talk books" with each other in a "real," non-academic sense. And they helped each other with their work and reinforced each other's efforts. The class became a real unit; it "jelled," as they say. As the term went on, the researcher simply joined in with the students as a fellow class member, giving ideas and suggestions. The researcher found herself thinking as the term went on, "This is the way it's really 'spoed' to be."

A key idea in the class was that almost everyone seemed to feel a sense of success about the class. Even those students who received lower final grades seemed to feel good about the class in general. Most of the class members came to the class with remarkable regularity. In spite of the fact that attendance was not taken, absenteeism was very low. Students apparently liked to come to the class even though they were free to do otherwise. Other aspects of the class which should be mentioned are:

1. Class size: The class numbered thirty-three, and this was a reasonable number with which to work with the techniques which were used. It would be unwise for the class to be larger than thirty-five as the group interaction would probably diminish.
2. Grading: The grading system at Michigan State University requires that each student be given a numerical grade ranging from 4.0 to 0.0. This necessitates devising grading systems within a class and detracts from a personal response instrument such as the journals. Yet, some basis for a grade must be found. The modules do lend themselves to the numerical grading system somewhat better but they, too, are difficult to assess under this system.



3. The stress in this course is mainly on the newer publications in children's literature and the availability of these titles is somewhat limited. With the large number of students enrolled in various sections of this course the pressure to obtain materials often detracts from the pleasure of using them.
4. The heterogeneous aspect of the class in Education 325c is advantageous. The nature of the class calls for varieties of responses and experiences. Some students have experience with children while others do not. Some are voracious readers while others have read very little. Their various childhood backgrounds and school experiences all add interest and variety to the class.
5. The time block for this particular class was fifty minutes, three times a week. With the open-classroom technique and the emphasis on the modules, a longer and more flexible class period would have been advantageous.

An approach, such as this, with its many facets, needs to be refined and polished through many consecutive terms. Almost everything that was attempted in this particular study was new--new to the researcher and new to the students. New groups and new materials would offer other challenges and different approaches.

Basically, though, the original questions which were raised at the beginning of the study were answered affirmatively. That is: (1) the students did assimilate a reasonable amount of content or information while using the instructional modules; (2) the students did emerge with positive attitudes toward the modules; and (3) the students did express positive responses toward the class and children's literature. It seemed, then, that it is, indeed, feasible to use instructional modules in a Children's Literature course.

#### Summary

In this study an attempt was made to try a number of approaches which might provide an effective teaching model for the teaching of children's literature. The approaches were devised and carried out to ascertain the feasibility of using these approaches in the teaching of a Children's Literature course, both on the undergraduate and graduate levels. The study was to propose a teaching model--one which would be feasible and effective in the teaching of children's literature.

The major focus in this study was on the methods of individualizing instruction for the students in the course. A major means of accomplishing this individualization was through the implementation of a set of instructional modules. The modules were designed to provide a number of options and choices for the students and

allowed them to pursue their studies with a high degree of independence. The modules also served as a basis for small group and large group activities. The specificity of the objectives included within each of the modules supplied very definite goals for the intended learning of the students, although the options and choices allowed the students to pursue the objectives in a variety of ways. The purpose of this study was to demonstrate the feasibility of using instructional modules in a Children's Literature class.

Along with the strategy of using instructional modules, the overall style of the class in which the modules were used was that of a modified open classroom. Some of the aspects of the open classroom used were:

(1) class sessions were informal; (2) student participation and interaction were basic instructional techniques; (3) small group discussions and activities were frequently used; (4) the teacher role was that of a resource person; (5) individual learning styles were taken into account insofar as the modules provided great varieties of experiences from which to choose; (6) interaction between the instructor and the students was stimulated by journals, and (7) openness and freedom to express ideas and feelings were fostered by the classroom atmosphere.

Multi-media were the means by which much of the information was transmitted to the students. Many of the

modules called for viewing of films and filmstrips which were replicas of children's books or presented discussions of children's literature. Tapes were also used extensively, as well as video tapes. Group presentations included films concerning picture books, graphic arts, poetry, folktales, and fantasy. Resource people spoke on topics concerning censorship and folk literature.

The students were encouraged to experience working with children and books directly whenever possible. Many modules called for these first-hand experiences. For instance, a module might have suggested to the student that he read aloud to a group of youngsters and then record their responses to the story. Many of the students had daily access to elementary school classrooms and were anxious to relay their observations and experiences with literature and the children.

Evaluation procedures were focused on several questions: First, an attempt was made to determine how successful the class had been in relaying a certain body of information concerning children's literature to the students. Second, students were asked to give subjective evaluations concerning the use of the modules and the general classroom procedures. Third, the students' attitudes toward the modules and the class were ascertained through several instruments developed for the study.

In regard to the first question concerning the extent to which students gathered a certain amount of information about children's literature, a teacher-made objective test traditionally used in Children's Literature classes at Michigan State was administered to the students at the end of the term. The students had not prepared in any way for the test in advance, nor had there been any "teaching to test." The mean score achieved in this instrument was 74 per cent, and the median score was 73 per cent. The results were interpreted to be positive, since they seemed to indicate that the students had acquired a substantial amount of information about children's literature, even though there had been no emphasis in this kind of learning during the course of the term.

In regard to the question concerning a subjective evaluation of the modules and the general class procedures, the Module Rating Form indicated positive attitudes in 89 per cent of the responses. In other words, a large majority of the students did respond favorably to the use of instructional modules. Their written responses in their journals also showed the same trend, even though there were criticisms of their specificity and somewhat restricted aspects. There was an overwhelming indication that the instructional modules were desirable as a part of the class.

The Student Attitude Instrument, which was designed to obtain student's subjective responses to a number of aspects of the course yielded a majority of positive replies. The average total positive responses was 92 per cent. On the basis of this instrument, 92 per cent of the responses were positive.

It would seem that it is entirely feasible to use instructional modules with a Children's Literature class. The modules allow for individualizing instruction, they seem to enable students to gather a certain amount of factual information and they foster positive attitudes toward the area of children's literature.

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

EDUCATION 325c CHILDREN'S LITERATURE  
MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST

## APPENDIX A

### EDUCATION 325c CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

#### MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST

Directions: After deciding on the best response to each item, blacken the corresponding space on your answer sheet. If you change your mind, erase your first mark completely.

1. One of the best ways to help children to develop a concept of books as living literature is to:
  - a. have the children all read certain required classics.
  - b. have the children read biographies of famous Americans.
  - c. have the children dramatize the stories.
  - d. help the children learn about authors and illustrators.
2. The primary difference between modern fantasy and folk literature is that:
  - a. the folk tales are longer.
  - b. the folk tales are more idealistic and romantic.
  - c. modern fantasy is made up by authors, while in folk literature the true origin is unknown.
  - d. in modern fantasy all the characters are believable.
3. The primary characteristic of good realistic fiction for children would be:

- a. inclusion of psychological aspects of growth and development of particular age levels.
  - b. a type of writing easily understood by the children; e.g., very simple and "down to earth" language.
  - c. an immediate emotional involvement situation exemplified by good literary characteristics.
  - d. an unusual style and format to add excitement to everyday living experiences.
4. Which of the following quotations or statements does not correctly describe an important trend in modern children's books?
- a. "the realm of literature is the total gamut of experience in life."
  - b. many children's books present one-sided character development in modern children's books.
  - c. many children's books tell it "like it is."
  - d. many styles of art are used in picture books.
5. The first and strongest (and likewise most universal) appeal of poetry for children is probably:
- a. its nonsense and humor
  - b. its melody and movement
  - c. its story element
  - d. its sensory content
6. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of some poetry, and that which may cause some children to dislike it, is:
- a. its story element
  - b. its form
  - c. its use of figurative language
  - d. its rhythmic structure
7. When using fantasy with very young children, it is important that they:
- a. see the fantasy and identify with it.
  - b. distinguish between what is fantasy and what is reality.
  - c. analyze the story.
  - d. find a worthy character with whom to identify.



8. In choosing books for the classroom or school library, the teacher needs to be aware of the fact that children read primarily:
  - a. to obtain information.
  - b. to find solutions to problems.
  - c. for recreation and entertainment.
  - d. to develop word-attack skills.
  
9. In regional literature the author shows likeable people who are wrestling with the problems of prejudice, religious belief, or mores of a particular group. The author, however, must be careful to:
  - a. restrict emotionality and avoid language or dialect which may deter from respect.
  - b. present these people and situations in such a way that their differences are evident.
  - c. make the theme extremely powerful throughout the book so that point will not be missed by the reader.
  - d. point out the situations and beliefs of the people to show why they live basically segregated from the rest of our society.
  
10. As children learn about people in other lands through their books, it is essential to keep in mind that:
  - a. fictional stories are not appropriate.
  - b. only factual books should be used.
  - c. insights can be gained through both books of fact and books of fiction.
  - d. books cannot help children to project themselves into another culture.
  
11. As children are helped to interpret literature, many will express themselves through art experiences. The teacher should keep in mind that:
  - a. illustrations must be accurate.
  - b. children of all ages need opportunities to express understandings of books they read through varied media.
  - c. creativity can be imposed.
  - d. posters are the best way for children to use this means of expression.

12. The least acceptable device to motivate children's reading is:
- a. chart comparing number of books read by the children.
  - b. diorama constructed by the children.
  - c. wall hanging constructed by the teacher.
  - d. oral report by the children.
13. With reference to children's special interests in the selection of reading material, it is important to keep in mind that:
- a. most children have one special interest.
  - b. most children go through interest stages.
  - c. most children keep the same special interest all through school.
  - d. most children have the same interests.
14. Which of the following interpretive activities would be the least effective in leading the reader to a better understanding of the author's message:
- a. creative dramatics (unstructured).
  - b. making illustrations of pertinent episodes in the story.
  - c. oral summary of the storyline.
  - d. composing an additional episode.
15. Themes of love, reassurance, and achievement are most typically found in:
- a. fanciful tales.
  - b. stories of family life.
  - c. informational materials.
  - d. picture books.
16. Throughout the development of literature for children, from the very earliest publications to the present:
- a. the world of fantasy has been criticized by adults as unhealthy.
  - b. instruction has been a primary factor.
  - c. the values of society have been reflected in their books.
  - d. the moralist has had a primary influence on all books.

17. The mood and message the author is trying to convey in literature is called:
- a. the plot
  - b. the format
  - c. theme
  - d. style
18. The book which is commonly called "America's first picture book" is:
- a. Birds by Brian Wildsmith
  - b. Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter
  - c. Millions of Cats by Wanda Gag
  - d. Winnie the Pooh by A. A. Milne
19. Investigations of the learning process have yielded general agreements on conditions that facilitate learning. This, of course, is extremely relevant in planning the literature program. Which of the following most appropriately demonstrates the above principle?
- a. give success experiences by always agreeing with the lecturer.
  - b. readiness is influenced by the authoritarian figure.
  - c. learning through extrinsic motivation is better than learning through intrinsic motivation.
  - d. the learner reacts as a whole.
20. Reading interests of children vary most markedly according to:
- a. social background
  - b. economic status
  - c. age and sex
  - d. reading ability.
21. There is great concern on the part of school librarians and teachers with regard to good book selection for children. Which of the following concerns probably makes it most imperative that books be chosen carefully?

- a. the time of childhood is limited and children read comparatively few books during this span of years.
  - b. children prefer books that are chosen by teachers and librarians.
  - c. the span of childhood is increasing in the 20th century.
  - d. there are certain books which should be read by all children.
22. Changes in the content of Children's Literature over the past three centuries have been due primarily to:
- a. the changing attitudes of society.
  - b. the desires of the children.
  - c. political and governmental influences.
  - d. the subject matter available.
23. Illustrations in children's books must be within the child's realm of understanding. Therefore, the illustrations should:
- a. be concerned with well-known facts.
  - b. add vicarious experience through the text and illustrations of the book.
  - c. deal with insignificant subject and objects.
  - d. be realistic and in muted colors.
24. A myth may be defined as:
- a. an unauthentic story about historical things presented as historical facts.
  - b. a story about human heroes who depict national ideas.
  - c. a story which explains unknown things about man and nature.
  - d. a story which tells about big, robust people epitomizing ideals.
25. The Randolph J. Caldecott Medal is awarded for:
- a. the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children.
  - b. the most distinguished contribution in international literature for children.
  - c. the most distinguished American picture book for children published in the United States.
  - d. the most distinguished picture book published for children in a given year any place in the world.

26. A fable may be defined as:
- a brief didactic tale in which an animal or inanimate object speaks as if it were human.
  - a narrative poem which expresses moral values of a society through the action of a single character.
  - a story dealing with men's relationships with their gods.
  - a tale idealizing a national hero.
27. Perhaps the most important element to be considered when choosing a picture story book is:
- that the facts are accurate.
  - that the pictures appropriately portray the text material.
  - that the pictures add details not included in the text.
  - that the story has worthwhile characters.
28. A form of poetry which utilizes seventeen syllables in its structure is:
- cinquain
  - haiku
  - limerick
  - diamante
29. The Newbery Medal was proposed to be awarded annually for:
- the most distinguished work in characterization for American children's literature.
  - the most distinguished American picture book for children.
  - the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children.
  - the most distinguished contribution for an author's first work in the field of children's literature.
30. During the past decade, the newest trend in the field of children's literature has been:
- to present fanciful fiction so that creativity and imagination will be enhanced.
  - to deal with social problems realistically as in the book, The Jazz Man.

- c. to encourage more informational books so that children will know more when they become adults.
  - d. to make poetry fun and nonsensical so children will enjoy it.
31. When recommending books for children to read, the teacher's primary consideration should be that:
- a. the classics and award books represent the best reading material for children.
  - b. book lists are very necessary since children are incapable of selecting worthwhile literature.
  - c. maturation levels differ in children, and book selections must be individualized.
  - d. children of the same chronological age are generally of the same physical and mental age, and therefore the same books can be used throughout the class.
32. Critical analysis of literature is part of literary appreciation and:
- a. should be demanded at an early age so children are more receptive to analysis at higher levels.
  - b. comes with increasing maturity and development from unconscious enjoyment to self-conscious appreciation.
  - c. is a natural development that needs no emphasis by the teacher.
  - d. can be accomplished only by studying the author's technique.
33. With regard to the accuracy of a piece of informational literature:
- a. the classroom teacher cannot determine accuracy.
  - b. the copyright date indicates accuracy.
  - c. the only clue to accuracy is the reputation of the author.
  - d. teachers and children may check accuracy in many ways.
34. Trends in modern children's literature include all but one:
- a. high level of writing and illustrations.
  - b. movement toward representational art in literature.
  - c. reflection of moral and ethical values of society.
  - d. little emphasis on humor.

35. Essentially the most valuable principle in motivating children to read good literature is:
  - a. a teacher's own enthusiasm and skill in enhancing the contents of good literature for enjoyment, gathering facts, etc.
  - b. exposing them to a broad variety of good literature.
  - c. making beautiful bulletin boards and visual aids that encourage children to read.
  - d. assigning the right kinds of books for children to read in making book reports, science projects, etc.
36. A group of fifth graders have expressed a dislike for poetry. As their teacher you will:
  - a. read them some of the lovely lyrical poetry of childhood.
  - b. ignore poetry and read stories.
  - c. introduce them to narrative and humorous verse.
  - d. suggest that they compose some poems of their own.
37. The first step in planning a literature curriculum in the elementary school is to:
  - a. identify specific activities centering around the use of children's literature.
  - b. write a curriculum guide stating objectives, activities and evaluation techniques for the literature teachers.
  - c. develop a commitment of the faculty to the importance of teaching literature.
  - d. establish a well equipped school library staffed by a professional librarian.
38. The main objective of a biography which is written for children should be to:
  - a. present a story with continuity.
  - b. state facts in a well-organized fashion.
  - c. help the child understand and know the person as a human being.
  - d. present only favorable traits of the person.
39. Which of the following is the primary difference between purely informational books and realistic fiction?
  - a. one is more plentiful for all age groups.
  - b. one is more interesting and meaningful than the other.

- c. one presents no story in connection with the facts presented.
  - d. one can be used with curricular areas of study while the other cannot.
40. When introducing children to historical fiction, it is important to remember that:
- a. time concepts are hard for children to understand.
  - b. history is made up of facts.
  - c. children generally dislike history.
  - d. historical fiction cannot be used until later elementary years.
41. Anthropomorphism is rejected in:
- a. biographical fiction
  - b. scientific informational books
  - c. historical fiction
  - d. science fiction
42. Which of the following best represents an appropriate guideline to follow when selecting poetry for children?
- a. poems may deal with any topic.
  - b. the poem should communicate experience by appealing to the thoughts and feelings of children.
  - c. symbolic poetry is suitable to use with children.
  - d. if a poem appeals to the teacher, then it is appropriate for the children.
43. Biographical and historical fiction:
- a. must be written in a factual, direct style.
  - b. are usually told from a child's viewpoint so children can more easily identify with it.
  - c. don't need to be based on fact because by definition they are fiction.
  - d. are good for entertainment only.
44. In order to help children cultivate an interest in poetry, a teacher should:
- a. saturate the children with poetry.
  - b. read poetry at least once a week.
  - c. have the children write their own poetry.
  - d. have children read the poetry to themselves.
45. With reference to the inclusion of a "story hour" for children in later elementary grades, a teacher should:



- a. have a certain hour planned each day and stick to it.
  - b. have a planned but flexible schedule.
  - c. have a story hour when the children request it.
  - d. suggest books for children to read, but recognize that a story hour is inappropriate at this level.
46. Probably most children have their first introduction to poetry through:
- a. narrative verse.
  - b. humorous verse.
  - c. Mother Goose rhymes.
  - d. lyric verse.
47. Realistic fiction may be defined as something that could have happened but didn't. When evaluating a piece of realistic fiction for children, the primary consideration should be:
- a. the adult appeal because children need to be introduced to the real world.
  - b. the relationship of theme, plot and character because children need to find identity with the story.
  - c. the author's qualifications because children need to learn to choose works by credited writers.
  - d. the setting because children will reject stories which contain unfamiliar settings.
48. In helping to create the proper environment for reading in the classroom, a teacher should:
- a. keep a small number of books available throughout the year.
  - b. gather books specifically geared to the grade level of the class.
  - c. provide a wide variety of subjects and reading levels in books.
  - d. require certain books to be read by all children.
49. A characteristic of modern realistic fiction for children differing from this same type of literature for adults is that in the former there is usually:
- a. a saccharin but untrue presentation of life.
  - b. a true picture of life depicted but problems are unresolved.
  - c. realistic situations are viewed with humor.
  - d. a realistic picture of life is depicted, with at least some promise that the problem can be resolved.

50. Which of the following most accurately describes the most distinguishing feature of a piece of literature which may be termed a "classic" for children?
- a. it has been read by at least two generations.
  - b. it embodies a universal truth.
  - c. it embodies social ideals which the society values.
  - d. it is perpetuated as a "classic" by the children who read it.
51. Which of the following is not always a criterion for evaluating poetry?
- a. melody
  - b. words
  - c. rhyme
  - d. rhythm
52. The main purpose of a book report should be:
- a. to evaluate the child's reading comprehension.
  - b. to give the teacher an opportunity to check whether the child knows the plot.
  - c. to integrate writing skills with reading.
  - d. to provide the child an opportunity to react to or interpret that which he has just read.
53. Because children in middle grades (4-6) have a high interest in collections, the book collection will offer them:
- a. wide variety of books.
  - b. series books.
  - c. continued stories.
  - d. humorous books.
54. The distinguishing feature of all folk literature, regardless of type, is that it:
- a. contains an ethical truth.
  - b. is of the oral tradition.
  - c. has great dramatic qualities.
  - d. contains an element of the supernatural.
55. The primary purpose of illustrations in a child's book is:
- a. to increase the child's enjoyment of a story.
  - b. to make the content more concrete in the child's mind.
  - c. to add to the attractiveness of the book.
  - d. to supplement to the fantasy and humor of the story.

56. The main purpose of using fanciful fiction is:
- to acquaint children with the world of make believe.
  - to encourage imaginative thinking on the child's part.
  - to give them enjoyment in a good balance of reading materials and styles.
  - to learn more about children and cultures of other lands.
57. The literary device of having the story characters speak in their dialects is likely to:
- encourage the young reader to acquire poor speech habits.
  - present a stereotyped portrait of members of a minority group.
  - allow the reader to more fully understand the story characters.
  - accomplish nothing.
58. A good information book must, above all:
- have good illustrations.
  - contain a good story.
  - be written by a credible authority.
  - be interesting to all.
59. The first book of instruction which was intended for children was called:
- The Battledore
  - The Pretty Pocketbook
  - The Horn Book
  - The New England Primer
60. Children's creative writing may be fostered through exposure to literature. Such activities enable the teacher to:
- discriminate between excellent and poor students.
  - learn more about children's books.
  - tell what books the children have or have not read.
  - develop a scale showing the degree of creativity of which the children are capable.
61. Perhaps the greatest justification for the utilization of folk literature in the elementary school is:

- a. to teach basic truths.
  - b. to provide information about cultural mores.
  - c. for enjoyment.
  - d. to reiterate the old verities that goodness triumphs over evil.
62. It has often been said that the interaction of the reader with a book is unique to that person. This implies that:
- a. it is almost impossible to convey ideas with the written word, for only the author knows the true meaning.
  - b. each person brings different experiences to the words and pictures he perceives.
  - c. the written word may help us to understand self but not others.
  - d. the reader has an obligation to interpret the author's words accurately.
63. If you were allocated only money enough to purchase a limited number of new books for your sixth grade class it would be best to select books which contain:
- a. information material.
  - b. a variety of material.
  - c. fictional material.
  - d. factual and realistic material.
64. Which of the following statements reflect an unsound educational practice:
- a. an interpretive activity should encourage and permit self-selection of books by children.
  - b. an interpretive activity should provide the reluctant reader with a temporary escape from the task of reading a book.
  - c. an interpretive activity should be restricted to one aspect of the total school curriculum.
  - d. an interpretive activity should cause the talented learner to take time out from his reading to appraise that which he has read.
65. Perhaps one of the best ways to help young children to understand and grasp historical concepts is to:
- a. begin with the future and move toward the past.
  - b. start with the Greeks and move forward in history.
  - c. start with the present and move into related aspects of the past.
  - d. start with pioneer units as children enjoy the excitement of this era.

APPENDIX B

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE 325c CLASS OUTLINE,  
SPRING TERM, 1971

## APPENDIX B

### CHILDREN'S LITERATURE 325c CLASS OUTLINE,

SPRING TERM, 1971

Instructor: Mrs. Joan Trezise  
Telephone: 485-9868  
Office Hours: 1:30-2:30 M,W,F

Text: Children's Literature in the Elementary School by Huck and Kuhn is suggested as an excellent supplementary aid for this class.

The Course: Education, 325c covers a broad spectrum of Children's Literature. We will be investigating these general areas:

Realistic Fiction  
Picture Books  
Historical Fiction  
Biography  
Information Books  
Folk Literature  
Modern Fantasy-Humor  
Poetry  
History of Children's Literature, Classics  
Motivational and Interpretative Activities

#### Student Responsibilities:

- a. There are sets of instructional modules for each of the above areas. These modules offer a great variety of options so that each person may choose his course of study to fit his own needs and interests. Modules may be completed as each area of study is completed in class.

- b. Each class member may keep a journal of his personal impressions of the class, reading of children's books, films seen, class activities, and any other aspect which may call for an individual response. These comments may be highly personal, subjective, and individual. The journal represents the students' involvement in this class.

Evaluation: There will be no examinations. The final grades will be based upon the quality of work done on the instructional modules and in the journals.





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