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AS THEY PARTICIPATE IN A
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Susan I. McMahon

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BOOK CLUB: A CASE STUDY OF A GROUP OF FIFTH-GRADERS AS THEY PARTICIPATE IN A LITERATURE-BASED READING PROGRAM

Volume I

By

Susan I. McMahon

ABSTRACT

BOOK CLUB: A CASE STUDY OF A GROUP OF FIFTH-GRADERS AS
THEY PARTICIPATE IN A LITERATURE-BASED READING PROGRAM

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This study was conducted within a line of research on the development of
a community of successful, reflective readers in a fifth-grade classroom. The
research is in response to (1) the movement toward literature-based instruction in
literacy and (2) the need to explore the changing role of the teacher, the type of
instruction which may be appropriate, and the relationships among changes in
teachers' roles, instructional support, and students' ways of responding to text.
The study was grounded within a social constructivist theoretical perspective and
influenced by related research on students' response to literature and related
instructional interventions. The questions were: How will elementary students
respond to text in student-led discussion groups? What roles will students adopt
as they interact in groups? What influence will instruction have on student
interactions?

To address these questions, a case study was developed for a group of five
students as they participated in a series of literacy events over a ten-week period.
Student written responses, field notes, transcripts of discussions and interviews
formed the data set of student responses across contexts, texts, and time.
Analysis focused on the group of five students as they met together, then
separated to contribute to two other groups. Since these groups represented

a range of verbal and written reactions to texts, they provided contrastive information about student response.

From these analyses, three findings have emerged. First, students' interaction patterns changed as a result of: (a) group composition, (b) the instructional focus, and (c) the activities surrounding reading. Second, students adopted various roles on their own in their small groups. Finally, the instructional focus highly influenced group interactions.

Findings from this work indicate that a literature-based reading program needs to achieve balance between instruction focused on personal response and on reading skills and strategies. Further, the adoption of student-led discussion groups runs counter to the norms established in most classrooms, so students need: (a) instruction on these new interaction styles and (b) time to read, write, and discuss literary topics and themes to allow their responses to develop.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As a social constructivist, I believe that no text is the result of a single author's work. Instead, it results from several interactions with oral and written texts over long periods of time. This dissertation is no exception. While it bears my name, the list of contributors is significant. The second chapter recognizes the many scholars whose work furthered my thinking; however, many individuals made significant contributions daily as I considered the issues related to this study. It is those people I would like to acknowledge in this space.

First, I could never have completed this study without the cooperation of the five fifth-graders who willingly allowed me to sit in with their Book Club group, take notes on their discussions, read their logs, and ask them numerous questions. While their real names are not Bart, Chris, Lissa, Martisse, or Mondo, they selected these names and can recognize their voices in this text. All of these students made my data collection enjoyable. They welcomed me into their classroom and their group and confided many of their ideas and concerns to me. Without such a cooperative group, I could never have completed this document.

While the students were of paramount importance in my data collection, they were able to participate because Laura Pardo allowed me into her classroom. Two or three times a week, I arrived with tape recorders, video

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camera, note pads, and my questions, regardless of the school climate that day, and recorded everything that occurred during reading. Laura always smiled as I entered, welcoming me to her room. She spent countless hours each week discussing the Book Club group with me. As a result, her insight and knowledge are reflected within this dissertation.

Even though I adopted a social constructivist theoretical perspective as I conducted this study, I never knew what these terms meant before beginning my studies at Michigan State; however, Jim Gavelek changed this. As my mentor while I tried to understand social constructivism, Jim suggested selected readings, discussed the ideas within, and spent hours helping me represent my thinking in nonverbal ways. He also allowed me to sit in on one of his classes as I tried to refine my knowledge while working on the dissertation. His teaching has not only helped me complete this dissertation, but also has changed how I view the world in general and education in particular.

When I began my doctoral program I had no idea how valuable one's committee would be. My committee members each contributed many hours to furthering my education. While all three -- Linda Anderson, Susan Florio-Ruane, and Laura Roehler -- helped me plan a rigorous, meaningful program, pushed my early thinking about a dissertation topic, and spent countless hours reading and commenting on chapters I had written; each also contributed in unique ways to my thinking. Linda always made time for lunch to talk about my design and how I was progressing. Susan continually asked thoughtful questions about the interactions and how I was making sense of them. Laura pursued

ideas related to instruction and teacher education. No one could have had a more supportive, knowledgeable committee than this one. Each of them has contributed to the many aspects of this dissertation and to my own professional growth.

Every dissertator needs someone who provides guidance, leadership, and pushes for the highest standards. I was fortunate to have this role filled by Taffy Raphael. The notion of studying children interacting in small, teacher-less groups as they discussed literature was hers. She mentioned this as a possible dissertation idea and together we planned what such a program might look like. As co-principal investigators on a larger project working with teachers to investigate a literature-based reading program, Taffy and I worked as equals. Such an experience taught me much about research on many levels. Further, she was able to "change hats" so to speak to shift from my co-researcher to my advisor, recognizing I still needed guidance with conducting a study. For the dissertation, she read numerous drafts of my work, writing detailed comments about how to improve. While such leadership and modeling helped me complete a dissertation of which I am proud, the relationship also provided me with a friend and colleague for life. Truly without her, this dissertation would never have been completed.

Anyone having completed such a research project realizes that supportive friends are essential. Sarah McCarthey was such a friend. She listened to my ideas, provided new ways to think about the data, and acted as an editor. Sarah and I shared much of the doctoral program together; our dissertations were no

exception.

Finally, a social constructivist recognizes those "knowledgeable others" who have helped shape and develop thinking from childhood. My mother, who spent many hours reading books to me as a child, not only provided me housing on my much reduced income while attending school, but support and encouragement while I worked. I am sure there were days she wished I would sit to talk instead of closing myself in with my computer and data, but she never interfered. To Kim and Larry who offered support and encouragement throughout and to my niece, Samantha, who could make me laugh when no one else could and helped me keep my perspective; I am forever grateful. Finally, my father, who did not live to see me complete this degree, nevertheless contributed. It was his words of encouragement I heard somewhere in the recesses of my mind as I worked, telling me I could succeed at anything I tried.

I am sure there are many others who contributed in some way to the thinking that led to this dissertation -- teachers, friends, and acquaintances whose voices are among the many I hear as I think. Though their words are not easily attributed to any one person now, they certainly have contributed to my intellectual growth. To them, as well, I offer my thanks.

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CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE-BASED READING INSTRUCTION:
MORE THAN JUST A CHANGE IN MATERIALS READ

Recently, educators have called for a change from the current skills-based

approach to reading instruction to a literature-based one (R. C. Anderson,

Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1984; Cullinan, 1987). Such reform includes more

than merely a transfer from the use of basal readers and their accompanying

workbooks to the use of children's literature. Advocates for modifications in

current reading instruction are also supporting changes in the instructional

context that would alter significantly teaching and learning in elementary

classrooms. These reforms include: (a) the types of learning emphasized, (b) the

representations that both promote and assess learning, (c) the interactional

patterns encouraged in the classroom, and (d) the role of the teacher in the

children's learning.

The Types of Learning Stressed

Teachers reveal the types of learning stressed in many ways. Among these

of fundamental importance are the texts students read and the content of the

activities surrounding reading.

Most students in the United States currently learn to read through

instruction that relies heavily on the selections and accompanying materials in

basal reading series (Chall & Squire, 1991). While more recent editions use

available children's literature, many of the selections in the students' texts have been chosen or modified to teach reading. That is, they have been written to provide experience with word identification and vocabulary building. Even stories adopted from children's literature are frequently modified to teach some skills. As a result, these selections often do not provide a story structure children can easily follow nor are they particularly interesting (Goodman, Shannon, Freeman, & Murphy, 1988).

In contrast, children's literature is generally written to convey meaning through a story line. Vocabulary is chosen to emphasize multiple expressions, not repeated to provide practice nor chosen to emphasize a skill. Literature selections have interesting plots fashioned around established story structures. Advocates for change in reading argue that such selections will make reading more interesting, encourage students to choose to read, and, therefore, promote better readers (Cullinan, 1987; Huck, 1990).

In addition to criticizing the selections students read, critics of current reading instruction argue that the content of the activities associated with reading stress a type of learning that misrepresents the very nature of reading. Currently, reading instruction, as reflected in most basal reading series, emphasizes the acquisition of skills through the completion of individual work sheets (Anderson, et al., 1984). Frequently, teachers organize instructional time by assigning workbook pages to individual students while small homogenous groups of students read aloud and answer comprehension questions under the teacher's direction. Tests measure students' progress on individual skills as they move through the book. The learning emphasized is that of skill acquisition

(Anderson, et al., 1984; Goodman, et al., 1988).

Advocates for change argue that reading is more than the mastery of a series of component skills; rather, it is a process of meaning-making (Langer, 1989). Thus, it is critical that reading instruction have this meaning-making process as its primary focus, with instruction on relevant strategies and skills embedded within and subordinate to the creation of meaning. Students should learn that understanding text by connecting it to one's life and experiences constitutes an essential aspect of reading. The current practice of reading instruction frequently ignores this.

Key to this meaning-making process is the belief that reading is a transactive process between the reader and the text (Rosenblatt, 1978). If educators accept this belief in a transactive process, they may no longer privilege text over reader. That is, interpretation and meaning cannot be determined by any one person. Instead, the reading program must seek more balance by recognizing that each reader constructs her own meaning. Teachers can no longer consider only elements of the text for evidence of student learning, but need to consider the learner, herself, and the meaning she constructs.

The Representations Used to Promote and Assess Learning

A second aspect of concern among proponents for changes in reading instruction is what representations teachers promote and accept as indicators of student learning. Currently, the basal series' worksheets and tests required of all students constitute primary evidence of successful reading (Anderson et al., 1984; Goodman et al., 1988). These skills sheets and tests measure the acquisition of specific, isolated skills and strategies, often those unrelated to selections students

have read. Questions that follow or relate to specific selections usually focus on comprehension but frequently ask for a single, "correct" answer, leaving learners to assume that text interpretation is a narrow, fact-finding process.

Advocates for change argue that traditional worksheets and tests do not provide sufficient evidence of learning because they ignore both the social aspects of reading and an individual's process of interpretation and sense-making. Since each reader constructs meaning based on her own prior knowledge and experiences, multiple interpretations may be gained from and relevant to a single text. Worksheets or tests designed for generic learners ignore what a given child or group of children bring to the act of reading, as well as the context in which this occurs. By seeking one best answer, such assessments emphasize an inappropriate, narrow focus on what constitutes learning and how one defines learning from text. Therefore, to recognize the students' roles in constructing meaning, learners should have multiple means of demonstrating the broader range of what they have gained from reading a selection.

The Interactional Pattern

A third criticism made by advocates for change in reading instruction is the common classroom interactional pattern of teacher-initiated question, student response, and teacher evaluation found in most classrooms (Cazden, 1988; Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Tharpe and Gallimore, 1988). Critics argue that such patterns lead to two problems. First, students believe that reading is basically an act leading to a goal of one right answer. Second, such a stance promotes competition among students as they endeavor to find the answer the teacher wants and bid for a chance to show their knowledge (Short, 1990). Individual

student interests and interpretations, as well as opportunities to build upon each other's ideas and interpretations, are sacrificed for the "correct" answer. Students look to the teacher as the source for and judge of answers, and they ignore what knowledge they might gain from their peers.

In place of this more traditional interactional pattern, reformers argue that teachers should provide students more latitude in the questions they pursue as a part of reading. Instead of the questions found listed in a basal text, they argue both that teachers construct questions that recognize and promote individual student interests and that students seek answers to their own inquiries based on the purposes students themselves establish (Applebee & Langer, 1983; Bruner, 1978; Langer, 1986).

In addition to changes in teacher questions, proponents for change note that students learn form one another as well as from the teacher, so a reading program should provide opportunities for children to select topics for total class discussions and to interact with one another (Shore, 1990; Smith, 1986). Such reform requires significant alterations in the instructional context. Instead of homogeneously-grouped students interacting solely with the teacher, advocates for change argue that students should be: (a) grouped heterogeneously, (b) provided opportunities to contribute ideas about the direction and content of discussions, and (c) afforded a variety of occasions to interact. Such opportunities include whole group, small group, paired, and individual activities.

The Role of the Teacher

Finally, proponents for change assert that the role of the teacher must change as well. The teacher is essential to any change because she currently

determines the selections her students will read, the content and focus of the activities in which they engage, and the content and structure of their interactions. For any reform to be successful, the teacher's understanding of the purposes for change is fundamental. She is the master designer who plans and implements the program. If she abandons the basal, she must construct a reading program from scratch. That is, she must select the texts, plan the content and focus of the activities, modify the interactional patterns, and construct new assessment procedures for measuring learning. Further, advocates for change contend that learners need more input into what and how they will learn. The teacher need not act as the source of all knowledge but instead be a facilitator of learning by beginning with topics of interest to the child. As such, the teacher monitors student learning and ever-changing interests and plans activities to foster further growth.

As we consider proposals to change the nature of our reading programs, it becomes increasingly apparent that such reform is much more complicated than merely replacing the basal series with children's literature. These calls for reform suggest significant modifications to four major components of the instructional context: (a) what children learn, (b) how they demonstrate this learning, (c) how they interact as they learn, and (d) what the teacher does to foster literacy growth. Clearly, this is a call for a fundamental transformation. Despite the logic of many such arguments for reform, many questions about how to implement such a reorganization remain and require investigation.

The Book Club Study:
An Investigation of Literature-based Reading Instruction

The study described in the following chapters was created in response to calls for change in current practice in reading instruction. While numerous stories of successful change exist as teachers adopt literature-based reading programs (e.g., Cullinan, in press; Hansen, 1988; Short, 1991), little is known about how such evolutions occurred. That is, as fundamental change is implemented in the teacher's role and the instructional context, we know little about how students adjust to new roles and responsibilities, how students' adjustment is affected by the instructional context, and what implications we see in students' response to text.

Five fifth-grade students, participating in a literature-based reading program that reflected modifications in the instructional context, are the focus of this study. Specifically, the teacher altered the reading program by changing both the materials students read and the methods she used to teach reading. The materials consisted of trade books, recognized by those familiar with children's literature as well-written texts conveying plots and characterization that arouse student response. The instructional methods included: (a) learning to read in multiple ways, such as paired reading, silent reading, and reading aloud; (b) using multiple ways of representing ideas stimulated by the reading experience; (c) encouraging interactions in both whole class and student-led small group discussions; and (d) teaching that modeled a variety of response and helped children identify the process of response to text.

Any study begins with questions that emerge from prior work in areas

related to the topic studied, and this study is no exception. While the notion of a literature-based approach to reading may be relatively new, calls for reform in this area derive from many aspects of instruction and the body of potentially relevant prior research is vast. In Chapter Two, I review the four broad areas that most directly affected the development of this study, each of which considers a different aspect of the investigation. First, I examine the appropriateness of moving from a skills-based orientation as the foundation of the reading program to that of a literature-based approach, reviewing related research calling for reform in reading instruction, as well as a social constructivist theory which provides a theoretical basis for such change. Second, I examine the question of what we can expect from students as they respond to literature. The research related to this question explores the nature of students' response and the instructional context in which such response is facilitated. Third, I explore the nature of representations that might be used to assist students' response to text. Finally, I examine selected literature about peer groups. Together, this literature provides a basis for understanding the reasons such changes in reading instruction are critical and the nature of alternative ways of focusing young readers on: (a) the content of their texts, (b) the ways they represent their response, and (c) the ways in which they might interact within the context of a reading program.

As I explore these four areas of the literature, I return to the nature of the four components of the instructional context of reading instruction that advocates of reform have stressed: (a) the types of learning emphasized, (b) the representations that can be used to promote and to assess learning, (c) the

interactional patterns encouraged in classrooms, and (d) the role of the teacher. I address these four components of reform as they relate in each of the four broad areas of the literature review.

In Chapter Three, I focus on the methodological information specific to this study, including: (a) the context in which I conducted the study, (b) the participants, (c) the reading program, and (d) the methods of data collection and analysis. Chapters Four and Five present the analysis of the data collected over the ten-week period, focusing on two halves of a unit using literature set during World War II. Finally, in Chapter Six, I discuss the implications of the study and recommendations for future work.

I conducted this study of five fifth-grade students in an urban classroom while they participated in a literature-based reading program to pursue three different questions:

1.   How will elementary students respond to text in student-led discussion groups?

2.   What roles do students adopt as they interact in groups?

3.   What influences will the instructional context have on student interactions?

The next chapter consists of the review of the literature that guided the development of this study.

Chapter 2

A MOVEMENT TOWARD LITERATURE-BASED READING INSTRUCTION: WHAT DO WE KNOW AND WHAT DO WE NEED TO LEARN?

Since the movement to a literature-based reading program is relatively new, little research exists exploring how such programs are implemented in elementary classrooms. At the same time, a considerable body of literature suggests a need for change in current practices in reading instruction. This review focuses on the literature that addresses three questions that guided one current study: (a) What basis do we have, both in terms of current practice and theoretical perspectives about learning, to support the call for reform in reading education? (b) What basis do we have for advocating alternatives to current practice in students' written response to text? and (c) What basis do we have for considering alternatives to current grouping practices during reading instruction?

Views of Reading That Established Skills-based Instruction and the Resulting Criticism

The roots of the dominant skills-based approach to reading instruction can be traced both to behavioral theories of learning and to early cognitive models of reading that focused on decoding and word identification (Venesky, 1984). For example, Gough's model (1972) included eight steps before comprehension, all leading to the reader's identification of the word. He identified comprehension as simply "Merlin," a magical stage where the reader made sense of the text. As

others developed models of reading, they began to recognize its complexity by including memory and comprehension. For example, LaBerge and Samuels (1977) developed a model that included attention and comprehension as essential elements of reading but did not attempt to describe either one. Rumelhart's (1977) and Just and Carpenter's (1977) models stressed the interactive nature of making sense from text by identifying prior knowledge of words and language, stressing the role of memory in comprehending text but not delineating the mental strategies readers use to access or make use of prior knowledge. All of these models of reading attempted to explain how readers made sense of text by dividing the process into discrete skills.

More recently such models have come under attack because they ignore the more complex aspects of reading: (a) comprehension and the role of prior knowledge and experience, (b) reading as a social process, and (c) the relationship between reading and writing. Despite current criticism regarding the limited role word identification plays in reading comprehension, such designs have highly influenced methods of teaching reading because teachers, curriculum developers, and the popular basal reading programs, responded to such views, incorporating word identification and decoding as skill acquisition essential for successful reading. Because basals are the primary source of not only materials but also methods teachers use to teach reading (Chall & Squire, 1991) and because they have been slow to respond to new definitions of reading, they are often the focus of criticisms, such as an underemphasis of the meaning-making role of reading. Critics of the emphasis on words and skills argue for a literature-based approach, stating that children will learn to read best by reading

literature, not selections, adaptations, or excerpts in basal series.

As both teachers and researchers call for the inclusion of literature as the source of reading material for elementary children, they are calling for major changes, not only in the materials and methods used to teach reading, but also in our fundamental beliefs about how literacy is developed.

Researchers have studied current practice in American classrooms both through observations of instructional practice and the recommendations in teacher's editions of basal texts and accompanying workbooks (e.g. Goodman, 1986a, 1986b, 1988; Goodman et al., 1988; Harste, 1989; Hoffman & Roser, 1987; Peterson, 1989; Shannon & Goodman, 1989). Much of the criticism has focused on the instruction that results from the use of basal series, specifically that students spend too little time reading text and that the meaning of "reading" conveyed is as an accumulation of skills rather than a holistic process of constructing meaning. The result is students learning isolated skills, represented by completed work sheets and answers to teacher-directed questions. The teacher's role is to manage the program outlined by the basal series.

Time Spent Not Reading

Taylor, Frye, and Maruyama (1990) found that the time spent reading during the scheduled period in school contributed significantly to achievement gains. Despite the importance of this, studies have found that children are not spending sufficient time actually reading. In fact, Goodman (Goodman, Shannon, Freeman, & Murphy, 1988), a major critic of basal series, found that elementary-aged students spend only 10% to 15% of the instructional time devoted for reading actually engaged with a text. In addition, R. C. Anderson

and his colleagues in their summary of the research on reading instruction (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1984) found that students spent only 7 to 15 minutes a day reading independently.

Instead of devoting time to reading, students spend approximately 70% of time allocated for reading on completing independent seat work, consisting of workbook activities and skill sheets. Such activities demand only perfunctory levels of reading, never requiring students to draw conclusions or reason at higher levels. Further, little of this requires students to engage in creating text. Students may complete assigned workbook tasks with little reading or writing by simply filling in blanks, circling an item, or underlining a choice after reading the directions. Thus, many written activities included in workbooks have little value for students learning to read. Rather, they are time-consuming, tedious, and poorly designed (R. C. Anderson, et al., 1984; Osborne, 1984; 1986). In addition, L. Anderson and her colleagues (Anderson, L., Evertson, C., & Brophy, J., 1979) found evidence that workbook tasks differed qualitatively for high and low achievers, resulting in poorer readers spending less time on such tasks in beneficial ways.

The Meaning of "Reading" Conveyed in Basals

For many children, school texts provide their sole literacy experiences, establishing their meaning for reading. However, opponents argue if children use basals to understand what it means to read, they must construct limited images of texts and the reading process. Such images might include reading to complete assigned work sheets (L. Anderson, 1984), not to understand text. One reason for this lack of focus on comprehension strategies might be traced to the basal

since Durkin (1981) found that there was little emphasis in teachers' manuals on teaching comprehension and word meaning. Further, teachers frequently ignored any prereading activities included for those purposes. This accentuates the problem since Deford (1986) found the focus of the teacher's instruction and the classroom context were key to how children developed their own concepts of story. Further, she found that reading material emphasized in the reading program was most influential in determining the form and content of students' writing. If basal series provide the sole texts children read, students will define the reading as a process of skills acquisition based on the experiences they encounter through the texts and workbooks.

After analysis of several basal series, critics identified four factors that appear to influence how children come to understand or misunderstand the reading process: (a) the use of controlled vocabulary, (b) the focus on isolated skills and testing, (c) the focus on comprehension checks instead of teaching comprehension strategies, and (d) the poor quality of the writing (R. C. Anderson et al., 1984; Aukerman, 1981; Goodman et al., 1988; Langer, 1984). All of these contribute to a skills-based approach and a lack of focus on reading as a social, meaning-making process.

Controlled vocabulary. One concern with the definition of reading conveyed by textbooks is that reading seems to be a process of learning words rather than constructing meaning and communicating. For much of the time children are engaged with basal texts and the accompanying workbooks, they are reading selections and completing activities included to help them identify words. Further, basal authors write text with controlled vocabulary. Even when

literature is included, selections are often revised or altered to meet requirements related to the number and frequency of the words introduced. Further, the instructional focus at most levels is on words, resulting in the use of non-authentic text whose purpose is teaching vocabulary outlined on a scope and sequence chart, not communicating ideas or feelings. Children whose only experiences with reading are with such materials will come to define "reading" as learning new words (R. C. Anderson et al., 1984; Aukerman, 1981; Goodman et al., 1988; Langer, 1984).

Isolated skills and testing. A second concern with the meaning of reading as conveyed in textbooks is the routinized focus on isolated skills and continued testing. Teacher's editions call attention to this by (a) providing more text instructing the teacher about how to conduct lessons than lines of text for children to read (Goodman et al., 1988) and (b) outlining instruction as a series of skill checks: introduce, review, test, maintain, and retest (Smith, 1986). Frequently, students find more questions to answer than lines of text to read (Goodman, et al., 1988; Smith, 1986). The result is that children never see the total process of constructing meaning from or responding to their texts. Instead, they spend their time completing workbook pages and skills work sheets.

Inappropriate focus for comprehension. Another criticism of basal series is their lack of attention to the development of comprehension strategies. Over a decade ago, Durkin (1978) brought this lack of focus to the attention of the reading community, noting that a main reason for the lack of instruction could be traced to the directions in the teacher's manual. Instead of providing teachers with support for instruction on such strategies and students with activities to

develop them, textbooks focus more on providing questions to check for comprehension. This fosters a belief among students that there is only one "correct" interpretation of a text (Touponce, 1990). Further, despite recent attempts to change their focus to provide more comprehension instruction, basals may reflect current research and trends through terminology used in the teacher's editions, they fail to implement recommendations within the instructional guidelines for teaching the process of comprehension (Goodman et al., 1988). As a result, teachers are led to determine comprehension by how closely children agree with the basal authors about text meaning instead of how they have constructed meaning based on the interaction of their own prior knowledge and experiences and their text.

Poor quality of the writing. Finally, since basal readers were historically written to try to teach the requisite skills, textbook passages are often examples of poor writing that, in fact, makes comprehension more difficult. Many stories in primers and early basals do not have predictable story structures, making them more difficult to understand, less interesting, and prohibitive to learning to read. Selections for higher grades tend to tell stories, but the structure is not always clear and comprehensible, often with insufficient insight into characters and the events surrounding their lives. Stories written for basals are not as complex as literature written for the same age group (Bruce, 1984; 1985). These selections lead children to define reading as an attempt to construct meaning from text which is difficult to understand and perhaps uninteresting (Anderson et al., 1984; Aukerman, 1981; Goodman et al., 1988; Langer, 1984).

The instructional context provided by basal series with such foci as

outlined above contributes to: (a) student learning of isolated skills, (b) representations of learning that are limited to work sheets and tests, (c) an interactional pattern that is dominated by the teacher and leads to student competition to find the one "correct" answer, and (d) the teacher's role as imparter of knowledge. The over-arching result of instruction which provides such reading experiences to children is that some students profit, but others never gain appropriate literacy competency. Only the students who demonstrate the requisite skills get to move to the better texts. Therefore, the students who already have the richest reading capabilities get to read the best selections. The poorer readers are destined to continued reading of controlled texts, leading to continued weak literacy skills (Applebee, 1989a; Johnston & Allington, 1991; Walmsley & Walp, 1989). All four of these characteristics of basal reading series contribute to a meaning of reading that does not result in understanding that reading is a social process.

<p align="center">Basal Series or Literature-based Reading Instruction?</p>

Opposition to the use of basals in their current skills-based format has become wide-spread. In response, some researchers note that basals are improving. Aukerman (1981) noted that the basal series he investigated demonstrated improvements in: (a) balance of ethnic differences, non-stereotyped gender roles, urban/rural/suburban settings and geographic areas, (b) inclusion of handicapped characters and senior citizens, (c) deletion of violence, (d) more variety in literary genres and improved literary quality, (e) improved graphic arts components, (f) developmental lesson plans, and (g) inclusion of glossaries. In addition, Baumann (1991) argues that basals can improve even more by (a)

adding complete selections from children's literature, (b) promoting instruction

with less but more authentic, contextualized reading skills and strategies, (c)

including holistic assessment facilitating teacher decision making about student

progress and future instruction, (d) including reading activities positioned within

the total realm of language and literature, and (e) creating teacher editions which

explicitly assert that instructional information is only suggested, not required.

Such changes would lead not only to improved basal content, but better

classroom instruction.

Other researchers who have investigated basal usage have also found that

while they differ in complexity (Barr & Sadow, 1989), they are improving and

publishers are capable of responding to criticism, creating texts that can result in

acceptable comprehension instruction (Rich & Pressley; 1990). Further, Chall

and Squire (1991) argue basals are responding to teachers' and researchers'

concerns, including more quality literature; however, such changes take time.

Despite the optimism of some that basal series can change and, in fact, are

improving, others believe their skills-based approach prohibits the acquisition of

literacy by not reflecting how people learn language. Workbook tasks and

directions to teachers seem to be based on the belief that language is a habit

learned through responses to stimuli in the environment, not the view that

language is learned through social interaction. The definition of reading

presented through basal selections and workbooks is reduced to mean whatever

can be easily tested in workbooks, skills sheets, or standardized tests (Goodman

et al., 1988) because such approaches remain skills-based, not meaning-based.

Absent from the text and accompanying work sheets is the notion of reading as a

transaction between the reader and the text (Rosenblatt, 1938) and the role of interaction among readers as they discuss the reading experience (Bloome & Green, 1984). Because of the perspective basal series tends to present of the process of reading, authors of the document, "Basal Readers and the State of American Reading Instruction: A Call for Action," wrote, "For many if not most children, the typical basal reading series may actually make learning to read more difficult than it needs to be" (National Council of the Teachers of English, 1988). In addition, Smith (1986) argues that no one learns because of the regimented schedule that includes ". . . disjointed, purposeless, repetitive, confusing, and tedious activities" (p. 7).

Such strong opposition to the use of basal series to teach reading has resulted in a call to move totally away from their skills-based approach and use children's literature instead. For example, Harste, a proponent of whole language, argues, "We need to get rid of . . . [basals]. Their absence in classrooms is important" (1989, p. 270). This chapter continues with an examination of the arguments for literature-based reading instruction.

Why Use Literature Instead?

Support for using literature more in elementary classrooms comes from a variety of sources, primarily from teachers themselves who have adopted such practice for many reasons: (a) access to books leads to better readers, (b) reading literature will result in better skill development, (c) reading and discussing literature promotes personal growth, (d) teaching reading skills is not necessary, and (e) reading literature will promote better citizens.

Greater access promotes better readers. One reason for supporting such

changes comes from the knowledge that children who have access to many books become better readers. For example, in A Nation of Readers, Anderson and his colleagues argued that children with greater access to books read more and that in addition to school libraries, classroom libraries provide greater access to books (R. C. Anderson et al., 1984). Cullinan (1987) argues that access to books provides children the much needed practice to improve their developing skills. Morrow and Weinstein (1986) found that children were more likely to select books to read when the books were displayed in attractive and comfortable centers. Thus, books displayed in the classroom in a selected area can provide a greater likelihood that children will read, and this increased reading will improve their ability.

Literature promotes better readers. Advocates of literature-based reading instruction argue that children will benefit through increased opportunities to read. They argue that young readers can improve vocabulary development, knowledge of text structure, and fluency through literature experiences. Elley (1989) found that oral story reading led to increased and relatively permanent vocabulary development among elementary-aged children. In addition to increased vocabulary development, reading a variety of books also improves fluency. Further, teachers can increase students' abilities for critical thinking by devoting time for them to delve deeply into characters' goals and purposes. Further, Huck (1990) argues that reading scores will improve the sooner children are exposed to literature and the more literature they have opportunities to read. Perhaps the foundation for this argument is the belief that comprehension is attainable only if the reader is engaged in a text which provides a good story and

holds the reader's attention.

Another related set of arguments that literature will create better readers is drawn from the fact that literary texts provide a variety of vocabulary and sentence structures for young readers. Thus, literature provides strong language models, such as images and story patterns, facilitating children's development of vocabulary and writing abilities, helping them create diversity in imagery and story structures of their own (Cullinan, 1987).

Literature leads to personal growth. In addition to the academic goals literature-based reading instruction might attain, supporters of such instruction also argue that increased personal growth will result. Unlike other school subjects, literature relates to our feelings rather than merely being a source of facts. It takes us away from our daily lives but allows us to return. At the same time, it provides knowledge about the foundations of our civilization (Huck, 1990). Perhaps one reason proponents believe reading literature may accomplish so much is the resulting change in instructional focus from imparting a body of knowledge to helping students enrich their own lives, causing students to become more reflective and self-critical (Smith, 1990). Thus, some believe that literature not only can teach children to read but can change the reader.

Who needs reading skills taught? Other supporters of literature use in the classroom are people who question the need to teach any reading skills at all. Taylor and her colleagues (Taylor and Frye, 1988; Taylor, Frye & Gaetz, 1990) found that teachers felt so compelled to meet the expectations of standardized tests that they spent instructional time focusing on skills and strategies students had already mastered. Other critics of skills-based instruction argue for contexts

which immerse learners in literary experiences, leading to an increased desire to read. For example, Martin (1987) wrote, "Reading instruction had less to do with skills than with luring children to book experiences -- touch-and-go books, try-this-one-for-size, here's-a-tale-for-you -- necessary beachheads for both the able and the frail in their quest for books that tap their dreams" (p. 17). Such advocates believe that exposure to good books will motivate children to want to read. Such desire will lead to good reading skills.

Betterment of civilization. In addition to supporters calling for the increased use of literature in elementary classrooms because of benefits to individual readers, some proponents argue that American society as a whole will benefit if the young read and understand our culture as represented through literature and history. For example, Ravitch and Finn (1987) recommend that schools facilitate the development of all students' background knowledge in literature and history and that this process should be started as early as possible. In addition, Hirsch (1988) argues that all children need to read and understand the classic literature of the American culture. While many might question which literature, history, or culture is represented in selections identified as "classic," others have accepted this logic that such texts will promote an improved society.

All of these arguments have convinced many that literature-based reading instruction will result in better readers. So strong is the belief that literature will better teach reading and improve student thinking that California has mandated literature-based reading instruction. Leaders in that state argue that using a literature-based reading program will encourage: increased appreciation of the aesthetic values of literature; hone intellectual skills; develop "allegiance to the

highest ideals of citizenship in a democracy;" refine feelings, personalities, and relationships with others; and deepen a sense of ethical responsibility (California State Department of Education, 1987). Thus, these supporters seem to believe that using literature will not only improve reading test scores, but also provide a better citizenry.

While advocates for the inclusion of literature may seem to be implying that just the inclusion of literature will promote better readers, closer inspection of their requested modifications indicate that they are also proposing other changes in the instructional context that foster the types of learning that promotes better literacy capabilities. Not only will children read literature, but the surrounding activities and interactions between students and teachers and among students will change as well.

Is a Literature-based Program Better?

While many propose to improve reading instruction through the use of literature, little research is available to support these views. The effects of the lack of available research can be seen in continued controversy about and questioning of the relative effectiveness of literature-based, often called "whole language" approaches. For example, Stahl and Miller (1989), comparing the effectiveness of basal readers to whole-language approaches, found neither superior, but they found that whole-language approaches appeared more effective with kindergarten children while basals seemed more effective with later grades. However, McGee and Lomax (1990), in a critique of the Stahl and Miller review, suggest the authors were naive in their fundamental definitions of whole language and questioned their conclusions.

Similarly, a recent issue of Educational Researcher (1990) highlighted a debate surrounding whole language instruction, while the lead article in a recent Journal of Reading Behavior (Bergeron, 1990) addressed the question, "What does the term whole language mean?" Much of this debate concerns what constitutes whole language instruction, the role of literature, the role of the teacher, and the place for instruction.

Despite controversy over the characteristics of a whole language approach, other research supports a literature-based reading program. Recently, Fisher and Hiebert (1990), comparing instruction in second- and sixth-grade classrooms adopting either a skills-based or a literature-based approach, found that children in the literature-based classrooms had greater opportunities for: (a) literary tasks, particularly in writing, (b) engaging in tasks that required greater cognitive complexity, and (c) exerting more influence in both the content and process of the literary tasks. Freppon (1991) also examined the influence of skill-based and literature-based reading programs on first graders' reading concepts. She found that while children from both types of classrooms indicated a high interest in word acquisition and phonics, only those children in the literature-based program demonstrated heightened metacognitive understandings, strategy use, and perspectives on reading as a sense-making process. Therefore, it might seem that literature-based programs do provide children increased opportunities with higher level thinking.

As basal series adjust to increasing concerns related to the skills-based approach adopted by many in the past, the arguments regarding whether or not to use a basal series or literature to teach reading may become mute. Therefore,

questions that might emerge next will focus less on whether or not to use a skills-based or a literature-based approach, but on how to improve reading instruction while using literature. Though many support a change to literature-based reading programs and some research supports such a conversion, even some of the strongest advocates caution teachers about the potential problems, stating that just having literature to read does not necessarily result in proficient reading capabilities.

Problems With Moving to Literature-based Reading Instruction

Traditionally, reading instruction and literature have been divided in elementary classrooms. Often "reading" is the time teachers provide instruction based in the basal, divide children into homogeneous groups, and assign workbook pages for skill development. Discussions focus on comprehension (Freppon, 1991). "Literature" has been the time that teachers read aloud to students or children self-select books to read silently at their desks. Discussions following such reading experiences contain expressions of personal enjoyment or interest (Smith, 1990). Teachers trying to implement a literature-based reading program might have difficulty determining which characteristics of each instructional context to include. Four areas are of particular concern: (a) the selection of literature, (b) the activities assigned, (c) the interactional patterns established in classrooms as teachers and students discuss text, and (d) the role of the teacher.

Selection of texts. The first issue teachers in a literature-based classroom must consider is the attention paid to carefully selecting the material for children to read since this influences what children will learn. When using a basal series,

teachers' decisions about selections are narrowed since the basal authors have already limited the range of selections. In contrast, teachers adopting a literature-based reading program do need to select appropriate materials by considering the interests and abilities of the students (Probst, 1991; Purves and Beach, 1972). Literature selected for instruction must provide children opportunities to engage with increasingly difficult levels of text, beginning with simple stories which help children come to understand story structure and make them easily comprehensible. To understand literature, children need to comprehend increasingly complex plots and characterization (R. C. Anderson, et al., 1985); therefore, the teacher needs to continually monitor student growth and interests to make literary selections accordingly.

Activities assigned to represent student learning. A second area of concern when changing to a literature-based reading program is the focus of the assigned activities. One practitioner who has tried to implement literature in her reading program identified two possible problems to avoid (Smith, 1990). First, she noted that teachers may bring the same types of assignments they used with the basals when they introduce literature. That is, they remain text-centered in their instruction and use of questions. In such settings, teachers often ask the same types of comprehension questions, testing students on whether they have read the story and whether they read it "correctly." By doing this, they are "basalizing" the literature. Cullinan (1987) agrees with this potential problem since she argues that using literature to teach reading can destroy the experience if it focuses too much on word attack skills, vocabulary development, and comprehension. This might be more than a potential concern since Saul (1989),

Florio-Ruane and her colleagues (Florio-Ruane, Mosenthal, Denyer, Harris, & Kirschner, 1990) and Eeds and Wells (1989) found that pre-service and in-service teachers, respectively, did tend to ask basal-like questions when discussing literature.

This indeed might be a problem because teachers' notions about what needs to be taught at specific grade levels influence what children learn and develop their attitudes toward reading. Zancanella (1991), investigating five junior high school teachers' personal approaches to teaching literature, found that these teachers experienced a conflict between teaching reading and teaching literature. They identified reading instruction with elementary grades, but literature instruction with the high school curriculum. Such perspectives influenced how they taught since they found themselves working with children in grades between these two levels. Such variations in teaching resulted in different student learning. Similar attitudes could influence elementary teachers' thinking as they incorporate a literature-based reading program. If they perceive their task as teaching reading but not literature, they could "basalize" literature as Smith described.

The second potential problem Smith (1990) noted with the activities assigned was that teachers try so hard not to be text-based that they only focus on readers' personal experiences and do not bring the reader into the text. In these settings, teachers' expectations of students is that they are to respond in any way they choose and all responses are treated as legitimate. Such interaction ignores instruction focused on modelling the skills and strategies necessary for young readers to improve their own reading ability.

Interactional patterns. The third issue that emerges when educators consider a conversion to literature-based reading instruction is concerns about the current interactional patterns within classrooms. Comprehension activities requiring students to arrive at the answer provided in the teacher's edition lead to interactions in which the teacher dominates much of the discussion, using a transmission model of instruction (Barnes, 1976). Such a model includes the teacher asking all the questions, evaluating each student's response. The student's role is to acquire the knowledge the teacher presents. Such teaching leads to little critical analysis. Thus, teachers come to see themselves primarily as evaluators of students' learning, instead of facilitators of it. Textbooks and their accompanying materials play a major role in such interactional patterns since they provide limited scope for the teacher and students (Langer, 1986). This teacher domination through directed instruction and questioning leads to the same recurring pattern: teacher-initiated question, student response, and teacher evaluation (Cazden, 1988; Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Tharpe and Gallimore, 1988). Proponents of literature-based instruction argue that such interactional patterns actually make understanding more difficult (Hynds, 1990) and need to be broken to focus on the reader's experience with the text. Teachers need to ask students open-ended questions that elicit their personal response.

Such changes in interactional patterns in classrooms have support from current research and theory that argue that literacy learning is an extension of earlier learning activities between a parent and child. Such theories support the idea that the teacher's language can function as a "scaffold" for the learner (Applebee & Langer, 1983; Bruner, 1978; Langer, 1986; Langer & Applebee,

1984). Through the use of interactions that help support student literacy acquisition, teachers can help students develop greater proficiency in reading.

In addition to changes in the interactional patterns between teachers and students, advocates for change argue that children need opportunities to interact with one another, as well as the teacher, in order to develop their own responses to literature. This requires a major change since much of the interactions in schools are between the teacher and students, requiring children to compete with one another for recognition of the best student. Such interactions can be public, as in classroom discussions, or more private, as during individual completion of assigned work. Such interactions do not foster active dialogue among children nor do they create a context in which students can learn from one another (Short, 1990).

To address this needed change, some argue for the use of more student-led discussion groups in which children can interact about literature. Such settings provide children time to listen to one another instead of just the teacher. These social interactions influence each child's reading and resulting knowledge. Teachers can structure groups so that students take responsibility for their own learning in a collaborative community of readers. Such a community encourages students to participate in on-going conversations, providing a rich context to support discussions about literature (Short, 1990; Smith 1986).

The role of the teacher. Finally, the role of the teacher alters significantly with the transition to a literature-based reading program. When using a basal series, a teacher need only manage an existing instructional system. While most teachers adapt such programs for their context, they are simply modifying a

program. By advocating a literature-based approach, proponents are requiring the teacher to create a total program, including the texts, the curriculum, and the instruction. Further, proponents for change are also advocating significant changes in the instruction so teachers cannot just adopt former practice to use with literature. Instead, they must also change their teaching methods to include more opportunities for student self-expression in both written and oral means. Teaching would no longer be imparting knowledge but become facilitative, pursuing student-generated questions and interests.

Such changes as those detailed above are consistent with changes in theories about how literacy, and learning in general, develop. Just as a shift in focus from decoding to comprehension could be closely tied to the growth in cognitive science perspectives on learning, current shifts toward literature-based reading instruction in contexts of peer discussion can be linked to the influence of social constructivism.

A Social Constructivist Perspective

A social constructivist perspective contributes an important new viewpoint to the study of response to literature. More than fifty years ago, Louise Rosenblatt (1938) argued for literary experiences that were intense forms of personal activity, not passive ones assuming students merely absorb information from their teachers and texts. Her views are echoed by current reformers calling for more and better literature experiences for elementary children. Children often come to dislike reading, are poor readers, or are unable to apply what they read to their own lives. While elementary reading programs might teach the "mechanics" of reading, they do not teach an appreciation for and enjoyment of

reading (Walmsley & Walp, 1989).

Traditionally, researchers and teachers have conceptualized reading as an individual activity in which readers gain ideas from the text. However, this conception of reading has been challenged as being incomplete, ignoring both what the reader brings to the act of reading (Anderson & Pearson, 1984) and the social factors that can influence reading (Cazden, 1981; Green, 1990; Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1988). A social constructivist perspective that emphasizes the interaction among the readers, the text, and the social context (Gavelek, 1986) underlies this study (see Figure 2.1). This perspective, articulated by scholars such as Mead (1934), Bakhtin (1986), and Vygotsky (1978) suggests that cognitive abilities and capacities are formed in part through social interaction. A social constructivist perspective asserts that such social acts generate higher mental functions of consciousness. Those who hold this view reject a reductionist view of development which places extreme importance on the individual. Three theorists are particularly influential in the development of this theory: Mead, Bakhtin, and Vygotsky.

Mead and the "Generalized Other"

Mead (1934) was one of the first to formulate a social constructivist approach to philosophy and psychology. He believed that social acts were the precondition of consciousness. To him, language was the creation of the social world and the individuals in that world. Meaning is constructed within the act of communication and within the context of it. An individual in a social group assumes the attitude of the others. She takes on the role of the other person with whom she is talking and, thus, in a way, comes to know herself. Through
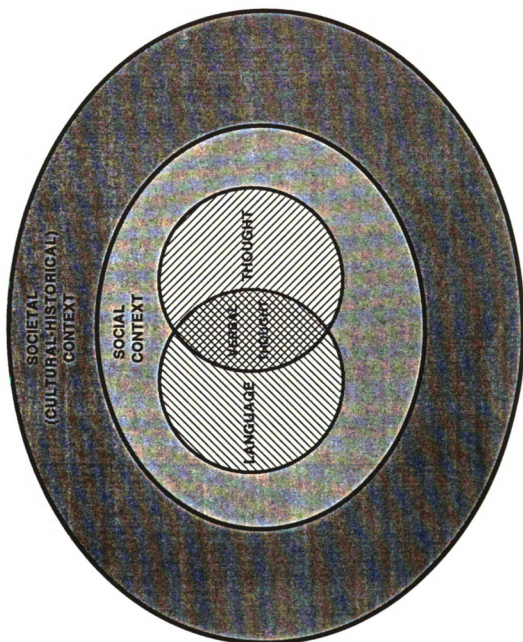
Figure 2.1

Reader-Text Relationships

this process, this individual can become self-critical. She imagines the other's response to her comments and modifies this response as necessary. This person assumes the attitudes of each individual in the group and the group itself toward herself so that she can direct and modify behavior in ways appropriate for the group. This individual is not only self-conscious, but also self-critical. In Mead's terms, this process results in the "generalized other."

In a classroom, children are part of a group larger than most social groups. While they can and are frequently aware that others are listening to what they are saying, they cannot get regular feedback because of the size of the group and the need for many children to participate. If the teacher structures the context so that children have opportunities to communicate in smaller groups, they have the potential for more frequent feedback on their ideas. The more opportunities children have to interact, and thus consider themselves through the eyes of their audience, the greater their own development of self. This furthers each child's thinking because each is more likely to become aware of the variety of reactions individuals have to one another's viewpoint and the topic discussed. Further, individuals within the speaker's audience may affect different reactions from her. For example, some members of the audience may be more influential than others as the speaker attempts to shape her thoughts. Close friends or popular classmates may influence what the speaker chooses to talk about.

As readers, we also become aware of the expectations of others. While we are reading, we may become aware of the author's efforts to evoke a particular response in the reader. In addition, we may imagine how others we know might

respond to a particular passage or inference in a book. These imagined responses influence how we then respond to texts.

Bakhtin and the Influence of Language

Like Mead, Bakhtin (1986) saw both the context and the act as important in the creation of mental processes. He furthered this thinking by proposing that the word, or sign, only had meaning that resulted from both experience and consciousness. The individual had to be a participant in multiple social contexts in order for words to have meaning (Sinha, 1989). Bakhtin and his associates identified four social factors that make understanding of written and oral speech possible (Emerson, 1986). The first is that both the word and its effects occur in some outer experience. That is, words have no meaning without a social context. Second, this outer experience must be organized socially in that individuals must be part of some social group. As a member of the group, the individual helps to create the discourse and, thus, the meaning. Third, the study of language and resulting ideologies must consider this social context. Language cannot be studied independent of the social milieu in which it took place. Each social group has its own way of interacting that includes a set of values and a sense of shared experiences. No two individuals are members of the exact same social groups; therefore, no two have the exact same meanings of language. The final factor influencing the understanding of language stems from Bakhtin's definition of "word." He stated that words do not come from dictionaries. Since they are rooted in the same experiences and social groups, their meaning derives from some memory of a previous usage in discourse. Therefore, the individual's prior experience with a word influences her current understanding of that word's use in

discourse.

In addition to the construction of word meanings in social contexts, Bakhtin (1986) also argued that we adopt various speech genres. As we move from one social setting to another, we modify our speech patterns. Much like literary genres, each speech genre has particular characteristics that set it apart from others. Participants within the social group often adjust to new speech genres subconsciously and often without effort.

An elementary classroom in which students are studying literature in both large and small groups provides evidence of Bakhtin's four social factors that make meaning possible. The classroom creates outer experiences in which children discuss their reactions to and thoughts about the literature they have read. This outer experience may be a large group setting in which the teacher provides instruction about some aspect of the literature, or one in which the teacher and/or other students share their own responses to a literature selection they have read. In addition, small group discussions provide all students with an opportunity to discuss their own reactions. All of this contributes to this outer experience with text, as well as meeting Bakhtin's second factor that the outer experience be organized socially and that individuals be members of some social group. In such a classroom, students are members of the larger class and of the small discussion groups.

Bakhtin's third factor recommends consideration of the social context in which the language was learned. Certainly a classroom that stresses individual students' responses to text creates a social context different from one that stresses one best interpretation. Student learning and speech genres in the first

classroom differs significantly from that in the second. In the first classroom, students see that readers create different meanings from the same text. The speech genre does not follow the traditional pattern of teacher question, student response, and teacher evaluation. While the teacher may ask questions, they are authentic probes asking for student thinking. In addition, children often decide the direction of the conversation as they pursue their interests. In the second classroom, responding to literature entails trying to figure out the right answer; that is, the traditional speech genre. Clearly, the milieu in these two extreme classrooms produces different responses to the same literature and, given traditional reading instructional programs, most students are likely to have far more experience with the speech genre that is characterized by teacher questioning to elicit the single "best" interpretation.

Bakhtin's fourth factor stressed the origin of the meaning of words. Students in a classroom in which all are encouraged to discuss their own responses learn that word meanings are derived from the context and the experiences of individuals. In a classroom in which simple answers are the goal, students assume that words in a given context have one meaning. In addition, anyone investigating the learning in these classrooms has to consider how different the experiences of students in each class are. These different experiences would lead to very different meanings of terms and concepts connected to the study of literature.

This notion of word meanings being established in social settings is of particular importance when considering a change in reading instruction. If one accepts Bakhtin's theories, then one realizes that all children beyond

kindergarten or first grade have constructed a meaning for "reading" associated with their school experiences within the instructional context. Further, if this instructional context has been grounded in a skills-based approach, successful implementation of a literature-based approach requires the students to modify significantly their previous definitions of "reading." Since many children in upper elementary grades have had substantially more experiences with the more traditional school meaning of "reading," the teacher implementing such major changes in the instructional context will have to provide continued support as children wrestle with new meanings. One such major change in the instructional context that will require such support is the inclusion of different speech genres.

Classroom discourse constitutes at least one type of speech genre -- teacher initiation, student response, and teacher evaluation (Cazden, 1988; Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Tharpe & Gallimore, 1988). Students learn this genre as they enter schools and begin to participate. Instructional plans that call for altering the interaction patterns already established to provide students more opportunities to interact and express their ideas require children to learn new speech genres or, at least, to apply ones they already know to a new context. Often such learning is implicit and difficult for children as they struggle with new expectations. Therefore, such instructional changes need to provide explicit models of the new discourse patterns until the students have internalized the new genre and are able to adapt it to the school context.

<u>Vygotskian Perspectives</u>

Perhaps some evidence of the influence of social context on peers who studied learning at the same time, Vygotsky (1978) shared many of the same

ideas as Mead and Bakhtin, though these men did not work directly together.

Vygotsky suggested that individuals are guided by their own mental processes as

they participate in social acts, but these processes are influenced by social

experiences. The social context influences several areas of thought: (1) the

nature of intelligence, (2) the developmental processes of thought, (3) the

formation of concepts, and (4) the learner's potential growth, or the "zone of

proximal development." These are each elaborated in the discussion below.

<u>Nature of Intelligence</u>

Vygotsky differentiated between a "natural" intelligence and one

influenced primarily by social processes. He saw the primary function of speech

as the social act of communication which influences the development of thought.

"Natural" intelligence is that which is similar to the intelligence of monkeys; that

is, intelligence comprised of those basic mental functions that permit one to

survive and to use a very limited vocabulary. For example, certain monkeys can

be taught to use some words or signs to get food or for their own comfort;

however, their use of language is extremely limited since they do not develop and

use these signs with one another or teach them to their young. Therefore, one

would never expect them to read and respond to text. In humans, this "natural"

thought occurs early, is global, and does not become diversified until later. The

logic of action precedes the logic of thought (Vygotsky, 1986).

In contrast, "historical" intelligence, that of humans in social groups,

consists of higher mental functioning. Unlike other animals, humans are capable

of making connections between events in the past, the present, and project into

the future. These connections enable us to construct new information by

adopting knowledge from the past. Such functioning enables people to communicate with one another and across generations. It is this higher mental functioning that enables humans to create meaning from text and to discuss this meaning with others.

The distinction between the elementary and higher mental functions, Vygotsky delineated through four criteria (Wertsch, 1985): (1) the shift of control from the environment to the individual, (2) the emergence of a conscious realization of mental processes, (3) the inclusion of the social origin of higher mental functions, and (4) the emergence of the use of signs to mediate higher functions. One perspective adopted in this study on the educational relevance of Vygotsky's theory of higher mental processes and their acquisition is that teachers who want students to attain higher order mental functions structure lessons so that these four criteria are met through instruction.

When investigating higher mental functioning, Vygotsky was particularly interested in the interaction between an adult, or more knowledgeable other, and the learner. The study of such interactions involved examining what he called the "interpsychological" processes. Such small groups of individuals are engaged in interactions that are concrete and can be explained in terms of the dynamics of the communicative process. These dynamics create a reorganization of thought that cannot be reduced to an analysis of individual psychological processes because of the influence of the other individuals on the mental functioning, thus underscoring the importance of "group" as the unit of analysis.

Vygotsky argued that mental functions begin on a social, or an interpsychological plane, first, then move to an inner, intrapsychological plane.

He called the process in which certain actions that first appeared in an outer social plane then move to an inner psychological one "internalization." The social reality of the individual in groups plays a primary role in determining how the internal plane functions. This internalization is not a process of copying the external reality of a social interaction on some preexisting plane. Instead, it is a process in which the internal plane of consciousness is formed.

If one were to imagine an elementary classroom again, one in which students responded to literature in both large and small groups, this concept of internalization becomes more clear. The child participating in the large group has the opportunity to see and hear the teacher and other students respond to text. This facilitates the student's learning. However, Vygotsky stressed the need for learners to participate in smaller groups in which they not only could hear the ideas of other students but could also share their own ideas and benefit from the reactions of others to these ideas. Therefore, a context providing optimal learning opportunities includes small group activities in which students practice interactions they have seen the teacher model, but which reflect their own ideas.

Developmental Processes

Vygotsky believed that mental functioning was culturally-based, resulting from social interactions not established developmental differences. However, in studying learning among children he and his colleagues found that the development of the processes that lead to higher mental functioning begins very early in childhood. Further, he found the intellectual functions resulting in concept formation, refinement and development formed at puberty. The adolescents he investigated displayed no new elementary functions developing.

Instead, those already in existence were incorporated into a new structure or synthesis and merged into a new complex whole. At this time, these individuals learned how to direct their own mental processes using words or signs. This process was a qualitatively new one mediated by signs. At this complex stage, the adolescent may have used words referring to the same object as an adult, but the thinking the child had about these objects was different because her mental framework differed, being situational while that of the adult was conceptual. In a concrete situation the adolescent used a concept correctly but had difficulty expressing it in words. If she did succeed in some verbal expression of the concept, this definition was much narrower than what the listener might have expected from the adolescent's use of the concept.

These intellectual functions are also important to consider in the imagined classroom. If Vygotsky was correct, many children think differently from adults and are incapable of an adult's refined mental functioning, particularly if the adult's thinking is never visible through language. As a result, their response to texts will differ from that of adults. If children in America resemble those Vygotsky and his colleagues studied, they may not be capable of complex conceptualization before adolescence. Their response to literature will not be similar to that of adults. Even if a child were to use the same language, her meaning would differ.

For example, parents and teachers frequently read fairy tales like <u>Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs</u> to children. As adults they react to this story as a whole. That is, Snow White does confront several ordeals, but she is saved from the evil by the handsome prince and they live happily ever after. The same story

to a child, though, may be frightening. This child may focus on Snow White's abandonment in the woods, her living with seven small strangers, the wicked stepmother's attempts to kill Snow White, and her apparent success. This child may respond to a question regarding the happy ending in apparent agreement with the adult, but she might be thinking this was a frightening story and that stepmothers are wicked women. The child's ability to see the ending as primary and balance this with the ordeals presented throughout the story is limited. She may be able only to focus on the ordeals, minimizing the happy conclusion.

As this example illustrates, the adult or teacher must model her own thinking and listen to children's responses frequently to determine student thought processes. Small group settings provide such an opportunity for the teacher to listen closely to student reactions to literary selections throughout the reading process. Through continued attention to children responding to literature, the teacher can better understand how individual learners are developing concepts related to literature response and help them by focusing attention on particular aspects of the narrative and by continuing to model various types of response.

Concept Formation

In Vygotsky's view, the development of concept formation followed two primary lines. One is complex formation; the other is the formation of "potential concepts." During complex formation, the child begins to be able to unite diverse objects in groups with common features. For example, a small child may refer to all things that fly as "birds." This might include insects and flying squirrels. As the child begins to be able to form concepts, she can differentiate

between these groups. The second line of development, the formation of "potential" concepts, includes being able to identify certain common aspects of members of a group that will lead to a new concept. In both lines of development, the use of language is key to the developing processes and in the formation of concepts.

Essential to understanding concept development in Vygotsky's argument is the role of language. Vygotsky noted two limitations of previous research examining the development of conceptual thinking: (1) a focus on product and (2) a focus on the word. The first drawback he perceived in previous research was that it focused on the finished product, not the dynamics that led to its formation. That is, investigators looked at the product of thinking, not the thinking itself. Second, they focused on the word, not the elaboration behind the use of the word. He believed that a concept was impossible without words and that concepts exist only in verbal thinking. Vygotsky argued that language was essential in the development of thought. Individuals developed concepts as they experienced language. By focusing on just the products of thought or the words without asking for elaboration, researchers were not examining the thought or what led to it. To understand an individual's thinking, researchers should have investigated the interactions that led to the final products representing the thinking.

For example, in a literature classroom students might all respond that the wicked stepmother in <u>Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs</u> was a symbol of all the evil in the world. A teacher stressing symbolism could end discussion there, assuming all the students had understood her intent. With further probing,

however, she might discover that some students might say this but still worry about their own stepmother deserting them and trying to kill them. Without further elaboration of student thought, the teacher will not be able to sense how students are responding to text. Instead, she will get answers they think she wants to hear. Therefore, while the social interaction can influence what some students say, it may not affect what they think.

While social interaction influences the development of higher mental functions, thought and language are not the same thing. Vygotsky envisioned these as two intersecting circles (see Figure 2.2). Where thought and language overlapped is verbal thought. This verbal thought does not, however, include all forms of thought, or all forms of speech. Children can use the same words as adults, but they do not have the same meaning. They have not yet developed the concepts fully. Examining only the product of thinking, such as a phrase, does not reveal the thinking itself that took place to form the word and to attempt to communicate.

One might criticize teachers of literature for the same reasons Vygotsky criticized other researchers. Frequently, teachers examine the final product of a student's experience with text. After reading, students complete work sheets or tests. Questions often probe for comprehension. The results are twofold: (1) the student's thought processes are never visible and (2) the child has limited experience with language to help develop her thinking more fully. In a classroom in which students are members of groups that discuss texts regularly, the teacher can examine these processes more closely and provide further assistance to challenge all students to think about literature in multiple ways. In addition,
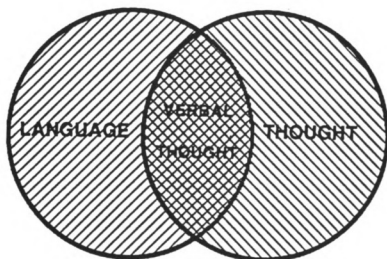
Figure 2.2

Vygotsky's Notion of the Relationship Between Thought and Language

children have experience trying to express their thoughts for others and hearing their peers trying to do the same. They have more elaborate experiences with using and hearing language.

The Zone of Proximal Development

A Vygotskian perspective recognizes two types of concepts: scientific and spontaneous. Spontaneous concepts are those that the individual develops on her own through social experiences while scientific ones are those most commonly taught directly. In his experiments, Vygotsky concluded that children can be taught both types of concepts. Direct instruction may favorably influence the development of concepts that have been initially formed by the student if that instruction begins at an appropriate point in the child's mental development. Concepts are not absorbed "ready-made;" instead, the individual modifies these to fit with her experience. Since the learner connects new information to prior knowledge, the teacher needs to find ways to access this prior knowledge through the student's talk and writing, helping establish the best beginning for instruction. The appropriate point for teaching is related to what Vygotsky called the "zone of proximal development." In Vygotsky's words, the zone of proximal development (ZPD) is "the distance between the child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Wertsch, 1985, p. 67-68). Thus, the ZPD is determined both by the child's level of development and the form of instruction. Instruction must proceed ahead of development, much as a scaffold precedes the building of a house, providing temporary and adjustable

support. The ZPD can be determined by how the child seeks help, how she uses various aspects of her environment, and how she asks questions. In addition, this instruction develops the cultural thinking of the child. The teacher who considers the ZPD arranges the environment and creates a "scaffold" so that the learner is able to attain a higher or more abstract perspective on the learning task. The child benefits from the consciousness of the more knowledgeable other.

A social constructivist perspective does not assume that children will naturally learn these important concepts. They need a more knowledgeable other to help them learn. This is only successful if the knowledgeable other knows the learner's ZPD so that the knowledgeable one can tailor instruction for the learner. In interactions between parents and their children, the parent is continually assessing the child's progress. In the case of the classroom, it is essential for the teacher to be this knowledgeable other or to identify other students who can assume such a role.

To successfully determine a student's ZPD, the teacher needs regular opportunities to monitor student thinking. In a classroom in which students regularly discuss texts in small groups, the teacher not only can monitor each student more closely because she has more opportunities to hear students discuss their ideas, but also can provide more scaffolding for individuals, for groups, and for the entire class. For example, the teacher may find that an understanding of plot is key for a particular story. She may find that some students understand this already while others do not. In small group settings, the teacher or other students may provide the support for those students who need it through

questioning, restating, or elaborating what they hear the student saying. As students demonstrate understanding, the teacher provides the leadership to encourage the group to move on to other important concepts.

Bruner (1989) elaborates on Vygotsky's ideas about the ZPD by identifying two important conditions that must be present for successful learning. First, the learner must be willing to try. The teacher cannot teach the learner to understand literature if the child refuses to read the book. Thus, self-selected literature is key to any literature program since children will be more likely to read the books they choose. Second, the teacher must provide a scaffold that narrows the task sufficiently for the learner. This task must not be too easy, nor must it be too difficult. The teacher focusing on the instruction of literature must understand the learner's reading and response processes to plan instruction appropriately.

Social Constructivist Theory in the Literature Classroom

The potential value of social theories for classroom instruction is outlined by Tharpe and Gallimore (1988). These authors note that most interactions in classrooms consist of teacher-directed questions that require only convergent, factual response. Teachers require students to respond with predictable, correct answers in both written and oral forms. Such a process, often only probing for a "correct" response, does not appear to value student thinking nor does it provide the assistance students need to develop their ability to solve problems encountered in learning.

Wells, Chang, and Maher (1990) further emphasize the need for social interaction patterns that change those found in many traditional classrooms.

These authors outline three features they believe essential in classrooms that hope to develop literate learners. First, they stress the need for learners to share their understanding and their confusion not only with the teacher, but also with other learners so that they can support one another and act as catalysts in one another's learning processes. Second, they stress the need for "tutorial talk;" that is, talk that provides guidance responsive to individual needs. Finally, such a classroom must provide opportunities for students to reflect and communicate among themselves through inner speech, reading, and writing.

A class engaged in response to literature may encourage authentic conversations about books by implementing an interaction pattern like the ones recommended above. The teacher asks questions that prompt genuine discussion among students revolving around individual responses to the selections they read. In addition, students discuss their responses together in small groups. In these groups, students demonstrate what they do and do not understand about the texts. The teacher and other students are available to help learners clarify issues. Finally, such a classroom incorporates opportunities for students to reflect on their reading experiences not only individually and in groups, but also in oral and written forms.

Several important aspects of a social constructivist perspective relate to literature instruction: (1) the types of learning stressed, (2) the representations used to evidence learning or thinking, (3) the influence of group interaction, and (4) the role of the teacher guiding the learner through the zone of proximal development.

The **types of learning** stressed is the first aspect of note in instruction

adopting a social constructivist perspective. Classrooms frequently vary in the kinds of learning experiences provided for learners. For example, Bakhtin mentions two ways that children in school are asked to learn texts: (1) to memorize and (2) to retell text in one's own words (Emerson, 1986). When one is asked to memorize another's words, the words take on an authoritarian mode. The child cannot doubt the words or change them. To modify a text in such a situation constitutes making a mistake. When studying response to literature, such an approach teaches children that each literary selection can be interpreted in one way. These children eventually devalue their own response in favor of the "correct" one. Certainly, the literature teacher would help guide learners to understand that response is related to information in the text and that some interpretations may appear to be more reasonable than others; however, this teacher would also continue to elicit student response and the thinking behind it.

The second way children are asked to learn text in school according to Bakhtin is to retell it in one's own words. This is a more flexible and responsive approach. The speaker can illustrate her originality in how she retells the text. The speaker becomes "internally persuasive" which is as close to being totally one's own as possible. In the literature classroom, this approach is particularly valuable for examining initial response to text. Instruction would begin here and move beyond by teaching readers how to ground these responses in the text. Learners would come to realize that both they as readers and the text itself contribute to their understanding and appreciation of literature. The struggle between these two modes of dealing with text leads to moral and intellectual growth (Sinha, 1989).

The second important consideration in instruction is the availability of choices students can make in the representations they can use to demonstrate their thinking. Sinha (1989) would define representation as an effort ". . . to represent something . . . to cause something else to stand for it, in such a way that both the relationship of 'standing for' and that which is intended to be represented, can be recognized." This definition indicates the conditions ". . . on what may be called canonical case of representation; that is, in which a representative subject recognizes the representational status of a representation, and it refers to it appropriately to that which it is intended to represent." (Sinha, 1989, p. 39). This elaborates two key features of a representation: (1) the intention that something stand for something else and (2) the recognition by someone that it is an intent to represent. Therefore, representations may take any form; it may be written, such as a retelling or a reaction to an event; it may be more abstract, such as a drawing or diagram; or it may be in the form of actions, such as pantomime or drama.

In a classroom that focused on multiple representations of response to literature, teachers would encourage students to express their ideas in several ways. In more traditional classrooms, while teachers sometimes ask for oral reports, they most frequently ask students to write their responses in the forms of test, essays, reports, or stories. Usually these written responses occur after completing the reading. There are limited attempts to help students capture not only their initial responses, but also their developing responses in writing. Both the teacher and the student can gain insight into the thinking processes that were involved in the development of a response to text if these are recorded. Having

students write as they read and discuss text is one way to capture these developing ideas, but since all thought is not verbal, traditional written formats are not enough. Dependence on written formats may hamper some children as they try to convey their ideas to others.

Vygotsky (1986) stated that the instruction of writing, and thus instruction in creating a written representation of thinking, is frequently ahead of the child's development since the development of writing does not follow the development of speaking. Written speech is linguistically separate in that it is not structured nor does it serve the same function as oral speech. Writing requires a high level of abstraction. It is speech in thought and image without the intonation, expression, and visual gestures that typify oral speech. Children may feel no need for conforming to written speech when teachers normally introduce it in classrooms. In addition, writing requires an analytical action that speaking does not. In contrast to writing, the child can speak without being aware of the mental functions she is using. In writing, the child must make conscious the sound structure of each word, take it apart, and reproduce it in alphabetic symbols that she has had to learn before being able to write in a conventional manner. In the same conscious, deliberate way, she must put the words in a particular sequence. Creating written text is more deliberate and conscious than creating oral text. Therefore, the ability to produce such written text is developed through the contributions of instruction.

Based on Vygotsky's work, one way to help children express their ideas in writing might be to encourage multiple ways of demonstrating this thinking visually for others. To help capture student initial and developing responses to

text, teachers might model representation by using conceptual maps, drawings, or dramatics during and after reading. These representations would then become the focus of discussions in attempts to facilitate student efforts to make verbal their thoughts and ideas. Then, the teacher could move from these representations to written ones.

Encouraged use of multiple representations characterize a classroom with a social constructivist perspective. The usage of varied representations allow the learner to experiment and experience various uses of signs, facilitating the learner's realization of her own mental processes and resulting responses. The teacher is also better able to understand the learner's thinking. Since the mental framework of children is different from that of adults, the varied representations might help the teacher understand each individual's thought processes that led to a particular response. Finally, providing a choice of representations also fosters the shift of control from the teacher to the learner.

The third factor, group interaction, seems obvious since some form of interaction occurs in any classroom; however, one might question the influence of this interaction on learning. In some classrooms, the interaction pattern between the teacher and students or among students might focus on ideas or behaviors that are not related to the content the teacher hopes to discuss. In classrooms considering the influence of social interactions in response to literature, the focus would be on interactions that foster children's construction and understanding of key concepts related to the study of literature and to personal responses. Such classrooms might recognize the need for dialogue in which individuals construct meaning and develop higher mental functions involved in responding to text.

This dialogue potentially facilitates the thinking processes and fosters internalization. That is, students may adopt the new information or interaction patterns and connect it with prior knowledge and experiences, making it part of their own knowledge base. Such interactions frequently require students to adopt new speech genres. Traditionally, interactional patterns in classrooms place the teacher as the initiator of discourse. The change in focus to children's personal response shifts this to the learner, requiring a new speech genre for classrooms. Such changes require continual support and guidance from the teacher.

Finally, the role of the teacher in a classroom that grounds instruction in a social constructivist theoretical perspective would be to recognize the importance of language as a mediator of learning. The language of the classroom indicates the learning valued and acquired. Furthermore, such a classroom would demonstrate instruction that encourages a shift in control from the teacher to the learner. Students would learn the importance of their own responses, the resulting questions, and their requests for help in the planning of instruction because the teacher would always be formulating instruction based on her knowledge of the students' zones of proximal development. Finally, in such an environment, teachers would help students become aware of their own mental processes.

The Underlying Theoretical Perspective: A Summary

Language is learned in social groups and individually. Children socialize as adults do by talking about what they are learning, reading, and writing, as well as about the difficulties they may encounter. Educators who advocate use of literature-based instruction recognize the importance of providing such

opportunities in classrooms. For example, proponents of whole language believe that children need to be involved with the language in general and with their own language through real experience (Goodman, 1989). They perceive children as knowledgeable individuals who can make choices about their learning and who should be provided reading and writing experiences, as well as written and oral ones, that are connected in a meaningful setting (Watson, 1989).

In addition to educators, some literary critics agree with the arguments for the inclusion of literature in classrooms. Many of these are in theoretical agreement with those proponents of a literature-based reading program. First, they argue for the role of interaction within a community of readers in the interpretations of text (cf. Fish, 1980; Scholes, 1985). Second, while some literary critics have argued about where meaning resides -- whether in the text or the reader -- others (cf. Bleich, 1978; Rosenblatt, 1938) have stated the case that meaning results from an interaction between the reader and text.

A social constructivist perspective emphasizes the interaction among the reader, the text, and the social context, proposing that meaning is the result of this interaction, not contained within any one aspect of it. Because of some of the overlapping beliefs about the role of interaction between reader and text on the understanding and interpretation of text, research into reader response to literature might gain significant understanding of this process by adopting a social constructivist perspective.

Reader Response, Multiple Representation, and Peer Groups:
Three Components of Change in a Literature-based Reading Program

Proponents of a literature-based approach to teaching reading note the role of the reader in the construction of meaning from text. As such, personal response is key to understanding how the reader makes sense of text. Three lines of research provide a basis for a social constructivist perspective in literature-based reading instruction: (a) reader response, (b) multiple representation of ideas, and (c) peer groups. The research on reader response provides a basic understanding of the relationship between reader and text, the types of response that can be identified, and instructional approaches that help develop readers' abilities to respond to text. The research on multiple representation helps expand our current emphasis on writing text as the primary vehicle for written response. The literature on peer groups provides a basis for understanding the dynamics of "teacher-less" interactions among elementary peers. Together, these three areas of research help determine the nature of the instructional approach examined in this study and provide lenses for interpreting the events as they unfolded.

Response to Literature

Three issues are important to the philosophical basis of an elementary classroom studying literature. First, research on text-reader relationships provides knowledge about perceptions regarding the role of the reader, perceptions which potentially influence instruction. Closely related to perceptions of text-reader relationships is research on the variety of reader response, including the various types of, the development of, and the process of

response. Finally, since the role of the teacher is also subject to change when moving to a literature-based program, this part of the review ends by discussing instructional issues concerning the teaching of literature.

<u>Reader-Text Relationships</u>

The perspectives adopted in response to literature have varied throughout history. Phenomenologists focused on literature as an object separate from its historical context, its author, its conditions of production, or its readers. Structuralists thought that the forms of literature and how they work should be the focus of response. Those interested in the psychoanalytical stance viewed literature in terms of how it evolved. They studied the author and the context of the work (Eagleton, 1986). Others have focused on the role of individuals in the reading process. For example, Scholes (1985) argued for the need for readers to develop power over the text in order to guide their own understanding. He suggests that literature is the result of ongoing compositions; namely, that all texts are related to other texts. Fish (1980) argued for the role of the reader in creating meaning from text within communities. For him, meanings result from the active interaction of the informed reader as she read and discussed text. By "informed" he meant the reader competent in the language of the text, in the semantics of the text and in literary study. In general, almost from the time readers began discussing text, debate has raged about where the meaning resided -- within the text or within the reader. What limited many of these earlier theories was their view that meaning existed in either place -- that is, the reader or the text. In contrast, current beliefs are grounded in the view that meaning results as an interaction between the two.

Rosenblatt (1938/1976) was one of the earliest authors to argue for the relationship that existed between the reader and the text. She presented a transactional theory in which she argued that meaning existed as the result of the interaction between the reader and text and that meaning did not reside within a text. She explained the literary experience as the synthesis of what the text presents to the reader and what the reader brings to the act of reading. The reader brings meanings to the symbols on the page and the text guides the reader's meaning-making through its structure. This theory provides an image of an active reader, constantly working to achieve meaning. The role of the text is to guide the reader in this meaning-making process. Thus, the reader becomes an essential element in the reading process.

Echoing Vygotsky's notion of a ZPD, Rosenblatt stressed that the reader's initial reaction to a text is the essential beginning for instruction. Children often react in terms of their own experiences and affective stance. The teacher needs to begin instruction with the child's initial response to further these responses by exposing readers to the opinions of others and by returning to the text for further reflection. She argues that personal response must be elaborated through a social exchange of ideas.

Others, (e.g. Bleich, 1975, 1978; Iser, 1978; Hanson, 1990) noted the role of reader in the production of meaning and noted the importance of the multiple influences upon literary response which might result in similar or varied responses. For example, Iser's (1978) theory of text-reader interaction is based upon the distinction between those variables of influence found in the text and those found within the reader. For him, each literary work has two sides -- the

artistic and the aesthetic. The artistic side is the one created by the author while the aesthetic is the realization accomplished by the reader. These two aspects come together to create a literary work that differs from the text since the literary work results from the combination of the text and the reader's experience with it. The role of the text is to engage the imagination of the reader so that reading becomes active and creative. The reader's role is to fill in the inevitable gaps in any literary work by making inferences or creating metaphors to construct meaning. This construction, while it may create a complete understanding for one reader, will differ from that of every other reader. There is no one "correct" interpretation of any text. Instead, there are interpretations that are complete in that they incorporate the information the author explicitly states.

Iser argued that since the reading process is selective, the potential for any text is greater than what may result from an individual reading. Any text must leave opportunities that evoke the imagination of the reader or the reader will never become actively involved in the reading process. At the same time, the text must create challenges for the reader by presenting unforeseen events or else the reader could potentially become bored. Therefore, there must be a balance between the images the text provides and those the reader creates. Thus, the reading process involves the reader entering a world of visions; the reader oscillates between creating these illusions and observing them.

However, Iser argued further that the reader will not maintain a perfect balance, for then the text would become predictable. Instead, this balance is occasionally tipped as the text challenges the reader's expectations. The active reader is constantly working to maintain a balance that is never fully achieved.

Each time a reader attempts to impose a consistent pattern on a text, the text creates discrepancies that the reader must accommodate. The text creates an anticipation of events in the reader, who then assesses these in retrospect. The reader enters the world of the text, observing events as they unfold, but does not necessarily anticipate the involvement the text requires. Frequently, the reader feels a need to discuss a book in which she has been most involved. This need to talk about the text is the result of the reader's need to understand more fully the reading experience. Thus, three aspects of the reading process affect how the reader constructs meaning from text: (1) the actions of anticipation and retrospection, (2) the consequent unfolding of the text, and (3) the resulting impression of reality.

Perhaps because of the controversy among literary critics, or in spite of it, research has attempted to explain the response of the reader. Researchers have identified aspects of text-based influence and reader-based influence (Beach, 1985; Cullinan, Harwood, & Galda, 1983; Galda, 1983; Golden & Guthrie, 1986; Ortony, 1985; Purves, 1973, 1985: Rosenblatt, 1976, 1985). What is essential to note is that the reader brings prior knowledge and experiences to the act of reading that shapes meaning-making. Traditional skills-based approaches to reading instruction frequently minimize this in favor of the text and the skills associated with successful reading. Changing to a literature-based approach requires attention to the reader and what she brings to the act of reading. While this is essential, the data from studies on response to literature has demonstrated the complexity of trying to understand how readers respond.

Types of Reader Response

Three aspects of response are invaluable to a researcher beginning to interpret events during reading and group discussions during literature-based instruction in which reader response to literature is a primary factor: (a) the range of responses one might expect to see, (b) the variety of responses throughout the process of reading a text, and (c) the influences on readers' response. In attempting to understand reader response, researchers have categorized the final written or oral comments made after completing the reading (e.g. Odell & Cooper, 1976; Purves, 1972; Purves & Beach, 1972). In their classic text, Purves and Beach (1972) delineated five types of response: (1) the personal statement, (2) descriptive responses, (3) interpretative responses, (4) evaluative responses, and (5) miscellaneous responses. They not only found a connection between understanding and interest, which focused more on content than on form, but they also found readers can be influenced intellectually, emotionally, and attitudinally by what they read.

Later, Odell and Cooper (1976) amended Purves & Beach's categories by adding subcategories. They divided personal statements into those that were about the reader and those about the text. Descriptive response could be narrative or could focus on particular aspects of the work referenced. Interpretative statements could be those that alluded to parts of the work or they could refer to the entire work. Finally, evaluative statements could refer to the evocativeness of the work, to the meaningfulness of the work, and/or to the construction of the work. However, these responses represent the final product of reading but do not reveal the process of response.

In fact, the process of reader response is influenced by multiple factors, such as: (1) developmental, personal, and social factors (Applebee, 1978; Cullinan, Harwood, & Galda, 1983; Farnan & Kelly, 1988; Hepler & Hickman, 1982; Hickman, 1983), (2) reading ability (Eeds & Wells, 1989; Kelly, 1987; Petrosky, 1976; Squire, 1964), and (3) differences in ways readers elect to process text (Langer, 1989; MacClean, 1988); that is, how much they balance their own prior knowledge with knowledge presented in the text. Furthermore, research suggests there are many ways to encourage response and deepen understanding (e.g., Benton, 1983; Hickman, 1981; Pappas & Brown, 1987; Strickland, et al., 1989).

Exploring the Process of Student Response

More recently, the study of response has moved away from a focus on categorization to one on the process of response, formulating bases for further investigation. In studying the process of understanding text, J. Langer (1989) made three assumptions about reading: (1) reading is an interpretive act, (2) readers follow certain conventions signaled by the text, and (3) readers need to personalize or objectify their reading experience with the text. While primarily focusing on the reader, these assumptions do not negate the role of the text which guides the reader's experiences as she enters the world of the text. At the same time, it is the reader's purpose for reading that also guides her experience and interpretation. These purposes might be efferent (Rosenblatt, 1978) resulting from a quest for scientific knowledge (Bruner, 1986) or aesthetic (Rosenblatt, 1978) resulting from a quest for a narrative experience (Bruner, 1986). Approaching text from an efferent stance, the reader is seeking logical,

rational meaning; approaching from an aesthetic stance, she is seeking a more emotional experience.

Langer's (1989) research detailing the stances readers assume throughout the response process has expanded our understanding of readers' construction of meaning and response to that meaning as they read expository and literary text. While noting that a reader's goals within a stance vary as a function of the nature of the text, Langer identified four recursive stances readers assume: (a) being out and stepping into an envisionment, (b) being in and moving through an envisionment, (c) stepping back and rethinking what one knows, and (d) stepping out and objectifying the experience (p. 7).

At the same time, readers adopted differing stances depending on whether they were engaged in narrative or expository text. For literary text, readers apparently seemed to be "reaching toward a horizon." This "reaching" seemed to result from the reader's sense of some unfolding of events that would reveal information about the human experience. Reading was guided by an effort to make sense of the whole through the use of emotions, motivations, intentions, assumptions, implications, values, and attitudes. Thus, this strategy was highly influenced by the emotional aspects of the experience. Readers often went beyond what the text said to explore what it did not say to construct meaning.

In contrast, readers of expository text were "maintaining a reference point." They read to understand the topic better by making connections between their previous knowledge of the topic and the information provided in the text. Their questions were related to information in the text and the meanings they created were the result of their prior knowledge and the information in the text.

In her study of high school readers, Langer (1989) noted they adopted the same four stances as they engaged in meaning-making from text and balanced this meaning-making with their own prior knowledge and the information from the text. While adopting these same stances, their strategies and concerns differed as they approached literary or expository text. Langer concludes that readers construct meaning at two levels. First, the text, whether literary or expository, creates different assumptions that influence the reader's orientation toward reading. However, on a second level, the readers adopted similar stances as the reading process evolved.

Previous research (e.g. Golden & Guthrie, 1986; MacClean, 1988; Squire, 1964) tends to support these ideas about various stances. Squire's (1964) findings indicated that response develops and changes during the reading process. Golden and Guthrie (1986) examined various responses to determine whether they were text- or reader-based and found that prior knowledge and new knowledge acquired from reading combined with the individual's affective stance to contribute to an interpretation of the literature. MacClean (1988) identified five categories along a continuum ranging from reader-bound to text-bound that influence reader response and found an equal balance between the reader's prior knowledge and text was the most common way mature readers process text.

The research cited above provides insights into a process of response to literature that is individual but tends to underplay or ignore the social context in which response occurs. The individual must be provided opportunities to develop her response. In more traditional, skills-based approaches to reading, students respond to text either in terms of: (a) the skills and strategies they used while

reading or (b) the answers they have to comprehension questions. Often, children respond to teacher questions immediately after reading a selection without openings to return to a selection later to revise initial reactions. In fact, few occasions exist in which learners can continue to pursue ideas related to texts. Therefore, traditional, skills-based approaches to reading limit the learner's abilities to develop a response.

Thus, while the response process may be an individual one, it develops within a social context. The instructional context of a classroom is comprised of many factors including the types of knowledge stressed, the modes of representation students use to indicate their thinking, the interactional pattern employed, and the role the teacher adopts. All of these come together in concert to create the environment of the literature classroom. An individual must consider each when investigating reader response in an elementary classroom.

The research described above helps us: (a) identify the final responses individuals report after completing a text and (b) understand the process of some readers while they are reading a single text in one sitting. However, it does not provide insights about the process of response to the same text over a longer period of time nor across several texts with similar themes. In addition, much of the research to date has assumed fixed developmental stages within considering the role of the social context, rather than emphasizing the instructional context and potential for working within students' ZPD.

Instructional Issues

Some researchers (Lucking, 1976; Purves, 1972) have argued that response is learned behavior that can be taught. While others might argue that initial

response to literature is an emotional experience (cf. Hansson, 1990; Hynds, 1990), many would argue that instruction and schooling influence both initial and later responses. Researchers have found several important factors related to schooling and instruction. When considering the **types of learning** stressed, the selection of books is essential since what students read influences what they learn. When exploring the **representations** students use to convey their response, researchers have investigated the use of writing. The **interactional patterns** in classrooms are often established by the questions teachers ask as well as the interactions among the community of students. Finally, an essential part of the **teacher's role** is to convey her expectations of students. These influence how children respond to text. Each of these areas, book selection, the use of writing, the questions teachers ask, the interactions among students, and teacher expectations, are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Selection of books. The first influential factor is the selection of books available for students to read. Applebee (1974) found that lists of literary selections recommended for the high school level remained relatively unchanged across texts, but actual selections and instruction varied according to many popular beliefs about the purposes of schooling. Those students identified as "college-bound" read recognized literature (e.g., "Classics"). Others, those identified as destined for a working class background, read works by more contemporary authors, the more popular literature among adolescents. Therefore, even though curriculum reading lists always represented examples from literature recognized as outstanding, the instruction for some students did not. Despite the cry for more varied selections including ones created by women

and minorities, Applebee (1989a) found that the list of most commonly taught literary works in high schools was notably similar to that found in a study conducted 25 years ago (Squire & Applebee, 1968).

In a study exploring literature instruction in the elementary school, Walmsley and Walp (1989) found little or no regard for what might be considered the "classics" in children's literature. Instead, elementary teachers use criteria such as success with a previous class or in receiving an award (e.g. Caldecott Medal winners or Newberry Award winners). That teachers find book selection challenging is no surprise. Most teachers become certified with only one term of study of children's literature; they may not have such a knowledge base or time to develop it. This results in children reading primarily what is available and what was successful with other students, often a system of trial and error.

A potentially disturbing finding in both the Applebee (1989a) and Walmsley & Walp (1989) studies was that children perceived as poorer readers were limited in what they were required to read. Often the poorer readers are those from backgrounds different from the white, middle class majority and represent other ethnic and socio-economic cultures. Walmsley and Walp found that elementary teachers expected less from their poorer readers. While teachers encouraged good readers to read whatever they wanted and whatever they found challenging, they encouraged their poorer readers to select easier material. This easier material was typically identified as that which had simpler vocabulary and lower readability. In addition, poorer readers had less time for independent reading at school. Since independent reading frequently came after students had

completed other work, the better readers finished their work sooner, so they had more time to read. These researchers concluded that teachers assumed: (1) reading must be enjoyable and reading that frustrates the reader is not enjoyable and (2) poorer readers do not have the skills necessary to read books on their own.

The types of books teachers select for students to read is influential for several reasons. First, all students should have as many experiences with quality literature as possible. Expecting only the better readers to read certain books deprives other students of experiencing the models of imagery and language use present in literature. The difficulty of a reading text involves more than the length of sentences and the vocabulary. Student interest is also important. To limit access because of readability formulas or perceptions about future life roles constrains student experiences with text. Second, when selecting recognized literature, the educator needs to be aware that the author and content of a book reflects individual students' particular life experiences. The need for balance and to provide content with which individual students can identify is important. Third, a teacher needs to allow student choice of reading material. While it is important to encourage students to read a variety of texts recognized as quality work, it is also important to allow students to select their own reading materials, particularly if enjoyment of reading is valued. Finally, teacher guidance in such selection is essential to promote student ability in recognizing quality literature in areas of their interest.

Providing reading material for students is a complex issue requiring teachers to consider several factors. These include a balance of authors in terms

of gender, ethnicity, and social groups; a variety of interest areas; and representative, award-winning, classic, and popular books.

The use of writing. In reexamining data from a previous study (Nystrand & Gamoran, 1989), Nystrand (1990) concluded that curriculum and instruction both contributed to either the ease or difficulty students experienced reading various texts, but difficulty was more the result of methods of instruction than of the particular texts taught. One method of instruction that influences student ability to understand text is the teacher's use of writing. For example, he suggests a lack of opportunities for writing during the process of reading contributes to student difficulty with recall and understanding text.

Nystrand's call for more writing related to student response to literature is not unique. Applebee (1989b) noted that virtually all the teachers in programs identified as excellent required formal writing assignments as methods of assessing student progress. In addition, he found that more of these teachers had modified their writing instruction to follow a process-oriented approach to writing than they had 25 years ago (Squire & Applebee, 1968). However, most of the writing related to response to literature was used for assessment purposes alone.

In identifying emergent issues resulting from this research, Applebee noted the need to reconcile approaches to literature instruction with approaches to writing instruction. This would mean not only the inclusion of more student writing, but also instructional approaches that demonstrated the parallels between process writing and the reading process. Process writing stresses the role of the author in the creation of text. Reader response theory stresses the role of the reader when constructing meaning from the text. Both processes require

students to see the importance of recognizing and expressing their own ideas and responses more frequently. Findings from this research, however, indicate that teacher requests for personal response was used only as a motivational device, if at all, and that the approach to literature was overly text-centered, ignoring the development of individual readers' responses. Applebee (1989b) notes that one reason for this might be that there are few models of a process approach to literature study for teacher to examine. Furthermore, teachers lack a vocabulary to talk about literacy understanding or instructional techniques they might be able to use.

In studying elementary schools, Walmsley & Walp (1989) found a greater variety of opportunities for children to respond to text, such as book reports, reading logs, book-sharing projects, and book conferences. However, some teachers expressed a reluctance to require much of this, particularly for independent reading, because they saw this as inconsistent with their beliefs that reading be enjoyable. The most commonly used technique for teaching literature among elementary teachers is what these researchers referred to as "read-aloud" activities. During this period of time the teachers read selected books to the entire class. Teachers often asked student questions about this reading and they expressed the hope that these sessions might lead to more student writing. These researchers noted there was no evidence that this additional student writing resulted.

It appears that written response might be an important means for students to share their ideas about texts. In fact, DeFabio (1989) and Quick (1989) both presented case studies of outstanding literature teachers who use writing to

support and further student response. However, Hansson (1990) argued that written response, as well as oral ones, are frequently difficult for readers. Initial response is often vague with illusions to emotional effects, but the reader is unable to elaborate this and make it more specific. While some teachers might interpret this as the student's inability to understand the text, Hansson argued that the reader needs time to process and elaborate the response. This can be facilitated by writing and speaking. Therefore, students need opportunities throughout the reading process to record, state, and restate responses so that they understand their own emerging responses. Writing that comes only after the completion of reading a text does not permit the reader to reprocess her evolving response.

Use of Authentic Questions. In addition to the books selected, teacher expectations, and the use of writing for students to record and refine their responses, the use of questioning is also an important component of instruction that affects how students respond to text. Questioning plays a key role in all of instruction. What questions the teacher asks determines what students will learn (Marshall, Klages, & Fehlman, 1990; Wixson, 1983). Therefore, in responding to literature, the teacher can develop questions that further the students' thinking about their own reactions to texts and cause them to explore the reasons for these reactions. In many classrooms, however, instead of facilitating student understanding, teacher questions make literary reading more difficult by (1) attempting to simplify the interpretive process by implying one right answer, (2) conveying contradictory expectations of exploring individual interpretations while at the same time presenting tests and discussions that undermine and undervalue

student ideas, (3) stressing literal or inferential meaning-making over personal, affective response, and (4) focusing on testing and skill-building over the literary experience (Hynds, 1990). Rather, the literary experience should pursue understanding of self, of society, of literature, and of aesthetics. To explore these, authentic questions that probe student ideas so that they can be examined, elaborated, reconsidered and revised are essential (Nystrand, 1990).

In attempting to identify what types of questions teachers might ask, Flood and Lapp (1988) called for questions that ask about three areas of reader response: (1) questions about self, (2) questions about the text, and (3) questions about the context in which they read and responded.

A Community of Readers. Added to book selection, teacher expectations, writing, and authentic questions, creating a community of readers who discuss text is the fifth component of classroom instruction that influences how students respond to text. No reader exists alone. Instead, she is part of a larger community of readers (Fish, 1980) which shares certain ideas, reactions, and beliefs about texts. This community shares some background information which helps create similar meanings. Newcomers to the community learn particular ways to respond to texts that they continue to apply to future texts. Thus, they develop a taste for and appreciation of what the larger community defines as literary (Purves, 1990). In order to learn these community norms, the learner must actively participate in interaction focused on texts. Yet, an average of less than one minute a day is devoted to class discussion of literature in high school classes, and during these discussions, only 34% of the students actively participate (Nystrand, 1990). While teachers in programs recognized as outstanding seem to

provide ample time for class discussion (DeFabio, 1989; Quick, 1989), this is not the norm.

It is within a community of readers that the teacher is able to present opportunities for students to make connections between their own experiences and the text. Evidence exists that making connections orally within such a community is influential in reading of and learning from expository text (Palincsar, 1986; Palincsar & Brown, 1984) and literature (Eeds & Wells, 1989; Huck, 1990; Smith, 1991).

Communities of readers establish their own goals and participate in discussions revolving around text. Smith, (1991) found that adult book club groups resembled classroom interactions in two ways: wanting to maintain the focus of the book discussion and wanting to delve deeper into the meaning of the text. Investigating the use of literature study groups, Eeds & Wells (1989) found that with teacher guidance, fifth and sixth grade students were capable of engaging in rich discussions surrounding literature. These children could articulate their perspectives, modify their ideas as they listened to alternative ideas, and evaluated and valued texts as examples of literature.

Teacher Expectations. Selecting appropriate books is just the first of many instructional factors. In addition to the selection of the books themselves, part of the teacher's role is to communicate her expectations which also influences student response. Touponce (1990) argues that schooling trains us to read in particular ways. Through schooling, young readers learn to define the reading process as one grounded in finding the right meaning or correct answer to comprehension questions or as one grounded in a transaction between reader

and text. Our focus on reading instruction as helping children to construct "the" meaning from text, grounded in bottom-up and interactive models of reading and the literary theories of New Criticism (Harker, 1986), support a text-driven view of reading. Thus, an essential component of interpretation is an understanding of multiple readings of the same texts; however, teachers often seem to expect one interpretation. Hynds (1990) echoes this same viewpoint, extended to include students' need to learn each particular teacher's codes, conventions, and interpretive norms. This required conformity to each teacher's idiosyncracies forces students to adjust their initial responses to fit those of the teacher, the literary community of a given classroom, and the text. Therefore, the teacher's expectations during instruction affect student response to literature.

<u>Instructional Issues: A Summary</u>

Despite Rosenblatt's (1938) call for a new methodology for teaching literature, researchers and educators at all levels are still struggling with finding effective ways to do this. Existing research has found evidence for various levels and types of response. In addition, this body of research has noted that response is influenced by developmental and instructional factors. Instructional factors of note are the selection of books students read, the use of writing, the use of authentic questions, the creation of a community of readers, and the expectations of the teacher.

Despite increased knowledge about response, much more research is needed. While researchers call for more writing related to student response, we do not know which types of writing best support developing response. Applebee (1989b) suggested that more links be made between process writing and the

reading process. Yet, no existing research has examined such a connection in instruction. In addition, since there is little evidence of genuine dialogue focused on authentic questions in classrooms, we do not know how this influences student response. Further, while there is a significant body of literature describing the success of practitioners as they have created a community of readers in a language arts classroom, little empirical work investigating the process of student response to literature exists.

Recently, Flood and Lapp (1988) outlined a process for a program that focused on reader-response to literature. They also outlined four assumptions that would underlie such instruction: (1) literary meaning is the result of a transaction between the text and the reader, (2) meaning is not static within a text, (3) since every reader is unique, each will respond differently to a text, and (4) critical to meaning-making is the reader's personal responses.

Much of the research cited above provided a basis for investigating reader response. Flood and Lapp's (1988) four assumptions are ones that do underlie the reading program I studied. In addition, the teacher considered the instructional issues of: (1) book selection, (2) the use of writing, (3) the use of authentic questions, and (4) the creation of a community of readers. Book selection was important in that books recognized as outstanding created the foundation of the literature program. In addition, students had opportunities to select books based on their interests for free reading, as well as selections read by the entire class.

As this dissertation will show, the teacher in the classroom I studied implemented many of the ideas reviewed above. Among them, she used writing,

authentic questioning, a community of readers, and instruction using Langer's (1989) reader stances as a framework to provide: (a) a shared language for the teacher and students to discuss text, (b) a way to reveal the evolving nature of response, and (c) a basis for teacher modeling of developing response.

Langer's (1989) four stances, coupled with factors of influence such as purpose, prior knowledge, and text, provided the basis for instruction on how to develop a shared language when discussing different ways of response. Thus, a common language was used as students discussed with one another their reading experiences. In addition, these reading process stances helped clarify the perspectives the reader brings to the text at various points during reading, thus highlighting the ever changing process of response. Discussions focused on the environment, as well as the influence of purposes, prior knowledge, and information found in the text. Further, the teacher in this study modeled multiple types of response to literature for the students to provide the necessary scaffolding they need to develop a variety of responses themselves.

Therefore, this study examined the issues raised by current research on response to literature. However, one issue previous research on reader response does not address is the social constructivist notion that language influences thought and that all thought cannot be conveyed in language. The reader's response might not be easily conveyed in words. Therefore, asking teachers to require more student writing may not be a sufficient way of getting at developing response. To address this, the teacher in the study included: (a) having more group interactions so that children had increased opportunities to verbalize their thinking and observe peers attempting the same and (b) asking students to

represent their ideas in multiple ways before, during, and after their reading. Thus, students were able to communicate thoughts that were not yet verbal through drawing or acting. They were able to convey thoughts that were beginning to become verbal but not yet clear through a conceptual map. To understand this need to provide multiple ways of representing ideas, we must explore existing research on representation.

<u>Representation</u>

The mediation of language is a key influential factor in a social constructivist perspective. Therefore, encouraged usage of multiple representations characterizes a classroom grounded in such a perspective. The usage of multiple representations allows the learner to experiment with and experience various uses of signs, facilitating the learner's realization of her own mental processes and the resulting responses. Student use of multiple representations allows the teacher to better understand the student's thinking and provides for transfer of control from the teacher to the learner.

This section describes the research on representation. The first section explores schema theory to discuss how people represent and remember information. The remaining two sections discuss research on the use of representations of knowledge in classrooms.

<u>Schema Theory: How Individuals Remember Information</u>

Of the many theories that exist regarding how individuals remember information, schema theory has received much recognition as a basis for how our knowledge is represented and used in understanding. In this section, I explore schema theory and its implications for how teachers encourage students to

illustrate what they remember about text through writing and other forms of representation.

Because we communicate most often with words, we often imagine that thought is represented in verbal form. As Vygotsky (1978) suggested, thought and speech are not the same; where they overlap is verbal thought (see Figure 2.1). Therefore, thoughts that are not in this overlapping section cannot be verbalized until the individual can make the link between the thought and language. Therefore, words are only one way individuals are aware of their thoughts. They also engage in imagery and think in conceptual abstractions that cannot be translated into words (Johnson-Laird & Wason, 1977). These internal representations are often analogical, in that they capture key elements and relationships and may be readily modified for any particular situation. Because of this flexibility, they may be essential in problem solving.

Representations of thinking have been the focus of much research in multiple disciplines ranging from artificial intelligence to cognitive psychology to linguistics. One goal of this research has been to model how knowledge is structured. Knowledge is not a duplication of experience (Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977), but, rather, the result of processing and reprocessing information. Researchers have tried to understand and explain these knowledge structures.

Bartlett (1932), in his studies of individual thought processes while reading and retelling stories, was the first researcher to attempt to identify these structures as they relate specifically to story comprehension. He concluded that individuals did not recall stories exactly as they had read them. Instead, they modified or omitted information as they recounted the story, based on a general

impression of it. Because these transformations seemed to occur during the retelling, Bartlett concluded that memory is constructed based on an interaction between the incoming information and the mental structures and strategies used by the reader. The incoming information is integrated into the existing mental structures. He argued that individual differences existed in these structures, but he also noted that similar characteristics were shared by members of the same culture.

The term most frequently used to refer to these structures is "schemata." While differences emerge among various researchers as to whether these are constructions or reconstructions (See Royer, 1977; Spiro, 1977), there is agreement about the characteristics of schemata as knowledge structures. These structures are encyclopedic in that they contain information that is in most cases characteristic of a particular entity and not a simple definition of it. They also represent knowledge that is conceptual; as such they are not linguistic but abstract symbol representations that are flexible (Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977).

How individuals, as well as groups, represent ideas is a key aspect of response to literature. Readers may compartmentalize information apart from prior knowledge or may integrate it into existing knowledge structures, depending on whether they have learned that the focus of reading is comprehension of a particular text or the expansion of one's own knowledge and experiences (Spiro, 1977). In addition, Stein and Glenn (1979) argue that the structures or schemata used while reading narratives might be very different from those used when processing a single sentence. Stories contain many features and therefore might require a model of an underlying structure that facilitates the reader's

understanding of the relationship between all the features.

Schema theory suggests that readers use prior knowledge to create meaning as they read. When reading literature, this prior knowledge helps the reader picture or imagine visions from the text. S. Langer (1942/1978) stressed the relationship between imagery and storytelling, arguing that the picture book, one of a child's first introductions to literature, combines words and images to create a story. The picture helps to teach the child how to create her own images connected to the print on the page. Benton (1983) elaborated on this by arguing for the influence of imaging while reading. Mental imagery creates the world of the text. However, the strength of this imagery varies from individual to individual much the same as dreams vary. Also, individuals have control over this imagery and can intensify or lessen it as they desire. The reader shapes these images into a text. One reader's images may not only be very different from another's, but also more or less intense or detailed. Finally, this author argued that these images are a means to understanding and not an end in and of themselves. They are created to help the reader comprehend.

In discussing the act of comprehending text, Benton cites Sartre's (1972) theory that the reader does not create images while reading, but that imagery occurs later as the reader thinks about the text. Therefore, the images are always changing throughout the reading process, being modified by new information the author provides the reader. This modification helps the reader in her making of meaning. Kiefer (1983) points out that research seldom attempts to uncover this level of a child's understanding of text even though they acknowledge that the reader constructs meaning from text. Allowing children to represent ideas in

multiple ways, providing them choices, as they are in the process of reading might better reveal their understanding of texts, as well as help them to develop those understandings.

Representation of images constructed from reading helps readers clarify their understandings. Mason (1987) argues that all individuals need to make sense of what others do, say, and/or write. He suggests individuals make sense through inner mental functions, rather than overt external behavior. That is, writing or other overt behavior is only the individual's presentation of what she/he has learned. In contrast, others suggest that the overt activity, such as writing, helps in the sense-making process. A social constructivist perspective recognizes the connections between thought and language. Vygotsky's (1978) studies placed a strong emphasis on oral language and the relationship between this and written text. The oral language an individual hears is not as complex as the written one she encounters. In order to develop this complexity of written language, the learner must both read and write. By doing so, the individual moves from being initially dependent on the oral language of others, to beginning a process of increased complexity and eventually becoming less dependent on this oral language. Therefore, instruction grounded in a social constructivist perspective brings together oral and written language by having children talk, read, and write.

In addition, other researchers support the connections between written language and thinking. Applebee, Langer and Mulles (1988) linked higher-order thinking with writing and suggested teachers help student use writing to improve their ability to interpret, analyze, and evaluate what they read. In classrooms

with a whole language perspective, children make personal links to meaning through reading and writing (Watson, 1989).

While representation may be reflected in writing, drawing, or dramatics, the most frequent method used in classrooms to have students represent their response to literature is through writing.

Representations Used in Instruction

Teachers most frequently assign written work to assess student thinking since they know writing may draw upon multiple forms of knowledge. While the most prevalent, writing is only one form of representing what one knows. Teachers can also incorporate other forms that reveal not only what students know but also how they are thinking. This section of the chapter outlines these various forms of representation.

Writing as Representation.
Several studies have been designed to help determine exactly how reading and writing are linked to one another and how they differ. Many of these were designed to demonstrate relationships between reading and writing. They prove helpful here as evidence of ways for the learner to use writing as one means of representing the multiple forms of information she has gained from reading. Rubin and Hansen's (1984) framework suggests five kinds of knowledge structures: informational knowledge, structural knowledge, transactional knowledge, process knowledge, and aesthetic knowledge. Researchers have found connections between reading and writing within all of these structures.

Some researchers have explored the relationship between informational knowledge, consisting of a knowledge of vocabulary, concepts, world knowledge,

and general "book" learning, in reading and writing (cf. Birnbaum, 1982; Gordon & Braun, 1986; Nist & Sabol, 1984). While reaching differing conclusions, their findings reveal that effective reading helps build informational knowledge. Effective writing depends on remembering and organizing that knowledge into a coherent text. Perhaps one does not require the other, but they can enhance each other.

Research into structural knowledge, the knowledge of the various structures of discourse and writing formulas such as paragraph structure or the structure of comparison/contrast papers (Rubin & Hansen, 1984), is supported by the belief that children will imitate in writing what they observe while reading (Goodman & Goodman, 1983). To do this, they must read the text as a writer would by becoming aware of the various texts authors may adopt. Readers' familiarity with the conventions of text structure affects their comprehension of that text (Kintsch, 1977; Englert et al., 1988; Taylor & Beach, 1984). Research exploring the knowledge of structure on both reading and writing has concluded that text structure instruction can affect student recall of text (Taylor and Beach, 1984) and quality and range of student writing (Raphael, Englert and Kirschner, 1989). Further, Eckoff (1983) found that children included in their own writing features they found in the texts they were reading. Therefore, it would seem that the structure of their reading texts influenced the structure of their writing (Stotsky, 1983).

Transactional knowledge is the knowledge that texts are a medium of communication between the author and the reader. This echoes Rosenblatt's transactional theory since it recognizes the interaction between the text and the

reader. Salvatori (1982) hypothesizes that by helping students learn to confront and tolerate the uncertainties of reading, they will eventually learn to deal with them as they write. As readers realize that texts may be unclear, they, as writers, may work to clarify their writings. This seems to link the need for communication -- a need common to both readers and writers.

Calkins (1986) supports this connection through her observations of classrooms. In these classes, children are encouraged to see themselves as authors. Because of this, they notice choices other authors make in the books they read and, subsequently, they learn by these choices. Their writing also causes them to be more critical readers. They see that authorship involves making choices; they view the books they read, not as absolute truths, but as the result of choices the author made. Calkins further states that if children are encouraged to make the connections between reading and writing, they not only need to see themselves as authors, but also recognize there are authors behind the texts they are reading.

Process knowledge consists of that knowledge used in the making of meaning. Possessors of such knowledge realize that making meaning requires a process. Flower and Hayes (1980) developed a model of composing to illustrate this process. This model contains three major sets of elements which are: the environment of the task; long-term memory; and the process of planning, translating, and reviewing. These are also important components of the reading process (Raphael & Englert, 1988; Tierney & Pearson, 1983). Both reading and writing involve plans which are based on the beliefs of the individual reader and/or writer. Writers must consider their readers and also act as their own

readers. Readers must react to and think about what they have read. All of this implies a process -- a development of meaning and an awareness of this development.

Knowledge of the process of reading and writing can enable learners to approach either activity with a plan that will aid goal attainment. Research needs to examine further the relationship between the reader's response to text as evidenced through written response and consider the role of the context in which readers interact daily around text.

Rubin and Hansen's final category is aesthetic knowledge. Duke (1984) proposes that the reader's aesthetic or affective response is an initial reaction based on the reader's raw emotions evoked through the reading of literary text. He argues that this initial response needs to be not only acknowledged, but also encouraged before moving on to other types of response. One way he identifies to bring these initial emotional reactions to light is through having students note these in writing. Then they can be discussed, analyzed, and perhaps elaborated.

Petrosky (1982) followed procedures outlined by Bleich (1975/1978) in stressing the students' need to relate text to their own experiences and, thus, focus more on personal reactions than on specifics of the text. Petrosky argues that having students write about their initial impressions of a text facilitates their efforts to link the text to their own experiences. Writing not only aids students in their efforts to create meaning, but also serves as evidence of their understanding.

As the above research indicates, there are many connections between reading and writing. As representation, writing is one way for students not only

to demonstrate what they know, but also to help them develop their ideas. For the teacher, a student's writing may provide insight into the student's ZPD and facilitate teacher scaffolding.

Other Forms of Representation

While important, writing is only one method of representation. Beach (1972) found that written and oral responses frequently differed; therefore, how a reader is asked to represent her ideas about text might influence the response communicated. Furthermore, Hickman (1983) found that younger children relied more on acting out an understood meaning than they did on verbal explanation. As a result, she identified behaviors such as casual references and art work, as well as the absence of such things, as evidence of these children's responses. She stated that a child's lack of reference to a book or lack of drawing about a book can tell as much about that child's response as their choice to talk or draw about it.

Spiro, Coulson, Feltovich, and Anderson (1988) conducted research on cognition, examining the characteristics of advanced learning of complex conceptual material. They noted an individual's over-reliance on a single basis for mental representation had a negative impact on learning. These authors conclude that one of our goals of knowledge acquisition should be the development of mental representations that support what they call "cognitive flexibility." Critical reading is a complex cognitive activity. Instruction in critical reading might better foster understanding of complex ideas if students are encouraged to represent their own ideas in multiple ways which, in turn, may encourage more flexible thinking.

Traditionally, teachers have relied on writing as the preferred method of representing ideas or information. More recently, Huck, Hepler, and Hickmann (1987) have suggested that teachers of literature might follow the lead of mathematics teachers by providing concrete manipulatives for students. Cianciolo (1988) suggests that teachers provide multiple activities in which students can express and clarify their understanding of and response to literature. These activities might include art, writing, games, crafts, and cooking.

Pellegrini and Galda (1988) investigated the influence of play props on preschool children's generation of stories. They found that those activities requiring the use of "functionally ambiguous props," that is, blocks of various sizes and shapes, prompted more personal narratives than the use of "functionally explicit props," such as doctor's kits, dolls, blankets, and pill bottles. Thus, children appear to be able to construct more elaborated stories when they had the freedom to explore possibilities with abstract props than with those for which there was a specific purpose. Such ambiguous props might have tapped their nonverbal thinking more fully than the explicit ones had.

An example of a successful intervention that considered these ideas as they relate to literature instruction can be found in Saul's (1989) work in teaching pre-service methods courses. This author found that these prospective teachers asked basal-like questions even though they were reading children's literature. To encourage a break from this question-forming pattern, Saul had them represent stories by asking her students to "diagram" the story they had just read. This diagram was to be the reader's personal method of conveying her/his understanding of the text. The purpose was to begin a conversation about the

text. In practice, these students drew pictures about the story. These representations demonstrated the students' literary interpretation better than a question-forming exercise.

In a study exploring the relationship between fifth graders' involvement in and comprehension of a fictional short story, Tierney and Edmiston (1991) asked children to create visual representations from the story. They concluded that comprehension of involved readers, as evidenced through the representations and interviews, creates vivid images of people, places, and events.

While there is evidence of a connection between reading and writing and evidence that learners need to represent their ideas in multiple ways, further research examining student use of multiple ways of representing their response to text is needed. For example, a teacher can provide instruction to students on various methods of presenting their developing response to text which they can then use when planning for discussion or when writing in reading logs. Furthermore, they can use these records of developing response as they finish reading a selection and attempt to formulate some final impressions of the book.

An important influencing factor on how the reader responds to text and how she represents her ideas about the text is the reaction she receives from others as she formulates and refines her ideas. Participating in peer groups is one way a student can receive immediate feedback for her ideas. Therefore, this review now focuses on the use of peer groups in classrooms.

Peer Grouping

A social constructivist perspective on learning stresses the role of discourse on the development of knowledge. Several have described the importance of the

relationship between thought and language, and that language is not inherited as a complete or total entity (Bakhtin, 1986; Mead, 1934; Vygotsky, 1978). Rather, we learn language by participating in particular conversations. Through this participation we develop thought.

Reading is a classic example of a process that is cognitive as well as social. Since language abilities are fundamental to the development of reading abilities, the critical role of opportunities to engage in oral discourse about texts is clear. Yet, typical classroom contexts usually consist of one teacher with approximately 25 students. In such a context, learners frequently interact with only the teacher and have little opportunity to discuss their ideas with one another unless the class structure includes some form of peer groups. However, research about cooperative groups in educational settings, while extensive, is sometimes conflicting. Those who attempt to implement student peer groups could become frustrated in reading relevant research without an understanding of the many perspectives on research itself and on grouping that influence interpretations of research findings. Because of the vastness of the research and the conflicting findings, this section presents only those factors that are relevant for establishing groups in a classroom grounded in a social constructivist perspective. The three factors include: (1) the key aspects of groups in a classroom setting, (2) the types of groups a teacher can establish, and (3) the considerations of a social constructivist perspective as they relate to peer groups.

Key Aspects of Peer Groups

Four interrelated aspects of peer groups in classroom settings include: (a) the types of learning stressed, (b) the representations students use to demonstrate

what they have learned, (c) the role of interaction, and (d) the role of the teacher in planning and implementing the other three components.

The Types of Learning Stressed. The first aspect the teacher should consider for grouping is the intended learning she is stressing. If the goal is to find the "correct" answer, perhaps groups may not be appropriate. On the other hand, if the desired learning is increased thinking that results from interacting with others and reaching consensus about a solution to a problem, peer groups are a better method than individual seat work. Many researchers consider the outcomes to be higher achievement on test scores (Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 1985; Lindow, Wilkinson, & Peterson, 1985; Peterson, Wilkinson, Spinelli, & Swing, 1984; Sharan, Bejarano, Kussell, & Peleg, 1984; Slavin, 1980, 1987, 1989; Webb, 1982; Webb & Cullian, 1983; Webb & Kenderski, 1984); others would note the ability to accomplish tasks together that individual students could not achieve (Cazden, 1989; Dyson, 1987; Forman & Cazden, 1989). Whether the outcome is measured in a test score or in the completion of a task, the teacher needs to realize that the desired outcome will influence the group interactions and the resulting knowledge acquired. However, the theoretical perspective of the classroom teacher must influence her consideration of task as well.

A teacher grounding her practice within a social constructivist perspective needs to consider the effects of using test scores to assess the success of groups when asking students to interact around the constructed meaning of a text. Achievement test scores fuel student perceptions that the teacher initiates classroom interactions because she is trying to determine who has arrived at the

"correct" interpretation of the text. As a result, the focus of all interactions becomes trying to guess the answer the teacher wants to hear. Therefore, when considering interactions grounded within a social constructivist perspective, the teacher focuses on tasks children are better able to accomplish with the help of others than they could alone. Such group compositions and tasks stress individual strengths in helping children construct their own response to text. Response to text is such a task. Even the most mature reader may gain insight into a text by interacting with another reader. Children in similar groups may also gain through such interactions.

How Students Represent What They Have Learned. The second component influencing peer group interactions is the task the teacher assigns that represents what students have learned (Palincsar, Stevens, & Gavelek, 1989; Slavin, 1983). For example, Slavin (1983) describes representations that are either individual, which requires a student to complete it alone; cooperative, which requires the student to work with others; or competitive, which requires the student to complete the task sooner or better than other students do. Students will not work well in groups if they are working on a task that is better solved alone. Only tasks that foster problem solving together result in peer group interaction focused on the solution.

Echoing this same criterion, Palincsar, Stevens and Gavelek (1989) stress the need for the representations that support the teacher's goals. Children can work in a cooperative state only if the task represents a problem that is best solved with team work. That is, a problem with one possible answer does not require the input of several individuals; one that is more open and for which

there may be several solutions does require input from many. More specifically, work sheet activities which require students to fill in the correct responses do not foster group collaboration. More open-ended questions that do not have one response do. Therefore, the teacher needs to consider what the assignment is before asking students to work in groups. If her goal is to have students work together, she must design open-ended tasks that do, indeed, encourage discussion.

One factor of the assignment that fosters interaction focused on task resolution is the use of argumentation. Johnson (1981) stated that the teacher needs to implement group tasks that foster more controversy among students so that they hear alternative perspectives on problems. This exposure to a variety of perspectives will foster higher levels of achievement since it leads to more creative and higher quality problem solving, increased motivation to learn, and more frequent use of higher stages of cognitive abilities. Therefore, when creating an assignment for peer groups, the teacher should include those tasks that include a variety of possible representations. This leads to multiple student solutions resulting in controversy the students resolve through discussion.

A classroom in which the teacher focuses on students' personal response to texts provides a context in which the task is to share everyone's unique response so alternative perspectives are bound to surface. As children read text, constructing meaning by connecting ideas presented in the text with their own prior knowledge, they are certain to reach alternative perspectives about the meaning of the selection. Further, they might represent their interpretations in multiple ways. Some may draw a scene from the text; others may write about it.

As they discuss these representations of their perspectives, they will also need to justify their interpretations, creating an argument for their views.

The Desired Interaction Pattern of the Group. A third aspect of group work that a teacher should consider is the desired interactions of the students (Palincsar, Stevens, & Gavelek, 1989; Slavin, 1983). As with the types of learning stressed and the assigned task representing their knowledge, Slavin (1983) also identified interactional behaviors that could be individualistic, cooperative, or competitive. Individualistic behaviors are those that indicate that a student is working alone regardless of whether or not there are other students around. Cooperative behaviors indicate a student is working with others to solve a problem. Competitive behaviors are those that demonstrate the student is working to achieve a goal ahead of others or to produce the best solution on her own. A teacher can establish a group with a cooperative assignment, but, unless she communicates and monitors her goals for cooperation, the group may consist of students who are working alone, of those who are cooperating, and of those who are competing against the others.

Johnson (1981) stated that the teacher must consider student interactional behavior and effectively manage the use of argumentation among students so that the goals of higher quality problem solving can be achieved. Palincsar et al. (1989) note that the teacher needs to help structure the interactions of the group to foster cooperative behavior. However, these authors also note that there is little attention to this need in the literature on cooperative and collaborative learning to help teachers struggling with this issue.

Helpful for anyone considering the roles students adopt while interacting

in groups is Cohen's (1986) work. She identified four status differences among children in a classroom: expert, academic, societal, and peer. A student with **expert status** is one the rest of the class recognizes as the smartest. Students attain expert status on tasks requiring skill in math and/or reading and tend to dominate groups in which these skills are required. Cohen relates how in most classrooms students are very well aware of the teacher's perceptions of which students are the strongest using clues such as the teacher's feedback to student responses and other evidence around the room.

A student with **academic status** is one who may dominate a group even if the task does not require any academic proficiency. These students do not necessarily hold expertise in the activity in which the group is involved, but because of strengths in reading and/or math they may dominate.

Peer status is awarded students who have a high social status among their peers in the class. These may be students who are good athletes, the most attractive, or the most popular. This status may cause some student to dominate a group even though they may lead the group in an inappropriate direction. Low peer status may prevent students from contributing to a group because of the reactions of the other students.

The fourth type of status that might affect group interactions is **societal** which draws from perceptions of people within the larger society. Such distinctions are made on the basis of sex, ethnic group, race, or economic class. Cohen found that in groups of children from mixed ethnic groups, white males tended to dominate. These four statuses combined influence how children interact in groups.

A teacher hoping to achieve a balanced discussion around responses to texts considers the interaction of these statuses within a group. Groups dominated by students with one or more of these statuses, or by one student whose status in any one category is greater than the status of the other children will not interact well. The teacher needs to monitor peer interactions continually to assess each student's status within particular groups and do what she can to help alleviate status differences.

The Role of the Teacher

As delineated in each of the three sections above, the role of the teacher is to integrate these other three aspects of group work to balance the instructional context. She considers her goals in terms of the types of learning she hopes children will gain, the interaction patterns students should adopt, and the means through which students will represent their learning. All three of these must align for groups to be successful. That is, the teacher must clarify for students that if the types of learning they will gain is group constructed meaning of the text, they will all need to contribute to the group's discussion and the group's project will reflect multiple interpretations. On the other hand, if the teacher's goal is to answer a comprehension question from the teacher's manual, she is stressing knowledge reproduction (Jackson, 1984) which requires little interaction and a group project with only one answer. Students unfamiliar with peer groups will need continued modeling and scaffolding for them to understand how these three components interact within the group. Therefore, the role of the teacher is key. She alone has the conceptual understanding of what her goals for the reading program are and how peer groups facilitate meeting that goal.

The teacher's conceptions about how students acquire knowledge influence how she establishes student peer groups. A belief in knowledge transmission supports the use of peer tutoring; a belief in consensually-formed knowledge supports cooperative or collaborative groups. Belief that student abilities vary considerably within a classroom and that instruction is improved by separating students into homogeneous groupings leads to ability groups. Much of the research investigating the use of peer groups has explored such student groups.

Eder (1986) noted three assumptions that drive an individual's acceptance of ability grouping in schools: (1) the belief that ability can be identified and measured, (2) the belief that a wide range of ability exists in classes and grouping narrows this disparity, and (3) that there exist sufficient opportunities for students to move to other groups that better meet their needs as their ability fluctuates in particular subject areas. While these beliefs might create the basis for acceptance of ability grouping in a classroom, constraints within the class affect practice and group interactions.

One subject for which teachers frequently divide students into ability-grouped instruction is reading. The underlying assumptions about knowledge acquisition that supports the usage of such groups for reading include: (a) the over-arching assumption that reading is a skill-based subject that must be learned hierarchically, (b) the belief that dividing students into groups of like-ability facilitates instruction, (c) instruction can focus on needed skill development and student reading ability will improve, and (d) while instruction may vary in content, each group receives quality instruction. Such assumptions do not always

bear out in practice.

In investigating first-grade ability-grouped reading groups, McDermott and Aron (1978) discovered that both the quantity and quality of instruction varied from reading group to reading group. Members of the top reading group each read in turn and maintained continuity since other students seldom interrupted. Teacher questions and instruction focused on comprehension. In the bottom group, however, not all children read each day since they read only when they volunteered or the teacher called on them, presenting a delay in reading as they decided the next reader. In addition, teacher questions and instruction focused on phonics so the story line became less clear. This group also had to contend with frequent interruptions from members of other groups, particularly the top group, with questions about seat work. The result was that students in different groups not only received different instruction, but also received a different quality of instruction.

Teachers can determine a student's ability not only by what they believe about knowledge acquisition, but also by what they accept as evidence of ability. Teachers make these decisions based on test scores, verbal ability, and other more evasive factors often related to cultural differences (e.g., Heath, 1982; Michaels, 1981). Often teacher assumptions about ability influence her interactions with and instruction of different groups. This variance often results in student behaviors to meet the teacher's expectations (Good & Marshall, 1984). Verbal ability does seem to be essential for successful group interactions. In fact, the most influential factors in achievement gains related to group interactions include the student's ability to interact in the group and to provide help to other

members of the group (Webb, 1982). However, teacher perceptions of ability and the resulting student behavior are complex aspects of classroom interaction not easily understood. Participating in groups requires knowledge other than academic to be successful (Cohen, 1986).

In investigating what children needed to know to participate in groups, Eder (1982) found that an important component to group interaction was knowing how to be able to talk, which she identified as knowing how to "get the floor." Even though the teacher controlled who talked, students in the higher ability groups dominated because they seemed to know how to get the teacher's attention. Students in the lower groups often tried to participate but were lacking in this knowledge. As a result, lower ability students talked less.

A social constructivist perspective accepts the role of language in learning. Being deprived of interaction also deprived these students of valuable learning. Dembo and McAuliffe (1987) concluded that if the less able students have less access to the interaction, then they have less access to the benefits of giving and receiving help. In addition, researchers (Cohen, 1886; Lindow, Wilkinson, and Peterson, 1985) also found that those students who participated more and provided the most prevalent responses to questions and problems were perceived by their peers as more competent and thus, they interacted more.

While ability of students is usually paramount, other considerations influence teachers when formulating groups. Eder (1986) found that often teacher decisions about grouping are based on the additional factors of time and group size. She studied a teacher who believed four reading groups of no more than seven students was the limited number of manageable groups. The result

was that even though student ability varied considerably, she maintained four reading groups. In addition, even if students improved or regressed in their reading ability, the teacher made very few changes. Reasons the teacher provided for this resulting stability included the maintenance of a manageable group size and the time available for instruction.

Ability grouping has proved effective whenever the means for "effectiveness" included some type of achievement test (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Slavin, 1989; Webb, 1982); however, there is sufficient evidence to question its value when grounding instruction in a social constructivist perspective. Such a perspective notes the importance of varied sources of knowledge. While a more capable other can help an individual student through the ZPD, all learners can benefit from frequent interaction with others about ideas. For example, in a classroom adopting a literature-based reading program, students might demonstrate varied reading ability as measured by standardized tests. At the same time, each reader brings different prior knowledge and experiences to the act of reading. As the children discuss ideas gained from reading, writing, and interacting around the text, they have opportunities to see the multiple constructions others made, drawing from their own experiences. As a result, all students gain from the multiple perspectives presented. Therefore, groupings recognizing the differences among learners would prove more beneficial.

Many differing factors contribute to group experiences that foster learning besides perceptions of ability: the inclusion of controversy (Johnson, 1981), the students' interactions (Cazden, 1989; Dyson, 1987), and the provision of models of interaction (Hythecker, Dansereau, & Rocklin, 1988; Lambiotte et al., 1987;

O'Donnell, Dansereau, Hall & Rocklin, 1987; Palincsar & Brown, 1984). As noted earlier in the chapter, multiple interpretations of text are inevitable when interacting with peers of differing abilities and backgrounds. These multiple interpretations will lead to conflicting ideas about the meaning of the text. Such controversy and the resulting discussion to resolve it will further student thinking. In addition, how the children learn to interact in groups is also essential. Instead of allowing children to let those whom they perceive as having expert or academic status (Cohen, 1986) dominate the group, the teacher needs to help children learn ways of interacting that provides all students voice and that demonstrates a valuing for diverse opinions. Such help comes in the form of models of responding to one another and continued monitoring of group interactions.

Evidence that learning in cooperative groups is more effective than learning individually or in competitive situations exists. Peers can act as teachers for one another and can take an active role in learning achieving results they could never achieve alone (Cazden, 1989; Dyson, 1987).

One factor that may influence the success of peer groups is teacher modeling of expected response. Palincsar and Brown (1984) studied the effects of peer groups on improving reading ability in situations where the teacher provided modeling of desired thinking during reading. These students came to resemble the adult model and increased their reading achievement. Studies investigating student use of scripted response also found successful learning.

In investigating the use of scripted cooperative learning, O'Donnell, Dansereau, Hall, and Rocklin (1987) concluded that students learning in a

cooperative setting learned better than those working in an individual setting. In other research investigating scripted learning, researchers concluded that these scripted interactions in cooperative groups facilitated initial learning and helped learners make links that enabled transfer (Hythecker, Dansereau, & Rocklin, 1988; Lambiotte et al., 1987).

Scripted learning may help students acquire a vocabulary and a structure to help them learn a new speech genre. However, literature response groups often follow a more open, interactive style. One suggestion for small student groups is the use of literary circles. Taken from the ideas of Smith (1986, 1988) these circles are based on the assumptions that: (a) children already know a tremendous amount about literacy from their interactions with people who know how and why literacy works (In Smith, 1990, citing F. Smith, 1988), (b) all children learn constantly, (c) children learn what others do, and (d) children learn what makes sense to them (Smith, 1986). For such groups, the members must find the activities in the club to be meaningful, useful, and enjoyable. They must also realize that they can learn from each other as they participate in the club's activities. Finally, the participants must feel that club activities are of no risk to members (Smith, 1990, citing F. Smith, 1988). The structure of these literary circles provide more flexibility in student response, thus better employing each child's interpretation of the text.

The notion of reorganizing student groupings of instruction is so salient to the teaching of reading that a recent edition of Reading Teacher, a journal written for practitioners, devoted an entire issue to it. From multiple ways of grouping students (Berghoff & Egawa, 1919) to creating literature study groups

(Keegan & Shrake, 1991) to establishing reading workshops (Reutzel & Cooter, 1991), articles address how teachers might regroup students for reading instruction.

In practice, these small groups meet whenever necessary with the teacher to discuss a book of common interest. Such meetings provide time for in-depth discussions of experiences, feelings, and ideas resulting from reading and perhaps rereading the book. Teachers and students also learn that such interactions might help them create new interpretations of the texts they read (Smith, 1990).

The Use of Peer Groups: A Summary

Conceptions of knowledge acquisition influence the establishment, the interaction patterns, and the effectiveness of groups. The teacher's beliefs about the role of the group, the member students' abilities, and her role in influencing group interactions all affect group success. Existing research provides evidence of the effectiveness and limitations of using student groups, particularly for ability-grouped reading groups, but does not provide information about student groups as they respond to literature in heterogenous groups.

Conclusion

Research into response to literature, multiple representation of ideas, and the use of peer groups identifies the benefits of encouraging and developing each of these instructional components separately, but does not yet link these three components to examine what teachers can do to facilitate student critical reading and appreciation of literature. This study was designed in a setting in which (1) an instructional component modeled the process of response to text, the use of multiple representations, and an effective means of interacting in groups and (2)

the context provided for a gradual shifting of responsibility for learning from the teacher to the students, for peer interactions around text, and for opportunities for multiple representation of ideas. This study pursued answers to the following questions:

1. How will elementary students respond to text in student-led discussion groups?

2. What roles will students adopt as they interact in groups?

3. What influence will the instructional context have on student interactions?

CHAPTER 3

COMING TO UNDERSTAND ONE LITERATURE-BASED READING PROGRAM

Educational research is often like music: How the musician views the world of music influences how she plays. Many musicians assume that the composer intended the music to be played a particular way, closely adhering to the notes they see on the musical score as they play their instruments. Other musicians assume they can never really know what the composer intended, so music requires interpretation. When they play, they recognize that music results from their own interpretation of what they see written on the score.

Educational researchers follow similar patterns. Some researchers are like musicians who closely follow a musical score, assuming one best interpretation. Since they believe events of the world result from logical, causal relationships, their work is to identify these relationships through controlled experiments measuring key variables. They value phenomena that they can observe directly and explain results through universal laws that determine probability (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

Other researchers are more like musicians that assume a required interpretation. They perceive human actions as infused with and based upon social meanings. Instead of controlled experiments, these researchers study the natural context to try to understand how people within the setting construct

meaning. Their primary concern is the process through which people make sense of their surroundings rather than the outcomes or products. They also assume that the researcher is a key instrument in data collection. Such studies are descriptive since data collected is in the form of words or pictures instead of numbers and because reports attempt to explain a phenomena through the perspectives of the participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

Such field-based studies often grow and change while the researcher collects data. In the midst of trying to understand the context and how the participants interpret their surroundings, researchers often change their questions. On-going analysis reveals further questions and different frameworks for analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Erickson, 1986; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

Studying A Literature-based Reading Program

The study described in this dissertation was based on assumptions of what Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) call "naturalistic tradition" and Bogdan and Biklen (1982) call "qualitative research." That is, I assumed that to understand the setting of an elementary classroom in which the teacher was implementing literature-based reading instruction, I needed to spend time within that classroom trying to understand such changes through the eyes of the participants. I was interested in the process children went through as they attempted to understand this new meaning for reading. As a regular observer in the classroom, I was a

primary instrument in the data collection.[1]

As with other studies conducted within a naturalistic tradition, this one grew and developed over time. While I maintained many of the original questions, new ones emerged and shaped further data collection. One question driving this study was: How do children react to literature as the basis of their reading instruction? Since "reaction" included both written and oral texts, other questions emerged from this original one: How will children interact in student-

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[1] At the same time, this study was embedded within a larger study, examining literature-based reading instruction across four classrooms. As a primary investigator on that study, I had helped design the reading program, along with one other researcher, Taffy Raphael; with two classroom teachers, Laura Pardo and Debbie Woodman; and with two research assistants, Jessica Bentley and Virginia Goatley. The larger study was a collaborative intervention. As such, the team (the researchers, teachers, and research assistants) had identified specific aspects of the reading program to change. The larger study is difficult to characterize in many ways because of its collaborative nature. While the research team identified specific elements of reading to address, we also recognized the differences across classroom contexts, making necessary changes throughout the study.

I mention the larger study here for several reasons. First, I include it because of the multiple roles I played. For the dissertation, I adopted the role of observer, recording events in the classroom and collecting documents that would help me understand the students' perspectives of reading. At the same time, during staff meetings, planning sessions, and interactions with Laura, I adopted the role of collaborator, helping to modify the reading program as necessary. While I tried to make careful note of times when I felt a tension, there were probably times when potential conflicts between these two roles were less clear to me.

A second reason I mention it is that the research team worked very closely together. During weekly staff meetings for teachers and researchers, Laura, Jessica, and I met to discuss what patterns we saw emerging during the reading instruction in Laura's classroom. I also talked regularly with Laura on the phone and we occasionally exchanged memos recording our thinking about the program. In addition, both Laura and Jessica collected data they made available to me for analysis. Therefore, they both were instrumental as I collected and analyzed data.

The final reason I mention the larger study here is to explain how I knew so much about the program. As a member of the research team, I was party to all major decisions about what literature to include, how to group children, how to modify the reading logs, and what to include during instruction. Though the team discussed alternatives for all of these aspects of the reading program, final decisions rested with the classroom teachers. Because they knew their students best, were most familiar with the district's curriculum guides, and were the ones held accountable by the community for reading instruction in their classes, their opinions carried the most weight.

directed small groups? How will their written responses influence group interactions? How will group discussions influence future written entries? In an effort to pursue these, I observed the reading program in a fifth-grade classroom for the entire fall semester.

This chapter provides information about: (a) the participants and context, (b) the instructional context, (c) the data collected, and (d) the data analysis. The purpose of the chapter is to outline the methodology as I explain the data sets and analysis.

Students Need a Place to Practice

To understand better the context in which I studied children's reading of and interactions around literature, I have included a description of the environment. This section of the chapter first describes in general terms the neighborhood and school, continues with the classroom, the teacher, and the students who participated in the study, followed by a description of the reading program called "Book Club."

Bates Elementary School

The streets approaching Bates Elementary School pass through both business and residential areas of a Midwestern city. Local businesses include auto repair and service stations, convenience food stores, and bars. Houses are modest one- or two-story, single-family dwellings surrounded by small yards. Houses on the main street are slowly decaying with shabby yards and make-shift material for curtains. Those on side streets vary, but are generally better-maintained with fresh coats of paint, neater yards, and windows dressed with curtains. Across the street from the school is a "Volunteers to America" second-

hand clothing store. The neighborhood displays some evidence of gang activities with spray-painted emblems marring building walls; however, it creates primarily the impression of an old, slowly-aging area instead of one rapidly degenerating and torn apart by violence.

Most of the people walking on the streets are young. Early in the morning, as school begins, passers-by can often see mothers walking younger children. Frequently, two or three young adults, dressed in jeans or white nurses uniforms, stand waiting for a bus. Even in the early afternoon, residents walk small children and meet in groups of two to talk. The neighborhood is quiet throughout the day.

Bates Elementary School, built in 1913, is a mixture of the old and the new. A red brick, three-story structure, Bates is a monument to architectural styles at the turn of the century. Looming over all other buildings in the neighborhood, the school encompasses half a city block. The other half of the block consists of play areas for the school. While a physical reminder of the past, it also shows evidence of the present. Modern, energy-efficient windows have replaced the originals. Blacktop paves the playground and yellow paint outlines play areas for particular games.

Faculty and visitors enter the main door to the school which faces Bates, a side street intersecting a major city street. Walking along the corridors of the building, visitors again notice the mixture of the old and new. High ceilings and tiled walls and floors are reminiscent of another age. Footsteps echo in the long corridors that direct visitors to classrooms. At the same time, the halls are clean and well-kept with freshly-painted yellow walls lined with orange lockers, a color

combination that reflects a trend of the times.

At 9:15, just as school begins, visitors might see parents leaving school after having walked their children to their classroom. In the entryway, a school staff member busily stores lunch containers packaged centrally and delivered in a pick-up truck. These lunches usually consist of fruit, salad, and a sandwich. Students can choose between eating at school or walking home. Of the 417 students, 266 were enrolled for free lunch and 20 for reduced lunch.

The student population of the school represents that of the neighborhood: 46% Caucasian, 30% African-American, 18% Hispanic, 4% Asian, and 1% Native American. The majority of parents are unemployed and on ADC; of those who do work, most hold cashier or service jobs in local department stores, food stores, or fast food restaurants. A very small percentage hold positions such as teacher's aids or secretaries. Most of the children come from single-parent homes.

The school district outlined curriculum requirements for reading and writing, revised in 1990. Generally, these requirements emphasize the inclusion of literature in reading instruction and a writing program that focuses on process and student choice. The district also supplies curriculum materials, such as textbooks, workbooks, charts, and maps. Bates has a budget of $3400 for additional supplies, including all the paper, crayons, art supplies, pencils and other teaching materials. Teachers typically buy many supplies for their classrooms on their own. For example, Laura estimated she spent between $200 and $400 a year.

The district supplies some additional support for children with special

needs, such as special education, counseling, and bilingual instruction. In addition, some external support agencies such as tutoring centers and several mental health agencies are free to children in this district. The curriculum also provides children opportunities to study both vocal and instrumental music, art, and enriched mathematics.

The school turnover of students is significant. For the first three-quarters of the year, 119 students had moved in and 133 had moved out. In the fifth-grade classroom where I conducted the study, nine students had moved in while seven had moved out.

In this school, a physical mixture of the old and new, teachers and children meet each day to prepare for the future. In one classroom I studied the development of student interaction around text. The curriculum reflected the latest in research findings about literacy instruction.

Mrs. Laura Pardo's Fifth-Grade Classroom [2]

This section of the chapter describes the classroom, the teacher and the students who participated in the study.

Room 310

This fifth-grade classroom was on the third floor at the end of the hallway on the right. Entering the room, most visitors might have been vaguely reminded of their own elementary school days (see Figure 3.1). Two walls were adorned with black boards of slate. Above each board rested bulletin boards of cork, covered with messages related to school. Posters on two boards included

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[2] I asked Laura how she preferred to be identified. She stated she preferred to be called by her real name and that she preferred "Laura" to "Mrs. Pardo."

reminders of school and study rules. Above the south wall were charts illustrating how to form the alphabet in cursive letters. To the right of the doorway was a set of book cases secured by glass doors. Student desks, probably those that originally furnished the building, were large, wooden receptacles housing books and supported by a heavy metal post, connecting the student's seat. These desks varied in size but were uniform in shape. The teacher's desk, probably of the same vintage, was large, wooden and rested near the windows. The floors were light oak, recently polished but marred by years of children moving their desks.

While much of the room resembled what the original occupants might remember, some aspects of it testified to the current decade. The walls were painted the same bright color as the hall. The outside wall, overlooking Bates Street, consisted of high, energy-efficient windows. In the northwest corner of the room sat three computers with a printer; in the southeast corner, a rectangle of carpeting on which a directors' chair sat with the sign, "Author's chair," over it. Instead of being lined in neat rows, student desks were arranged into groups of four or five, facing each other. In the center of the west wall, below the windows, was a horseshoe-shaped work table with a veneer top.

The students in this fifth-grade classroom represented approximately the same ethnic mixture of the school: nine Caucasian, thirteen African-Americans, three Hispanic-Americans, one Asian-American, and one Native American. Like the school in general, the class was slightly dominated by boys, 14 to 9.

Laura described this class as "academically average to above average. Most students are good workers and well-behaved in structured activities."
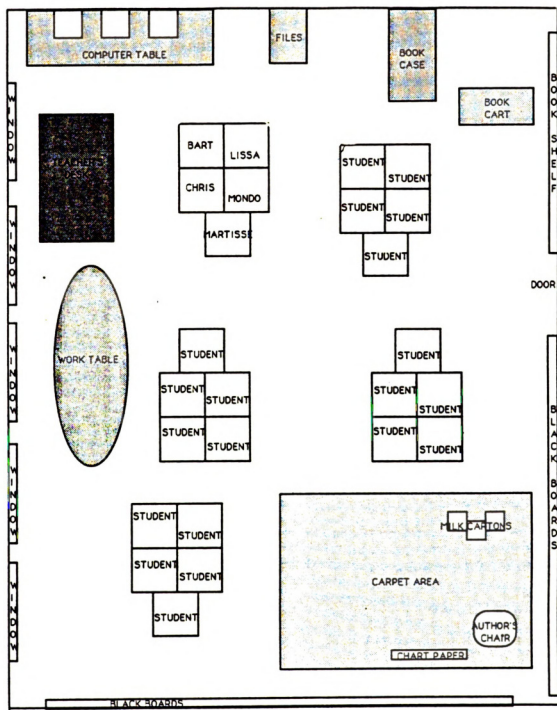
FIGURE 3.1

Diagram of Laura's Classroom

Whenever Laura taught the class, students were generally well-behaved and attentive. However, some of them were frequently cited by other building adults, such as the custodian or cook, as "trouble-makers." Whenever Laura was gone and a substitute teacher was hired, the class became problematic. Laura explained this as the result of a lack of sufficient structure. "This class tends to have problems with manners and respect during less than structured times (such as) PE (and) bathroom breaks." However, the librarian, a woman who believed in very structured environments, also expressed frustration with the class, describing them as a "difficult group." I noticed that the class seemed to have difficulty adjusting to any adult other than Laura, and even she occasionally found them problematic. She stated the children often became disruptive when visitors, such as parent speakers, the research team, and a student teacher came to her classroom.

In addition to the large number of visitors, Laura was frequently gone from the classroom for several professional reasons. First, Laura was recognized as an outstanding elementary literacy teacher, sought out to discuss her classroom with other teacher groups in the district. Second, the building principal enlisted Laura's assistance on days when he was absent from the building. This assistance took various forms, one of which required her to spend some days in his office acting as the building administrator. Next, Laura was very active in the local teacher's association which required her to attend several meetings held during the school day. Finally, she was also professionally involved in state and national organizations which enlisted her presence during conferences. All of these responsibilities frequently called Laura from her classroom. Therefore, students

in this fifth-grade class needed to be able to contend with several interruptions.

Regardless of whether or not the teacher was present, she had established routines for the students. The day's schedule for all of these children included journal writing, reading, spelling, science, social studies, and math. In addition, some received instruction in other areas. Many class members attended choir and/or violin lessons twice a week; some attended special help in reading, math, and English as a second language.

Mrs. Pardo, the Teacher

Laura Pardo, a fifth-grade teacher, had nine years teaching experience. After teaching middle school for six years, she had changed to teaching at the elementary level three years prior to the study. She had taught in both parochial and public schools at several grade levels and holds a master's degree in the teaching of reading. Her ability to integrate the teaching of language arts had been recognized by her peers, her administrator, and other local educators. She had also proved innovative as she had encouraged students to work in cooperative groups for several school subjects.

A visitor to Laura's classroom would soon realize that she stressed literacy and believed in the relationship between reading and writing. Throughout the day, visitors saw how she incorporated literacy across the content areas. She also had students participate in writer's workshops regularly, in the local, annual writing contests, and in writing their own classroom books. The northeast corner of the classroom was labelled "literacy corner" which housed carts of books for self-selected reading materials. Most of the posters on the bulletin boards focused on literacy.

The Book Club Reading Program

"Book Club" is the name of the reading program Laura introduced to her class in her efforts to establish a literature-based reading program. The next section of this chapter outlines the components of the reading program as Laura implemented in her classroom.

Book Club Components

Hickman (1981) identified seven common strategies for effective literature instruction. In her emphasis on literacy, Laura had incorporated three of these ideas and they were clearly evident in her classroom early in the school year: (a) children had access to a variety of attractively displayed books and time to peruse them; (b) Laura provided space, materials, time, and suggestions for activities related to books in her "literacy corner;" and (c) as part of her process writing program, Laura provided students an opportunity to share their reading experiences.

In addition to these aspects already in place, the literature-based reading program stressed the remaining four strategies Hickman recommended: (a) selection of quality literature related to the children's experiences, (b) opportunity to read literature daily, (c) teacher's daily discussion of literature with the children, and (d) planned cumulative experiences with the books children read.

The Book Club reading program incorporated these ideas across its four components: (a) reading, (b) writing/representation, (c) instruction, and (d) discussion (see Figure 3.2). While these components were present every day, the order and time allotment varied depending on the needs for that day's lesson.

Each of these had additional related strategies for teaching and learning literature.

Reading. Laura's literature-based program required Laura to select many of the books. She made her decisions based on recognition of the book as quality work and on the interests and needs of the students participating in the study (Purves & Beach, 1972; Sims, 1983). Since this classroom represented a racially-mixed group of students, literature selections also reflected the experiences of various ethnic groups although not always those most represented in this classroom. In addition, Laura chose specific selections focused on the theme of war. Laura used three books about Japan during World War II [3]: Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes [4] (Coerr, 1977), Hiroshima, No Pika [5] (Maruki, 1982), and Faithful Elephants [6] (Yukio, 1988). Since the children were intrigued by the war theme, Laura then selected Number the Stars [7]

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[3] Laura decided to begin with three books we had piloted the previous year with another class of children because these books had prompted multiple, varied responses from the students.

[4] This book describes one ten-year-old girl's struggle with leukemia, contracted after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Sadako, the main character, attempts to alter the decline associated with her illness by responding to an old Japanese folktale that stated the gods would grant a wish to anyone making a thousand paper cranes. By making the selected number of cranes, she hopes the gods will spare her life.

[5] This is a picture book relating one family's experiences after the bombing of Hiroshima. The story recounts how a woman, carrying her injured husband, and her daughter run away from the city in search of safety.

[6] This picture book relates the dilemma many zookeepers confronted during World War II. As many major cities were being bombed, citizens were concerned with the potential safety problems if the cages were damaged, resulting in wild animals being set free. In this story, the keepers of the Tokyo zoo must destroy favored elephants.

[7] Lowry's book recounts the events during the Nazi occupation of Denmark. In this fictionalized account, one girl, Annemarie, is called upon to help her best friend's family, Jews, escape.

Book Club Components

Reading

Writing

Book Club

Instruction

Whole Group Discussion
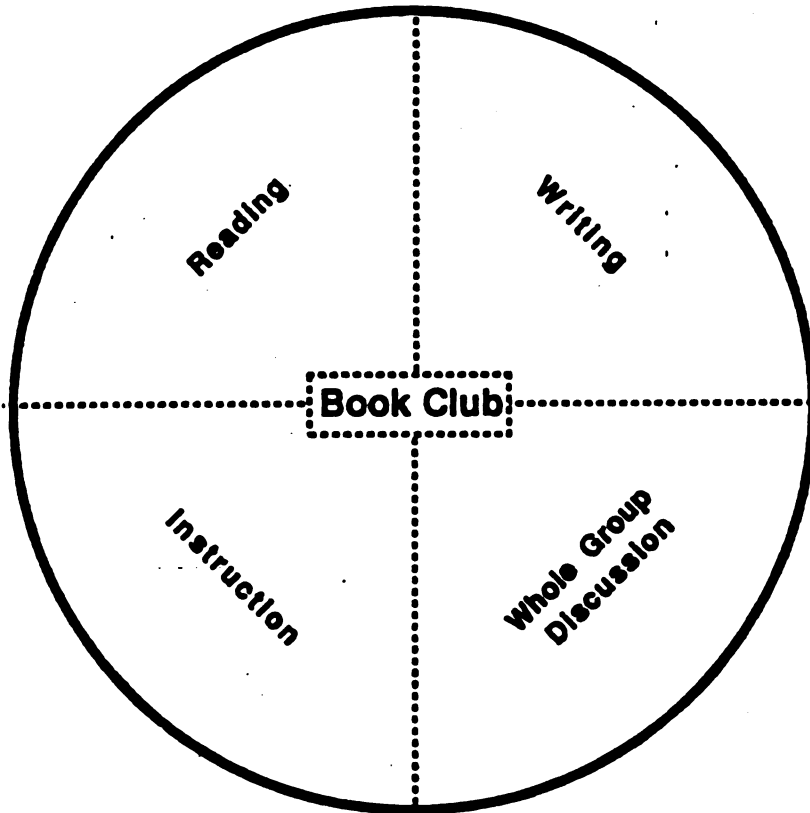
FIGURE 3.2

Book Club Components for the Literature-Based Reading Program

(Lowry, 1989) as the fourth and final book in this themed unit.

In addition to the selection of the books, Laura also was concerned with increasing student ability to read and interact around text. Thus, to read the books and to prepare for Book Club, students of differing abilities needed a variety of methods. Therefore, during reading children practiced reading silently, orally, and in pairs, as well as listening to the teacher or a peer read orally. Laura consulted the district's reading curriculum and included reading skills and strategies identified in the guide as she implemented her instructional plans and when she assessed student progress. For example, using these guidelines, Laura encouraged students to predict, summarize, and sequence events in the stories. She also consulted district curriculum guides when selecting books but also listened to input from the children, the district Language Arts Coordinator, and the research team. Children always read trade books representing quality literature. In addition to the selections for Book Club, "literacy corner" housed several books from the local libraries with similar themes, settings, and/or characters that related to the selection read during Book Club.

Writing/Representation. One major difference between a more traditional approach to reading and the changes Laura was trying to implement was the inclusion of written opportunities to express personal response while reading and to synthesize ideas after completing a text. For these purposes, we worked together to develop alternate forms for written expression. We designed two types of materials for instruction and assessment: (a) reading logs and (b) think-sheets. Students generated these during reading and kept them in a portfolio.

Reading logs were based on the ideas proposed by researchers such as

Atwell (1983), Blatt and Rosen (1982), Fulwiler (1982), Gambrell (1985), McNeil (1988), O'Sullivan (1987), and Reed (1988) who suggest that journals provide an important means for students to reflect about their reading, to encourage close reading of text, and to prepare for later sharing of their ideas. Laura and I devised these for student use and changed them over the course of the study. In the beginning, they contained both lined and unlined pages. The lined pages had specific prompts ("What section from this book would you like to read to your Book Club group?" or "What would you like to talk about in Book Club?"), asking students to record particular sections of the text they wanted to share in their Book Club groups and reminding them of one way to prepare for discussions. Laura used the unlined pages to encourage students to represent their ideas in multiple ways. For example, she might ask them to draw a favorite scene from a chapter they had just read or to create a map illustrating aspects of their favorite character.

Students used these logs daily to record thoughts and ideas before, after, and during reading; to prepare for discussions; and to provide a record of ideas after instruction and discussions. To facilitate student use of the logs, Laura modeled desired entries and referred students to their logs during large group discussions.

We designed think-sheets, based on ideas of Raphael and Englert (1990) who suggest that students benefit from having prompts that serve as a basis for thinking and for dialogues about text, to provide culmination of the reading experience. The think-sheets were more structured than the reading logs in that they requested more specific information. For example, when students were

beginning a book, Laura modeled how readers often respond to a new book by predicting or asking questions. The think-sheet for this stance asked students to formulate questions they had about the book and predict what they expected to happen. When students had finished the book, the think-sheets helped them bring their reading experience to some closure. The specific content of the think-sheets evolved as the study progressed. Some asked students to critique a book just completed; others asked students to synthesize information across texts (see Figures 3.3 and 3.4). For example, based on pilot work on a unit on survival, we observed the benefits of asking students to synthesize information across texts in some way. This synthesis included selecting one topic common to all works, finding information from each text and recording it on paper, then selecting an audience for a written paper about this topic.

Instruction. The instructional component included all teacher-led activities designed to support and facilitate both what and how students could share ideas during discussions.

Daily discussion of literature provided children repeated opportunities to experience what they read; however, most interaction in classrooms does not model authentic, interactive discussion. More typically teacher-directed questioning, probing for specific student response, typifies classroom discourse (cf. Cazden, 1988; Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Tharpe & Gallimore, 1988). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that children need help learning how to interact around text. Laura's instruction reflected two aspects of discussion: (a) the various types of response to literature and (b) the various ways students could interact in groups.

BOOK CRITIQUE

Stepping Out
Book "Critique"
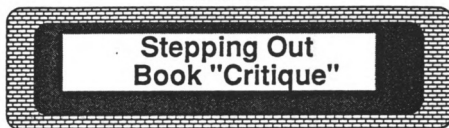
I plan to critique
(plot, character, setting?) _____

_____

What are some things the author did well? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What are some things the author could do to improve the story?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

FIGURE 3.3

Book Critique

Stepping Out
BRINGING IDEAS TOGETHER

from SADAKO

from HIROSHIMA

from FAITHFUL ELEPHANTS

Topics that Sadako, Hiroshima No Pika, and
Faithful Elephants make me think about are:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

The topic I want to share about is:

_____

because _____

_____
_____

FIGURE 3.4

Think-Sheet for Synthesizing Information Across Text

First, since this was a reading program, the full spectrum of responses needed inclusion. Laura modeled a variety of responses ranging from those indicating comprehension of story events to those discussing literary elements to personal reactions to the text. For example, Laura frequently checked student comprehension by asking them to predict up-coming events and revise them after further reading. To elucidate the author's craft, she assigned character maps for students to illustrate what the author had revealed throughout the book. In addition, she led activities which helped explain key concepts, terms, and ideas. Finally, she frequently noted particular words, phrases, passages, or images that touched her personally.

In addition to modeling the various types of response, Laura also wanted to demonstrate to her class the process of response. To do so, she used Langer's (1989) four stances.

When discussing Langer's first stance, "stepping into the world of the text," Laura asked students to identify what questions they hoped to answer and make predictions about what would be in the text. Having recently completed her Master's Degree in reading, Laura knew from her course work that formulating questions and making predictions were influential on how the reader constructs meaning. Students need to respond to authentic questions that probe their own responses to text. Research indicates that prediction is essential since the primary determinant of how readers comprehend, as well as how they evaluate text, depends on their expectations of stories (Cullinan, et al., 1983). Since the teacher seemed to be of major influence in how children respond to text (Cullinan, Harwood, and Galda, 1983; Kiefer, 198; Hickman, 1983), Laura

needed to model this question-forming and predicting act before reading. This was not only to encourage the pattern of questioning and predicting prior to reading, but also to model the kinds of questions students could ask themselves (Marshall, Klages, & Fehlman, 1990; Wixson, 1983). Laura modeled this "stepping into" stance regularly and had students write and revise their predictions.

Langer's second reader's stance, "moving through the world of a book," involves the reader's construction of meaning. This proved to be the most difficult stage of the reading process to model since it involves the mental functions of reading. While Laura was not able to explicitly model her thinking while reading, she did model reading silently while her students did the same. In addition, she often read aloud, stopping to include the meaning she was constructing from the text and asking students for their interpretations.

The next stance, "stepping back," allows the reader to rethink or revise ideas. During this stage, the reader reflects on the experience, creating images that are a result of the reading (Sartre, 1972). At this time, the teacher can model multiple ways of representing what she is currently thinking about the text. To model this stage, Laura read aloud but stopped to ask herself questions or make predictions.

Finally, the reader "steps out" from the act of constructing meaning to make final revisions on her construction. During this time, the individual refines the meaning she has created. To demonstrate this stage, Laura frequently used whole group instruction. During this time, she both modeled her own earlier thoughts, questions, predictions, and representations and included student

examples of the same to show how these had been modified and changed throughout the reading process. She also provided a variety of activities ranging from book critiques, to reader's theatres, to syntheses of ideas across texts. These culminating activities provided students opportunities to reach their own final thoughts regarding the selection.

Laura also provided students with models of how to share. One way Laura did this was to read aloud, stop, then respond as she suggested the students might. For example, after having read a section of a chapter book, she stopped, reread a sentence and said, "That's a curious way to say that. I might write that in my log and read it to my Book Club so we could discuss why the author wrote it that way."

Laura also had a group of adults (i.e. the research team) demonstrate effective and ineffective Book Club discussions early in the school year. Four researchers modeled brief (i.e. two-minute) Book Club meetings during which they discussed a story the students had already read (Sarah, Plain and Tall). In each two-minute segment one member modeled a problem behavior, including interrupting, being inattentive, and being unprepared. Each segment was followed by a whole class discussion of the quality of the interaction. Then the group modeled a Book Club which was more successful. Members discussed key elements of the book in a more effective, interactive, and personal way. Again, students discussed the quality of the discussion. Laura also had students examine transcripts of student Book Club conversations to explore what a group had done well and what they could do to improve.

Thus, a key aspect of the instruction was teacher modeling of response

and having students analyze other Book Club interactions. A second, though no less important part, was the planning of activities that further enhanced the reading experience. One such activity was providing students culmination with end-of-book opportunities such as reader's theatre and opportunities to synthesize across texts. One example already described was the synthesis activity for exploring themes common across multiple texts.

Laura incorporated activities providing for review, synthesis, and culmination after each book read. For example, one activity asked students to write critiques of the novel, suggesting what the author had done well and what she could improve. Another allowed students an opportunity to perform a reader's theatre. Each Book Club group selected a section from the book they most wanted to represent and performed this for their class and another one in the building. Laura video taped this for viewing the next day.

The instructional component incorporated all those aspects of responding to text essential to a literature-based reading program in which students experienced authentic reading and writing tasks. Laura wanted to implement these in ways that helped students redefine reading as interaction between them and the text.

Discussion. The fourth component, Discussion, provided students opportunities to interact over text in two different social contexts: (a) total-class discussions, called "Community Share" and (b) small group interactions, called "Book Club."

Laura included Community Share for two major reasons. First, it provided her a period of time in which she could help students focus on key

issues or events in the reading. For example, when reading the picture books, Hiroshima, No Pika and Faithful Elephants, Laura decided to discuss what the children expected the stories to be about during Community Share, then read the books aloud before holding a Book Club meeting. Since the content of these books is potentially sensitive, it provided Laura the opportunity to manage the reading experience more closely.

Community Share also gave students an opportunity to learn about what other Book Clubs had discussed. Often used as a synthesis activity, Laura would call students together in one large group and ask representatives from each Book Club to summarize their conversation or share one main idea presented. Regardless of the specific purpose, during Community Share, students practiced interacting with one another, prepared for future Book Clubs, and shared the results of their small group discussions.

The smaller, student-directed discussion groups, called "Book Clubs," consisted of approximately five peers interacting about ideas related to what they had read. During Book Club, students focused on what they had written in their logs as they prepared for the meeting and on ideas that emerged as they talked.

Working together, these four components of the intervention included all those strategies Hickman (1981) identified. As a result, students had ready access to quality literature daily, not only through the selections they read for Book Club, but also through those displayed in "literacy corner." The Book Club meetings allowed children opportunities to share their reading experiences while community share provided further student elaboration of response and the teacher's modeled responses as well. The instructional component provided

student guidance and modeling of ways to respond both in written and oral forms, and included activities facilitating culmination of the reading experience, synthesis of ideas and illustration of intertextuality.

The Book Club meetings were the primary focus of this dissertation; however, all four components of the reading program worked together to help students learn how to read and respond to literature. Because the reading program consisted of these four components, a brief vignette describing a typical lesson is provided to facilitate understanding of how they worked so closely together.

The Book Club: A Typical Day in Early October in Laura's Room

The four components were present daily, though time spent and the emphasis in each varied according to the goals for a given day. The following reflects a fairly typical day, early in Laura's introduction to students of her literature-based reading program and provides a sample of the context of the Book Club study.

At 9:30, Laura began her reading class with the instructional component, having all of the students sit on the rug in the front corner of the room by the director's chair and an easel. Laura initiated the lesson by holding up a copy of the reading log and directing students' attention to an example of the log, also written on the easel. She surveyed the class to determine whether anyone had used a reading log before. One student, Nora, responded that she had used a response log in another class. Laura followed this by asking how many other students had used response logs before. A few students raised their hands. Laura mentioned that reading logs and response logs were very similar. She said

that she wanted to talk about some specific parts of the reading log they would be using.

On the easel she had written, "Section to read to BC," "Why?" and "Other ideas." As she talked, she used both the sample reading log and the easel. To model how she wanted them to use the logs, Laura first reread a section from the first chapter of <u>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes</u> which described how Sadako liked to run. When she had finished reading, Laura stated that she liked to run, too, so she would want to talk about this in her Book Club meeting. On the easel under the heading "Other ideas," she wrote, "Running -- I like to run, too." While writing, she said "I like that part." Next, she read aloud a section that illustrated a discussion between Sadako and her mother about the carnival. When finished, she said she thought discussing the seriousness of the carnival was important to share in Book Club. Under "Section to read to BC," she wrote "P 10, Her mother . . ." Remembering this was an integrated literacy curriculum, she took advantage of an opportunity to assess student understanding of punctuation by asking whether they knew what the three dots meant (the ellipsis at the end of the phrase). Most students indicated they knew that this meant the writer had left out part of the text. She suggested they might want to use this punctuation in their logs instead of writing the entire section from their book. Following this, under the section headed "Why?", she wrote, "Sadako and her mother see Aug, 6 differently."

After having modeled ideas to include in their logs, Laura checked for student understanding. She asked if anyone had any ideas from the previous day they would like to include on the easel log. Reggie volunteered that he liked the

part about the spider being good luck. With this, Laura added "Spider-good luck" on the easel under "Other ideas." Next, Nora mentioned that her mother told her why the United Stated dropped the atomic bomb on Japan. Laura asked whether this topic was okay to discuss in Book Club, and Nora responded, "Yes." Laura reinforced the notion that students could incorporate ideas from other experiences by adding to her list on the easel, "Why we dropped the bomb."

Laura continued to elicit ideas about what to include until she had what she thought was a sufficient number of examples. To complete this section of the lesson, Laura reviewed what they had just covered by asking, "What is the purpose of a reading log?" Leroy said logs were to talk about ideas; Cathy said they were to keep ideas together in one place; Nora contributed that they were used to include ideas from the book to discuss in Book Club. These responses and more demonstrated students understood the purposes of their logs.

For the subsequent section of the instruction, Laura moved from the introduction of reading logs to a review of the previous day's reading. She asked the class, "What happened in our reading yesterday?" Students mentioned the dropping of the bomb again. Then Bill contributed, "Making birds." Laura asked where this happened in the book. He responded, "On the front cover." Laura followed up with a question about whether the class had read that part yet; several students responded, "No." Laura continued with this line of questioning until she seemed satisfied that students had comprehended the previous day's reading material.

When the instructional component was completed, Laura then moved to reading. Students returned to their desks as Laura passed out their reading logs,

asking them to write their full names on the front covers. Laura directed students to begin reading the second chapter and to record their ideas in their logs as they read. As students began to read, Laura circulated around the room. Students took approximately ten minutes to read the next chapter.

On this day the **writing** component consisted of generating and recording ideas for all three sections of their reading log page: (a) selecting a section of the book they wanted to share, (b) explaining why they wanted to share it, and (c) relate other ideas they want to discuss in Book Club. Students seemed to complete this quickly.

After they had all written in their logs, Laura directed them to their **Book Club** meetings. As students began interacting, Laura moved from group to group eventually sitting with Paul and Daniel's group. Students seem to be sharing their ideas, talking for approximately ten minutes. Then Martisse went to Laura and asked her whether they could turn off the tape recorder since her group was finished. Laura looked around the room and told everyone they all seemed ready to move on to the next part of the lesson.

For **Community Share**, Laura asked individuals to talk with the whole class about the section of the chapter they liked the best. Responses ranged from particular events in the story, such as Andria's reference to the "lamps" on the water, to the graphics of the story, such as Cathy's remark about how the author matched the picture with the language. Laura asked why they sent the lanterns on the water. Bart related, "It's their culture," which began a brief discussion about the Japanese custom of sending lanterns down the river to commemorate the dead.

Students also used this Community Share to ask questions about parts they did not understand. For example, Kim asked who "Chizuko" was. Laura let the students demonstrate leadership as Nora answered Kim's question by stating that page 15 explained that Sadako and Chizuko were best friends. Martisse said she selected this section to talk about in her Book Club, too. Moving to another topic, Lissa mentioned that at home they have a book that shows the inside of an atomic bomb. She continued by describing the mushroom shape of an atomic bomb.

While many volunteers had contributed ideas, some students remained silent. To encourage additional participation, Laura asked Paul, a somewhat shy and withdrawn student, to tell the whole group what he chose to share with his Book Club. He said that radiation came down and that it is poison. Laura took advantage of this to talk more to the children about the bombing of Japan. She elaborated Paul's contribution by explaining that some people died immediately, many died later, and some were scarred for life.

Having exhausted student ideas from their Book Club meetings during this Community Share, Laura switched to an instructional mode by providing a brief preview into the subsequent day's reading. She read the title of the next chapter, "Sadako's Secret," and asked students what they thought would happen next. Martisse suggested that Sadako will do something, then keep it a secret. Bart contributed that she will sneak out to go to the carnival. Constanza said she would make cranes and keep it secret. Lissa said she had already read the back cover of the book so she knew why Sadako made the cranes. This prompted several children to turn their books over to read the back cover.

The lesson completed, Laura requested that one person in each group bring up the logs and one bring up the books. As they finished with this, students then began working on spelling.

The entire lesson took approximately one hour of class time. During this time, students had opportunities to read, write and share their own ideas about the chapter, to demonstrate comprehension as well as confusion about the selection, and to contribute knowledge each had about the topic and the theme of the book.

This described an early lesson, so instruction and Community Share took up the majority of time. In contrast, later lessons included longer reading, writing, and Book Club sessions as students became familiar with the program.

Such activities were regular components of Laura's reading program. Students learned to move easily from reading to writing to discussion. Laura interspersed instruction as needed. She also read students' body language, comments and behavior as indicators of the need to move to the next activity. As most students finished reading, she reminded them to write in their logs; as they finished writing, she would move them into Book Clubs or Community Share. Such flexibility contributed to a relaxed, teacher-directed, but student-led atmosphere. This was the context for the observations of the case study students in their Book Clubs.

The Book Club Group

One goal of the reading program was to have student-led groups engage in conversations about books. A program requiring such student responsibility needed to reflect the understanding of the influence of group composition on the

ensuing interactional patterns. One of Laura's challenges then was to create a composition of students in each group that would best facilitate conversations about text. Laura was already committed to using student groups (Pardo & Raphael, 1991) and knew that dividing students based on their school abilities did not guarantee effective discussions. However, she also knew careful attention to qualities other than academic ability may lead to more interactive groups. Considering this, Laura decided to use Cohen's (1986) varied statuses to reach decisions about groupings.

<u>Determining the Group</u>

Cohen identifies four types of status that can lead to competition and/or dominance in a group: academic, expert, peer, and societal. She defines these statuses as hierarchies in which some individuals become more active and/or influential within the group. Since I defined "role" as the function each individual served as she/he participated within the group, consideration of these factors that might stimulate interactional patterns within the Book Club group seemed important as I addressed the question of the roles students adopted. Cohen's notion of hierarchies which influenced the interactions proved helpful as I considered the case study group. These statuses were also helpful to Laura as she considered alternatives to the more common practice of grouping students based on academic ability alone. While helpful when considering ways of grouping students, these four categories are similar and distinguishable qualities overlap.

<u>Expert status</u>. Expert and academic statuses are somewhat similar. A student with expert status is one the rest of the class recognizes as the smartest.

Students attain expert status on tasks requiring skill in math and/or reading and tend to dominate groups in which these skills are required. Cohen relates how in most classrooms students are very well aware of the teacher's perceptions of which students are the strongest using clues such as the teacher's feedback to student responses and other evidence around the room. This classroom was no exception. Three charts illustrating each student's progress in language arts, spelling, and math graced the east wall. Therefore, students could easily ascertain the best readers and mathematicians who then might dominate group discussions.

Academic status. A student with academic status is one who may dominate a group even if the task does not require any academic proficiency. These students do not necessarily hold expertise in the activity in which the group is involved, but because of strengths in reading and/or math they may dominate. For example, some group projects focus on developing an opinion about an issue which does not require strong math or reading ability; however, students perceived as having academic proficiency may dominate and/or mislead the group. Since students in Laura's classroom could easily identify the best readers and mathematicians, these identified students could potentially dominate any Book Club.

Peer status. Peer status is awarded students who have a high social status among their peers in the class. These may be students who are good athletes, the most attractive, or the most popular. This status may cause some students to dominate a group even though they may lead the group in an inappropriate direction. Low peer status may prevent students from contributing to a group

because of the reactions of the others. Like most other classrooms, Laura's class contained students who were popular with their peers and those who were not. This was clearly an important consideration for Laura when designing the groups.

Societal status. The fourth type of status that might affect group interactions is societal which draws from perceptions in the larger society. Such distinctions are made on the basis of sex, ethnic group, race, or economic class. Cohen (1986) found that in groups of children from mixed ethnic groups, white males tended to dominate. In addition to several girls, Laura's class contained many students of mixed ethnicity who might have had less social status than the others.

Laura and I discussed these statuses and decided, with some revisions, they would be helpful as she decided on how to group students. Hoping to attain balance and increased interaction, Laura assigned students to groups using her perceptions of each student's potential strengths for Book Club after observing student interactions for approximately three weeks. At this time, I selected the five students I wanted to study: Mondo, Martisse, Lissa, Chris, and Bart[8] (see Table 3.1).

The Five Case Study Students

Five students comprised the Book Club case study group: two girls and three boys. The group remained intact for the first half of the study and split to contribute to two other groups for the last half, for reasons explained later. All five students participated in the study for the entire ten weeks; however, one

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[8] These children selected their own pseudonyms. I selected the pseudonyms for the other students in the class.

TABLE 3.1

Participant Information

CHILD'S NAME	ETHNICITY/GENDER	READING ABILITY
BART	AFRICAN-AMERICAN, EUROPEAN, & JAPANESE MALE	ABOVE GRADE-LEVEL
CHRIS	AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALE	BELOW GRADE-LEVEL
LISSA	CAUCASIAN FEMALE	AT GRADE-LEVEL
MARTISSE	AFRICAN-AMERICAN FEMALE	WELL ABOVE GRADE-LEVEL
MONDO	HISPANIC MALE	BELOW GRADE-LEVEL

student moved immediately after this so was unavailable for follow-up interviews.

<u>Mondo</u>. An eleven-year-old Hispanic boy, Mondo lived temporarily with a cousin's family until his mother could find a house. Laura met his mother once, but did not meet his father and could not remember Mondo talking about him. During the parent-teacher conference, Laura learned that Mondo's mother's first language was Spanish and that this was the language spoken in the home. Mondo participated in the study until Christmas vacation when his family moved. While never talking a lot about his family, he seemed drawn to family relationships in the books we read and discussed. Since he moved before the final formal interview, much of his perspectives on Book Club cannot be included.

Mondo was of average height with dark brown eyes, black hair, and a ready smile. He told me he would rather draw pictures than read. According to the teacher, Mondo was low academically, but worked hard and always turned in his assignments. He was having difficulty in most content areas and reading below grade level. In fact, during a pre-reading assessment activity early in the year he asked me several questions about the task. He seemed to read very slowly and could remember only limited ideas at a time. Laura noted that he became frustrated whenever asked to redo an assignment that had frequent errors.

Mondo got along well with most of the children. Laura noticed that he did not volunteer in class very often and attributed this to his being shy and insecure about his verbal abilities. However, in an early Book Club discussion when I sat with the group, Mondo participated frequently. Transcripts also

revealed that even when an adult was not present, he frequently talked but his relative reserve prevented him from taking a leadership position.

Mondo's shyness did not seem to interfere with his relationship with his peers or his own sense of belonging. One day immediately after recess, he came running to me to relate a story from the playground. According to him, a new student made a derogatory comment about the black students in the school. Several boys, of all ethnic backgrounds, attacked this boy. As Mondo put it, "We don't use them words" to talk about our friends. Mondo was excited about this and seemed to want to tell me all about it. At the same time, I got the impression that he was an observer to the event and not a participant.

Mondo was selected as a member of the target group because of his interest and ability in drawing. While not a strong reader and neither a popular nor an unpopular student, Mondo was a good enough in drawing so that he could maintain an expert status in his group.

Martisse. Martisse was an African-American girl of average height and weight and ten years old when the study began. The youngest of three children, Martisse lived with her mother and brother, an eighth-grader. Laura related that she thought Martisse was a "mommy's baby" who was pampered. Her older sister, a high school student, lived in an apartment alone. Martisse mentioned playing video games with her brother and related they spent time on weekends with her mother's boyfriend and his children.

Martisse's father lived in California. She and her siblings had visited him two years prior to the study and she mentioned the possibility that they might return the summer following it. Other than this, Martisse never volunteered

information about her dad, but she once wrote about him in her reading log.

The teacher had asked students to relate one time when they were very brave. Martisse wrote, "I was brave when my mom cut my dad in the knee and I didn't cry I went to the hospital with them and my dad got stiches in his knee. I had told the nurse I mom cut my dad in the knee with a sword." She did not make clear whether this incident was an accident or the result of a family dispute. This is the only other reference to her father that Martisse made either in her logs, in discussions about families, or during interviews.

Martisse was very well-dressed and groomed, but dressed simply, usually in pants or jeans. Unlike many of her classmates, she rarely wore a dress or skirt, or wore hair ribbons. She had short black hair and dark brown eyes and frequently dressed in blue jeans and t-shirts. Her health was good, but her attendance was marred by suspensions related to behavioral problems.

Laura described her as a student with very high academic ability and a very good reader who handled all fifth-grade work easily. Martisse revealed that she enjoyed reading and often read when at home. She complained that the school library did not have enough good books for children her age, adding she preferred going to the public library instead.

Her maturity and insight emerged early in the school year during a discussion about a fantasy, Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs. Unlike the other children who focused on how much fun it could be to have food rain down three times a day or those who questioned how sanitary it would be, Martisse noted how our world could be improved. She claimed that such a condition would stop starvation among the Ethiopians because they would no longer have

to worry about having enough food. No other students connected this fanciful idea to real-world problems.

While seeming friendly and popular with her peers, Martisse did not smile often. She had several friends in the class, mainly other black girls, but also one white girl, an equally good student. The boys liked Martisse as well. When students were asked to select which other students they would most like to work with, the girls selected Martisse more often than all but one other girl, and the boys identified her as one of two girls they elected to work with.

Despite her seeming popularity, Laura noted that she had two undesirable qualities. First, she seemed "short-tempered" since she had been involved in several fights over the school year, many resulting in suspension. Martisse explained her problems with other children as the result of their initiation of a fight. "If they mess with me, I make 'em stop." She never admitted to beginning any fights with other students.

In addition to Martisse's occasional difficulties with her peers, Laura noted that some adults in the building described her as indignant. However, these qualities did not seem to interfere with her relationships in the classroom, and she had never been indignant with Laura or any of the researchers in the classroom. In fact, she seemed somewhat shy around adults and never sought one to talk to even though she occasionally smiled or briefly greeted me in the hall.

Martisse was selected as a participant in the study because of the apparent depth of response she exhibited early in the year, her enjoyment of reading, and the positive relationship with her peers in this room. We perceived that she had

both academic and peer status.

Lissa. A Caucasian girl with blond hair and blue eyes, Lissa is the middle child in her family, having an older sister and a younger brother. She described frequent activities with her brother and sister, such as board games and movies. Lissa complained about what a pest her brother was but also noted that she threatened to beat up anyone who bothered him. When asked whether she had ever really beaten anyone up, she replied she had not. Lissa's father was not living in the home, but she had a twenty-three-year-old step-father who was. Laura said her mother was supportive and strong, attending all parent-teacher conferences and willing to provide help and structure at home.

Lissa was well-dressed and groomed. Her clothes often were coordinated outfits with matching hair ribbons. For example, one outfit consisted of a pair of pink shorts with matching suspenders, a white shirt with pink buttons, white socks with pink trim, a pink headband and a pink ribbon. While she often wore such carefully matched clothes, she also dressed more casually by wearing jeans and t-shirts. Lissa's health and attendance were good.

An average student, Lissa seemed to want to do well in school but was not always successful. Laura described her as an average student who had received Ds in many subjects over the year because she had become involved in too many extra-curricular activities, such as violin, safety, office helper, and door monitor. She also tended to rush through her work and sometimes neglected to turn it in to Laura. Reading at grade level, Lissa said she loved books and reported reading at home.

Lissa was polite and smiled to adults frequently, but did not seem to get

along well with her peers. She related that she had no friends in the class, which seemed to be true. When the class was asked to select which students they most wanted to work with, only one other student selected her. She frequently complained to the teacher and her parents that she was picked on by the other children. She told me they made fun of her clothes and did not like her, but she did not know why.

To avoid interacting with others her age, she would often try to find jobs to do during recess. She related that she preferred working in the office or helping teachers to going out to play. Laura related to me that she found Lissa's willingness to help sometimes overwhelming.

Despite Lissa's lack of popularity with her peers and their unwillingness to seek her company, she contributed regularly to class discussions, and her peers seemed to value what she said since her ideas resurfaced in other students' texts. One reason for this might be that Lissa frequently resorted to outside sources. She kept her own private library of reference books in her desk and often prefaced her response to Laura's questions by alluding to a book she had read.

Lissa was selected as a participant in the target Book Club group because she seemed to have expert status due to her outside reading and the apparent influence of this on some of the students.

Chris. Chris, an African-American boy, was the youngest of a large family, but he seemed unsure of the exact number of brothers and sisters he had. When I asked, "How many brothers and sisters do you have?" he answered, "A lot." I asked him, "How many is 'a lot'?" He responded, "Five or six brothers and three or four sisters." He lived with two brothers, both of whom were older

than he. As the youngest, Laura thought that, like Martisse, his mother pampered him, calling him "Little Chris." At the same time, she tended to support Laura and the school when he did anything wrong, and she attended all parent-teacher conferences.

Chris was of average height and weight for the fifth-graders in this classroom. He wore his hair cut in a current fad for African-American boys. That is, he had a pattern cut into his hair so that some of it grew longer than other sections. He dressed simply in jeans and t-shirts with high-top athletic shoes. He was clean and well-groomed.

Chris was a quiet student of low ability who hated reading. Laura related that he had qualified for Title One in both reading and math at the beginning of the year, but she kept him in his home room for the second semester. He frequently mentioned how much he hated reading, noting this fact in a preliminary questionnaire, in a midpoint survey, and during all interviews. He stated that reading was boring, but once revealed he had thought about how to be a good reader. On the midpoint survey, one of the questions asked students to identify someone they thought was a good reader and then tell why. He identified one of the best readers, saying she was good because she practiced a lot. When I asked him whether he thought he would get better if he practiced, he said he probably would, but "I'd rather be ridin' my bike or playin' basketball with my brothers."

For activities outside of school, Chris mentioned playing football, basketball, and Nintendo. He also mentioned enjoying movies that are either violent or funny. In class, he seemed to get along well with his peers and

frequently joined them in disruptive behavior. His best friend was another member of the class who often lost privileges for not doing his work. Unlike some of the other boys, though, Chris seemed to know the limits and did not get punished frequently. He displayed his insights about school norms when he explained why some class members got into more trouble than he did. During an interview, he related how one classmate always got into trouble because he could not control arguing with the teacher. He continued by explaining that if he would just stop talking, the teachers would not get so mad. Chris seemed to believe that he himself usually did not do anything wrong, but when he did, he got caught. He seemed to understand how to balance his friendships with these peers, but also not alienate the teacher.

Chris was selected for the target group Book Club because of his peer status. While not a good reader, he still seemed to want to do well in school and had some influence on others in the class.

Bart. Bart is a child of mixed ethnicity -- his mother is half Japanese and half European descent while his father is African-American. He is the youngest of two children, his brother being one year older. Laura perceived his parents as somewhat over-protective. Both of them were employed: his mother worked at a local university; his father was a counselor. While his father seldom attended school functions, his mother was president of the PTA and attended all parent-teacher conferences.

Bart described weekend trips with his family in the summer to a nearby lake for boating and skiing. He seemed particularly fond of these times with his father. He also talked frequently about a trip the previous summer to Japan to

visit relatives, but it was unclear whether his father traveled with the family. In all the pictures Bart brought in of this trip to Japan and all the stories he told, his father was present in none of them. However, his family seemed extremely close. Bart described many events together, including the fact that his mother insisted the family eat dinner together every evening.

Bart was an attractive boy, a little huskier than his peers. He had light brown skin and dark brown eyes. He dressed in the most current styles with his dark brown hair neatly trimmed. Frequently he chose bright, printed shirts with acid-washed jeans and high-top athletic shoes.

Bart had good verbal skills, was of average intelligence, and seemed to want to do well in school. He was an office helper and Laura saw him as a student who was capable of taking responsibility. During class, he frequently participated in discussions and began assignments immediately. However, Bart had another side to his personality.

Other adults in the building, such as lunch aids and substitutes, reported Bart as being manipulative and sneaky. They frequently caught him creating problems in the school yard, during lunch, and while in the library because he liked to have fun with his friends who were less-inclined to be good students. The boy he identified as his best friend, Daniel, was one of the most negative students in the class. Bart related to me several dangerous adventures in which he and Daniel participated outside school. For example, one day they decided to experiment with aerosol cans and fire. One boy held down the nozzle of the can while the other lit a flame under the escaping contents. When I asked Bart whether he knew how dangerous this was, he said, "Yea. I would never do it at

home. I might get caught." In addition to being in trouble with his parents, Bart also seemed to understand that playing with fire and aerosol cans was dangerous. In the same conversation, he related that Daniel was about to try an experiment with his family's gas stove. Bart stated, "I ran out the door as fast as I could."

Another time, the same two boys got into trouble for throwing rocks at a younger child and his mother while walking to school. Bart and Daniel told the principal and Laura that the younger boy had been throwing stones at them and the mother was swearing at them. They felt justified in throwing the rocks. When the school relayed the incident to his parents, Bart admitted to a confrontation with the younger boy but denied throwing the stones at the boy's mother. His parents came to his defense, saying this family had created problems for Bart and his brother before and that Bart was right to defend himself.

Reports of Bart's sneakiness was evident even in the classroom where he seemed more successful avoiding punishment. He often joined other classmates, including Chris, in creating problems for both the student teacher and substitute teachers. Bart seemed to begin the disruption, continue to participate in it, but stop before getting caught. For example, one day while a student teacher conducted a lesson at the board, Bart, Chris and two of their other friends were making faces at another child who was getting angry. The student teacher turned from the board in time to catch three of the boys creating a disturbance. Meanwhile, Bart cleverly avoided being caught by pretending to rub his eyes. Throughout the observational period, I witnessed several such instances where Bart participated in disruptive behavior, but seldom received punishment. When I asked him whether he ever got away with anything in the classroom, he

responded he did not. He readily admitted that he was not an angel, but denied his own skill at avoiding punishment. Bart's craftiness was clear to Laura since she reported him as a leader who instigated trouble but rarely got caught.

Despite his ability to avoid punishment or perhaps because of it, Bart continued to be one of the most popular boys in the class. He usually had a ready smile for classmates and adults alike. Bart talked easily with his friends and adults, but on some days seemed somewhat moody and would not participate in small groups.

Bart was unique in this classroom in many ways. First, he was the only target student who came from a two-parent family in which both parents held jobs, his father's a professional one. Second, his ethnicity was unique. The mixed European-Asian-African heritage provided him with an appearance that was handsome yet exotic. Next, he was the only student to have traveled to another country. In fact, many of his peers had never left their home town. In addition, he alone talked of family outings and dinners together. Finally, he was the only student who seemed to be relatively successful as he balanced peer popularity and academic achievement.

Bart was selected for the study because he appeared to have academic and peer status. He was a high-average reader and tended to do well in most of his subjects.

Book Club Interactions Early in the Program

As Laura began reading instruction and the small group discussions, the success of the groupings emerged very quickly. The majority of the groups appeared to be interacting reasonably well. One observer's note (Bogdan &

Biklen, 1982) I wrote expressed pleasant surprise with how well the overall class appeared to be interacting. "I am struck by the fact that one teacher <u>can</u> run several Book Clubs in one room. While every group is not always on task, many were discussing the text and the others were not creating any serious problems." At the same time, some groups seemed unable to proceed without Laura's direction. They either fell into silence or talked about topics unrelated to the reading. Despite some early indications that interactions might improve, not all students had progressed beyond the initial stage of sharing logs for the first few minutes then falling into silence or becoming distracted. In addition, some members dominated their Book Club. These interactional patterns became a source of frustration for Laura. I focused my observations more closely on group interactions to try to answer whether anyone dominated the group, and, if so, when and how.

Laura and I frequently met and discussed how to get the groups interacting more effectively. We planned lessons in which Laura modeled ways to share, students observed other groups on tape or examined the transcripts of some groups, and the researchers modeled composites of what we saw them doing in their groups and of what we hoped they would do. While some students seemed to modify their interactions based on these, others did not.

After five weeks with the same groups, Laura wanted to try restructuring them. This created one of many dilemmas I recorded in a memo as I struggled with the issues surrounding a change in group structures. As a researcher, I wanted my five case study students to remain together. Reassigning them to other groups would create difficulties collecting data and analyzing transcripts.

Since the study was built on a social constructivist perspective, how students interacted and how such interactions influenced their thinking was essential to understanding their learning. Trying to follow more than one group would be impossible and would be difficult to interpret.

At the same time, Laura felt her instruction was less effective since not all children were interacting as she had hoped. Regrouping students might foster enhanced learning for more of them. Since she was the classroom teacher, I did not feel comfortable resisting instructionally-sound changes. In addition, I realized that students often tire of being with the same group. A change might add vitality to the reading program. Therefore, I supported Laura's decision to regroup students, but I requested that if possible she divide the targeted students into just two groups, keeping at least some of them together. Laura complied with this request.

Regrouping Students

Regrouping students seemed to have mixed results. While some students seemed to interact well with their new groups, others did not. This issue of formulating effective groupings continued to plague Laura the rest of the school year.

As I studied the reactions of the target students, I continued to focus on the questions, How are these students interacting? and What creates lively discussions in the group? To help answer these, I frequently listened to tapes, studied transcripts of group meetings, and recorded new ideas regarding possible answers.

The Information Collected and Continued Analysis

Data collection and analysis for descriptive work merge together into one, on-going process. The researcher must begin early the process by systematically searching through all the possible documentation to determine which data is relevant and to catalogue materials based on emerging patterns and themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). To understand student perceptions of the reading program, I collected multiple sources of data, including: (a) field notes, (b) audio taped lessons, (c) audio taped Book Club meetings, (d) formal and informal interviews of Laura, (e) formal and informal interviews of the students, and (f) student documents. This chapter continues by outlining the data sets I included and the process of analysis I followed.

<u>Observing and Recording Field Notes</u>

I observed reading two to three times a week, beginning at the start of the school year and ending at Christmas vacation. During the observations, I took field notes as Laura implemented lessons and students met in groups, directing most of my attention on the responses and behaviors of the five students reported in this study. I rarely sat with the targeted students, instead, positioning myself closely by the group as soon as I entered the room. Laura facilitated this by assigning the case study students seats near a large table where I could easily take notes and listen to their interactions.

While observing and taking field notes, I frequently looked around the room and recorded information about other members of the class. At the same time, while I looked toward other groups, I continued to listen to the targeted group's conversation and recorded these in my notes.

After observing the class, I listened to the audio tapes of the instruction, Community Share, and Book Club meetings before sending them to a professional transcriber. This practice helped me expand my notes with information I might have forgotten and with additional information about the context during the class period.

I expanded my notes on the computer, clarifying sections of description and noting patterns and themes I saw emerging in student discussions during Book Club and Community Share. I also added impressions or noted patterns I saw emerging in student behavior and interactions. I began keeping a file of these with sections of my field notes supporting my ideas and using these to help focus further observations. As I identified recurring patterns, I noted this for future observations and subsequent analysis. (See Appendix A for an example of expanded field notes.)

Recording the Participants' Words

To capture the participants' own words, I taped the instructional component, Community Share, and student Book Club meetings. At least once a week, I audio taped Laura's instruction and the related Community Share. As I listened to these tapes, I expanded my field notes, including direct quotations from the teacher and students. In addition, I tape recorded Book Club meetings. I had these professionally transcribed but edited them myself.

As transcribers finished the audio tapes, I reviewed the transcripts while listening to the tapes. In doing this, I could check for accuracy in terms of which speaker was attributed particular statements and of how accurately the transcriber had recorded speakers' comments. After this, I again listened to try

to characterize student talk. (See Appendix B for an example of an edited transcript page from a Book Club discussion.)

Repeated listening to the tapes resulted in my identification of two essential characteristics of the talk I wanted to capture: (a) what topics students in the group wanted to discuss and (b) what roles they appeared to adopt during the discussion. Both of these appeared to influence which ideas remained on the conversational floor the longest. To attempt to communicate these, I identified six key aspects of the conversations I wanted to note on the transcripts: (a) interruptions in a speaker's turn, (b) overlapping talk, (c) stressed words or phrases, (d) pauses within a speaker's turn as well as between turns, (e) speaker's tone, and (f) time elapsed (see Table 3.2). Each of these seemed important when trying to understand the roles students adopted during their interactions as well as the content of what they were saying.

After I had established my scheme for identifying these aspects, I asked others to listen to one of the tapes and view the transcript to establish whether others understood the notations and whether they matched what others heard on the tape [9]

In addition to my attention to how to best capture verbal speech on paper, I listened to the tapes and read the transcripts repeatedly, trying to identify themes and patterns in student talk and behavior during Book Club. I also recorded questions as they emerged to ask the students during the more formal

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[9] Throughout the course of the study I met with a group of researchers interested in analyzing video and audio taped data. This group proved invaluable to me as I analyze the data. I would like to express my appreciation to this group: Susan Florio-Ruane, Jenny Denyer, David Eichinger, Ruth Heaton, Sarah McCarthey, Jim Reineke, and Dan Chazan.

TABLE 3.2

Explanation of Transcript Notations

14	Number notation at far left indicates a new speaker.
01	Number notation in second column indicates counter number on the transcription machine noting passage of seconds.
///	Indicates pauses within a speaker's turn. Each note (/) indicates one second.
[	Indicates overlapping talk.
...	Indicates a speaker's thoughts were interrupted by talk, but the other speaker might have begun during a slight pause in the first speaker's turn.
_	Indicates the speaker stressed this word. For example, "I want you to do that now."
( )	Indicates my comments, including my interpretation of how someone stated something, or what other group members were doing at the same time.
" "	Indicates the speaker was reading from a log or the book.
,	Indicates slight pauses in speech.
(?)	Indicates the speaker said something that was not distinguishable on the tape.

interviews and noted behaviors that I wanted to look for while observing. In addition, I listed questions I had for Laura regarding instructional issues or student behavior and/or ideas.

Teacher Interviews

During weekly planning meetings, I informally interviewed Laura, attempting to understand her assessment of the targeted students during lessons, the instructional direction she wanted them to take and the reasons for this. In addition, after I had collected data through December, I formally asked Laura questions about the school in general and the targeted students in specific, hoping to gain insight into the patterns I had found in the students' written and oral responses (see Appendix C).

Student Interviews

To gain some sense of student perceptions of reading and group interactions I frequently talked with the target group during class as I circulated. I included student answers and/or my impressions of what they were writing in my field notes.

In addition, I scheduled four formal interviews with each of the case study students. The need for the first one emerged as I continued to reread their logs and transcripts of Book Club meetings. I decided that I wanted to know more information about them and would attempt to achieve what Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) called "respondent validation" about what they had in their logs. I brought all the data I had collected on each student for the interview. This included edited transcripts of Book Club meetings, their reading logs, and their think-sheets. I had organized all of these in a large notebook for each child.

Before the interview, I had marked particular responses or representations that I questioned. I began each interview asking background questions (see Appendix D). Then I proceeded to ask questions specific to each child's data and in response to their answers. As the student looked through the notebook, I asked questions related to my analysis thus far. I taped these interviews, which were professionally transcribed. Once I received the transcriptions, I edited them.

Still trying to gain the insider's perspective, I also met with these students in groups of two[10] to discuss sections of transcript I had decided to include in the study. I decided that for this type of interview I wanted more interaction among the children. Having them meet with me in groups of two facilitated this. During the interview, students listened to the audio tape and read the edited transcripts. I asked them to listen closely to ascertain whether I had attributed comments to the correct person and whether I had accurately represented what they had said. In addition, I asked them to characterize the mood of the group at the time and explain what individual group members were doing. I audio taped these sessions and had them transcribed professionally.

Such interviews proved helpful as well as confusing. For transcripts in which there was significant overlapping talk, students could better identify their own voices in the mixture of conversation and clarify mumbled words. However, asking them to characterize the climate of the group raised as many questions as it did answers. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) cautioned, the participant

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[10] By this time, Mondo had moved and was not available for the interview.

must reconstruct the event and, at the same time, explain their own actions. Such reconstructed memories require the same levels of analysis as other documents and accounts. Therefore, instead of validating my analysis, these interviews provided yet another set of perspectives to consider about the group interactions.

Finding Patterns and Themes after Data Collection

In general, the analysis of the combined data led me on many varied paths. I started analysis by searching through individual student data, establishing such categories as: (a) behavior of a student, (b) role in Book Club meetings, (c) views of war theme, (d) reactions to other cultures, and (e) personal response. These categories provided opportunities to examine the data closely, focusing on its key aspects.

One dilemma I confronted was the question, What made a case? Was it one student or five? As I began, I looked at each individual student, in effect trying to ignore the group. For example, I began with Bart by examining my field notes, his papers, and transcripts of Book Club meetings. I found three major patterns emerging as he wrote and talked about Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes (McMahon, Pardo & Raphael, in press). While doing this, I also examined data from each of the other five students. This process revealed to me that analysis of the total group made more sense because I realized that their ideas were growing as a result of their interactions with one another. Given that my study was based on a social constructivist theoretical perspective, using the group as the level of analysis provided a greater perspective to understand emerging patterns and themes.

I continued analysis by searching for patterns emerging within the group by examining each student's comments during Book Club, log entries, and representations. The over-arching questions included: Which ideas are recorded in logs? Which ideas are introduced into discussion? Which are elaborated? and Which reemerged in either future discussions or logs? This analysis led me to question dominance of certain members and behaviors that did not contribute to the discussion of the text. As I examined transcripts, I began to see patterns emerging that helped explain group behavior and the resulting focus of discussions.

As I examined the data further, I found different patterns in the groups. During the first half of the unit, in which the five targeted students were members of the same Book Club, three consistent patterns emerged. Some of these same patterns continued even after they were separated into two groups, while other new patterns emerged.

During the first half, as students read, wrote about, and discussed the books set in Japan, three consistent patterns emerged for the targeted students. First, similar themes and/or topics surfaced across individual student's log entries and in their Book Club discussions, though some students seemed drawn to certain themes more than others. Second, a distinct relationship emerged between students' written and oral texts (McMahon, 1991). Ideas students introduced in logs they elaborated in Book Club discussions; those ideas introduced in Book Club surfaced in subsequent logs. Further, the log entries provided students a method through which to enter the discussion. Third, students developed particular roles within their Book Club. For example, one

appeared to initiate discussions and set the tone, while another assumed the role of conductor, keeping the conversational momentum going. The other students followed the lead of these two.

During the second half of the unit, Laura regrouped students, modified the reading log, and changed the focus of instruction. Therefore, as the students read, wrote about, and discussed <u>Number the Stars</u>, new patterns emerged. First, there was a lack of personal response. Students became bounded by the events of the text and proceeded to summarize these without individual reflection or comment. Second, the relationship between written and oral text remained since logs continued to provide students an opening into the conversation. Further, what students had written in their logs determined the content of Book Club discussions. Thus, since the logs primarily contained events restated from the text, the content of the discussions also focused on the text. Finally, students again adopted roles in their groups, but these roles did not often foster interactions about the book.

Having described the participants, the context, and the methods of data collection and analysis, I continue with the analysis of the data. In Chapter Four, I explore the targeted Book Club group as it interacted together at the beginning of the unit. Chapter Five examines these five students as they then became members of two other groups.

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BOOK CLUB: A CASE STUDY OF A GROUP OF FIFTH-GRADERS
AS THEY PARTICIPATE IN A
LITERATURE-BASED READING PROGRAM

Volume II

By

Susan I. McMahon

A DISSERTATION

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CHAPTER 4

THE CO-CONSTRUCTION OF MEANING: HOW FIVE STUDENTS LEARN TO BECOME ONE GROUP REDEFINING READING

Martisse, Bart, Lissa, Chris, and Mondo developed their abilities to participate in the student-led Book Clubs, growing both in what and how they shared. In this chapter, I focus on the first part of the World War II unit when these five students participated in the same Book Club. During this unit, they read three books: <u>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes</u>, <u>Hiroshima, No Pika</u>, and <u>Faithful Elephants</u>. I explore their general patterns of interaction, then focus on the analysis of the transcripts of their Book Club discussions. I will discuss each day's transcript in sections, then summarize the findings.

Emergent Patterns

Each day students met in Book Clubs to discuss ideas related to their reading of the text and written comments in their logs. Analysis of the transcripts of the five case study students interacting in their Book Clubs revealed three emergent patterns: (a) the introduction and development of three themes consistently emerging in the group's conversation, (b) the relationship between students' written and oral texts, and (c) the development of student interactions about texts during these discussions. I discuss these three first, then move to a description of the group interactions.

<u>Themes</u>

The first issue for analysis was the development of themes. As students met and discussed their books, three themes emerged, reflecting varied student interests: (a) how war affects all life forms, (b) how characters related to one another, and (c) how cultures differ. First, since all of the class books the first semester were set during World War II and three of them related events surrounding the bombing of Japan, all five students demonstrated a developing sense of the casualties of war. A second theme shared among the students in the Book Club group related to interpersonal relationships developed as students identified with the characters and the events in their lives. The third frequent theme considered cultural differences between events described within the books about the Japanese culture and the students' own experiences. These three themes consistently emerged during Book Club discussions I studied.

<u>Connections Between Reading, Writing, and Discussions</u>

The second issue analyzed was the connections between what the students read, wrote, and discussed. Since the Book Club meetings were just one component of the intervention, they were not the sole influence of what students discussed. What they read and what they wrote or drew in their logs became equally important, stimulating many of the introduced topics. Students also selected ideas that were introduced during instruction or Community Share. Further, Book Club discussions, Community Share, and instruction all influenced student writings. As a result, log entries became powerful tools, providing students entry into the conversation.

<u>Interactional Patterns</u>

The third issue of analysis that emerged during Book Club discussions was how the students learned to interact as a group around the text. Changing ways in which ideas were valued, elaborated, or dismissed illustrated the development of these interactions. Initially, conversations resembled solo performances conflicting with other soloists. As the group read additional selections with similar themes, as they shared more common experiences with the books, and as the instruction helped them explicitly examine Book Club interactions, their discussions appeared more like musical selections where particular instruments prevailed, contributing to one unified text.

Throughout the subsequent analysis and discussion of the student interactions in Book Clubs, I will weave these three issues: (a) themes, (b) relationships between written and oral text, and (c) interaction patterns. This chapter combines examples of student written text, transcripts from Book Club meetings, information from field notes, and quotes taken from formal and informal interviews. Most of the data are considered in chronological order since one aspect of the argument I am putting forth is that the interactions between these five students developed and changed over time.

<u>Book Club in the Beginning</u>

Students began the first literature unit reading <u>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes</u>. Laura designed the first day's lesson to help familiarize students with the components of their reading program. Therefore, students practiced all the components of the reading program; they read, wrote, and discussed their ideas. Laura used the instructional time to prepare students for the book. For

this, she directed students to look at the cover of the book, predict what they thought it might be about, and write this prediction in their logs. The case study group's predictions all drew from the title and the picture on the cover of the book (see Table 4.1). Each student predicted something about the main character and a bird. Differences emerged in identification of the gender of Sadako. Martisse and Lissa predicted a female; Chris, Mondo, and Bart a male.

After this, Laura read the first chapter aloud. When she had completed the reading, students wrote modified predictions below their initial ones. All five case study students changed their predictions to incorporate information gained from the chapter (see Table 4.1). Martisse and Chris predicted happy stories; Lissa and Mondo drew on the sadness of the grandmother's death. Bart maintained his belief that Sadako was a male and predicted a story about a bird with the spirit of one of the dead grandparents.

When students had had sufficient opportunity to revise their predictions, they met in Book Clubs to discuss them. The target group adopted a round-robin style for sharing their predictions. Each read the first prediction, followed by the modification. None of the students elaborated or refined their written log entries.

On the second day, the teacher began by asking all of the children to illustrate some section from the first chapter they most wanted to discuss in Book Club. Through these drawings, students introduced the emergent themes they continued to discuss for the next several weeks.

TABLE 4.1

Original and Revised Predictions Before Reading <u>Sadako</u>

Original Predictions

MARTISSE: It will be about Sadako making paper cranes that she likes and will probly will end up good or bad Sadako must be Japanese or Chinede by her name I like Chinese and Japanese because they are nice

CHRIS: sakdo is going is going to make a lot of planes and Sakdo is proley poor and he is on his on without a mother and a father

LISSA: sadako is a little girl she is chinese and she kows how to make paper krans and and she made a thosand paper krans and she holds one up one day and says I wish you could and then it turns real!

MONDO: I going about browing a baid that he promble and someone shise to kill it. but the little boy won't let hen go and he get hem and takes hem to jell. or he likes bird and try to braw the bird and make's them.

BART: I might be about he going somewere like a pond and he saw that bird sadoco and he got attached to them or maybe he had a bird and then he probably started makeing them our of papper maybe he made six a day entell he got to a thousand birds thats why they call the story that name

Revised Predictions

MARTISSE: She will have good luck at the fair and she will get to ride a lot of rides and that might be where she gets the ideal of making paper cranes.

CHRIS: skado grandmother spart will come back and the air will will get clean and people will stop dieing and the will live happy amp popeople wham die.

LISSA: I think that it will be a very good book but sad at parts because the grand ma died and I think that the girl dies in the Story.

MONDO: the real story she's was going to a place ware peopel dead of a bom and everone diad but her grana diad in the bomm thay went to pray for her grana.

BART: he could be going to the pong and see that bird and that bird could be a spiret of his grandma or grandpa one of the two.

Student Representations

Bart began drawing immediately, creating a representation of a plane dropping a bomb on a carnival (see Figure 4.1) and illustrating his initial focus on weapons and death. There was little evidence that Bart questioned the idea of war, the outcomes, or any value judgement. In this drawing, many small, faceless figures fall soundlessly to their death. People on the ground are drawn exactly like those falling. There is no evidence of pain, suffering, or death.

Chris chose to follow Bart's lead in his choice of illustration (see Figure 4.1). Field notes revealed that the teacher suggested students might look at one another's drawings. "Chris waited several minutes, then looked over at Bart's paper and settled into his own drawing." Chris revealed during an interview that he did not like to draw and that it was Bart's idea to illustrate the bombing of the carnival. Thus, since he followed Bart's lead when considering what to draw, he, too, focused on the weapons of war.

Another student Bart's representation seemed to have influenced was Mondo (see Figure 4.2). Field notes indicated that Mondo had first drawn a picture representing the family praying to their dead grandmother. "I walked around the room looking at students' drawings. Several boys drew planes dropping bombs (Bart, Chris, Bill); some students drew ghosts or images of the grandmother (Lissa, Mondo)." When Mondo added the picture of a plane was unclear, but it probably had been during the Book Club meeting.

As their drawings illustrated, all three boys included a bombing incident in their representations of an interesting section of the chapter. Of the three,

166

Chris's representation of the bombing of Hiroshima
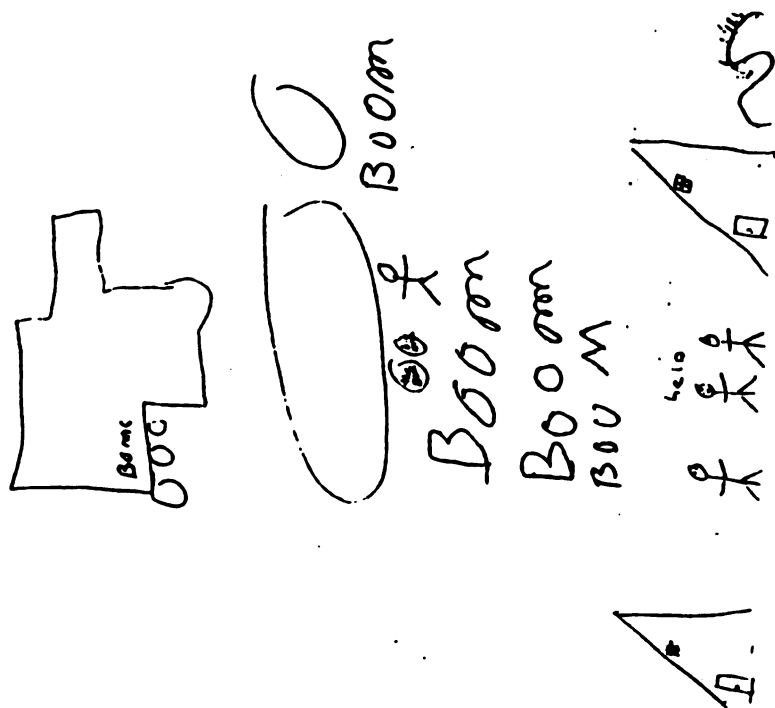
Bart's representation of the bombing of Hiroshima
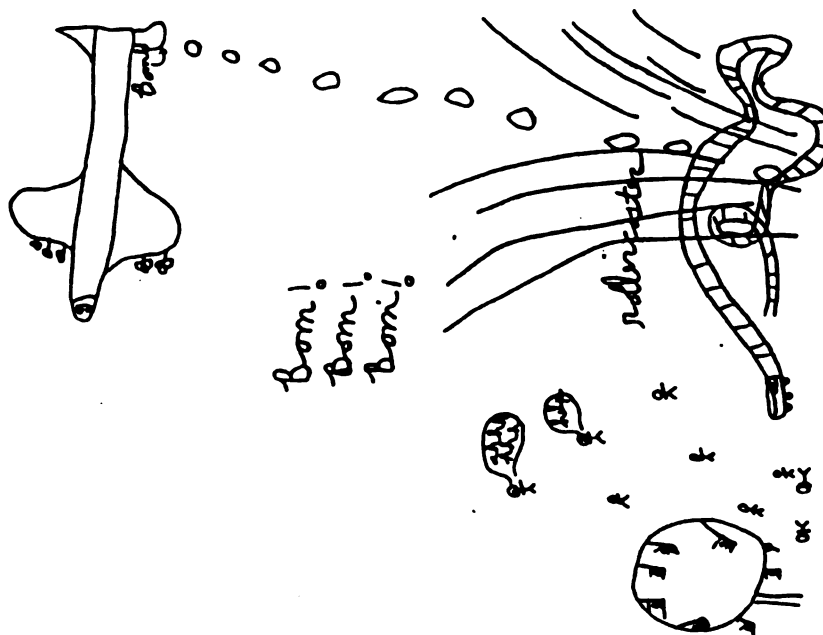
FIGURE 4.1

Bart's and Chris's Representations of the Bombing of Hiroshima
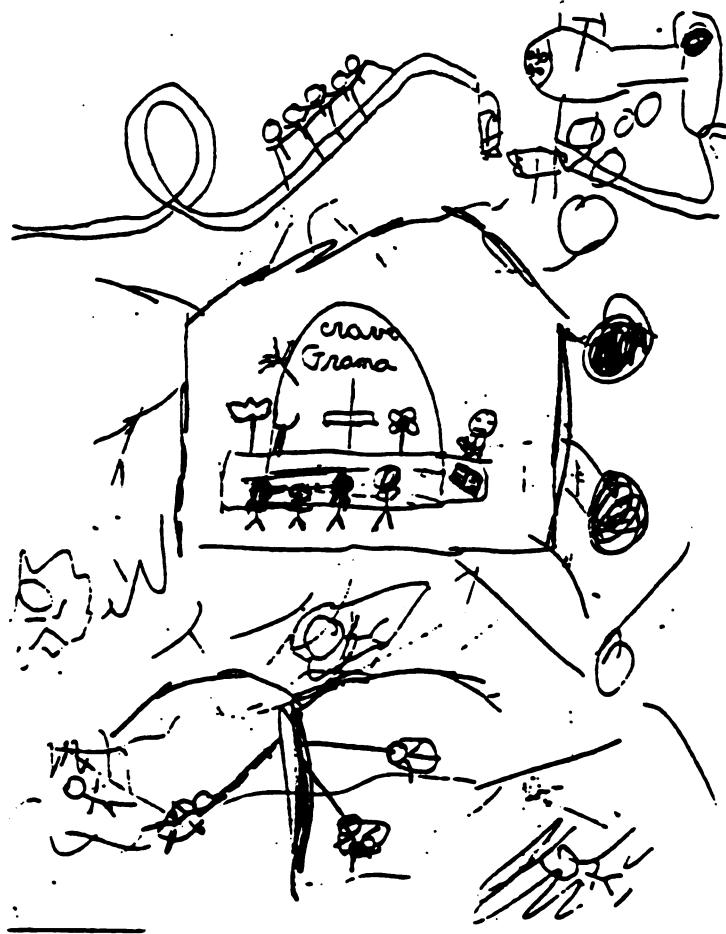
FIGURE 4.2

Mondo's representation of Sadako's Family Praying and the Bombing of Hiroshima

Mondo alone provided a section of his drawing that centered on family relationships.

Like Mondo, Lissa and Martisse each focused on a different aspect of interpersonal relationships. Lissa drew the family praying to their grandmother who had died during the bombing of Hiroshima (see Figure 4.3). Martisse's drawing represented a conversation between Sadako and her mother relating the serious effects of war and of the Peace Day Carnival that commemorates it (see Figure 4.3).

As their drawings demonstrated, the students prepared for their Book Club discussion by illustrating two prevalent themes: the effects of war and the relationships between family members. In fact, combined, the illustrations devoted equal time to each topic. Bart and Chris attended only to the theme of war while Lissa and Martisse focused on family relationships. Mondo alone included both themes. An observer who saw only the drawings might predict that the resulting discussion would include somewhat equal attention to both issues.

Meeting in Book Club

The actual Book Club meeting, however, was not so balanced with respect to participation or content. While all group members referred to their drawings as they talked and all had an opportunity to share what they had drawn, only Bart's and Chris's ideas received significant attention. This attention did not seem to be the result of students' valuing this theme more, or that Bart's and Chris's representations were better or more relevant. Instead, the interaction styles of these two boys contributed to their domination of the discussion.

Setting the tone of the subsequent conversation, Bart initiated the

Lissa's representation of the family praying

Martisse's representation of the argument between Sadako and her mother

FIGURE 4.3

Lissa's Representation of Sadako's Family and Martisse's Representation of the Argument

conversation with a kind of joke before referring to his drawing of the Peace Day

carnival being bombed. His verbal description, like the drawing, reflected a lack

of concern for those hurt in war. Further, he and the other Book Club members

found humor in his drawing as they engaged in conversation about the bombing

of the carnival. While this particular section of transcript includes the

conversation between Bart and Chris only, the other members appeared to be

actively listening.

1	005	Bart:	All Right! Hello, I'm young MC with a story to uhm, ah, I'm gonna start over. This is Bart um, hmm, I drew um, that um, airplane dropping a bomb on that fair. And there's dead people laying on the ground (He laughs) /// and um it it it exploded, and gas is killing them, they're all falling on the ground // and their eyes are popped out, an' they're, an' they're, and they're dead. And they fell off the roller coaster,
	011		(Chris Laughs)
2		Bart:	Splattered (Bart laughs).
3		Martisse:	Go Chris.
4		Chris:	You through? (To Bart.)
5		Bart:	Yeah.
6		Chris:	My name is Chris. I drew. I drew.
7		Martisse:	You gotta talk louder.
8	013	Chris:	I drew the story of the bomb, bomb, falling on the fair. (Laughing) Boom! Boom!
9			(Bart Laughs)
10	014	Chris:	And people said, "Heeelp! Heeeelp!"
11	015	Bart:	I'm dying! The gas is getting to me!

12			(Chris Laughs)

13   016   Chris: And they trying to run to their houses saying, "Help! Help! Let me in." And their brains poppin' out their heads. I'm finished. (Book Club Transcript, October 1, 1990)

Bart's initial "joke" seemed to have led the group into a comic mood even though the topic he introduced was serious. Field notes from this discussion described all of the students as actively involved.

> "I noticed only two groups where the students seemed to be listening to one another talk -- the target group and the group with Juan Martinez. Other groups broke down into pairs . . ., or were not talking at all . . . Leroy's group varied; sometimes Jim did not participate; other times he did. Before long, 2-3 minutes, all groups except for Anthony's seemed engaged in talking. The target group seemed particularly engaged." (Field notes, October 1, 1990)

The notes went on to describe how the members of the group were sitting closely together in a circle listening to Bart and Chris discuss their drawings. All five group members laughed at Bart's and Chris's descriptions. Bart contributed ideas to Chris's explanation, adding to a general sense that war and bombs can be funny.

In a later interview with pairs of students, I asked four of the original group members (Bart and Chris, Martisse and Lissa) to listen to the tape. All four children laughed again as they listened. I asked each what was funny about this. Chris responded, "Bart. The way he was talkin', 'the bomb hit and they fell off and hit their head . . .' It was funny." In a separate interview, both Martisse and Lissa supported Chris's assessment that is was Bart's method of explaining his drawing that created the humor.

Observational data indicated the reaction was what Bart had intended

since he was smiling and continued to interact with his group over issues related to his or Chris's drawing. Bart's oral response elaborated his drawing, adding detail and humor.

In addition to illustrating how Bart took control of the flow of the conversation, this section of transcript illustrated the role Martisse initiated here and continued later as conductor of the conversation. She immediately called on Chris to follow Bart's contribution even though Chris's question (line 4) indicated he was not sure Bart was finished. Whether he had intended to say more or not, Bart relinquished the floor to Chris. Martisse's direction continued the flow of conversation by quickly identifying the next speaker. Her direction also led the group into a round-robin style of interaction. That is, as each member read an entry, the next speaker took a turn. This was the interaction pattern they were probably most accustomed to during small group discussions.

As the interaction continued, Martisse shared her drawing which changed the focus from the war theme to that of interpersonal relationships. She related the conversation between Sadako and her mother in which the mother wanted Sadako to understand the serious event commemorated by the Peace Day Carnival. Sadako, on the other hand, typified a child's response that the carnival was a place to go have fun.

14 017 Martisse: I'm Martisse. (Chris laughs. Martisse sounds like she is laughing too.) About the story I have, (Reading her log in a serious voice) her ma she said um she ran out in the street and she said, "I'm going to this carnival." And then her ma said /// She said, "I like the carnival (Undecipherable. Something about running.) Her ma said, "You'll be um sad like that and it's not a carnival. It's a memorable day and so

many people uhm, your grandma died in that bomb because the gas . . .

(Chris laughs)

15	021	Martisse:	. . . comes out and you get leukemia and some people still got leukemia now.
16	022	Chris:	(Interrupting) Yup, my grandfather died of that.
17		Martisse:	(continuing) And um . . .
18		Chris:	Seriously, I'm not lying.
19	023	Martisse:	and uhm, uhm, she said, "I like the carnival." Her mom said, "You don't wanna be talking like that because your grandma died in that bomb with leukemia." (Book Club Transcript, October 1, 1990)

Martisse's tone in reading Sadako's part seemed to indicate her own identification with the main character as Sadako interacted with her mother. Martisse attributed rebellion and indignation to Sadako, not remorse. She seemed to be giving Sadako qualities that some of the adults at Bates Street School attributed to her. This identification is no surprise since Sadako is approximately the same age as these fifth-graders. Having limited understanding of the effects of war, Martisse assumed that, even though Sadako grew up in Japan, she was like modern-day American children. Despite differences in culture and time, the event in the novel echoed one Martisse herself probably had experienced. The book presented Sadako and her mother engaged in a conflict over differing values. Martisse elected to illustrate this and read each character's part with emotion as if she could identify how each character felt.

While field notes indicated that Lissa listened to Martisse, they also recorded Bart and Chris busy talking to one another. Mondo divided his

attention between Martisse and the other two boys. "Martisse is reading from her log. Lissa is quietly listening. Mondo seems easily distracted by the other students. Bart and Chris are talking together." (Field Notes, October 1, 1990)

Even though Chris was attending more to Bart, he also seemed momentarily drawn to the theme of family relationships when he commented about his grandfather (lines 15 and 17). These general comments about family seemed to trigger Bart's memory of his family trip the previous summer to Japan and introduced for the first time the third theme, cultural differences.

20	024	Bart:	In Japan, when I went to Japan, you have to treat with respect . . .

21		Chris:	(interrupting) They fall off the roller coaster?

22	025	Bart:	. . . you have, you have to treat them with respect. Like uhm let's say someone died like, like, what I'm saying in my story. They fell off the roller coaster (Chris laughs) and then and then if you go on that roller coaster again

(Chris continued to laugh loudly while Bart talked.)

23		Martisse:	Shhh . . .

(Chris laughing.)

24	026	Bart:	. . . you go on the roller coaster again they say, "We fight to death, I'm going to stab you. Really I'm telling the truth (laughing).

25		Chris:	Okay.

26	027	Bart:	So they, so they say we have to fight until someone dies./// So they have to treat them with respect or bum-bum-bum bum (makes noise like suspenseful music sound), you're dead.

(Chris and Bart laugh) (Book Club Transcript, October 1, 1990)

At first, Bart's contribution seemed serious as he related what he learned

about respect for the dead in Japan. On the other hand, Chris reverted to humor as soon as Bart had the conversational floor. This might be attributed to mixed signals Bart's manner sent to Chris. Bart's tone of voice remained neutral and he told Chris he was serious; however, he also laughed while he was talking, contributing to Chris's confusion over whether Bart was serious or still joking. As a result, Chris continued in a comic mode, laughing at Bart's comments. Only toward the end of Bart's statement did Chris seem to think Bart was serious.

In contrast, demonstrating her adopted role as leader in Book Club, Martisse indicated to Chris that he should listen when she said, "Shhh." Seeing herself as the conductor, she decided she could determine who rightfully had the floor. Telling Chris "Shhh," she was attempting both to help establish Bart's right to continue talking and to show she wanted to hear what Bart had to say about his trip to Japan.

Bart's participation in the establishment of the interactional patterns seemed to suggest his desire to control the conversation and to receive Chris's approval. His desire for approval seemed to weigh more heavily since he dropped the theme of cultural differences and returned to his original mode when he finally had all of the group's attention again. He continued talking throughout interruptions by Chris and Martisse. However, during his last section (line 13), there is a three-second pause after which Bart hums suspenseful music. This silence might have indicated to Bart that he had succeeded in gaining the floor. At the same time, he had nothing more to say. Without further information to share, Bart resorted to joking again. Thus, he ended with humor.

As this section of the transcript illustrated, Bart continued to try to dominate or direct the flow of conversation. Martisse's drawing referred to a serious conversation between Sadako and her mother. Bart adopted this tone momentarily but Chris's laughter showed his association of humor to Bart's comments. Bart pressed on until silence ensued then reverted to humor, thus maintaining control of the overall tone of the conversation.

In the few seconds after Bart's comment, silence prevailed in the group. Then Lissa began to relate what she had drawn. Perhaps trying to build on Martisse's drawing, Chris's comment about his grandfather, and Bart's comment that he was not kidding; or on her own frame of mind while drawing, Lissa 's contribution was also serious. Her representation was of the family praying to their dead grandmother.

27	030	Lissa:	Uhm, I drew a picture of them kneeling and praying, / uhm, um praying for for the grandma and stuff.
28	031	Chris:	Why d'you say they're fallin' off the roller coaster?
29		Lissa:	Cause he's sitting here going like this.
30	032	Bart:	They fell off the roller coaster because the bomb hit it, and they hit their head . . .
31		Mondo:	(interrupting) I know. They flew out . . .
32	033	Bart:	(continuing) . . . they hit their head on the metal and their head popped open and that's why they died.
33	034	Mondo:	. . . and they flew out . . .
34		Chris:	(Making a noise like someone falling.) Awww . . .
35		Bart:	(Pretending to be one of the people at the carnival.) I'm dying!

36   Mondo: They thought they were superman. (Book Club
                            Transcript, October 1, 1990)

The interaction surrounding Lissa 's contribution illustrates the domination of certain group members as a slight conflict emerged. Lissa appeared to believe she had the floor to share her drawing since she began by sharing her log entry. On the other hand, Chris seemed to want to continue the previous conversation by apparently ignoring Lissa's comment and interrupting with a question to Bart (line 28) which returned to the earlier "joke" about the bombing of the carnival. Chris seemed to have a delayed response to Bart's comment, questioning Bart's reference to respect, yet laughing at the dead in his drawing. Lissa momentarily thought Chris's question was directed at her, illustrating she thought she had the floor (line 29). However, Bart, understanding Chris's question was for him, answered, maintaining the focus on his drawing. Lissa's ideas were ignored and she fell silent.

Bart, Chris, and Mondo took control of the conversation from Lissa and, as a result, refocused it on the humor they saw in Bart's drawing. They continued to elaborate on the developing narrative they have co-constructed around the notion that the Peace Day Carnival got bombed. The influence of this theme of the bombed carnival became particularly obvious for two reasons. First, Lissa's contribution was ignored. Had all been willing to let members' ideas share the floor equally, the group would have returned to Lissa's topic. If they had, the direction of the conversation might have changed to family relationships. Chris had already stated that his own grandfather had died from leukemia. Given Martisse's comments and Bart's elaboration on the respect the

Japanese give their ancestors, all group members could have focused on the negative effects of war or on family relationships. However, some members of the group, particularly Bart and Chris, persisted in following a humorous tone. The second reason this theme about the bombing of the carnival seemed particularly influential is this was the first time Mondo participated in the interaction. This influence became even more apparent when Mondo took his turn to talk.

37	035	Mondo:	I drew a picture (nervous laugh) the bomb came down, and when they came and started praying to their uhm grandma
38	037	Bart:	(softly) Look at his airplane.
		(Students laugh.)	
39		Martisse:	(laughing) There's the airplane.
40		Mondo:	An a helicopter (Laughter in group and by Mondo) blew a bomb that smelled and all that junk . . .
		(Children laughing)	
41	038	Mondo:	when they were praying, oh man . . . (Mondo sounds flustered)

///

| 42 | 039 | Laura: | Going all the way around? |

What seemed clear from this interaction was the influence of the other boys' drawings on Mondo's contribution. He began with the bombing even though he drew the praying family first, thus reflecting Bart's ability to control Mondo's contribution. At the same time, Mondo's response sounded halting and he appeared frustrated perhaps because he did not know what to say about the plane or because the group responded with laughter to his drawing. Because the

teacher happened to join the group at a pause in the discussion, Mondo never got a chance to continue his explanation. Instead, the teacher inferred the group had finished discussing their representations and suggested they move on to share predictions they had written.

This might have been a potentially pivotal time for Mondo's participation in the group. He was selected for this group because he liked drawing and this could have provided him expert status within the group. However, drawing the plane later, when he had less time, he created a picture the others scorned, undermining the possibility of some status in the group.

Laura's entrance into the discussion was key for two reasons. First, it ended Mondo's turn. He might have further pursued some of his own ideas if he had had time. In addition, Laura's comment seemed to reinforce Martisse's earlier assumption that they should share by going around the circle in round-robin fashion. This could have influenced future discussions if the children interpreted her comment to mean that they should go around the circle as they shared.

A Look at the First Day's Discussion

This first transcript illustrated the three emergent patterns that remained constant for this group. First, two recurrent themes surfaced this first day: (a) the effects of war and (b) interpersonal relationships of the characters. On this first day, students pursued the war theme more diligently, adopting a humorous tone because of the domination of some group members.

Second, the relationship between what they had drawn and what they chose to introduce as topics for conversation were directly related. Every student

began by referring to her/his drawing and creating a narrative around it. A simple relationship could be expected because Laura had asked students to share their drawings. At the same time, a deeper relationship emerged. These drawings and the constructed narratives provided students inroads to the conversation. All participants, except Mondo, remained relatively silent until they had begun interacting over their drawing.

Finally, this transcript illustrated how the children have yet to learn or develop a conversation around every student's ideas. While each began with a narrative about the drawing, no one demonstrated knowledge of how to sustain a conversation related to the presented themes with the one exception of the theme Bart introduced. This is not to suggest they were not capable of doing so. Since Laura had just begun the reading program, this was their first day of instruction on how and what to share. They had not yet had time to learn the new ways to discuss text that Laura was introducing.

Vygotsky (1978) has noted the continued need for children to have language for scaffolding their learning and that the teacher, more experienced than the students, needs to provide language to the learner to facilitate internalization of the new information. Further, Bakhtin (1986) argued that meanings are grounded in social settings and individuals adopted speech genres for these settings. These students, who had had four years of schooling, had already adopted particular meanings and speech genres for interaction in groups both during reading and other times during the day. One day's instruction apparently was not sufficient for students to change adopted patterns.

Individuals within the group, particularly Bart and Chris, dominated the

direction and tone of the discussion. Even though Martisse, Lissa, and Mondo chose more serious topics and Bart's drawing was not in and of itself humorous, the prevalent theme revolved around the humor they found initially in Bart's description of the bombing of the carnival. Particularly influential were Bart's and Chris's attitudes. They seemed to want to: (a) control the conversation by directing it to humorous accounts of war instead of the serious aspects of it, and (b) have their ideas valued.

The musical metaphor of a choir helps illustrate this section of transcript. With such a metaphor, Laura becomes the choir director, responsible for several small choirs. As such, she selects the text each choir will perform, schedules rehearsals, identifies the section of the musical work to be highlighted in practice, and oversees the overall plan for the performance. The students become members of the small choirs, responsible for their rehearsal and performance. This group of students assumed many qualities of such a choir as they prepared for and participated in their Book Clubs.

First, as musicians prepare for a performance, they often practice alone, refining their section of music based on personal interpretation. Like such musicians, the Book Club members prepared by drawing the section of the text they found most interesting. They brought these to the meeting, completed and ready for their performance.

Next, many quality pieces of music consist of several themes, highlighted by particular voices, but complemented by the others. So, too, were the drawings the students created for the discussion. The effects of war and interpersonal relationships were different but, in this case, related themes. A skilled director

provided guidance, but success required a skilled conductor and singers who could have brought these together into one harmonic piece. These students were not yet skilled conductors nor musicians so the themes remained separate.

Finally, several very different voices comprise a choir which, when orchestrated successfully, create one musical selection in unison. Since the students were not yet skilled in this genre of interacting over text, no such unity emerged. Instead two voices controlled the direction, continuing one theme -- the humor they associated with the bombing of the carnival. Bart and Chris seemed to be trying to perform solos or a duet, rather than contributing to an ensemble.

If this Book Club were likened to a choir performing a musical selection, the audience would have heard several voices as each performed, solo, the part they had prepared. Under the guidance of the choir director, Laura, members prepared for and participated in the performance. However, students never wove the introduced themes into the composition nor did they support the other voices. The "group" remained individual performers never coming together as a quintet singing in harmony.

Still the Beginning

The next day, after additional reading, the teacher had children sitting on the area rug by the chart paper which had headings similar to those in the reading log. The purpose of the lesson was to illustrate how to use their logs best. After Laura had modeled various types of entries, she elicited student ideas (for example see pp. 103-108 in Chapter Three).

As students contributed ideas for the easel log, one referred to the section

of the text explaining the Japanese superstition that spiders brought good luck. While Laura was writing this on the log, a small disruption resulted around Bart, Chris, and a few other boys because a spider crawled between them on the rug. At this time, Bart said he would have good luck because the spider was by him. Some of the other boys were leaning back trying to avoid being touched by the spider; one reached out as if to kill it. Laura said to leave it alone and attempted to redirect the boys' attention to the easel. She had to stop two or three times to get their attention back from the spider. Bart never did turn back to the teacher, choosing instead to watch the spider crawl, redirecting its path with his hand. Laura continued eliciting ideas for the easel log.

After this lesson, Laura assigned the next chapter to read and suggested they complete a page in their logs. This log entry directed students to record a section from the book they most wanted to share, relate why, and list additional ideas to talk about in Book Club. After students worked individually for ten or fifteen minutes, Laura directed them to their Book Club groups to discuss their log entries.

Log Entries

All five target students recorded ideas concerning the three reemerging themes in their logs (see Table 4.2). The most prevalent theme about which students chose to write this day related to cultural differences. Bart wrote several lines about superstitions both in Japan and the United States; Lissa and Mondo both were intrigued by the custom of sending candles down the river for the dead. Lissa , along with Chris, also returned to the war theme by indicating they wanted to discuss the bomb again. Only Martisse continued the

TABLE 4.2

Reading Log Entry

LOG PROMPTS:

Question 1: Section from the book that I would like to read to my Book Club group

Question 2: Why do I want to share this with Book Club?

Question 3: Other ideas I'd like to talk about in Book Club.

BART:

Question 1: a spider is a good luck sighn said Sadako oh thats silly said Masahiro spiders dont bring good luck. Just wiat and see said Sadako

Question 2: Because I would like to see if it worked or knot because on the rug a spider walked passed my path so I would like to see if it worked

Question 3: sometimes I believe that if a black cat walked pass your path you have bad luck. and if kill a spider it will rain

MONDO:

Question 1: When the let the candles in the water of there grana

Question 2: becuse that will be nice to do that for there grana.

Question 3: NO

LISSA:

Question 1: paper lanterns, the thunder bolt

Question 2: because it is intrresting

Question 3: I have a book and it says all about atons and the atom bomb

CHRIS:

Question 1: When the Boom drop on masues

Question 2: I would like to find out Whey the did it

Question 3: Whey can't they can't say camrave (carnival)

MARTISSE

Question 1: Pg 15 Sadako ran ahead to her friends house . . .

Question 2: because I like people who are friendly

Question 3: when she runs I like running and being on time

interpersonal relationship theme by indicating she wanted to talk about Sadako

and her friend. Since Laura directed all groups to share their log entries, the

close connection between what students introduced for conversation and their

logs was no surprise.

Discussing Ideas in Reading Logs

When the Book Club discussion began, Chris referred to his log, asking

why Hiroshima was bombed.

1	007	Chris:	Okay, in my Book Club I want to know one reason, why <u>did</u> they drop the bomb on Mashugo, what ever? // Anybody know? ///
2	008	Martisse:	Because,// uhm,/// I don't know.
3	009	Lissa:	Because uhm the people from that city kept coming and killing and killing and crashing their planes into the people from the, from, here.//
4	011	Martisse:	[So
5		Bart:	[Why . . .]
6		Martisse:	[they dropped the bomb on them.]
7	012	Bart:	Why, um, why is // why is the spider good luck if it walks past you, past your path? // Anybody? //
7		Chris:	Well,
8		Bart:	Anybody know?
9	013.5	Martisse:	Maybe they just use that . . .
10		Chris:	Yea, as an excuse in the book.
11	014	Bart:	(Answering his own question.) Or maybe that happened to someone in and something good happened the same day so they said that. (Seems to be agreeing with Martisse and Chris) (Book Club Transcript, October 2, 1990)

Chris indicated he wanted to discuss why Hiroshima was bombed. Initial reactions from Martisse and Lissa demonstrated they did not know why the war began although Lissa's comment (line 5) about "the people from that city kept coming and killing and killing and crashing their planes into the people from . . . here" might illustrate some knowledge about kamikaze pilots' activities during World War II. In general, however, the group seemed to be somewhat stumped by Chris' question, perhaps because it required information not in the text. For some reason, even though Martisse was trying to provide her perspective, Bart interrupted, initiating another theme, drawn from his reading log (see Table 4.2).

As mentioned above, Bart was reminded of this superstition when a spider crawled past him during instruction earlier that day. Instead of selecting something from the second chapter to share, Bart chose to quote the debate between Sadako and Masahiro from the first chapter about spiders being good luck. The tone of his log entry could indicate that in Book Club, Bart would like to have initiated a debate about superstitions. Citing Sadako and Masahiro's argument as a topic for discussion, Bart reasoned that he wanted to see ". . . if it worked." In his final entry that day, he illustrated uncertainty about superstitious beliefs, beginning the sentence with "sometimes . . ." but listing several common superstitions in this country (see Table 4.2). Since this was the only topic Bart had written about in his log, his interest in this cultural belief was clear.

On the other hand, Chris, who was also in the group of boys attracted by the spider, was not as compelled to pursue this topic. Neither were the other members of the group since Martisse continued the meeting by reading what section she wanted to discuss.

12	015	Martisse:	Okay well, well my, I said page page 15 and I wanted to read that to you guys. I said, it said (reading) "When the family started out, the air was already warm and just hung over the busy streets. Sadako ran a head of the house of her best friend Chizuko, the two had had have been friends since kindergarten, Sadako was sure that they would always be as close to pine needles on the same twig."
13	021	Chris:	(Interrupting) I want to know something else.
14		Martisse:	(Continuing) And the reason why I picked that because I like more people that are friendly and they have more friends. (Book Club Transcript, October 2, 1990)

Martisse introduced a section of the text illustrating the close relationship between Sadako and her friend, Chizuko, echoing her primary interest the previous day on the interactions between characters. Again, Martisse seemed attracted to aspects of the character with which she could identify -- first, a fight with her mother, then her feelings about her best friend. Chris interrupted, indicating he wanted to introduce a new idea, but Martisse held the floor by stressing the word "and" louder than Chris until she finished what she had written in her log. The group's value of the written log entry surfaced again since Martisse kept the floor until she had referred to everything written in her log.

As soon as Martisse completed presenting her ideas, the group interaction broke down for several seconds as Chris and Bart engaged in word play.

15	Chris:	I wanna [know
16	Bart:	[I wanna [know
17	Chris:	[I wanna know
18	Bart:	[I wanna [know
19	Chris:	[I wanna [know

| 20 | Bart: | [I wanna know (Book Club Transcript, October 2, 1990) |

Bart "won" this game since he succeeded in getting the floor and returned

to superstitions as a topic. Like a musical selection with a reoccurring theme,

Bart's voice and ideas return to his original introduction. However, Chris quickly

tried to regain the floor by referring to a topic Martisse initiated the previous

day.

| 19 | Bart: | I wanna know // I would like to see if a spider walked past my path was on the rug, the spider walked past my path and I tried to pick it up and I picked it up and dropped it / I let it outside and I wanted to see if it's really good luck |

| 20 | Martisse: | [Cross your path |

| 21 | Bart: | [that's why I put it down. |

| 22 | Chris: | I just, I just wanted to know, why can't they say carnival? |

| 23 | Bart: | They do say carnival. |

| 24 | Chris: | No, why, how come they can't? Just cause their grandmother died there? |

| 25 | Bart: | Yea cause it's speaking with respect. |

/

| 26 | Chris: | Oh I forgot. (Book Club Transcript, October 2, 1990) |

Bart was briefly successful in getting Martisse to contribute to his idea

about the spider, but Chris diverted the conversation, proving successful in

bringing his idea to the forefront. Bart quickly dismissed Chris's question,

though, with a reference to the previous day's conversation about respect. For

several seconds the group remained silent. With both Bart and Chris seemingly

at an impasse, conversation stopped. Then Lissa introduced ideas she had

recorded in her log regarding the atomic bomb.

27	Lissa:	. . . I have a book at home that says that atoms are, are made out of a whole bunch of little things.
28	Mondo:	Nuah. It's a bomb . . .
29	Chris:	It's a bomb that smells . . .
30	Mondo:	It's like gas that . . .
31	Bart:	Ooo gas (laughs)
32	Chris:	That's what my grandfather died from, leukemia.
33	Bart:	It's a kind of gas that's ah / and you can't get it out of your stomach.
34	Martisse:	It's called leukemia, jerk.
35	Chris:	Leukemia? My grandfather died from it. // Something like that. / But see, he didn't die from a gas. / (Book Club Transcript, October 2, 1990)

Lissa began by including information she found in another text, one of her

reference books kept in her desk. Mondo and Chris began contributing

information they had about the bomb, but Bart tried to make a joke, referring to

"gas" and laughing. Chris ignored this, referring to his grandfather as he had the

previous day. Bart seemed to get the message since he contributed more serious

information. Martisse appeared to have lost patience with Bart (line 34) since

she referred to him as a "jerk."

During this brief interaction, the group came together to construct

meaning, four members contributing ideas, but clearly all members attending.

Lissa 's topic, related to the war theme, was the first to get this level of

involvement from the group. However, Lissa's participation was limited to the introduction of the idea since she was silenced by the others. Immediately after this brief exchange, however, the rest of the group also fell silent for several seconds.

The group continued to engage in various topics, questioning lines in the text and discussing references to dying. None of these topics was related to their logs, nor did they sustain group level interactions. Most often, they included two students. For this section of the meeting, the students appeared to be struggling with their inability to decide on a topic for conversation. Finally, Bart returned to the spider topic introduced in his log, this time to a somewhat more receptive audience.

36	Bart:	The other idea is I would like to talk about Book Club. It's at the bottom page. (Hitting his desk.) You know, sometimes I will read if a black cat walks past your path you get [bad luck.
37	Chris:	[Bad luck.
38	Bart:	And if [you squish a . . .
39	Chris:	[And you should go the other way.
40	Lissa:	[Not true because I have a black cat.
41	Bart:	[Yup. And, and if you squish a spider it will rain. (Makes his voice go high and sing-song like)
42	Lissa:	It will not rain because I squished a spider and it didn't rain the next day. (Makes voice like Bart's)
43	Martisse:	I know. It didn't even rain that day. That's just a [superstition.
44	Chris:	[Superstition
45	Lissa:	Well, it rained the day before.

46	Martisse:	Even if you had a black cat cross your path . . .
47	Chris:	No.
48	Bart:	I had bad luck when that happened once, I swear.
49	Chris:	They do say black cats <u>are</u> bad luck.
50	Martisse:	They're not.
51	Lissa:	They aren't, 'cause I [have a black.
52	Bart:	[We're not supposed to be arguing. We're supposed to be saying stuff on the thing. (Sounds angry or frustrated.) (Book Club Transcript, October 2, 1990)

By referring to a topic written in his log, Bart became successful in getting most group members to contribute to his topic of superstitions. For a while, he and Chris seemed to be constructing the same ideas (lines 36-39), but Lissa, seemingly undaunted by previous behavior to silence her, introduced a conflicting idea by producing contradictory evidence (line 40). Bart ignored her, though, and continued his theme (line 41). However, the refrain remained discordant since he seemed to be the only one who accepted traditional beliefs (lines 42-43). Even Chris did not accept the idea that black cats were bad luck (line 44). Bart appeared to become frustrated when he was unable to create a more balanced debate or a harmonic interaction (line 52). As the conductor leading the conversation about his log entry, he dismissed the topic, indicating they should move to another idea. The group appeared to accept this since they did not pursue this any further.

After this interaction about superstitions, the group fell momentarily silent before Lissa introduced a new topic from her log related to the cultural theme.

53		Lissa:	Uhm, I think its neat that they put the the lan, the paper lanterns in the water.
54		Bart:	That, Yea I forgot to tell [you . . .
55		Chris:	[Oh, yeah.
56		Bart:	. . . they put paper lanterns in the water [that's for their grave.
57		Mondo:	[For their grandma.
58		Bart:	Their grave, because on Karate Kid, [the,
59		Mondo:	[Yeah, they done it
60		Bart:	[the Japanese
61		Mondo:	[They done it,
62		Bart:	[and they did that too in the water Karate Kid Part 3.
63		Mondo:	Yea, but they done it around the [circle.
64		Chris:	[a circle.
65		Mondo:	They did it in the ocean.
66		Bart:	A river.
67		Mondo:	A river.
68		Chris:	Yea and they made,
69		Lissa:	[But why did they call the bomb a thunderbolt?
70		Chris:	[and they were like candles.
71		Martisse:	Yea
72	057	Mondo:	Cause what if a thunderbolt hit, 'cause when it lands
73		Bart:	[Listen up.
74		Mondo:	[it makes some thunder.

75   058   Bart: [I'm talking. 'Cause lightening has,// rit . . .
lightening is <u>very high</u> in electricity and so is a bomb.
(Book Club Transcript, October 2, 1990)

Together, Bart, Mondo, and Chris elaborated Lissa's topic. She began with

her own emotional reaction but was again cut off by Bart. The three boys then

contributed their knowledge combined from the book and the movie, <u>Karate Kid</u>.

Bart and Mondo were co-contributors to the body of knowledge about the

Japanese custom. Chris's role was minimal, adding few ideas. Before the boys

had exhausted the topic, though, Lissa asked her question related to another log

entry about the bomb being called a "thunder bolt."

With this, Bart demonstrated his past habit of preferring to dominate.

Immediately after Lissa introduced her question about the thunder bolt, Mondo

tried to answer her, but Bart interrupted, illustrating his desire to stand in center

stage: "Listen up. I'm talking." Bart reacted as he had the previous day by

trying to perform solo, his voice attracting the most attention. At the same time,

this desire to dominate seemed temporary as the group returned to Chris's

original theme about the bombing of Japan. This time, the focus centered

around what they thought happened when an atomic bomb dropped. Bart and

Lissa became co-constructors, taking turns explaining how an atomic bomb

resembled a mushroom.

76   062   Lissa: That's what happened. I saw it in the book the same
story (hitting the desk),

77   Bart: [Yep

78   062   Lissa: [I saw it in my book and it it made
a [mushroom-shaped cloud . . .

79   Bart: [Mushroom-shaped like, like

80		Lissa:	. . . and it killed almost every one around.
81		Bart:	Yup like that. (Moving his hands up, illustrating an explosion.)
82	063	Lissa:	No it goes like this. It goes shh . . . (Moving her hands higher in the air and tracing the form of a mushroom.)
83		Bart:	Yea that's what I did I went like . . . (Moving his hands like before except in a more exaggerated way.)
84		Chris:	When the bomb hit poof!
85	064	Bart:	The bomb could travel. The gas could travel up, cause when the wind, cause when the gas is in the air the wind blows it and it goes to country, to country, to country and they all die. (Book Club Transcript, October 2, 1990)

This conversation illustrated how intrigued the students had become with the notion of the atomic bomb. Like the previous section of transcript, two members together constructed information. This time, Bart and Lissa contributed to the topic for an extended period, each bringing ideas, constructing meaning together. Even though Lissa referred to a book she read at home, neither student demonstrated considerable knowledge about the atomic bomb; however, both contributed to making sense about what happened when the bombs were dropped on Japan. As the conversation continued, Mondo reflected his own values as he challenged the humor in Bart's drawing the previous day.

86	066	Mondo:	But I don't think that's funny what you said yesterday.
87		Bart:	What?
88		Mondo:	When the people who where blowing blown off the roller coaster.
89	067	Bart:	[But they were,

| 90 | | Mondo: | [That's not funny. |

| 91 | | Bart: | [but they <u>were</u> falling off the roller coaster. Where else would they be? Still riding it and having fun when the bomb hit it? |

/

| 92 | 068 | Mondo: | That's still bogue. (Book Club Transcript, October 2, 1990) |

This interaction about the atomic bomb seemed to have given Mondo cause either to rethink his own previous drawing and amusement over Bart's or to gain the confidence to express what he might have felt during the previous conversation. In this interaction, Bart defended his previous position. None of the other children became involved in this discussion between the two boys.

A Look at the Second Book Club Meeting

During this third day of Book Club, the three themes emerged again: (a) the effects of war, (b) the relationships between the characters, and (c) cultural differences. All of the children's selected topics were introduced, but each conversation surrounding the topics was limited. Each student initiated a conversation by referring to log entries. Even though Mondo never introduced a topic, his log entry referred to the same one Lissa initiated -- the custom of sending lit candles down the river. During her comments, he readily joined the conversation. Martisse again raised her interests in the interpersonal relationship when she shared her entry about the friendship between Sadako and Chizuko, but, as before, none of the other group members expressed an interest in pursuing this theme. Thus, though all three themes were introduced, only two continued to emerge throughout this discussion: (a) the effects of war and (b)

cultural differences.

As they had the previous day, each student came to the discussion prepared by completing a written log entry. They appeared ready for a group performance; however, as before, solo performances characterize many sections of the discussion. At the same time, even though these solos were still prevalent, another interaction pattern emerged. Unlike the previous day, the students interacted for slightly longer periods of time over each topic introduced, almost as if Luara's direction was helping them to begin thinking of themselves as one group contributing to a single text. During some sections of this transcript, student voices joined together on the same issue.

In terms of the musical metaphor, as their director, Laura had provided them additional support by delineating what and how to practice in their groups, resulting in their practicing their parts through their log entries and coming to the group thinking they were prepared to perform. While still dominated by soloists, some sections of the ensuing composition reflected two or three voices in unison. Each voice began a new theme. Sometimes the theme was elaborated in harmony; other times it remained distinct or surrounded in discord.

Soloist or Ensemble?

For the next few days, Laura focused instruction on the character of Sadako and the skill of sequencing. As students continued to read and discuss the novel, they became increasingly more sensitive to Sadako's plight. Some of the reading logs seemed to facilitate this. During the intervening week, students continued to read the book, write log entries, and discuss these in Book Club. Writing activities included drawing a character map of Sadako and making a

sequencing chart of major events in the novel. The influence of these activities surfaced as the case study group focused more on Sadako's personality and the events in her life. As students continued to participate in the reading program, they wrestled with how to interact during Book Club meetings. Their written responses reflected Laura's modeling. Children often selected particular aspects of the book or previous conversations they wanted to discuss. However, Book Club meetings continued to reflect the same dilemmas. On two different occasions, students demonstrated their struggles with group processes in somewhat different ways.

Laura decided to incorporate two activities that monitored student comprehension of the book: (a) a character map and (b) a sequencing chart. As students met to discuss these, the change to activities that tested comprehension modified how the students interacted.

Creating and Sharing a Character Map

Since this was the reading program, Laura felt she needed to incorporate the skills and strategies the school district required. After having several open-ended prompts for their logs and Book Clubs, she asked students to create a character map of Sadako, hoping to facilitate student understanding of character development.

Bart drew the most elaborate map, listing things Sadako liked and aspects of her personality (see Figure 4.4). For example, he stated, "she likes the carnival," "she likes to play," "she likes cotton candy," "loves the family," "she likes to run," and "she's sensitive."

Chris's map focused on many events from the novel without relating how
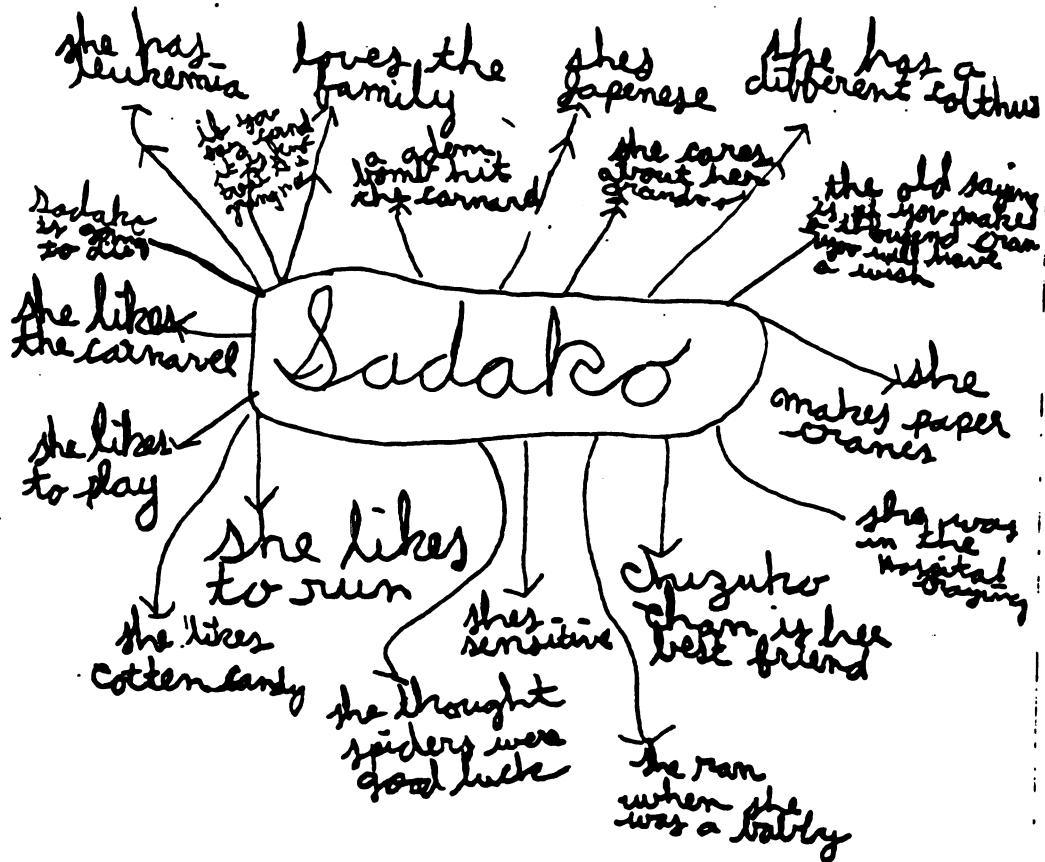
FIGURE 4.4

Bart's Character Map of Sadako

he saw these connected to Sadako (see Figure 4.5). For example, in addition to another reference to the bombing, he related the Japanese superstition about a thousand paper cranes bringing good luck and how a character named Chizuko made paper cranes. At the same time, he included some personal details about Sadako, such as she liked to run, she was in the hospital, she was Japanese, and she contracted leukemia.

Lissa's character map included some of the same ideas as Bart's and Chris's, but also included new elements (see Figure 4.6). Unlike the two boys, she listed many qualities, such as "faithful," "happy," and "helpful." She also chose to draw a heart around Sadako's name instead of the more traditional circle. This heart appeared several times in later drawings related to the novel.

Martisse and Mondo were both absent the day students drew these maps and never included them in their reading logs.

Discussing Their Character Maps

The Book Club meeting to share their character maps was extremely brief. Laura's purpose for Book Club that day was for the students to gain more ideas for their character maps. Field notes recorded little interaction in the group. Laura mentioned that she thought the influential factor was Martisse since Mondo was gone the day before and the group seemed as talkative as normal. I thought the group silence might also be a factor of having two members absent. I did not question Martisse's influence, particularly since she had adopted the role of conductor, but I also thought missing two group members could be a factor.

As the group came together to discuss their drawings, the students
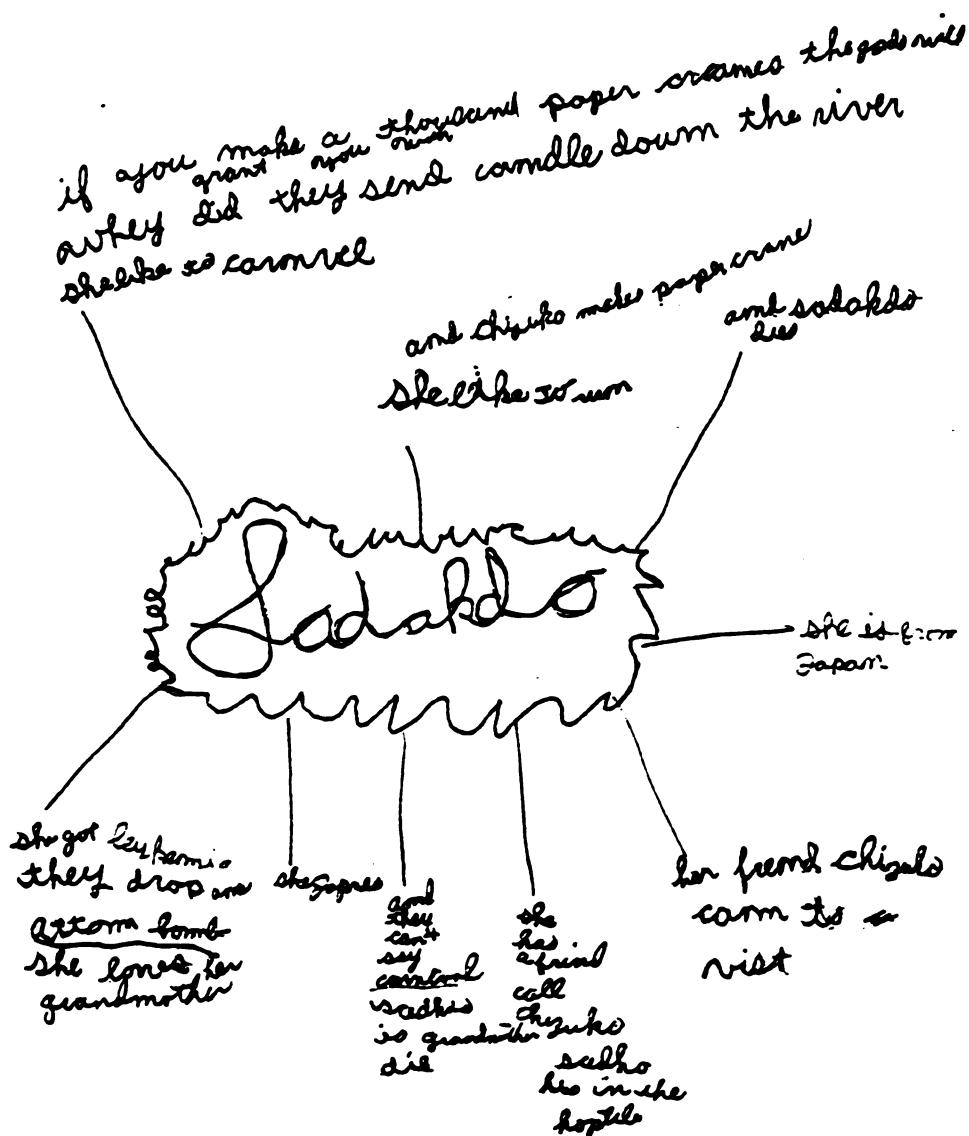
FIGURE 4.5

Chris's Character Map of Sadako

The handwritten character map shows a heart shape with "Sadako" written inside. Around the heart are the words: "Spirit", "helpful loving", "Loved people", "day", "courage", "faithful", "luke", "culture", "belief in gods", "fun", "happy". To the right is written: "if you make thousand Then the gods will grant you'l wish"
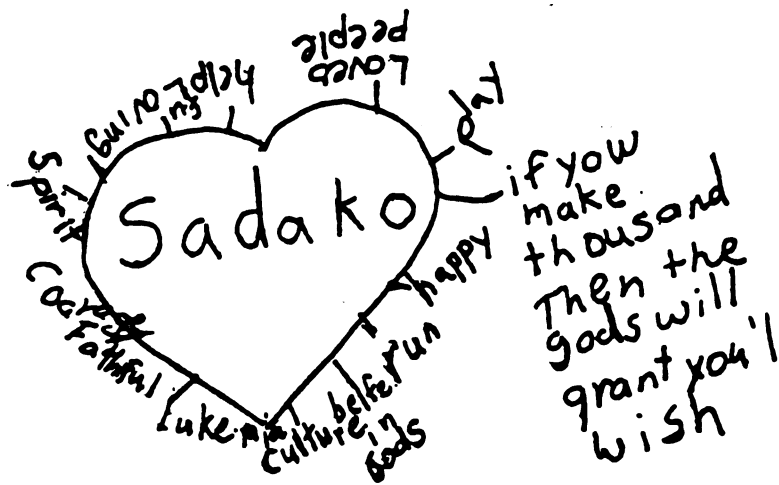
FIGURE 4.6

Lissa's Character Map of Sadako

displayed varied attitudes about sharing their ideas. Field notes revealed that

Chris had added ideas to his log after seeing and hearing what Bart and Lissa

had written.

> Chris is standing up and leaning over his desk toward Bart. Lissa is
> leaning toward Bart and saying, "She likes to run." Chris is leaning
> over on his elbow, looking to his left, not writing or reading. I
> went to sit with this group for a while. Bart was angry because he
> said the others were taking all of his ideas. Lissa contested this,
> asking, "Where do we get our ideas? From the book, right?" I
> interpret this to mean that Lissa saw their ideas as coming from the
> book and, thus, belonged to everyone. I also think this is more of a
> contest between Bart and Chris about the number of ideas each
> had. (Field Notes, October 4, 1990).

In a later conversation, Laura revealed that Chris did indeed seem concerned

that he did not have as many ideas as Bart.

The case study students used this Book Club meeting time to add more

ideas to their maps. Completing the most detailed map became more important

than discussing Sadako's attributes or the key events in her life. At the same

time, sharing ideas created a tension, illustrating the continued dilemma of how

to share the floor. Bart's anger over Chris and Lissa adding elements of his map

to theirs indicated again he preferred performing solo. Even though Laura told

the entire class that they could include any ideas they wanted to from other

group members' charts, he resisted sharing, stating his was the best and Chris and

Lissa were stealing his ideas.

With a similar perspective of wanting the best map but perhaps with less

confidence about his own ideas, Chris appeared willing to pursue getting as many

ideas as he could from Bart's and Lissa's maps. Lissa alone appeared to believe

all ideas came from reading the book, so these were group property. Such

differing perspectives regarding ownership of ideas created conflict.

Identifying Key Events on a Sequence Chart

The next related activity was drawing a sequencing chart of the most interesting events. The charts the five case study students drew echoed the same themes from their discussions: the effects of war and the focus on interpersonal relationships. In addition, they raised questions about the reading abilities of some of the group members.

Bart's chart focused on the war theme and Sadako (see Figure 4.7). Echoing his very first drawing, he began with the bombing of the carnival. His second illustration, the death of the grandmother, like the first, is an integral part of the story of Sadako, but a past event referred to by the characters. Bart's third and fourth drawings capture key events up to the current reading and focus on the interpersonal relationships of the characters as discussed in Book Club meetings. He related Sadako's falling ill, illustrating his growing concern for the main character's problem. His chart demonstrated Bart's growing concern for Sadako and that he appeared to be keeping up with the reading assignments.

Since he did not like to draw, Chris's sequence chart was without illustrations; however, he wrote sentences describing the major events for him and focusing on two recurrent themes: the effects of the war and interpersonal relationships. Like Bart, he began with the bombing of Japan and the grandmother's death but then included two events from the first three chapters (see Figure 4.8). His first comments, like Bart's, focused on the war theme. His third was a restatement of a brief event from the first chapter and his fourth referred to an event bringing Sadako joy. All of his events occurred within the

1 The USa drops a bomb on the fair

their grandm. gets lukema and dies

3 and Sadako gets lukema and they jn the hospital

and Sadako meets Kenjie and kenjie dies
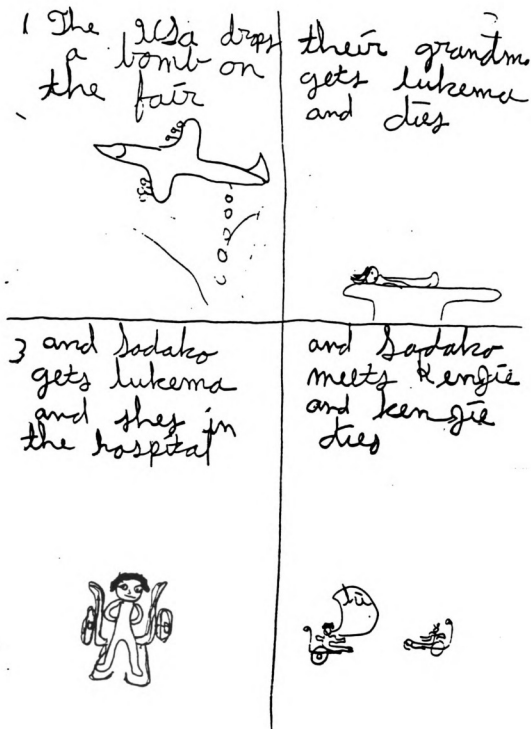
FIGURE 4.7

Bart's Sequence Chart
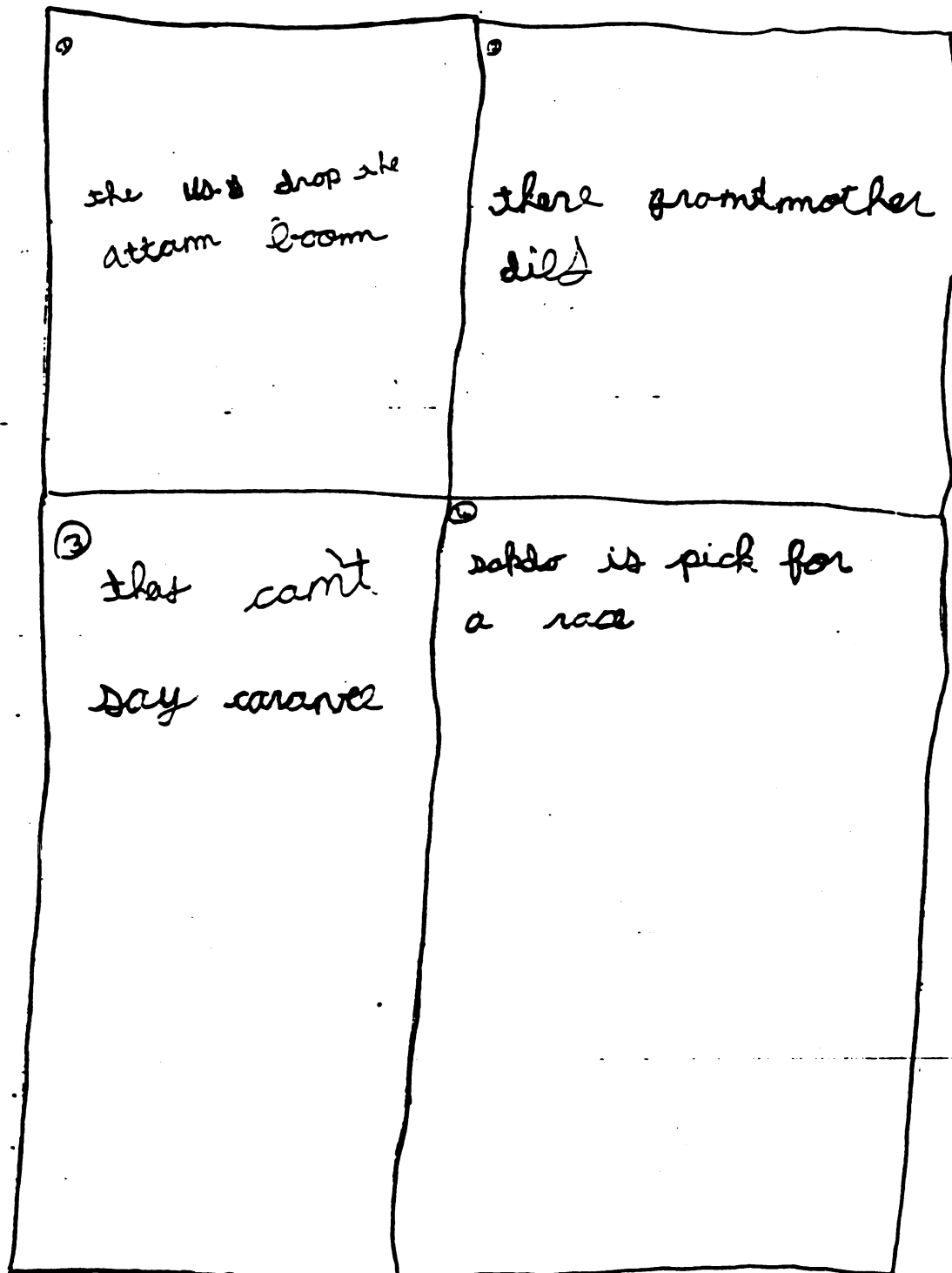
FIGURE 4.8

Chris's Sequence Chart

first three chapters and reflect none of the misfortune that had befallen Sadako.

Chris's selection of events early in the novel requires further discussion. Such a listing was not surprising since the teacher identified him as a slow reader, and he himself confessed a dislike for reading. Also, in a later interview, he admitted to me that he did not always read the books. This information corroborated an observation I recorded in my field notes.

> "Chris asked Martisse what page she was on. When she told him, he opened his book to that page and looked at it. I noticed that while Chris was looking at his book, his eye movement was not like that of someone reading. Instead of looking across the page with brief pauses, he was looking down the page. After glancing at the page for a few seconds, he looked at me. When he returned to the text, his eye movement resembled a reader's -- across the page with brief stops. I wonder whether he is reading or pretending to read."
> (Field Notes, October 2, 1990)

Early in the observational period, I questioned whether Chris was using the allotted time to read. Chris's sequence chart provided additional evidence that he was not always keeping up with the reading; however, this was not the only possible reason for the selections he made.

Another explanation for these selections might be that Chris did not want to discuss what was happening to Sadako. He had related twice that his own grandfather had died from leukemia. Perhaps Sadako's experience was too close to that of his own family.

Martisse demonstrated her own consistent focus on the interpersonal theme, recounting events personally relevant for Sadako (see Figure 4.9). Sadako's selection for the race was very important to her since she enjoyed running and felt honored to be chosen. Martisse had indicated previously both in writing, during Community Share, and in Book Club that she, too, enjoyed

FIGURE 4.9

Martisse's Sequence Chart

running. Martisse's next two illustrations focused on Sadako's illness. The final one echoed one of her preferred topics, the reference to friendship. Her chart illustrated events up to the current reading assignment demonstrating that she was probably able to complete the required reading.

Lissa might have followed Bart's and Chris's lead since her first two illustrations recount the same incidents as theirs (see Figure 4.10); however, this reference to the war theme was also consistent with her earlier log entries. In addition, her next two drawings centered on Sadako and a friend, Kenji, reflecting her other interest in the theme of interpersonal relationships. Like Bart and Martisse, Lissa appeared to be reading her daily assignments with ease.

Mondo's sequencing page demonstrated his own preference for the interpersonal theme since three of his drawings relate such events. At the same time, his chart is even more enlightening since he drew events early in the novel and placed them out of order (see Figure 4.11). One goal Laura had when asking students to sequence events was to test for comprehension of the text. Perhaps Mondo, like Chris, had been unable to keep up with the reading assignments. He had been absent for three consecutive days. Even though his final picture illustrated Sadako in the hospital, an event later in the novel, he might have gleaned this from class and group discussions. His inability to place the events in order indicated a potential lack of comprehension of the text.

As an assignment, the sequencing chart provided Laura with valuable information about students' reading abilities. First, the charts illustrated the themes students were most compelled to discuss. Next, they also gave her a basis upon which to determine who needed further assistance with the reading.
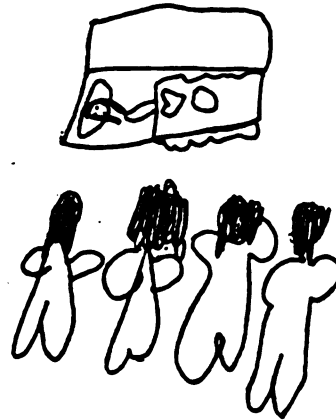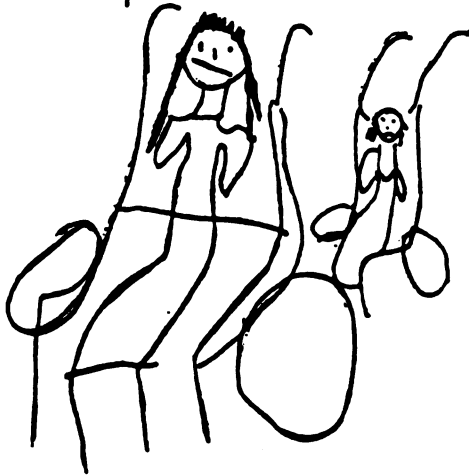
FIGURE 4.10

Lissa's Sequence Chart
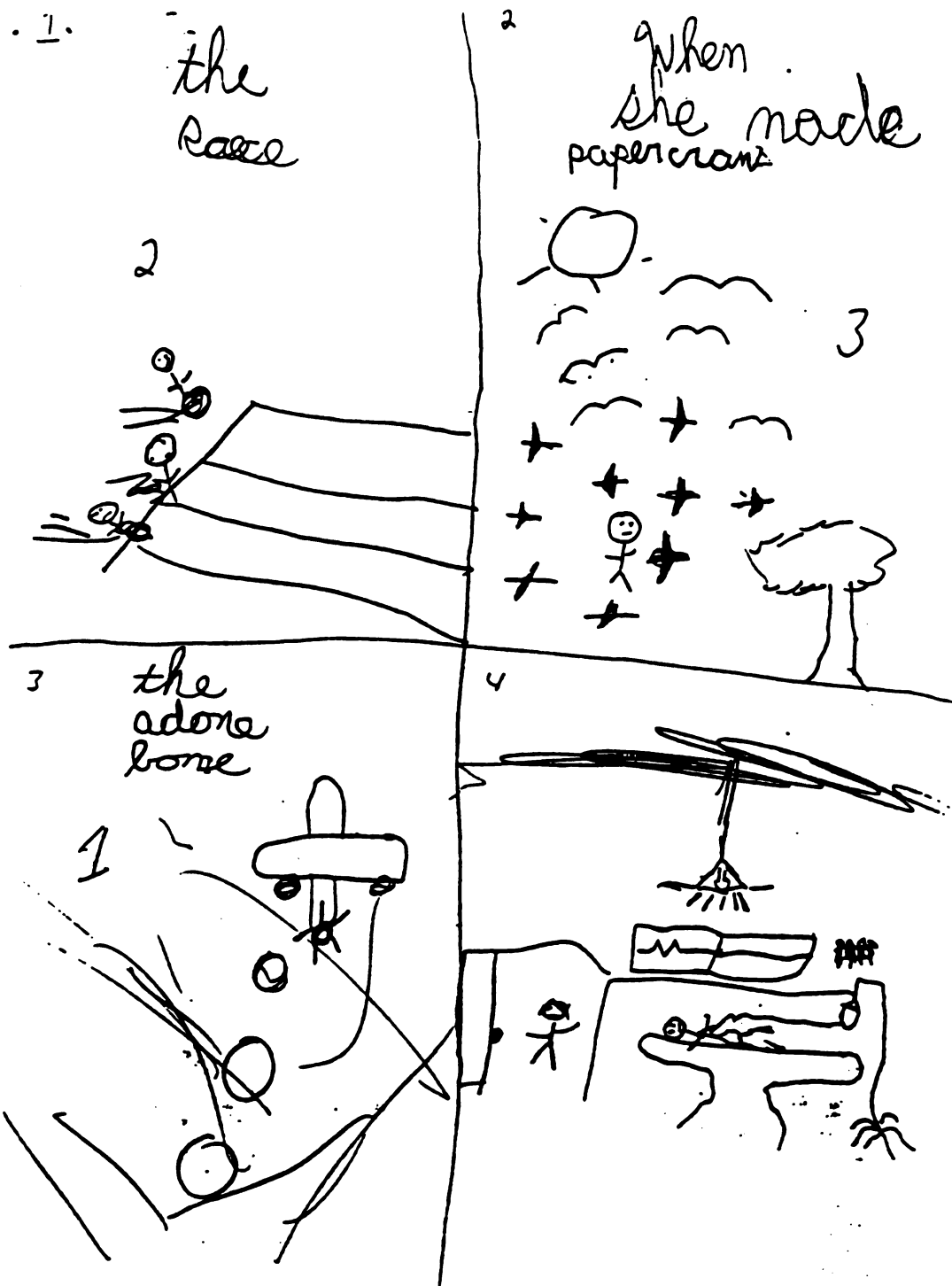
FIGURE 4.11

Mondo's Sequence Chart

Without these charts, Laura might not have had any way to determine who was having difficulty completing the reading since Book Club discussions often included topics of interest to some members, not necessarily topics related to the day's reading assignment and not all members participated in the discussions to the same degree. Therefore, these charts provided valuable information Laura could not have gained through the log prompts and Book Club discussions. The possibility that some of the group members had not read all the assigned chapters helped explain the next Book Club meeting.

Discussing the Sequence Chart

When Book Club met, members had considerable difficulty interacting with one another. Field notes recorded that students were not listening to one another and seemed preoccupied with other things.

> "The group is not talking together. Each one is sharing but the others are not listening. Bart and Mondo are talking together. Martisse is twisting her hair. Then Bart and Lissa are talking while Mondo shares what he drew. Martisse then begins looking at herself in the mirror. Toward the end, Chris and Bart are playing leads."[1] (Field Notes, October 8, 1990)

The transcript revealed that Chris set the overall tone, beginning with a taunting play on the children's names.

1   Chris: Ok Mr. Milky man. What did you write about on [your . . .

2   Bart: [Did you call me, "Milky man"? Cow ham!

---

[1] Playing leads was a game several of the children in this school knew. The game required one student to hold a pencil vertically while another student hit it horizontally with a second pencil. The object was to break one student's pencil. The game was against school rules.

3	Chris:	Milky man. Now Mr. Milky man, what did you write in your journal? I mean not your [journal,

4	Bart:	[Cow ham.

5	Mondo:	Cow ham (laughs).

6	Chris:	Mr. Milky man what did your write in your . . .

7	Bart:	Okay, Mr. Cow ham.

8	Chris:	What did you write Mr. Milky, Mr. Milky . . . Mr. Milkman! / What did you write?

9	Bart:	Well, um I wrote about, ok here's my order. The U.S. drops the bomb on the fair, and I draw an airplane dropping a bomb (Chris snickers) on the fair and they're flying in the air. (Chris laughs) Two, your grandma gets leukemia and dies, I saw him laying on the bed and going like this, and um and she's dead. Three, Sadako gets leukemia and she's in the hospital. I made her in a wheel chair and made her eyes crossed because she was dizzy once in a while. (Chris laughs again) Then I made, and three, four I mean, Sadako meets Kenji and Kenji [dies.

10	Chris:	[Okay, Mr. Mando.

11	Bart:	And then, no, and then, No I'm, I wanna tell you what I drew I saw, I drew, um um Sakadako, Sadako and Kenji, uhm, Shut up, watch! (as if to someone not in the group), and Kenji, speaking to each other and Sadako says, (He read with expression.) "Hi, are you going to die?"

12	Chris:	Ok Mr. Mando, what do you have? (Book Club Transcript, October 8, 1990)

Chris initiated the meeting by "calling on" Bart to begin the discussion.

Despite considerable objections to the name-calling, Bart eventually read his log

but was constantly interrupted by Chris's laughter. Bart's participation was

limited to reading his log, probably because as soon as he finished each section,

Chris directed Mondo to talk, again taunting him with a play on Mondo's name.

This "game" continued throughout the discussion as Chris seemed more interested in his own bantering throughout the conversation than discussing sequence charts. Bart periodically joined in, also constructing names for group members or talking privately with Chris. When Martisse, Lissa or Mondo tried to read what they had, Bart and Chris continued talking. For example, Martisse could not be heard above the noise Chris and Bart were making and her turn was interrupted by an argument between the two boys.

13	Martisse:	(Hard to understand because background noise is too loud) . . . Sadako got ready for the races and she getting dizzy and Sadako . . .
14	Chris:	What? You're writtin'!
15	Bart:	No I'm not.
16	Lissa:	Shhh
17	Bart:	I do not, Chris.
18	Martisse:	. . . has Leukemia and Sadako has (?) and she says, "I have Leukemia" and he says, "I do too."
19	Chris:	Ok Mr. Cavanaugh. / Mrs. Cavanaugh, what do you have?
20	Lissa:	Uhm, I put a bomb dropping on the village and grandma dies and then Sadako meets Kenji, and Kenji dies.
21	Chris:	Well, now, see mine here Mr. Calhoun, let's see . . . (Book Club Transcript, October 8, 1990)

Martisse tried to read what she had written, but could not since Chris directed Lissa to continue. This pattern characterized the discussion as Chris, and to some extent Bart, dominated, keeping the group from interacting over the text. Finally toward the end of Book Club time, Chris and Bart began "playing

leads." The resulting interaction was limited to bantering back and forth between students, summarizing what individuals had written, or no conversation at all.

Unlike some sections of the previous meetings, this entire Book Club consisted of solo performances without any pairs or trios co-constructing meaning from one another's charts. Chris took over the role of conductor for this discussion; however, he only promoted having members read their logs without interaction while he and Bart talked. All of the other group members seemed willing to let him do this since no one was assertive enough to get the conversation on track. Bart did make sure he got to read everything he had written on his sheet but demonstrated no attempt to provide others the same opportunity. As each of them tried to read their logs, Chris interrupted.

A Look Back at the Discussions

On this particular day two unusual events occurred: (a) Chris assumed leadership and (b) the group followed his lead. These combined to create a Book Club in which students seemed unable or unwilling to conduct a conversation from their log entries or the book. These two events might be related; nonetheless, there might be more than one reason for each.

Never before had Chris demonstrated a willingness to assume leadership of the group, nor had the group ever shown a desire to follow him. While his reasons might not be clear, he could have had several potential purposes in assuming leadership. First, Chris might not have read the most recent assignment. Recall that he had indicated he did not like reading and field notes supported that he did not always read during class. In addition, his sequence map included events much earlier in the novel. Therefore, he might have been

behind in his reading, prompting him to control the direction of the conversation to prevent having to divulge that he could not keep up with the assignments.

In addition to the possibility that he was behind, Chris might have had other reasons for wanting "center stage" during Book Club. First, Martisse, clearly a student Chris liked, had been absent the previous day. Laura noted that Chris frequently attempted to get Martisse's attention, and several sections of observational notes recorded this as well. On two occasions, both Chris and Martisse participated in behavior that alluded to their interest in one another.

Field notes recorded their behavior one day while Laura was teaching. "Martisse seems to be distracted by Chris sometimes . . . Laura began reading again. The room became quiet. The book mentioned Sadako's long legs. As Laura read this, Martisse moved her legs out from under the desk as if for Chris to see her long legs." (Field Notes, October 1, 1990) Martisse appeared to be trying to get Chris's attention as Laura was reading the book. The next day, Chris reciprocated in similar behavior.

> "Chris put his foot on Martisse's foot. She brought Laura's
> attention to this. Laura told Chris to stop. He did it again;
> Martisse smiled. This continued as Martisse moved her foot away
> only to put it back again. Chris put his foot on hers until she
> moved it. When she put it in the same place, he put his foot on
> hers. She moved her desk out of the way, but not so far that he
> could not reach. They continue to play 'footsie' for several more
> minutes." (Field Notes, October 2, 1990)

As these instances note, both Martisse and Chris seemed mutually drawn to one another and vied for the other's attention. Since Martisse had been gone, perhaps Chris was attempting to gain her attention through the group discussion. In addition, Laura believed that Chris was competing with other students,

particularly Bart, for Martisse's attention. Perhaps assuming leadership of the group was one way he hoped to gain her attention.

Another reason for Chris's lack of academic focus might have been related to events not connected to this particular Book Club. As already mentioned, Chris had high peer status. Some of the other boys with whom he identified and socialized were beginning to resist the notion that they take responsibility for their Book Club groups, so they stopped participating. Frequently, during instruction, Chris and his friends separated themselves from the rest of the class. For example, one day Laura requested that students sit on the rug in the front. Chris and his friends elected to sit on milk cartons instead, positioning themselves behind the rest of the class. One of the most visible students who did not seem to like this reading program was Leroy, Chris's best friend. Observational data supported Leroy's distaste for the book.

> "As I walked around the room and talked to students, many of them mentioned that they had read the back of the cover and knew what was going to happen to Sadako. When I got to Leroy's group, he was reading another book -- one on poetry. I asked whether he liked Sadako. He said it was okay." (Field Notes, October 2, 1990)

Perhaps Chris was reacting to peer pressure he felt from his friends who did not like Book Club or the book itself. Unlike the other Book Clubs in which his friends participated, this one usually remained engaged in conversations related to the book. Maybe he wanted this group to be as much fun as he perceived the ones in which his friends participated. Any one or all of these reasons might have contributed to Chris's leadership and his apparent desire to divert the group's attention from interacting over their reading logs.

Regardless of Chris's purposes for assuming leadership, the group's

willingness to follow also was unusual. In previous meetings either Bart or Martisse, and sometimes both, provided the group direction. On this particular day, neither asserted themselves by adopting their prior roles. Again, there are two possible explanations: (a) the task and (b) not being prepared.

In terms of the task, this particular activity was grounded totally in the book. The purpose of a sequencing activity was to assure the teacher that students had read and understood the text. While a legitimate activity as a source of valuable information to the teacher, it might have constrained the interactions among the students, having them assume they could only relate events from their book without personal reactions. Feeling bound to the book could have proved difficult for the majority of the Book Club members.

A second, though potentially related, reason for the group's apparent willingness to follow Chris's lead and a lack of interaction over ideas might have been the result of several group members being behind in their reading. As already mentioned, Chris exhibited evidence that he had not completed the most recent assignments. In addition, Mondo had been absent for three days and was very likely behind in his reading, as evidenced by his chart. Martisse's chart indicated that she knew the key events in the class reading assignments, but she had also been absent for one day. She could not have been able to read the most recent assignment, and she had not been present for the previous discussion which might have left her feeling behind and unwilling to contribute. In addition, field notes recorded that both Martisse, as well as Lissa who had not been absent, volunteered in class that they had not completed the previous chapter.

"Laura asked how many students had not yet finished Chapter Six.
Three people, Leroy, Martisse and Lissa indicated they had not.
What about Mondo? He was absent for at least two days last week.
Did he read it on his own? I doubt this since he is a slow reader.
Or did he just not respond? Laura suggested they finish this before
they read on." (Field Notes, October 8, 1990)

Thus, it seemed likely that most of the Book Club members were not

prepared to discuss the most recent assignment. If they were not prepared,

sustaining a conversation that they perceived needed to be text-based could have

appeared impossible, so they followed Chris's lead and simply read what each

had written.

Reader Performance and Assigned Task vs. Interaction

Regardless of the specific reasons that contributed to the lack of

interaction during this particular Book Club, the fragility of the group became

apparent on these two particular days. Each member of the Club brought

individual strengths. While Bart had demonstrated leadership in previous group

meetings, he did not want to share his ideas for the character maps and did not

withstand the pressure from Chris to move quickly through the sequencing charts.

During the mapping Book Club he resisted participation; for the sequencing one,

he was willing to follow the direction Chris chose, once he had related his own

log entry early in the meeting. Martisse, the best reader, had been absent and

unable to catch up with the reading. As a result, she did not adopt her previous

role as conductor, preferring to remain relatively quiet and follow the boys' lead.

Lissa, whose strength was eliciting information from other sources, could not

draw on these since both activities drew directly from the book. Mondo had

already demonstrated an unwillingness or inability to take leadership. The result

was two Book Club meetings in which none of the students engaged in meaningful interaction around the text and their logs. On these two days very little of the students' ideas about the book emerged because of the students' inability to adequately prepare and because of the tasks.

Any choir, no matter how well-prepared, is at the mercy of the written score and under the direction of the conductor. The choir director can select the music, plan and schedule rehearsals, and monitor some of the practice, but she cannot sing for the choir members. If the music does not test the singer's voice to its limits, the sound remains predictable. If the singer does not rehearse, she cannot sing. If any singer chooses to compete instead of share interpretations, the group cannot play harmonic selections. If the conductor of the group chooses to lead the musicians in discord, the same lack of harmony results. The fruit of such endeavors is continued soloist performances combined to create a cacophony of sounds.

Learning More Explicitly How to Interact

After observing several Book Clubs experiencing difficulties similar to those discussed with the target group in the two preceding meetings, Laura began to focus instruction directly on how to interact during Book Club meetings. She helped conduct two very specific activities to facilitate student discussion about interactions.

First, the research team associated with the larger Book Club project modeled effective and ineffective Book Clubs for both classrooms. Each meeting illustrated one or two problems we noticed developing in all the groups. For example, students frequently interrupted one another with topics unrelated to the

one currently on the floor. We modeled such a meeting with several examples of inappropriate interruptions. After each of these, under Laura's direction, students critiqued what the researchers had done as a group. After modeling several ineffective meetings, we conducted one we thought was more effective, again providing students an opportunity for critique.

The second activity consisted of Laura leading discussions around selected printed transcripts of the students' Book Club meetings, identified because of the mixture of both good and poor interaction techniques. Students analyzed these, pointing out where their peers had listened to the previous speaker, had elaborated on the ideas presented, and had developed the topic presented. They also noted times when speakers had interrupted inappropriately or changed topics for no apparent reasons.

Laura hoped both of these activities would help improve Book Club discussions. Since students were still learning this, their interactions in Book Club changed slowly. Therefore, it was not until two weeks later that their interactions were notably enhanced.

Coming Together as an Ensemble

Throughout the next two weeks, students maintained their focus on the novel Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes. They continued to read, record log entries, and discuss their ideas about the final chapters of the novel both in Book Club and Community Share. Not surprisingly, during the ensuing reading all of the children directed their attention to Sadako and her death. This led to their relating more sensitive feelings about the effects of war. After completing the book, students participated in two culminating activities. First, each planned

and wrote a book critique. In addition, Laura set aside a few days for students to prepare and perform a reader's theatre. For this, each Book Club selected a section from the book they wanted to perform. They presented their version of Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes not only to their classmates but also to another class of children. Both of these activities provided the students additional opportunities to revisit ideas from the book. Satisfied that students had had sufficient time to process their reactions to this text, Laura moved the class along to the next two books.

The inclusion of two picture books, Hiroshima No Pika and Faithful Elephants, produced more definite feelings and beliefs about the themes that interested the group. Activities for reading these two books resembled those for Sadako. That is, the students predicted the book's story before reading and responded to their feelings after hearing them read. Their Book Club meetings focused on their log entries. Instruction during this period, however, changed emphasis.

The Activities for Hiroshima, No Pika

As a pre-reading activity for Hiroshima, No Pika Laura had students write in logs what they thought the book would be about. As students wrote, she circulated around the room, showing them the cover. After this, she read the story aloud to the class as they sat on the rug. Then she asked them to return to their seats and write what they were feeling. Members of the class read their logs during Community Share. Time did not provide for a Book Club meeting.

Four of the students made predictions that clearly drew from their reading of Sadako (see Table 4.3). All of them already knew that Hiroshima had been

TABLE 4.3

Original and Revised Predictions for <u>Hiroshima, No Pika</u>

Original Predictions

MONDO: It will promble be about the bom and win she Deis and About the paper cran And the posin that got in to her And when she went to the hospitel.

BART: it Might be about a bomb and some of her family dies like the mother or father and she makes things out of paper and makeing a wish and she might die from a diesease and people start making things for her when she is in the hospital and her hole family might die

LISSA: the story is going to be about the bomb that struck Hiroshima a long time ago and about all the people that dies in it and about how many people died then and what the amercans felt like then

CHRIS: It will be about the attom boom and it will show when the people are dieing and the Book will show the plane that droped the Boom and it will show a big big furnal and it will show how it bloom up the peace and they will pray to all the flams and there people and the americans felt bad after they droped the boom

Revised Predictions

MONDO: I feel sorry for the little girl. And her dad and Mon And her friends I wood pronble be scard of the bon to if I was her

BART: The book is a very sad one. I feel sorry for all the people who died I would knot be able to talk about the bomb if it happend to me

LISSA: I feel very different from the story of sadako

CHRIS: it was kind of sad But way did they droped the boom they did not do eanything to the us that was not fair and I felt sad

bombed and predicted that this book related the event. However, each individual added small details that illustrated a particular interest. Mondo and Bart included the notion that the main character would also make paper cranes. Lissa and Chris added an idea that the book might include how Americans felt after the bombing. Chris also predicted that the book would show a large funeral and the bombing. Martisse was again absent and did not complete her prediction sheet.

After having heard the story and seen the illustrations, all four students expressed remorse for the people who were bombed. Lissa 's comment, perhaps the least enlightening, simply stated she felt "different from the story of Sadako." The three boys went on to include how they would feel in a similar situation. From sad to scared to "knot able to talk about it," they made their feelings clear (see Table 4.3).

Reading and Responding to Faithful Elephants

Reading, writing, and discussing Hiroshima No Pika seemed to have influenced the group when they read and discussed the next book, Faithful Elephants. Before reading the book, Laura again asked students to predict what they thought this picture book would be about by examining the cover. After this, she had them move to the rug. Field notes recorded that this was much like any other day.

> The students get up from their seats and move to the front of the
> room. There is a lot of talking. Laura waits for them to get quiet,
> then reminds them to settle down. All of the children sit in a semi-
> circle around Laura and eventually get quiet. As Laura read the
> book, students became increasingly quiet and still. (Field Notes,
> October 23, 1990)

After Laura had finished reading the story, she asked students to very quietly return to their seats to write down exactly what they were feeling. All of the students seemed subdued.

> As students return to their desks, they looked very serious or sad. Very few children talk to one another. Daniel looks into the video camera and makes a slight face, but he is the only one. (Field Notes, October 23, 1990)

Log entries. Reading the students' log entries illustrated how differently all the children approached the reading of this book and how similarly they felt afterward. Bart connected the previous books to this new one by thinking that this would be about using animals in warfare. He wrote, "It might be about people using animals to fight in war or it could be about using animals weapons like elephants tucks, training them how to use animals weapons to kill shoulders in the war." His response echoed his first drawing, focusing on the weapons of war. Bart had not considered that, like people, animals, too, are victims of war.

After hearing the book read, Bart wrote, "This story was more sad than the one Yesterday if I had elephants I would feed them every day so they would not starve." Bart recorded his sadness that these animals had become victims of war just like the characters in the other books he had read.

Lissa selected a theme similar to her prediction since she assumed the elephants were going to fight with the people. "I think that it is going to be about a war and the Elefants are going to fight with the people." Her notion was that the elephants would join people in battle though she, too, did not seem to consider that animals get hurt. After the story, Lissa wrote very little. "I fell very sad about this story." She had underlined every word in this sentence, perhaps to

emphasize her feelings.

Mondo's ideas about <u>Faithful Elephants</u> seemed to echo Lissa's. He wrote, "I think it's prombabe it go to be About the War ware peopl get killed. And ware Elephants come to the war in one of the time. And thay to kill the people for they can win the war for thay can get to win." Mondo's weak writing skills prevent a clear understanding of what he was trying to say; however, the gist of his prediction seemed to be that elephants will fight in the war and this might help some people to win. After the story, he wrote, "I feell sorry for the janpan and the animals and the Elanphants." Like Bart and Lissa , Mondo felt remorse for the characters in the book.

Chris was the only Book Club member to predict the elephants would be killed. "it is going to be about men killing elefligant and they are going to be people that care for them and if they are goging to crie and they are going to fill Bad and the war men are going to kill." Chris's was the prediction closest to the actual events in the book. After hearing the story he wrote, "I fell sad they did not have to kill them and they could have stop the war they were doing thing (nothing)." Even though he had accurately predicted the death of the elephants, Chris seemed as sad as the other students after hearing the story.

Martisse was again absent from school this day, so her prediction and revision were not available.

<u>Book Club.</u> As their log entries and field notes revealed, students entered their Book Club groups depressed. They seemed shocked that anyone could have killed the innocent elephants. The research team perceived this book as extremely powerful; therefore, not only could the instruction have influenced the

interactional changes in this Book Club, but also the text. At the same time, the

Book Club meeting after hearing <u>Faithful Elephants</u> illustrated how advanced

these students had become in learning how to interact in their group.

1	Bart:	Alright, I-I'm gonna go first; I'm Bart. Um I thought this story was sad, bec, in a way it's, it, the way my feelings are different from the one is that these are animals, y'know, and you don't, and, um, y'see, // people are different from animals, like elephants. I wouldn't make 'em starve and everything. I would keep good track of 'em because if they love 'em so much, why'd they do it? And when they dropped the bomb, it could've been over, and it <u>was</u> over! 'Cuz the war // 'cuz if it wasn't over, the war would still be going on <u>right</u> now in Japan. And I went to Japan. The answer is gone. I went to Tokyo. And everything's rebuilt and everything.
2	Mondo:	I thought it was, I thought it was different. 'Cuz I wrote right here, I thought that they were gonna use the elephants to, for the war, to kill the people.

/////

3	Lissa:	Um, I thought the story was sad, because there's like ten million thousand people in this world ///// but there's not very many elephants or any tigers, and I // and I don't see why they have to kill all the animals.
4	Chris:	Um, well, (clears throat) this is Chris. I think that was bogue killin' those animals, and if they love 'em so much, they shouldn't 'a' killed 'em; they shoulda just wait for the bomb to drop, then let 'em die in peace . . .
5	Lissa:	Yeah.
6	Chris:	. . . instead of starvin' 'em to death. (Book Club Transcript, October 23, 1990)

Unlike all the previous Book Club meetings, this one began with all of the

members sharing what they had written in their logs without interruption. Each

participant got the floor long enough to make an opening statement. Another

difference was that all the members focused on the same theme -- war; not surprising given the power of the book.

As the meeting continued, students pursued further this theme concerning the cruelty of war. During the following interaction, Bart, Mondo, and Chris debate alternatives the zookeepers could have embraced.

| 7 | Lissa: | But they couldn't kill the people, couldn't kill the people. |

| 8 | Chris: | And those dumb folks up in the air coulda stopped that war. Why do they always drop it on the people that know they can't do anything back. |

//

| 9 | Bart: | They shouldn't 'a' put 'em through misery like that. If they really did wanna kill 'em, they shoulda just did it fast, 'cuz they made 'em suffer. And it rea, and it really hurt 'em, I guess. |

| 10 | Mondo: | They should just . . . |

| 11 | Bart: | And I wouldn't like it. And if that happened to them, I betcha they wouldn't like it at all; they would be beggin'. |

| 12 | Mondo: | They shoulda just shoot, shot 'em with the elephant gun. |

| 13 | Chris: | They tried to. |

| 14 | Mondo: | No, but . . . |

| 15 | Chris: | They broke the middle. |

| 16 | Mondo: | No, but a gun. |

| 17 | Bart: | An elephant gun, and shoot 'em. |

| 18 | Mondo: | About, the bullet's about that big. |

| 19 | Bart: | Yep. |

20   Mondo: See what I mean? (Book Club Transcript, October 23, 1990)

Lissa began this section of the conversation by attempting to understand the position of the administrators who decreed that all the dangerous zoo animals be destroyed when she mentioned that people could have been killed. Her comment stimulated an interaction among the boys about how the zoo keepers could have killed the elephants in a more humane way. For the first time, the students were working together to come up with an answer. They did not all agree about the specifics, but they did agree about the goal -- to solve the problem in a more humane way.

As the conversation continued, students demonstrated they could conduct such interactions, but they also illustrated when they got so excited over a topic, they talked at the same time, ignoring one another's input. In the following section, Bart was explaining his original prediction. Chris got a new idea while Bart was talking and wanted the floor immediately. For a short period of time, they were both talking, continuing their own line of thought. Mondo, too, got an idea he wanted to share, but instead of talking with them, kept trying to find an opening in the conversation. Both of the other two boys were so interested in what they were saying, they never provided Mondo an opening.

21   Bart: I thought they were gonna kill the, um, elephants and take the tusks, 'cuz that's what they always do to get money. People in the world // some people are just sick, and they just, they just care about money, they don't even care about other animals; they don't care about their feelings.

/

22   Chris: Oh, yeah somethin' . . .

23	Bart:	They just care about money.

24	Chris:	. . . when they was killin' those elephants . . .

25	Bart:	All they want is money.

26   Chris: . . . while they was killin' those elephants, they were wasting food. ///// Either way they go, they were gonna die, but they didn't have to make them suffer.

27   Mondo: Well, they co, they couldn't, 'cuz they, They coulda lived.

28   Chris: Either way, they're gonna die. If they woulda lived longer, they were gonna die from radiation sickness.

29   Mondo: But there wasn't, They didn't drop a . . .

30   Bart: (The first part of his statement cannot be heard) radiation, 'cuz that wasn't the bomb. It was regular old bombs they dropped.

31   Mondo: But they coulda left them to destroy. They coulda . . .

32   Bart: They _were_ close; they coulda got radiation.

33   Mondo: They could have.

34   Chris: Or they could've got burnt to death.

35   Bart: Yeah. Just like the chemical. (Book Club Transcript, October 23, 1990)

The conversation here resembled that among a family at a dinner table, no idea emerging as the prevalent one and many members talking at the same time (see Shultz, Florio, & Erickson, 1982). No one person had the floor alone, and yet there was a sense that each child heard what the other said. Eventually, all three came together, joining in on one topic (lines 28-35).

Singers Improve with Further Practice

After several lessons about how to interact in Book Club and several meetings to practice with one another, this group seemed to have made significant progress as evidenced by this section of transcript. Further, they seemed to understand more explicitly what participation in Book Club required. At one point during the conversation, Bart became nervous because he thought they had gotten off the subject. The conversation had focused on old people dying. While an adult might see the connections between their discussion and topics related to both Sadako and Hiroshima, No Pika, Bart thought they were talking about a topic not related to the current book. Because of this, he pointed out what he thought they needed to do to be a good group. He stated, "Let's get with the story. We're tryin' to get off; we're gettin' off base, talking about our grandma dying . . . We wanna be a good group, we gotta get every detail." For the first time, Bart explicitly stated what he thought the group should be doing.

This Book Club meeting finally adopted the qualities of a choir working together to create one musical selection. The efforts of the choir director seemed evident since, even though each member had prepared for the meeting somewhat differently, when they came together, each voice joined the others as they constructed in harmony.

While this one transcript illustrated the group had made progress, further evidence was needed. This was only one meeting and it was video taped. While the camera was a regular fixture in the classroom by this time, this was one of the few times the camera was focused on one group for an extended period of time. Further proof was needed that this was not just a performance for the

camera by audio taping a meeting that was not also being video taped.

Almost one week later, the students engaged in another activity that required them to synthesize the three books they had read so far. During the intervening days, the students had been working on several synthesis activities connected to the three books. The Book Club meeting in which they discussed their final written paper, synthesizing a major theme across books, reinforced that the group had indeed learned to interact together.

<div align="center">An Ensemble with Discordant Tones</div>

After the class had read both picture books, Hiroshima, No Pika and Faithful Elephants, Laura again provided them with opportunities for culminating activities. First, the students planned and wrote an essay comparing and contrasting any elements of the two books in which they were most interested. In addition, a Japanese-American community member skilled in origami visited the classroom. While there, she spent two hours, teaching the children to make paper cranes and discussing what happened to her family during the bombing. Students then estimated how long it would take them to make 1,000 paper cranes and decided to make them and send them to the Japanese Peace Park.

The third and culminating activity for this section of the unit asked students to discuss themes common to all three books, decide on one, then plan and write a paper synthesizing this theme across texts. One aspect of this included students meeting in Book Clubs to share their ideas. During this Book Club interaction, the progress the group had made toward working together became apparent. In addition, their focus illustrated how deeply concerned the children had become with the issues surrounding war. Perhaps the fact that the

United States was then verging on war with Iraq influenced this; nonetheless,

their interest and emotional involvement was strong.

<u>Synthesizing Themes: A Book Club One Week Later</u>

Martisse had regained her position as conductor, calling on Bart to begin.

With his opening statement, Bart appeared to be pursuing the theme of the

effects of war on innocents.

1		Martisse:	Bart. (As if calling on him to speak.)
2		Bart:	I wrote, / "It is innocent people dying."
3	004	Martisse:	I wrote about innocent dying too. // And // and I wrote/ I wrote about like the elephant got killed of the bomb but / the the zoo keeper tried to help but he couldn't, so /// and they die anyway. The end.
4		Mondo:	[They
5	008	Bart:	[I didn't I didn't write about that.
6		Mondo:	[They
7		Bart:	[I wrote about people trying to live.
8	009	Mondo:	They should have took the elephants (?) too.
9		Chris:	[They shoulda just . . .
10		Martisse:	[I wrote that too. Like a different order. (Book Club Transcript, October 29, 1990)

Martisse seemed to think Bart was introducing the topic of the effects of

war on innocent people since she elaborated her log entry detailing this theme.

Bart protested her notion, however, saying he had written about people trying to

survive (line 7). His comment might illustrate Bart's desire to change the focus

from the negative effects of war to a discussion of survival. Combined with his

demonstrated sensitivity toward Sadako and her death, this helped reveal Bart's developing response that war hurts people.

Mondo attempted to gain the floor, but, as in previous interactions, he was overridden. Chris, too, tried to change the topic, but Martisse maintained her right to the floor since she and Bart had begun this topic and had not yet finished. It was not until a pause indicating their discussion was completed that Bart proceeded to one of the other recurrent themes -- Japanese culture. Even though he read his entry, Chris demonstrated the group's lost interest in this topic by initiating a new one regarding the reasons for war. This issue prompted an extended conversation, involving all group members, about the dilemmas surrounding warfare.

17	011	Bart:	I wrote about survival <u>too</u> //// and I wrote about Japanese. I was speaking about Japanese people and their culture. That's what I was really thinking about. But I wrote . . . (unclear Chris talking but too softly) I know, I know but I was thinking, if you can't bomb Americans,
18	014	Chris:	It's war. They bombed us and we bombed 'em back.
19	018	Bart:	I know, but still.
20		Chris:	(Says something, the tape doesn't pick up.)
21		Lissa:	Yeah, / but the Americans had the the war.
22		Bart:	Yeah, but if Japan bombs uhm a part that's not uhm, if Japan this part we don't have the right to go back and bomb them. Two wrongs don't make a right.
23		Chris:	Japan bombed Pearl Harbor.
24		Bart:	I know, but still,
25		Chris:	Americans had to go bomb them back.

26	019	Bart:	It doesn't make sense to go back and bomb them. That's like President Bush //
27		Child:	(Someone outside the group says something to Bart, but the tape doesn't pick it up.
28		Bart:	(As if to someone outside the group) Wait. (Then as if to the group) I know. He gets a mistake, like really uhm / if they if they make a move on us, we have a war. Two wrongs don't make a right. That's wrong. / I would saying / run me over, if they do something . . .

//

29	022	Martisse:	Bomb them back.
30		Lissa:	No!
31	023	Bart:	No! Just <u>leave</u>, leave it. [Just leave.
32		Lissa:	[Let it be. (Book Club Transcript, October 23, 1990)

The interaction pitted Chris and Martisse against Bart and Lissa about what leaders should do when confronted with differing views. Bart's voice was the loudest and his argument the longest, indicating his interest in the topic. Even when someone outside the group tried to get his attention (lines 27-28), Bart maintained his focus. Despite Bart's apparent dominance, the others contributed ideas as well. Chris was unusually soft-spoken as evidenced by the loss of some of his ideas because the tape recorder did not pick up his voice. This might have been because the debate had set him on the side opposite Bart, his best friend in the group. Nonetheless, he maintained his position, arguing that when wronged, a nation must fight back.

As the conversation continued, students seemed momentarily confused about the direction to follow. Mondo's comment may have contributed to this.

33		Bart:	If they keep on doing it we'll have to do somethin' about it.
34	024	Mondo:	Well, they're just killin' our guys.
35	024	Bart:	What about these American people there too ha? There <u>are</u> American people there. So if we bomb em . . .
36	025	Martisse:	Bomb yourself.
37	025.5	Bart:	I'll do it. He might let go. And let him take over 'cause it's got nothing to do with us.
38		Martisse:	Because we are . . .
///		(Silence in the group.)	
39		Bart:	We're talkin' about the bomb.
40		Martisse:	Yeah.

//

(Book Club Transcript, October 23, 1990)

Mondo's opening comment placed the discussion in the present. With the then current world situation in the Gulf, it was unclear whether he had identified the situation in the books during World War II with the contemporary conflict. Bart's response was also vague, using present tense. Whether the students were beginning a discussion of the current War in the Gulf or maintaining their previous conversation about World War II was unclear. Martisse seemed momentarily stumped since she seemed to have lost her train of thought (lines 38-40). After this, several seconds of silence elapsed.

Martisse broke the resulting silence by submitting the theme of the personal consequences of war. At the same time, Bart indicated he preferred pursuing the theme of the morality of war.

44	031	Martisse:	Well I wrote like Sadako, I wrote Sadako she she got the bomb, the disease and didn't hardly know it. She had it for a while but then just sprung up on her. Then she had //// she tried to fight, and make them them ah paper cranes, but she didn't make enough and then it didn't work.
45	034	Bart:	I wrote [about
46		Martisse:	[Then,
47		Bart:	[when the bomb radiation hit. When the bomb hit, when that bomb hit, America had no right to do that. I don't think they shoulda done that. 'Cause how would they like it if _we_ went and bombed them.
48	036.5	Martisse:	Radiation
49	036.5	Bart:	[Radiation
50	036.5	Martisse:	[killed a lot of people.
51	037	Bart:	[killed a lot of people. How would they like it? They wouldn't like it _one_ bit. They would get mad and go do it again. They had no right to do it. (Book Club Transcript, October 23, 1990)

Even though Bart had interrupted her, Martisse joined in the very rapid interchange on the issue of the effects of radiation. This led to Lissa's entrance into the conversation with questions regarding how the United States became involved in the war. The children's lack of understanding about the reasons for World War II became apparent with Lissa's question. None of the students seemed to know the events that led up to the war. Bart's own reasoning led to his explanation that "Pearl Harbor probably did something to Japan." He demonstrated his own logic that Japan was seeking retribution. Lissa's next question about letting them fight illustrated her lack of knowledge that Pearl

Harbor was part of the United States. None of the children seemed to know this.

53	038.5	Lissa:	That's interesting because why would they, why would they, everyone knows //
54	040	Bart:	Why but did Japan bomb Pearl Harbor for nothing?
55		Lissa:	Yeah.
56		Bart:	Because Pearl Harbor probably did something to Japan.
57	041	Lissa:	Yeah, but then, why don't why didn't American just leave them alone and just let them fight because they're the ones who started it, you know? They're the ones that . . .
58		Bart:	That's what I was saying
59		Martisse:	[Hiroshim . . .
60	042	Bart:	[they're stupid. This world is sick.
61	042.5	Martisse:	Just like Hiroshima, No Pika. Like the husband and the wife and the child. They had to run and run and run and run away from that fire and then they got to the river and the fire trucks came and tried to put out some of the fire and den // and den they, uhm

////

| 62 | 046 | Bart: | Anthony has a crush on Martisse. |
| 63 | 046 | Martisse: | . . . they took the husband to the uhm hospital and then the husband he probably died. (Book Club Transcript, October 23, 1990) |

As Lissa and Bart wrestled with issues surrounding the U.S. involvement in the war, Martisse found an opening to include information she cared about. As the other two discussed the insanity of war, Martisse described the most frightening scene from Hiroshima, No Pika when the family ran to escape the fire

storm. This statement illustrated how the various themes students had been discussing all month were finally coming together. War affects people and their relationships. While Chris, Lissa, and Bart had frequently wanted to pursue the war theme, Martisse had been more interested in the interpersonal relationships. In this one statement, Martisse brings both themes together. This family must pull together to survive the effects of the war. Even Bart's comment about another student's interest in her did not prevent Martisse from completing her idea (line 62).

When Martisse had finished her idea, the group remained silent for a brief period. Then Bart returned to another related aspect of the war theme by mentioning the events in <u>Faithful Elephants</u>. This prompted the group's final topic of the day, the injustice of war.

1		Bart:	I, the topic I wanna share about is the elephants getting no food. The elephants were innocent. They didn't do <u>one</u> thing. The elephants, they didn't do <u>one</u> thing. They were innocent. If the zoo keepers loved them so much, why'd they have to put them to sleep?
65	056	Lissa:	Yeah, but.
66		Bart:	Why?
67	057	Lissa:	Uhm, they said the two elephants were cute. How come they had to kill 'em?

////

68	058	Bart:	The bomb didn't even hit.
69	058	Mondo:	The war was going to be over.
70	058.5	Bart:	The war is over now, right?
71	059	Martisse:	They coulda took the elephants . . .

72	059.5	Bart:	The elephants could have been alive right?
73		Lissa:	Yeah.
74	060	Bart:	They they could've been happy. And I betchu, I betchu that bomb didn't hit, I betchu that bomb didn't even hit that zoo.
75	060.5	Lissa:	There was a whole bunch of little bombs, [you know.
76		Mondo:	[They, they coulda [put
77	061	Lissa:	[How come Hiroshima had to get them big ole bombs and then, uhm, Tokyo had those little ones? (Book Club Transcript, October 23, 1990)

For this final topic, four of the five group members contributed as they tried to understand the injustice the elephants suffered. In many ways the three themes that were separate and distinct at the beginning of the unit had come together as the students wrestled with these difficult issues. War was the reason the zookeepers had to destroy the elephants, yet they cared deeply for the elephants who were like dear friends, known for years. In Japan during World War II, resources were extremely limited and the zookeepers did not have access to the elaborate equipment they would today under the same circumstances. The Japanese culture during the 1940s differed significantly from that of the United States then or now. The technology these students took for granted did not exist. They struggled with the possibility that there was perhaps no better alternative. Thus, the student's interest in the themes of the effects of war, relationships among people, and cultural differences all merge to varying degrees in this last discussion. Like a choir, their voices joined together in harmony, contributing to general themes.

From Soloists to Choir

At the beginning of the academic year, these five students first participated daily in instruction and small group discussions around the texts they read. Provided with Laura's continued modeling, explicit instruction, support, and sufficient opportunities for practice, they learned to interact as one group. Working as an ensemble, they were able to unite the three themes that resurfaced in all of their written and oral texts. Also, they came to value their log entries as keys to entering the conversation. Through continued preparation and practice, they established ways to come together as a group interacting over similar, related ideas.

As the unit continued with another novel set during World War II, Laura decided to adjust the Book Club membership and the instructional focus. As these five students separated to contribute to two other Book Clubs and as the log activities changed, new patterns emerged. This change is the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

CONSTRUCTING MEANING WITH A DIFFERENT GROUP: RETURNING TO OLD DEFINITIONS

When the class had completed <u>Hiroshima, No Pika</u> and <u>Faithful Elephants,</u> Laura made several decisions that influenced the course of subsequent Book Club interactions. First, some groups did not seem to be progressing in their interactions as well as others. Laura's decision to reconstitute groups, attempting to find a better student mix, resulted in the separation of the target students into two new groups. Bart, Martisse, and Lissa remained together, joining Anthony and Roger. Chris and Mondo joined Leroy, Natashia, and Nora.

A second change, related to increased demands on Laura's time, took her from the classroom. In the weeks from the beginning of November until Christmas, Laura was scheduled for several professional functions outside class for an average of once a week. From previous experience she knew her class worked best with very specific directions. In the past, more open-ended activities requiring student-initiated responsibility had frequently failed when she was not there. Thus, Laura decided to plan lessons that a substitute teacher could implement successfully.

Finally, the third book, <u>Number the Stars</u>,[1] [2] required additional adjustments. Laura had selected the book to continue the war theme that had intrigued so many students, but also to provide a change in setting and to build on interpersonal relationships among characters, another interest of many students. However, the change in setting from Japan to Europe focusing on the Nazi occupation of Denmark required students to formulate information about a different country -- its customs, the people, and the reactions to the War.

All three of these conditions influenced the context in which the students read and interacted, with groups adjusting to the new instructional focus, new content, and new group members and their interests. This chapter describes these adjustments as they affected the five target students. It includes a description of the instruction, focusing on the dilemmas Laura confronted and the related changes; descriptions of the other students who, together with the target students, constituted the new groups; and a description of the two groups as they interacted over the book <u>Number the Stars.</u>

<u>Instructional Focus</u>

As previously mentioned, Laura decided that providing substitute teachers with very specific assignments not only eased their job while she was gone, but also insured that students would accomplish their assignments. Open-ended

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[1] This book is also set during World War II, except instead of Japan, it is set in Denmark after the Nazi occupation. The story relates how one family, particularly one of the young daughters, helps their Jewish friends escape the Nazis.

[2] Laura selected this book for three reasons. First, the Gulf War was in the news every night and students had become interested in the topic of war. Second, she had read the book, enjoyed it, and thought the students would like it as well. Finally, she knew the book had won an award, so she knew it was well-written.

questions or less-structured activities often left the substitute floundering. This section of the chapter focuses on Laura's dilemma that resulted from her need to miss several days of school, describing student behaviors when she was gone and explaining how she managed instruction as a result. It begins by providing a description of the classroom climate as I observed a day with a substitute teacher. My observations were recorded after my visit to the classroom.

> On this day, I had arranged to visit the room to interview Bart. As I entered in early afternoon, students were not in their usual seats; in fact several were not in seats at all. Some were seated on the rug; others were sitting on desk tops or standing. Some students, including the target group, had their math books open, but none seemed to be reading their books nor did they appear to be writing math problems. Anthony, Jim, Leroy, and Chris, all had straws with straight pins sticking out of one end. Jim had attached a pinwheel to his and was sitting on a desk blowing on it.
>
> I looked around the room and saw a very short woman writing math problems on the board. She appeared to be talking, but I could not hear her above the noise of the students. As I approached her, I could hear that she was explaining a math problem. She turned as I came closer. After explaining who I was, I asked whether I could take Bart for an interview. She agreed he could leave. I approached Bart and noticed that Anthony and Jim were throwing straight pins at one another. I went up to them, told them this was dangerous, and requested their straws and pins. After minimal protest, the boys gave them to me. I then went up to Bart and asked him to come with me. As we left the room, the noise level remained very high.
>
> After fifteen or twenty minutes, Bart and I returned to the room. The substitute teacher was standing at Laura's desk, correcting papers. At this time, several children were playing games on the rug. Some were still sitting on desks and others were standing on their seats. Anthony and Jim had acquired new straws and straight pins. As I approached the substitute, she seemed nervous. She explained that "a woman" had said the class had been too disruptive during music that morning so they had lost the afternoon recess. The class had given her so much trouble about the loss of their play time that she decided to let them play games in the room for the rest of the day.

I tried to assure her that I was not employed by the district so she did not have to explain her actions to me. However, I told her that the boys were getting straws and straight pins from somewhere and that this was potentially very dangerous. She agreed and stated she would find out what was going on. I then left the room for the day.

As these notes indicated, students seemed to take control when Laura was gone. While this seemed to be a particularly bad day, it was not unusual. I observed several substitute teachers over the course of the semester and found that most were unable to manage the students successfully. Often, members of the class were sent to a corner or to the hall. Substitutes who tried to teach reading were often delayed by student tactics to get attention and seldom completed the total lesson. In addition to my observations, both substitute teachers and other building teachers reported negative student behavior to Laura when she returned. Laura came to dread leaving her class for any reason since she always had to sort out the previous days' events when she returned. Such conditions led Laura to wrestle over reading instruction while she was gone. Confronting the problem of what to do when she could not be there to teach her class created a serious dilemma for Laura regarding reading instruction. The reading program was clear to her. She understood and supported the role of interaction, reading, and writing in student learning. She valued these components, including them in her plans each day. At the same time, she also knew that substitute teachers had very different experiences when teaching reading. They did not always understand the role of the groups nor the integration of reading and writing. Further, students did not cooperate to facilitate the substitute teacher's job. Each time Laura had to plan instruction while she was to be away, she weighed the complexity of the reading program as

taught by a novice against a more traditional lesson which might result in a more orderly class. The more order the substitute could maintain, the more likely students would learn while Laura was away. As Lampert (1985) has articulated, teachers do not solve problems; they manage dilemmas. Laura could not solve this problem; she could only find ways to manage it.

In managing her dilemma, Laura's decisions reflected her best answer for providing quality instruction and a safe classroom environment. During the previous section of the unit, she thought groups did better when they had a more structured activity. In a memo to me, Laura wrote:

> The Book Clubs were best when the groups were given very structured activities, such as the character map or sequencing. When they were free to write in their logs, according to the logs, they wrote less and had more trouble staying on task with their Book Club. Many children did not complete all sections of their logs each day. (Memo, October 21, 1990).

At Laura's request, we changed the logs to include lined pages with no specific prompts, but unlined pages for student representations remained. These enabled Laura the flexibility of deciding the prompt based on whether she or a substitute was teaching.

As a result of Laura's concerns and observations of the total class, instruction and log entries began concentrating more on the reading skills and strategies as outlined in the district's reading curriculum guide for fifth grade, primarily the act of making and revising predictions. In addition, Laura left substitute teacher's plans for reading that resembled more traditional reading lessons. For example, students often read sections of their Weekly Reader and answered comprehension questions since Laura's experience had taught her that

answered comprehension questions since Laura's experience had taught her that substitute teachers seemed better equipped to teach such lessons and students responded more cooperatively.

Laura discovered that stressing reading skills was not enough to insure continuity throughout her absences, so she also asked the school to assign the same substitute teacher to her class. Since the majority of her absences were planned, professional activities which facilitated advanced notice, the building principal agreed to hire the same substitute whenever possible. One man was hired for several of Laura's planned absences. Once he had been assigned, Laura asked me to model a reading lesson for him on a day he was hired to work in her room, with the idea that he could then be in a better position to orchestrate Book Club more easily.

As a result of the number of substitute teachers, the behavior of the children, the focus on reading skills, and the interruptions inherent during the weeks prior to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, the content of this section of the literature unit on World War II differed significantly from that of the first section. For example, when the class began discussing Japan, they read, wrote, and discussed the books each day. During the first two weeks of the section focusing on Europe, the children read and discussed Number the Stars only four times (see Appendix E). Three days within the third and fourth weeks, the children read a story related to the Pilgrims and the establishment of Thanksgiving. Not until November 28 did the students have several consecutive days in which they read, wrote, and discussed the book. The interruptions students experienced as they began reading the book included: (a) several

grading period and parent-teacher conferences.

Meeting Together in New Groups

The second change, reconstituting the groups, evolved after Laura

observed her class interact in Book Clubs for approximately five weeks. Some

groups had successful Book Club interactions. Like the target group, they had

come together as a group and were cooperatively working to understand text.

Other groups were less successful. Even with the increased instructional focus on

how to interact, these students had remained dependent on Laura's intervention

before they would begin or were often unable to maintain a focus. Laura wrote

the following note to me as we began thinking about the instruction for Number

the Stars.

> The selection of groups still bothers me. Why do some groups
> work well together and seem to stay on task, while others struggle
> to have any discussions? I'd like to work out new groups for the
> next unit -- yet I'm unsure how to go about doing this. Often in
> the work place, groups don't work out either. Is this something
> children need to experience? . . . I'm thinking of Chris and Leroy
> and maybe putting them together for the next unit. (Memo,
> October 21, 1990).

My response was the following note:

> The group interaction is a problem that frustrates me, too. I watch
> each group to try to determine what is working in some and why it
> doesn't carry over to the others. This is where I feel I am letting
> you down. I feel like I should have some answers for you but I
> don't. Taffy and I have talked and we have kicked around some
> ideas, but we really need a staff meeting to talk about it. We have
> discussed structuring the discussion more. For example, have one
> student begin and have all the others listen for an idea they agree
> with and/or one they disagree with. Then when the next student
> talks, she/he must build on what the previous student has said.
> (Taffy said Debbie tried something like this with the total group on
> Tuesday this week and it seemed to work.) Another possibility is to
> do more modeling in large group of the kind of conversations we
> would like. We could tape more, but I'm not sure that would

change anything with some groups (I'm thinking of the group with
Bob, Lisa, Carol, and Anthony. I am really puzzled about that
one!) We could also have you, Jessie, and I work more closely with
groups, but I'm not sure whether that would change anything
either. My preference so far is more structured interaction. I think
this is a top priority that we should talk about as a group soon.
(Memo, October 23, 1990).

At the next staff meeting, we decided that perhaps regrouping students

and providing them more guidance in how to interact might help those students

who did not seem to be very interactive. To maintain some continuity, we

identified successful dyads or trios and grouped them with other smaller groups.

For individuals who had not paired with anyone, Laura made careful decisions

about their placement.

Laura assigned students to the new groups using the same criteria as with

the original Book Clubs (Cohen, 1986), considering student qualities that

provided status within the group whenever possible. Those students who

appeared to have none of the identified statuses with their peers, Laura placed in

groups in which all members were likely to interact. As a result, she divided the

five students from the case study Book Club into two different groups.

Book Clubs as Reconstituted

Since this chapter discusses the interactions of the case study group

members as they participated in different groups, I refer to "Bart's" and "Chris's"

group, selecting them since they had both been quite verbal during the initial

Book Club.

Bart's group. Martisse, Lissa and Bart were joined by Anthony and

Roger. Anthony was of mixed descent -- his mother Caucasian and his father

African-American. He was loud, frequently initiating class disruptions. Brown-

African-American. He was loud, frequently initiating class disruptions. Brown-skinned with curly black hair, he seemed embarrassed by his parentage, reacting negatively whenever his blond mother entered the classroom. His demeanor often portrayed anger and discontent. He contributed little to class interactions and seldom completed assigned work. Anthony counted Chris among his few friends, but their interactions were limited to creating disruptions during class.

As Laura considered his potential strengths, she realized he demonstrated evidence of little status in the classroom: His academic skills were weak, he had low peer status, and his parentage might have provided him low societal status. Further, since he did not talk of his outside interests, she had little information to suggest other strengths on which to draw for expert status. Creating a group in which he could find success was essential.

Laura weighed several possible groupings and decided to consider Anthony's choices. While Bart did not perceive Anthony to be one of his friends, Anthony elected Bart as one of the students with whom he would most like to work. Hoping that interacting with Bart would help motivate Anthony to participate more, Laura placed these two in the same group.

Laura's plan was to provide a gender balance in Bart's group and limit it to four. This might help Anthony if he were in a smaller group and one in which he could interact more with Bart. Adding another boy might leave Anthony out of discussions. Her plan had to be altered, though, as the unit progressed.

Roger, a new boy who joined class after students began reading the book, immediately had difficulties adjusting to the class. Taller, more mature, and older than the rest of the class, Roger was also somewhat shy. A Caucasian with

long blond hair and blue eyes, Roger had acne. He dressed like the others in jeans, t-shirts, and athletic high-tops but also wore an earring which separated him from his classmates. He had been identified as requiring special education for reading in the previous school, but after assessing his reading, Laura decided, with additional support, he could handle reading with the whole class and might be better able to interact with his peers if he participated in Book Club. She also decided that members of the original target group would be most receptive to working with Roger for his first Book Club experience. Laura decided that the group with Bart, Lissa, Martisse, and Anthony would be the most supportive, so she assigned Roger to their group.

Using Cohen's (1986) various statuses to identify qualities desirable in a group, general, observational information indicated that on the surface this group's composition appeared similar to the original target group's. Laura's observations indicated that Bart's, Martisse's, and Lissa's statuses remained relatively stable over the course of the first half of the unit. Anthony and Roger were not strong readers, but neither were Mondo or Chris. Roger seemed to like to draw, as did Mondo, and this could have contributed to his expert status. Chris had peer status which neither Roger nor Anthony did, so this was the single general quality lost.

Chris' group. Mondo and Chris were joined by Natashia, Nora and Leroy, three students who had participated in a reasonably successful Book Club. Laura hoped that placing this trio with Chris and Mondo would lead to an interactive group.

Natashia, an African-American girl, was an average to below-average

reader. Petite and well-dressed, she was hard-working and well-liked by other students. She was basically quiet during Community Share, but Laura observed that she contributed frequently during Book Club. Laura added her to this group because she had peer status which appeared to enable her to take some leadership.

Nora, a Caucasian girl with brown hair, was an excellent student who completed all of her work. While somewhat shy in class and quiet whenever we taped a group, she had established leadership in her previous Book Club. Thus, Nora appeared to have academic status and some evidence of peer status.

Leroy was Chris' s best friend. A large, African-American boy who remained very quiet during class was not completing his required work. An average student in the past, Laura was concerned that he was not working up to his ability. Even though his previous Book Club group had been one of the more interactive groups, Leroy's contribution was inconsistent. When Laura discussed this with him, he convinced her that he could do better with the support of his friend, Chris. Laura agreed to try to place them in the same group for the reading of one book as a trial, insisting Leroy keep his promise to improve his work habits.

This group seemed to have a heavier emphasis on peer status than did the original target group since Chris, Natashia, and Leroy all brought such status. Further, though not displaying expert status in the previous group, Mondo had continued to participate, somewhat elevating his peer status. In contrast to the others, Nora had academic status due to her high grades and reputation as the best reader.

New Groups Coming Together

Even though Laura adjusted the focus of instruction during reading, the original components remained intact. Laura's instruction continued to include modeling for the entire class. Students continued to read, write, and interact in both large and small groups. However, the subtle changes were significant as the reading logs and Book Club discussions revealed. This section of the chapter describes specific lessons, including the first day's activities, the changes in the reading logs, and the new groups as they came together to discuss text.

Instruction and Community Share Day One of Number the Stars

Laura began Number the Stars with instruction that focused on predicting the story plot based on the title and cover. Field notes revealed that this activity was similar to previous ones. Laura passed out a "Stepping Into" sheet and had the students write Number the Stars on the top line. She told the class that this book was about war, the same war Sadako was about. She had the class look at the cover to get an idea about the characters and the setting. She told them that given the title, the picture, and the setting of World War II, they should write what they predict the book is about.

All five students in the original target Book Club wrote predictions that reflected their reading of the previous three books: Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes, Hiroshima, No Pika, and Faithful Elephants (see Table 5.1). These entries revealed some of the intertextual links the target group members made, and during Community Share these became even more apparent.

As students responded with their predictions during Community Share, the influence of the prior readings was clear. Many of the students predicted a story

TABLE 5.1

Original and Revised Predictions, November 7

Original Predictions

BART: It could be about her making paper stars. Or her having star neckleses. or her mom dying. She might try to pass the Germany wall to save her friend

CHRIS: it is going to be abuot a war and ther is a gril how is going to count the stars as many days as they get booed (bombed) and they proleb get boomed every nigh no stop and there is going to be pople going to die and pople are going to heve any were to live and no food and there pople

LISSA: A girl that has a chane with a star on it and she wishes that war would be over and stuff like that

MARTISSE: Maybe the boy lost his parents and Maybe he had leukiemia and he has a new way to get rid of leukiema and it will maybe be about thsoe chains.

MONDO: That girl going to be in the war. And her dan And mom or died. And Thay lost the war.

Revised Predictions

BART: DID NOT REVISE HIS PREDICTION

CHRIS: she is going to have to take the nellectra with and she has to save her firend from the moozke (Nazis)

LISSA: her frind is in troble and she is going to save her and shee is going to use the neckalace to wich on

MARTISSE: Maybe her friend might die and she might you the necklace and the stars to talk to her and see her in a vision

MONDO: she prombabe going to use the star neckles to open a door to get her friend out

with elements similar to <u>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes, Hiroshima, No Pika</u>, and <u>Faithful Elephants</u>. As class members shared their predictions, both the targeted students and their peers elaborated ideas that connected the upcoming book with previously read ones. In addition, some of the target students displayed their continued interest in particular ideas.

For example, Mondo predicted that the main character would be in a war and lose her parents, noting the girl on the front cover had a sad face. In so doing, Mondo connected to the first three books in two ways. First, he drew on the idea of the death of a family member and the related sadness. Second, he focused on interpersonal relationships, a theme he had seemed most attracted to in the previous books.

Martisse's comments reveal a second example when she responded, "She might have Leukemia and there might be a new way to get rid of it." Laura probed this further, asking Martisse what made her think of that. She answered, "Because of the war." After additional prompting, she added, "Because of <u>Number the Stars</u>, like the cranes, only this might work" (Tape, November 7, 1990).

Martisse, too, made connections between what they had just finished reading and her predictions about the new book. For her the key element was leukemia and finding new ways to combat the disease. She had also remembered the topic of superstition discussed in her Book Club and associated numbering the stars with a superstitious belief.

Lissa provided further evidence that the students were making connections between the reading experiences for this book and the previous three. When

Laura called on her, Lissa predicted that the girl had a necklace and she wished the war would stop, adding that she got this idea from the cover of the book. In addition to a young girl, the cover displayed a golden necklace of the Star of David. Lissa was the only student to notice this, consistent with her earlier pattern of seeking information from the book. Further, books seemed to her own ideas as a source of information. She was the first student who turned to the back cover of the book when Laura asked the class to predict events, and she continued to keep her own resource library in her desk.

Laura asked neither Bart nor Chris to share their predictions and neither volunteered. However, other students who did share predictions also illustrated their connections with the previous texts.

Paul said that because of the cover and the title he thought it would be about a child who lives through the war. After being prompted to elaborate his ideas, he added that the main character "counts the stars." Later in the discussion, he added a connection between the stars and the description of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, No Pika, saying, "Maybe the main character saw the flash of the bomb and thought it was the stars" (Tape, November 7, 1990)

Jim said the book might be about a girl because of the picture -- she counts the stars to make a wish. Leroy suggested that she might figure out how long the war is going on by numbering the stars. Constanza, echoing Mondo's ideas, predicted that the mom and dad die but continued by saying the mother gave the girl a necklace and that is all she remembers of the war.

When students had exhausted their predictions, Laura moved to her next activity, telling the class, "We all know the back of the book tells a little about it.

I'm going to read it" (Tape, November 7, 1990).

When Laura had finished reading, she asked students to revise their predictions based on the new information from the back cover. Four of the targeted students revised their predictions by including information about the main character's best friend and the necklace (see Table 5.1). Bart maintained his original prediction.

As class continued, Laura led Community Share for students to express the new ideas they had. She wrote these on the chart paper after drawing a line to distinguish between the ideas they had contributed before her reading and those after. Student responses after hearing Laura read the back cover narrowed their focus to the events of this book.

Natashia pointed out that the girl on the cover has a best friend. Constanza added to this, predicting that something will happen to her friend. Bill noted, "They're in Germany" (Field Notes, November 7, 1990). Wanting to help children focus on the new setting, Laura asked Bill how he decided this. He responded by relating that the back of the book mentioned the Nazis. Laura pursued this, asking how many students knew what Nazis were. Most of them had heard the word before, but only Bill seemed confident, answering, "They were German soldiers" (Field Notes, November 1990). Next, Bart connected one of his previous interests in superstitious beliefs by contributing that the girl might bring the necklace with her for good luck.

Laura continued the lesson by giving students their copies of the books and asking them to read the first chapter. When students had completed the chapter, reading time was over, with no time for a Book Club.

As the class continued reading the novel, they began recording ideas in their reading logs. Most often the prompts Laura provided involved prediction or summarization (see Figure 5.1). Since the topics for logs thus focused on story events, themes indicating student interests did not emerge. The log continued to provide entrance into the conversation, but in more limited ways. The next section of the chapter discusses this development. Examination of log entries and Book Club transcripts illustrated the role logs continued to play as students met to discuss the book.

Book Clubs: Maintaining Old Patterns While Establishing New Ones

Throughout the reading of the novel, Number the Stars, Laura continued to incorporate reading, writing, instruction, and discussion. This section continues to discuss the five targeted students in their new Book Club groups.

Reacting to the first chapter. Early in the novel, the main characters, two Danish girls, approximately the same age as these fifth-graders, are stopped by occupying Nazi soldiers. In the initial log entry, Laura had asked students to write their ideas about how the characters felt being stopped by enemy soldiers and to illustrate any part of the first chapter. The target students who recorded ideas wrote somewhat different comments (see Table 5.2). Chris neither wrote a response nor drew a representation. Martisse and Bart projected their own feelings or experiences into the book. Lissa and Mondo attempted to think like the characters.

Martisse picked up her previous concern, focusing on interpersonal relationships. She assumed the girls were not as afraid of being stopped by the soldiers as they were of telling their mothers. This revealed some of Martisse's
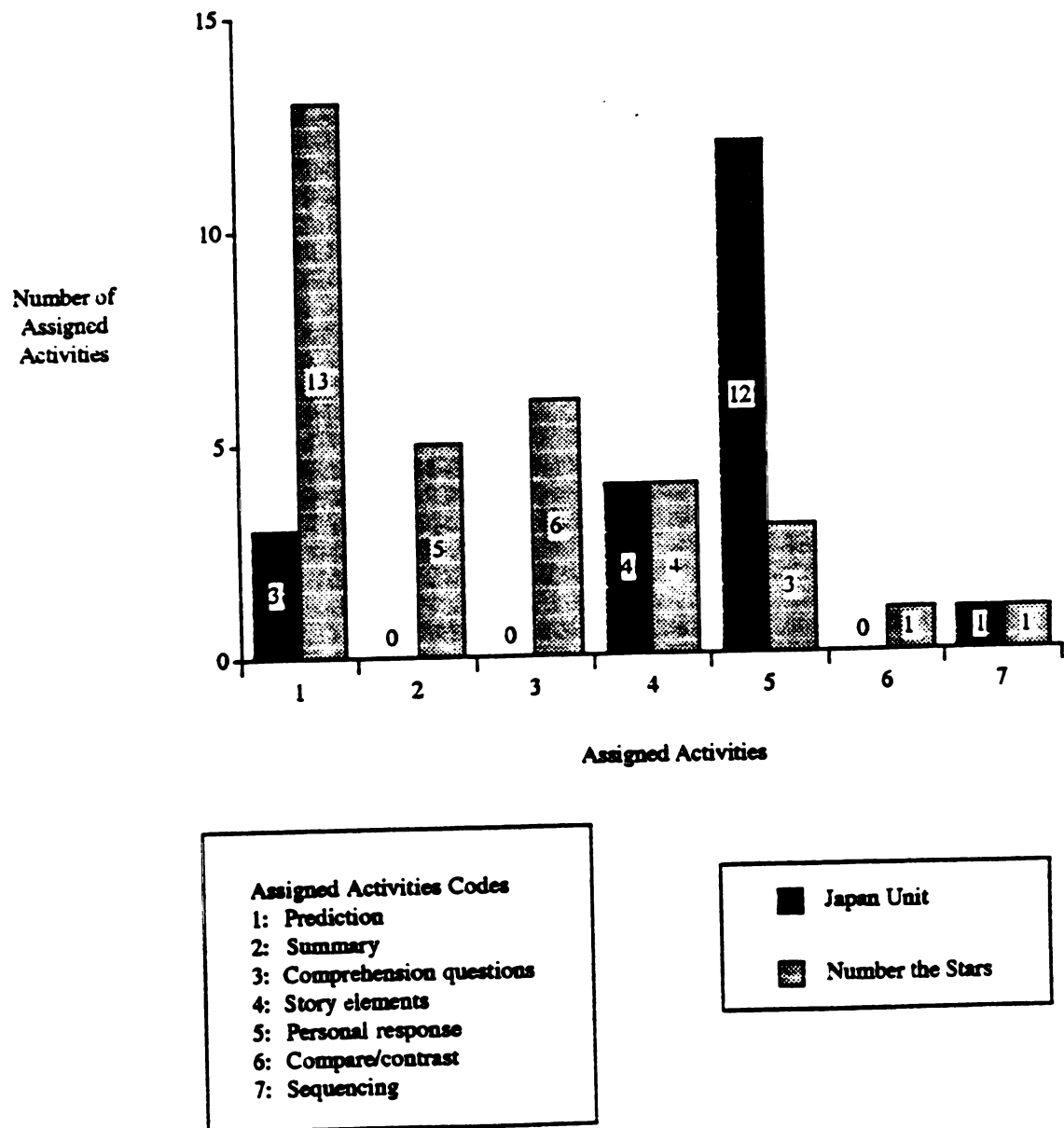
FIGURE 5.1

Comparative Frequency of Assigned Activities

TABLE 5.2

Log Entry, November 8

BART: I think they felt that the two soldiers were mean. And I think the two girls felt that the sodiers were mad. And maybe those two girls Annemarie and Elen thought they should knot hang around the guards because they had a bad attatude.

CHRIS: **NO LOG ENTRY**

LISSA: Thay feel sad because thay want there country to be free!

MARTISSE: The girls thought nothing of the soliders and when it came time time to tell mama what happend everybody had a different story.

MONDO: She filt cand (kind) of mad that the soldier tilling them went to do And thay been thair 3 years And they con't even speck air langue.

own experiences. Once, Martisse and I discussed how she frequently got into fights, which led to a description of one specific encounter with a neighborhood girl. Martisse said that once the girl's mother had reported Martisse to the police because she had hit the woman's daughter. "Because she would mess with me and then when I hit her, she started cryin' and then her mom called the police" (Interview, April 9, 1991). When I asked her how she felt about this, she immediately began relating how she told her mother about the incident and how her mother reacted. ". . . my mom said, 'What they, what the police come over here for?' And I said, 'cuz that girl hit me and then I hit back'" (Interview, April 9, 1991). According to Laura, this was not the only time Martisse had talked to the police. Her temper and fighting had gotten her into trouble before.

Martisse's personal experiences had helped her interpret how the characters in the novel would feel when stopped by an authority figure. Martisse had no experience to help her understand what living in an occupied country would be like. She had limited knowledge of Nazi Germany and the treatment of the Jews. Therefore, she understood the reading by connecting the incident in the book to her own personal experience. This log entry seemed to reflect how she had felt in what she perceived as a similar situation.

Bart's entry, reflecting a dislike for the guards, seemed similar to Martisse's. He thought the guards had a "bad attatude" making them mean and angry. In Community Share, he reported how he would react in a similar situation. Bart said the girls probably thought, "Shut up. You can't tell me what to say in my mind," after they had walked away. He added, "That's what I would do" (Field Notes, November 8, 1990).

Like Martisse, Bart projected his own thoughts and feelings onto the characters. He, too, had no personal experience with living under Nazi rule. Therefore, he seemed to think about how he had reacted when encountering figures of authority and attributed these feelings and thoughts to the main characters in the book.

Lissa's and Mondo's responses seemed less self-revealing than Bart's and Martisse's, since they demonstrated their attempts to project themselves into the characters' minds. Unlike Bart and Martisse who seemed to think of how they would react in similar situations, Lissa tried to image what these characters living in an occupied country would feel, writing, "Thay feel sad because thay want there country to be free!" While brief and thus hard to interpret, Lissa's written comment reflected her apparent efforts to understand how the characters in an occupied country might feel. At the same time, Mondo attributed anger to the characters for similar reasons. "She felt cand [kind] of mad that the soldier tilling them went to do And thay been thair 3 years And they don't even speck air (their) langue." While neither Lissa nor Mondo had personal experience of this type to draw from, they seemed to be trying to make this intellectual leap. Further, Mondo might have been trying to make such a leap by connecting the soldiers' inability to speak Danish to his own experience. Mondo's mother and extended family spoke primarily Spanish. Perhaps he or his family had encountered negative reactions from others to their limited ability to speak English. Therefore, he seemed to be projecting some of his own experiences but modifying them somewhat to the characters' feelings about the Nazis occupying Denmark.

All four students drew pictures of the girls being stopped by the guards. Of all the drawings, Mondo's was one of the most elaborate ones in the class (see Figure 5.2). He seemed to be trying to capture some sense of the neighborhood in which the girls lived. In addition to the two guards who stopped the girls, four others patrol the streets. The guards have mean faces but no guns.

Bart's drawing was comparatively simple (see Figure 5.3). The guards stand still on the sidewalk while the girls run past. When I asked him about the girls' hair standing on end, he explained that he was trying to make it look like they were running and their hair was flying out behind them, "I wanted to make it as realistic as possible" (Interview, March 27, 1991).

Martisse's drawing (see Figure 5.4), also simple in design, is balanced with equal numbers of people and cars on each side. Neither the girls nor the soldiers display any negative emotions. The girls are smiling while the guards call to them. Interestingly, the girls and the guards have very curly hair, representing people with whom Martisse was more familiar, not the fair-haired German and Danish people.

Lissa's drawing was unique (see Figure 5.5). She had drawn none of the characters closely together. At first glance it appeared that each soldier and each of the main characters were drawn apart and alone. Closer inspection revealed more interesting information. All four figures seem to be holding guns, so perhaps Lissa had represented only the soldiers. The question became, Where are the two girls -- the main characters in the book who are best friends? If the picture has only soldiers, the girls are not represented at all.

Perhaps this told more about Lissa, the representor, than about the book.
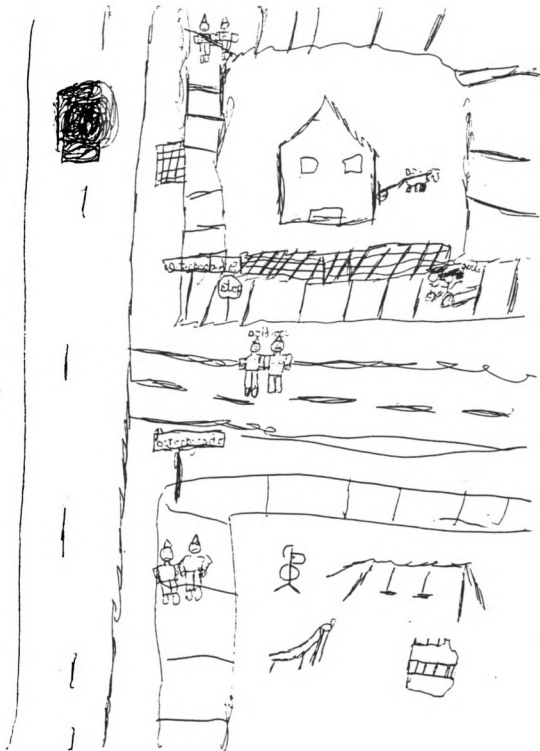
FIGURE 5.2

Mondo's Representation of the Guards Stopping Annemarie and Ellen
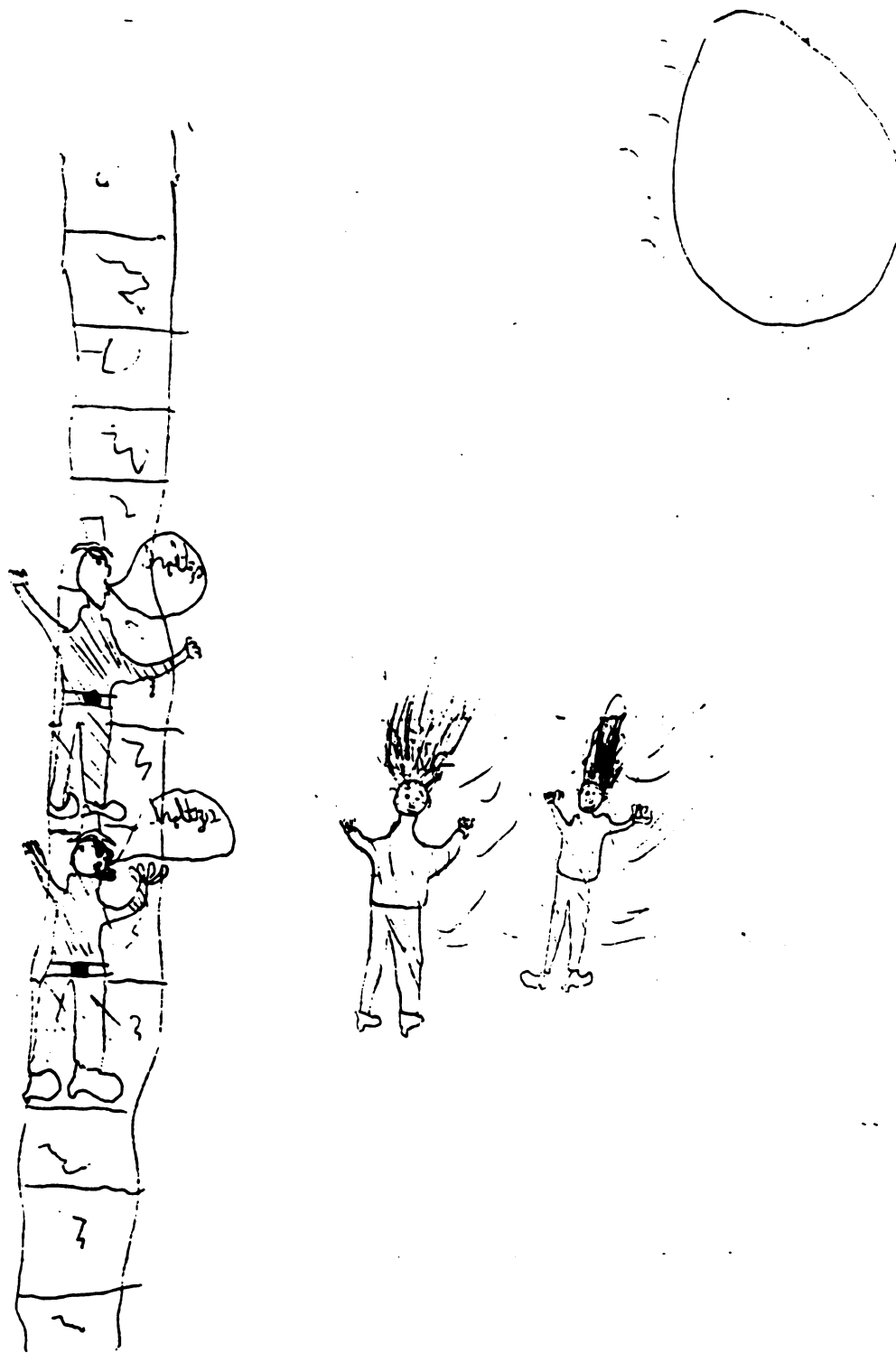
FIGURE 5.3

Bart's Representation of the Guards Stopping Annemarie and Ellen
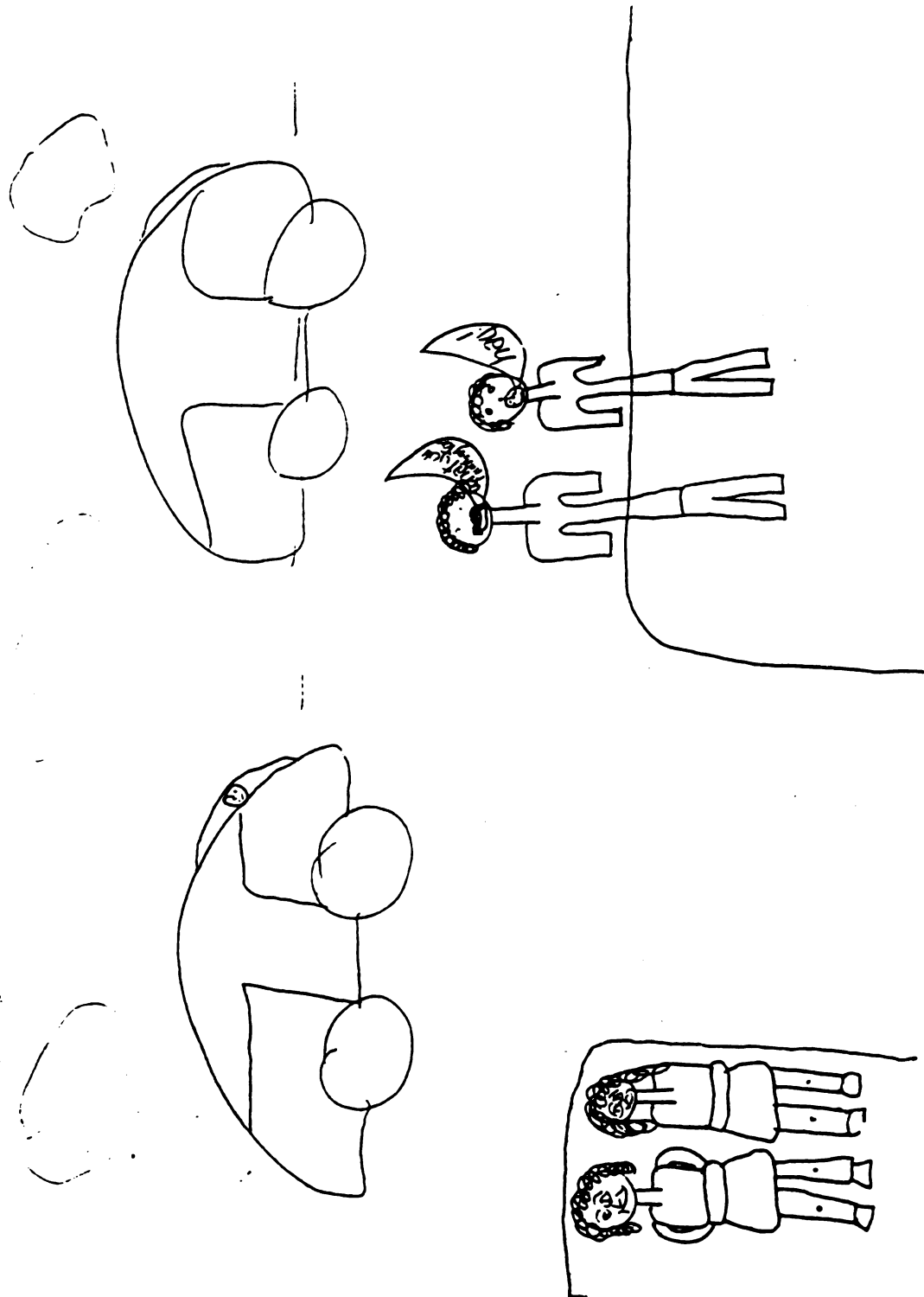
FIGURE 5.4

Martisse's Representation of the Guards Stopping Annemarie and Ellen
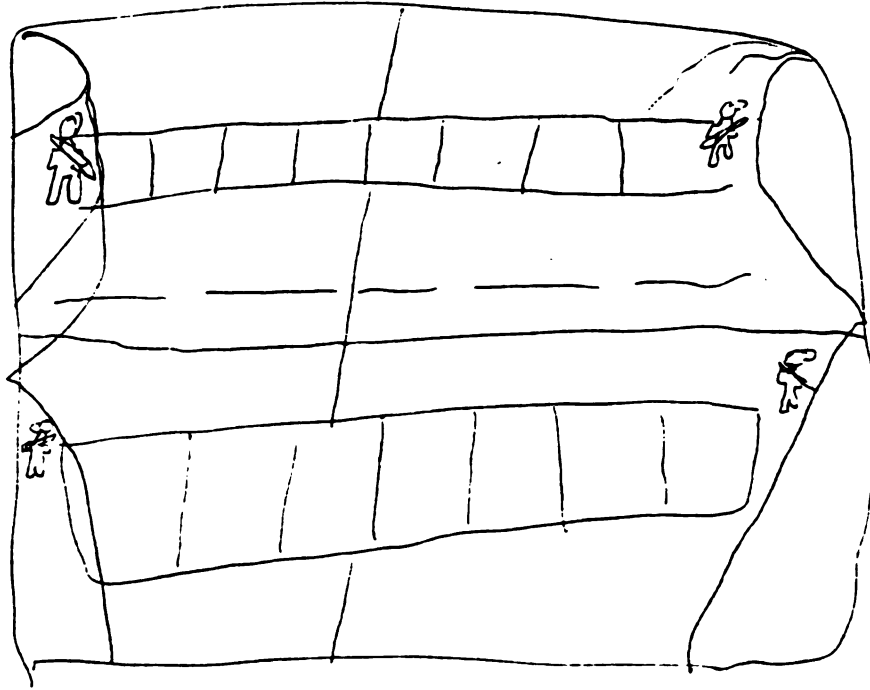
FIGURE 5.5

Lissa's Representation of the Guards Stopping Annemarie and Ellen

According to her own reports and Laura's, Lissa had no friends in the class. When new girls arrived, Lissa and the new girl might be friends for a while, but these relationships always ended. The times that were the most difficult for Lissa were recess and lunch when the other children interacted with one another. Having no friends, she often spent such free time alone. Her picture illustrated solitary people. Unlike Mondo's, Martisse's, and Bart's drawings which portray companionship between the soldiers and between the two girls, Lissa's portrays each character alone. This might also help explain her written response. Unlike the other three students who seemed capable of attributing more specific emotions to the characters, Lissa appeared able only to identify sorrow with the loss of national freedom, not anger or fear for self and friend.

Of the targeted students, Chris alone had no log entry -- either written or drawn. When I interviewed him, he admitted he did not like to draw and had not read most of the book because it was "boring." Additional prompting on several occasions could not get him to relate what was boring about this book. Given his dislike of reading and the lack of an initial log entry, the possibility exists that he never read the first chapter so he could not complete a log entry or represent an event from the first chapter.

As the two Book Clubs met, different characteristics emerged. I next describe the Book Club meeting from the beginning of the unit (November 8) for each of the two groups.

Emergent patterns: Bart's group (November 8). Transcripts of Bart's group revealed no consistent theme and, in fact, little interaction. Rather, students read from their logs in round-robin style.

The following transcript is illustrative of the round-robin reading. All students were present, except Roger, who had not yet joined the class. Lissa indicated she wanted to begin, but, as in previous Book Clubs, Bart ignored her and started the conversation.

5		Lissa:	Mine first.

6	749	Bart:	I think that they felt the two soldiers were <u>mean</u>. //// And I think that the two girls felt that the soldiers were mad. And shouldn't hang around them, and maybe those two girls, Mary Ann and Ellen thought they should not hang around them because they had a <u>bad</u> <u>attitude</u>. /// And I drew a picture of the guards on the side walk, saying "Halt" and I drew the girls hair in the air running. I tried to make it as realistic as I could.

7	825	Martisse:	I thought the girls didn't think nothin' of it because they, I know they seen them, I know when they seen the people up in there now, // I didn't think they thought <u>nothin</u> of them because, their, when they wouldn't tell their ma, they didn't, all of them had a different story to tell. I didn't think they, just thought nothing of the guard because . . . (Transcript, November 8, 1990)

As had happened in previous meetings, Lissa was silenced by Bart. Even though she indicated she wanted to begin, he started the meeting by reading his entry and sharing his drawing. Unlike previous meetings, he combined the log entry and his drawing in one turn. Both he and Martisse began their turn by reading their logs as they had begun doing toward the end of the section of the unit focusing on Japan. Why Martisse stopped her turn mid-sentence was unclear. The tape picked up only silence. Though new to this group, Anthony took advantage of a pause to read his log. His beginning comment about the two

girls being glad to be stopped by the guards initiated a debate between Bart and him.

8	856	Anthony:	I thought Ellen and her friend felt good because the guards stopped them to see if anyone was chasing them. // And I drew a picture of them. I drew a picture of the guards stopping them at the little guard house and then the guard said "What are you guys running for?" and then Ellen and them, they said that . . .
9	923	Bart:	[Remember
10		Anthony:	[...they were trying out for the race.
11		Bart:	Remember that one part where, How could the girls feel good when that man (unclear word) said "You're running like two hoodlums"?
12		Anthony:	The guard didn't say that.
13		Bart:	Ohhh! Wanna bet? Watch this. ////// (Bart reads from the book.) (Unclear word) "Go home all of you. Go study the school books and don't run. You look like hoodlums when you run." See.
14	949	Anthony:	But,
15		Bart:	How could they feel good?
16		Anthony:	But, But, Why would the guards say that after the guard just stopped them and said, "Is anyone chasing you?" I'm sure a guard's going to be mean and say, "Oh, go home!" The guard [didn't . . .
17	1000	Bart:	[You look like hoodlums when you run. (rereading from the book.) (Transcript, November 8, 1990)

As Anthony read his log, Bart questioned his interpretation. The chapter stated clearly that the girls were frightened by the guards. It appeared that Anthony had not comprehended the first chapter, so Bart challenged his response.

Apparently still accepting his own interpretation or unwilling to admit his lack of

comprehension, Anthony debated Bart's statement. Bart then turned to the

book. This still did not convince Anthony. As they continued, Lissa entered the

debate.

| 19 | 1010 | Anthony: | Well then, (Anthony laughs with Bart) //// Wait a minute. How, how would the guards know they had to go study their school books? See ha ha! |

Overlapping talk as several students contribute ideas at once.

| 20 | | Bart: | They said, but they said, they said, they said "Just go study you school books." They said . . . They automatically [assumed . . . |

| 21 | 1029 | Lissa: | ['Cause they poked the gun in the back pack and the man goes um "What's in here?" and they go, "School books." |

| 22 | | Bart: | [Yep. |

| 23 | | Lissa: | [And she goes, and he goes "Well just go study your school books and don't run 'cause you look like hoodlums when you run." |

| 24 | 1045 | Bart: | Haa haa haa . . . (Transcript, November 8, 1990) |

This short segment illustrated how in their first meeting this group

engaged in a limited conversation; however, this Book Club was in sharp contrast

to earlier ones where students created their own interpretations based on

elements they were drawn to (e.g., when Bart shared his drawing of the carnival).

Instead, they focused on the "right" answer, not comfortable letting Anthony

construct his own version of this event. Bart referred to the book to show

Anthony he could not possibly be correct in his interpretation. Lissa joined this,

adding information Bart seemed to have missed. Together, Bart and Lissa join

to construct a close summary of the events in the text.

Seeming to have settled the issue, the group fell silent for several seconds.

Then Lissa introduced a question, but Anthony interrupted her. This resulted in

a slight quarrel among Bart, Anthony, and Lissa.

25	1055	Lissa:	But um, // What was I going to say? /// How can they be in the the How can the soldiers be in the, the thing for three years, country for three years and still don't know how to speak the language? 'Cause my cousin [he's only three years . . .
26	1116	Anthony:	[We're not talking about your cousin. (As if through gritted teeth.)
27		Lissa:	. . . he's only two years old and he knows how [to . . .
28		Bart:	[We're changing the subject. We're suppose to talk about Number of the Stars. We're not talking about . . .
28		Anthony:	[Cousins.
29	1126	Bart:	. . . talking language and cousins and stuff.
30		Lissa:	My mom says we have to (voice trails off as she continues to drop the volume.)
31		Anthony:	Oops . . . (Sounds as if someone had dropped the microphone.)
32		Bart:	Drop it, Lissa.
33		Lissa:	Shut up.
34		Bart:	Why don't you shut up?
35		Lissa:	'Cause I don't want to.
36		Anthony:	Oops (Sounds like he is playing with the microphone.)
37	1139	Bart:	She-devil. (Transcript, November 8, 1990)

This segment indicated a strong tension among Lissa, Bart, and Anthony.

This time, Bart and Anthony side together to dismiss Lissa's question. As the

debate continued, Bart described what the group should be doing, echoing a comment he had made in a previous Book Club (line 28 & 29). Lissa, following an earlier pattern of looking to other sources of authority, cited her mother's comments as permission to conduct the conversation the way she would like (line 30). This interaction ended the Book Club for that day.

<u>Patterns in the New Book Club: Bart's Group</u>

There were several noteworthy points in this Book Club meeting. First, little of the discussion focused on student interests spawned by the book. Three students, Bart, Martisse, and Anthony, read their entries recounting text events. Lissa never completed her turn. Further, once they had read their entries, limited discussion not directly related to the text resulted. Instead, the group turned to another student to read. Even when Lissa introduced a question requiring clarification, the group did not pursue her topic. Perhaps because it was not connected to the log assignment or because of a growing conflict between Lissa, Bart, and Anthony, the group dismissed her question.

Second, Bart immediately challenged Anthony when he contributed an idea inconsistent with the text, yet Bart's first drawing for <u>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes</u> did not accurately relate the novel's events. Students' challenges of alternative interpretations might have been related to a difference in their perception of the assignment. For the first log entry for <u>Sadako</u>, students interpreted Laura's request to draw as an elicitation of what they imagined from the first chapter. As Bart stated, "She asked us to draw what was in our heads. That was in my head" (Interview, October 17, 1990). In contrast, the first assignment for <u>Number the Stars</u> asked students to react to an event in the text.

While subtle, the difference seemed clear, at least to Bart. He questioned Anthony's log entry because it did not match the events in the book. The result was that, unlike the first Book Club discussion early in the year in which the group allowed some flexibility as students created their own texts, their focus this time was a correct reading of the novel.

Third, Anthony seemed comfortable with the new group. He contributed his log entry right away and debated with Bart over the accuracy of his own log. He also sided with Bart in the confrontation with Lissa. Therefore, Anthony seemed to join this group readily.

Fourth, roles established in the previous group continued in this one. Bart maintained his dominant role of beginning the discussions. Lissa continued to speak with authority. Her knowledge was accepted once, but dismissed later. Only Martisse's role as conductor seemed lost. However, since they had apparently agreed to read their logs in order, with little overlapping talk, there was no need for anyone to take on such a role.

Finally, the log continued to provide members entrance into the conversation. The first three turns consisted of students reading their logs.

Emergent Patterns: Chris's Group (November 8). Chris's group had the same assigned task as Bart's. That is, they were to share what they thought the girls in the novel were feeling and discuss their drawings. Like Bart's group, they began their discussion by reading from their logs. Nora began.

| 1 | 034 | Nora: | I'll go first. Okay, my name's Nora and I think the girls felt scared because they, they felt that way because they were being watched all day and all night an' stuff and they probably felt like they couldn't do anything. |

///////

2	101	Mondo:	I wrote she felt scared and mad. (A lot of noise and confusion. I think they are reminding Mondo that he forgot to say his name.) Mondo. /// She felt scared and mad and she was scared and I wrote a picture about when they were in the road and they were running. The soldiers right there.

///////////////

3	137	Natashia:	My name's Natashia and I wrote that they felt sad because uhm, uhm, uhm, when they was uhm, when they was running they told their teacher's names. I know they was mad. (A loud noise.) Owww!

//////

4	158	Leroy:	My name is Leroy and ////// I wrote that they was very mad.

///

5	211	Chris:	My name's Chris /// and I thought they was scared /(because // they were being watched. /// and they didn't do anything and they didn't do anything and they were just running and the soldiers were questioning them for no reason. Just 'cause they were running.

6	239	Mondo:	You gotta tell about your picture. (Transcript, November 8, 1990)

There was even less interaction surrounding students' log entries in Chris's Book Club than there had been in Bart's group. Further, this group had difficulty maintaining any momentum. Between each speaker several seconds passed without anyone volunteering to share or without any questions or comments. Students' entries were similar, all describing the girls as scared and/or mad. No one elaborated upon this idea or commented about their similar conclusions.

Again, Chris had not written a log entry, but this time he shared an idea.

He never actually indicated he had written anything, but he summarized what others had contributed and implied to his peers that he had written in his log.

Mondo (line 6) continued the conversation by reminding everyone that their next charge was to share their drawings. Drawing was the major strength he brought to the group, so it was significant that he wanted to focus on their illustrations. Unfortunately, no interaction occurred around their pictures either. The group broke down into silence or confused noise.

7	249	Nora:	My picture is about uhmmm /// when the soldiers stopped her and that Lise (unclear word).
8		Mondo:	My picture is about when they're running down the street and stuff. (Laughs)
9	315	Leroy:	This is my favorite picture. (Laughs and there is laughter in the group.)

(A lot of talking all at once among members, but it is lost in the overlapping talk. This goes on for approximately 20 seconds. Then Nora begins talking about the soldiers.) (Transcript, November 8, 1990)

Mondo's effort to get the group to interact over the more open segment of the assignment, their pictures, failed. In the previous Book Clubs, drawings often displayed different events in the novel, and a discussion that focused on these might have led to some diversity of ideas, prompting increased interaction. This did not happen. Nora's and Natashia's pictures, like Mondo's, portrayed the girls' encounter with the Nazi guards. In addition, Leroy's comment (line 9) seemed to ridicule the discussion over drawings, creating laughter and leading to several seconds in which different pairs of students talked, but in which no group interaction as Laura had modeled and discussed occurred.

Following this, another several seconds of silence ensued, but then Nora,

prompted by a question from another group member, began summarizing aspects

of the novel.

| 11 | 423 | Nora: | They stopped the girls ///// because they thought they might steal something the way they were running. A little girl named Kirsti looked just like the girl at the school. She was (?) (Laughs) (Transcript, November 8, 1990) |

When I asked Chris and Natashia about this, they related that some members of

the group had not read the first chapter so they had asked Nora, the best reader

and only member with academic status, to summarize it for them. Analysis of

the logs indicated that Chris and Leroy probably were the two students who had

not read the assigned chapter. In the same interview, Chris added that some of

them had continued this pattern of asking Nora for summaries throughout the

entire book. Nora became the informant so not all members would have to read.

Patterns in the New Group: Chris's Book Club

This Book Club meeting revealed the students' struggle to interact. Nora

emerged as the leader, but with little ability to orchestrate the conversation. Like

Bart, she began by reading her log, but unlike Martisse, neither she nor any other

group member adopted the role of conductor to continue the conversation.

Leadership for Nora seemed to mean reading the log first and being a source of

text information when asked.

Second, in addition to lacking a conductor, this group missed Lissa's

reliance on the book. No one in this group ever turned to the book to check

their ideas, and they accepted all log entries at face value. Of course, they all

seemed to agree so there was little reason for conflict. Therefore, Nora alone

seemed to emerge with any distinct role while the other members appeared to be followers.

Comparing and Contrasting the Two Groups

In many ways the two groups began their Book Clubs discussing <u>Number the Stars</u> by following the same pattern the target group had demonstrated by the end of the section of the unit on Japan. That is, they began by reading their log entries to the entire group. However, unlike their final Book Club synthesizing the texts set in Japan, they never elaborated on the ideas in their logs. Bart's group referred to the book to challenge interpretations that were inconsistent with the events in the text. Both groups seemed unable to sustain any conversation about their ideas, and Chris's group also seemed unable to maintain any momentum. Each member's contribution was followed by several seconds of silence as if they did not know what to do and lacked leadership to control the flow of the conversation when it lagged.

At least two reasons could have contributed to these changes. First, the student groupings were new and they had not interacted with each other around books before. As evidence from the target group during the first half of the unit revealed, it took time to establish patterns of interaction. Much like a new group of singers forming a choir, individuals appeared to be performing solos until they knew their position in the new group.

A second reason might have been the new focus on the text. Even though this was just the beginning of the unit and on the surface Laura's introduction resembled the one she prepared for <u>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes,</u> subtle messages conveyed that the instruction was different. Through

assignments in their logs and drawings, Laura stressed a focus on the events in the book and on summarizing these accurately. Laura's directions were to interpret how the characters reacted to events. Their drawings were to represent this event. Both assignments were more grounded in the events of the text. Instead of prompts that elicited individual response, the blank pages might have seemed more the blank notebook paper they had used in the past to answer comprehension questions.

The choir metaphor helps to understand this phenomena. If this were a choir meeting for the first time, they would not just be concerned with the quality of their voices compared to others. They would be looking to the group to help define how they would perform musical selections. Some choirs lean toward more improvisation than others. Perhaps Laura, as the choir director for the entire class, conveyed through the assignment that improvisation was not valued as much as it had been. Therefore, when the groups came together for the first time they had to establish how much variation from the text would they allow. Bart's group indicated they would tolerate no improvisation. Chris's seemed to indicate each individual could "sing solo" with little interference. Each chose what to say without challenge. At the same time, they seemed to turn to Nora's voice as the one whose lead they would follow.

Regardless of the reasons for the new characteristics in the two Book Clubs, the first Book Club meetings with the new groupings found students struggling with how to interact. As the unit progressed, the groups established new patterns but continued to differ in their interactional patterns.

The Progression of Instruction and Community Share

Interruptions in instruction over the next two weeks diffused student attention so that in addition to reading Number the Stars they were also reading shorter selections including folk tales and articles from USA Today and Weekly Reader. By November 20, students had only read through chapter four of Number the Stars. Laura had other professional responsibilities so could not attend class that day, but by this time, the school principal had arranged for a permanent substitute for her class when she was gone. As a result, Laura asked me to demonstrate for the substitute how she conducted her reading program. Laura planned the lesson and we discussed it the night before. I attempted to implement her lesson as she would have, had she been there. Jessica, a research assistant assigned to the larger project, observed and took field notes. The description of the instruction is based primarily on her notes and my own reflections after the lesson. I include this lesson because it occurred during the period in which several lessons focusing on the novel were interspersed with lessons on other texts and holidays.

This description of the lesson, characterized by summarization and prediction, illustrates Laura's preference for my demonstrating a reading lesson, rather than a more open-ended activity prompting student creativity and personal response. The events in chapter five constituted a turning point in the book since the main characters begin to react to their plight, which eventually results in the story's climax. There might have been several other activities to prompt more student involvement. However, such activities would not have focused on reading skills and strategies, the emphasis for this unit. In addition, they might

not have conveyed the instructional atmosphere Laura wanted the substitute teacher to maintain.

The day I was teaching reading, the substitute teacher, Mr. Milano, had begun the morning as Laura usually did with a journal writing activity. Students were slower than usual in completing this, as was Mr. Milano in finishing the required morning paper work. One reason for the delay was the temperature in the room. Weather had turned cold, but someone had neglected to turn on the heat. As a result, the room was uncomfortable and students were extremely restless. We began reading at 9:40, approximately ten minutes late.

Laura had told me that a new student, Nila, had entered the previous day. I used this as an opportunity for students to review the book up to chapter five, asking them to help Nila understand the key events in the novel up to the current assignment. The purpose was to remind students of the key characters, events, and the setting. In general, students related the events as they happened in the book. Jessie's field notes recorded the influence of such an activity on what students remembered.

> Sue summarizes what each child has said. As I watch, I'm thinking that this sometimes becomes a kind of feedback to kids about what's considered interesting and what is not. I notice the kids focusing their attention on Sue intently, especially as she summarizes what they said. There are nods, or more leaning forward, or sitting up straight to see if Sue responds with elaborating on what the kid said, or if she drops it. (Field Notes, November 20, 1990)

Jessie's notes revealed how influential my own summary of students' ideas became for them as they volunteered ideas in Community Share. She noticed that my possible inclusion of their comments affected their interest level.

Both her notes and mine reflected that students reviewed key characters by describing who they were, what they might have looked like, and what role they played so far in the novel. Events primarily focused on the Nazi treatment of the Jews and the impending problem for the main character's best friend, Ellen. To discuss the setting, I directed students' attention to the map in the front of the room. I demonstrated which territory was occupied by the German army in 1943 and the relationship between Sweden and Denmark. Jessie's field notes help explain the instructional climate.

> Sue and kids discuss general map information and go over occupied and unoccupied countries, discussing how much territory the Germans had during this part of World War II. Tommy tells about the fact that the characters can see Sweden from the shore of Denmark. Sue asks, "Where is Sweden?" Constanza answered, "The yellow part." Constanza points out where the Nazis are on the map. Kids are now spontaneously contributing information from the book and previous discussions centered around the map of Europe. Sue is summarizing what the kids said, standing next to the map. They are discussing the time period, 1943, World War II, kids during that time, and how they might feel living in Denmark. Sue summarizes the story so far. The kids keep adding details as she completes the summary of events. Sue asks the kids to open their books to Chapter Five, page 39. Then, based on the title, kids predict what will happen next. The title is, "Who is the dark-haired one?" Students make some predictions then the kids read silently. (Field Notes, November 20, 1990)

In addition to Jessie's notes, mine included a reaction from individual students to predicting and to reading. First of all, students complained that they were cold. "Throughout Community Share, students frequently complained or asked to leave the room for their coats. I asked that they wait since the heat was then on." (Field Notes, November 20, 1990). Next, when I asked students to predict what was to happen in chapter five, several groaned.

Leroy made a face. Bill said, "We always do that." At the same time, Bart said, "We already did that." When I asked students to begin reading, I had to specifically go up to Chris and Leroy to get them started. Only after I had stood there for several seconds did they pick up their books to begin reading. I had to return to their area three or four times because as soon as I would leave, they would begin talking. As students settled into reading, I individually approached those who had requested getting their coats and let them go to their lockers. Once students had their coats, they seemed to settle down to read. (Field Notes, November 20, 1990)

After students appeared to have completed the chapter, we discussed key events. This was basically a comprehension check before ending the lesson.

Before we finished, I read the back of the book. Jessie's notes described this.

Sue reads the third paragraph from the back of the book. Pointing out that it says Annemarie will be asked to go on a dangerous mission. She asks the kids what they think this mission will be. (Field Notes, November 20, 1990)

Book Clubs were then to discuss what they thought the mission would be.

<u>Log Entries: November 20</u>

In their logs, students were to predict what they thought would happen in the rest of the story. The three boys all predicted events closely related to the story (see Table 5.3). In fact, they each merely elaborated what was written on the back cover: "Then Annemarie is asked to go on a dangerous mission. Somehow she must find the strength and courage to save her best friend's life. There's no turning back now" (<u>Number the Stars</u>, Lowry, 1988). Bart and Chris noted that Annemarie would have to encounter the Nazis. Chris added that he thought Annemarie would be captured but escape. All three boys remained closely tied to the text as the assignment demanded.

On the other hand, Martisse and Lissa wrote vague answers that are difficult to interpret (see Table 5.3). Martisse seemed to predict that the soldiers

would return and something will go wrong. Lissa might be predicting something similar if she meant the soldiers when she wrote "thay." None of the predictions seemed misguided and none of these students included personal interests.

After writing these, all students met in their Book Clubs. By November 20, students had participated in Book Clubs to discuss <u>Number the Stars</u> only four additional times (see Appendix E).

<div align="center"><u>Book Club Meetings</u></div>

After several weeks of instruction, reading, writing, and meeting in their groups, the case study students had established patterns whenever meeting in Book Club. However, since these groups had only met four times previously, they were still establishing interactional patterns for their Book Club. This chapter continues by describing each group's interactions on November 20 to illustrate these patterns.

<u>Bart's Group (November 20)</u>

When Bart's group met in Book Club, the influence of the focus on prediction clearly affected their interactions. The Book Club meeting began after considerable confusion. Several seconds of general background noise was on the tape, indicating that the group did not begin immediately. Once they did start, they seemed preoccupied by something else -- exactly what was unclear; however, there was an increased amount of noise on the tape, as if someone were scratching the microphone. In a later interview when I asked the group what was going on, Bart answered he was moving the microphone so that everyone could talk into it. There seemed to be more noise than this would create. I suspect

TABLE 5.3

Log Entry, November 20

BART: The story could be about Annmarie going on a mission to save Ellen from the nazis Annmarie likes her friend so she tries to get past the nazis to save her friend.

CHRIS: Anmrie her friend is going to get taken by the germ people and she is going to have to go no a long gurney (journey) and she is going to get caught and she is going to get away and go and save her friend

LISSA: thay are going to look at the family for a long time they are going to find

MARTISSE: they are probly going to come back and it ain't going to work this time or something else is going to go wrong

MONDO: Her friend Germoms And there going to take her frieand And her friend mom. And Annemarie going to save her firend from taking then.

they were doing something with the microphone that none of the adults in the room saw.

3   030   Anthony: Bart, it's gonna make noise. Anthony! (Saying his name for the tape.)

4   033   Bart: You guys, let's talk kinda loud and close to the thing because it won't be crunched up.

5   038   Martisse: That ain't it. It's this.

6   039   Bart: I, I wrote that the soldiers asked, no that's a different one. Sorry. // The story could be about Annemarie going on a mission to save Ellen from the Nazis. Annemarie likes her friend and so she tries to get past the Nazi's to save her friend. // I'm done.

7   059   Anthony: I'll go next. / I put / that will, she was tryin' to save her friend from going to the uhm, her goin' to like a prison and that uhm she might get shot at and she's trying to help her friend.

////

(Roger laughs then someone in the group whispers, "Roger")

/

8   124   Roger: Well, I wrote, my prediction is that Annemarie's famous mission is to help protect Ellen. (Transcript, November 20, 1990)

The ideas they presented during Book Club reflected their log entries. After each student read from her/his log, the next student read without any interaction about ideas. As the group continued, more evidence emerged that the students were not attending to one another.

9   133   Lissa: [Uhm

10   135   Roger: [Sweet [Jesus.

11   136   Lissa: [The dangerous...

12	138	Anthony:	[Shhh Talk louder.
13		Lissa:	[I wrote that that I think the dangerous mission of the
14		Anthony:	[It's going to make noise, Bart.
15		Lissa:	[that
16	144	Roger:	[Speak up, Bart.
17		Lissa:	[that that Annemarie's gonna have to go
18	146	Martisse:	[Bart, you try to make that noise.
20	150	Lissa:	[uhm she's gonna have
21		Martisse:	[What you mess with [it for then?
22		Lissa:	[she's gonna have to go find her friend.
23	151	Bart:	[Be quiet!
24	154	Lissa:	[and then her, then she's gonna, they're gonna take little Kirsti and their fam, and and and Ellen and her mom and dad to to uhm to the the edge of Copenhag err the edge of um . . .
25	210	Martisse:	Denmark
26		Lissa:	. . . Denmark and then they're gonna swim ta Sweden so they can be free.
27	217	Bart:	You read the [story!
28	218	Roger:	[You wrote all that?
29		Lissa:	No.
30		Roger:	(He laughs) I didn't think so.
31	222	Bart:	Did you read the story, Lissa?
32		Lissa:	Yes. (Transcript, November 20, 1990)

Even though Lissa's log entry was only two lines, she contributed several

ideas. However, students seemed to be directing their attention to what Bart was doing, as well as listening to Lissa. There was continued overlapping talk for the first part of her entry, illustrating that the students' attention was on something Bart was doing.

Since I was circulating the room listening to all groups, I have no record from field notes about what the group was doing. Jessie's notes did not record any unusual behavior at all. However, listening to the audio tape and rereading the transcript led me to suspect that Bart was doing something the other members were nervous about. Both Martisse and Anthony caution him (lines 14, 18, & 21), but he responded by telling them to "shut up." Meanwhile, Lissa appeared to be trying to read her log, but Roger's question, her subsequent response (lines 28 & 29), and her log indicated she said more than she had written. Why did she continue to talk even though she did not have the attention of the rest of the group? It is possible that she might have continued to cover for Bart. Perhaps neither Jessie nor I noted anything unusual in the group because members appeared to be reading from their logs and others appeared attentive. Regardless, Lissa persisted in completing her turn even though group members' attention seemed divided between her and Bart.

A second interesting event in this section of transcript is that while Bart clearly seemed drawn to another activity, he also appeared to have heard the bulk of what Lissa was saying because he questioned her about what she had said (lines 27 & 31). Whatever had diverted his attention did not prevent him from getting the gist of what Lissa was saying. Bart's behavior seemed to illustrate that despite the conflicts that had developed between him and Lissa, they had

also developed a kind of respect for one another's ideas.

Bart and Lissa had an interesting "love-hate" relationship that seemed grounded in Lissa's ability to irritate Bart but his recognition that she frequently had good responses. In addition, Bart was a very popular student with his peers while Lissa was not. Despite her knowledge, perhaps Bart could not risk a relationship with Lissa, like the one he had with Martisse, since it could jeopardize his relationships with his peers. Regardless of the reasons, the relationship between the two was interesting.

Both students were clear about the extent to which they wanted to interact with one another. One question I asked all of the targeted student was to list classmates they would like to join in a Book Club. Bart did not list Lissa, saying she fought too much with Martisse. (I never observed any fighting between Martisse and Lissa. In fact, they often cited Bart as an instigator of trouble in their Book Club.) At the same time, Lissa listed Bart as someone who would contribute a lot to a Book Club, but not necessarily someone she would want to work with.

In further discussions, Bart mentioned he did not like Lissa and he frequently joined some of the other students in calling her names, such as "she-devil" or "red devil." He explained they called Lissa "red devil" because "whenever she gets bashful, she turns red, real red" (Interview, March 26, 1991). He continued, explaining the reasons for his dislike for her. "She starts it all. She's always criticizing people about their work 'cause she thinks hers is better than everybody's. And then she thinks she's extra special . . ." (Interview, March 26, 1991). He then described times when Lissa attempted, and sometimes

succeeded, in getting privileges or in getting others in trouble. At the same time Bart seemed to respect Lissa's knowledge. In a later interview, he described her as "smart" (Interview, May 1, 1991) and field notes recorded several times he appeared to ask Lissa for help when he seemed uncertain about an assignment.

Lissa reported that Bart and Chris did not like her. "They didn't really like me much so that they always call me 'bum' and stuff . . . and she-devil and stuff" (Interview, April 9, 1990) When I asked her whether she understood why they did not like her, she replied, "I don't see what's wrong with me. Lana, y'know my friend, one time she told me that I dress like a bum and one time she told me to get away from her. I was ruin, ruining her reputation. So it's, I get treated like that all the time" (Interview, April 9, 1991). While Lissa implied that no one really liked her, she primarily described mistreatment by the girls. This appeared to bother her more. When she talked about Bart and Chris she referred to their actions during Book Club which she appeared to dismiss more easily. "They just don't like me" (Interview, April 9, 1991). Martisse substantiated this saying, "They don't never let her talk" (Interview, May 1, 1991).

This tension between Bart and Lissa began to emerge more and more during Book Club. For the first half of the unit, they appeared to get along reasonably well, even though Bart frequently interrupted and/or dismissed Lissa's contributions, but as they continued to work together for Number the Stars, interaction between them seemed fraught with conflict. The previous section of transcript illustrated this to some degree.

As the November 20th Book Club continued, Martisse attempted to read

what she had written; however, Bart probed Lissa for more information about the ideas she had presented.

33	224	Martisse:	I, I said that...
34		Anthony:	Shhh
35	225	Bart:	[So she swims?
36		Lissa:	[No.
37		Anthony:	[Shhh
38	229	Martisse:	I said that / um / that (One of the students is playing with the microphone. This is making a loud noise.)

//////

39	238	Martisse:	I said that / uhm that they were probably going ta swim across that thing like Lissa said and be free in Sweden. That's what her dangerous mission is to save her friend.
40	255	Anthony:	Stop it and let's listen to ourself.
41	257	Bart:	Aw, I should have wrote about that. I'm stupid.
42	300	Anthony:	Can we listen to ourselves? (Transcript, November 20, 1990)

Martisse took her turn, but the conversation around Lissa's entry continued with Bart probing for more information. As Martisse continued, she related information Lissa had shared, but that she had not actually recorded in her own log (see Table 5.3). Interestingly, Martisse implied that she, too, had recorded the idea about swimming to Sweden in her log. When she finished, no one asked her any questions. In fact Anthony wanted to listen to the tape, signaling his belief that once they had all read their entries they were finished.

Bart's comment about being stupid (line 41) was not consistent with his

earlier bravado. He had never before referred to himself as "stupid." When I asked him why he said this, he stammered as he tried to explain he had considered writing what Martisse had said but could not get it worded the way he wanted it. When he heard Martisse's entry, he wished he had written it as she had. If Bart had considered predicting that the characters swim to freedom, but rejected writing it, he might have been frustrated when he thought both Lissa and Martisse, classmates whose knowledge he respected, made the same prediction. He might have felt he had omitted the "correct" prediction.

At the same time, I wondered whether his comment during Book Club was made for Jessica's sake. The tape indicated that she approached the group just as Martisse was finishing her turn. Her voice was next on the tape, asking students how they were doing. Bart's comment could have been another diversionary tactic to create an impression that he had been on task the entire time. Bart had used this tactic before to avoid punishment.

As this transcript revealed, Bart's group had come to use Book Club as a place to read their log entries with little meaningful interaction. In addition, they had begun dividing their attention between the speaker who had the floor and other group members.

Chris's Book Club (November 20)

Chris's Book Club, meeting in close proximity to Bart's, adopted a similar plan for conducting their meetings. The group began with Nora reading her log entry.

| 14 | 106 | Nora: | O.k. I'm Nora and I think they're going to have (unclear word) first: The soldiers they they went and did some research and found out that Lise is really |

dead and Ellen, they take her away, and they like kill all the Jews or something so Annemarie has to save her or they like take them away ta and then . . .

///

15   133   Chris: I think that uhm [Annemarie . . .

16   Jessie: [Does anybody have a response for what Nora said? Or a question about what she said?

17   Leroy: She didn't point at nobody.

///

18   142   Jessie: Well, does she have to point at somebody?

19   Leroy: [Yeah.

20   Chris: [Yeah.

22   Mondo: She's supposed to. (Transcript, November 20, 1990)

Nora began by simply reading her entry. After a few seconds of relative quiet, Chris began reading his log. Jessica, apparently standing close to this group, reminded them of a new procedure Laura had added to group interaction.

Two class days before this session, Laura had discussed with the class the apparent lack of interaction during Book Clubs. To help rectify this and provide the structure we thought might further group discussions, she had conducted a lesson on questioning, by modeling different types of questions to ask. One procedure Laura had suggested was that after students shared their entry, they should point to someone to ask a question. The groups then practiced this new questioning in their Book Clubs. This section of transcript revealed that students apparently either had rigidly adopted this notion of pointing first, or had

forgotten the new procedure and were trying to cover themselves. With Jessica's
reminder, someone very quietly asked Nora a question she then answered.

| 24 | 159 | Nora: | I said that because I got lots of information that kinda, / (laughter in the background by Chris and Leroy) it sounds like it might happen that way. Because the next chapter says why, is it a good day for the mission so it sounds like their gonna have fun. But then it sounds like this other thing. |

| 25 | 218 | Natashia: | Do you like the book? |

(Chris and Leroy laughing in background.)

| 26 | 221 | Nora: | Uhm, Yeah I like the book I mean . . . |

///// (Transcript, November 20, 1990)

Someone appeared to ask a "Why?" question based on Nora's answer.
Natashia followed Nora's response with another question, but Nora did not
complete her answer. She began but then stopped, leaving four seconds of
relative silence. Chris took this opportunity to read his log entry.

| 27 | 229 | Chris: | I wrote about the Jews that are gonna get killed and their gonna save Ellen so they can torture her. |

| 28 | 232 | Nora: | So did I. |

| 29 | | Leroy: | Who do you wanna . . . |

//////

| 30 | 241 | Natashia: | Um a why did you say that? |

| 31 | 244 | Chris: | Because they might just kill all the Jews and save her to torture, but Annemarie's gonna get there before they torture her. |

| 32 | 251 | Mondo: | Are you sure that's true? (Directly into the microphone.) |

(laughter in group.)

| 33 | | Chris: | Yeah! |

///// (Transcript, November 20, 1990)

While the group followed the pattern of asking a question after Chris read his log, they did not seem involved in a serious interaction. Even though Leroy began to ask Chris a question, he never completed it (line 29). Perhaps this was because Chris pointed at Natashia, but several seconds of silence followed. After Natashia's question and Chris's response, Mondo spoke directly into the microphone; something we had asked and reminded students not to do. Mondo's action created a disruption in the group's interaction. Had they been engaged in serious dialogue, Mondo might not have been motivated to create a diversion and his actions might not have stopped their conversation.

Not only did Mondo's action indicate that these students might not be engaged in the discussion but several seconds of "dead" time elapsed between speakers. This seemed to illustrate that students were either having difficulty deciding what to say next, or did not want to interact. During an authentic conversation, there are frequent times when no one is speaking. At the same time, there are also times when speakers are overlapping as they engage in ideas. No such overlapping talk emerged early in this Book Club. In fact, they seemed to turn question-asking into a group joke when Leroy took his turn.

34	259	Leroy:	It's my turn. She goes for help. That's all I could think of.
35		Nora:	Why does she go for help?
36		Chris:	Why <u>does</u> she go for help?

/////

| 37 | 311 | Nora: | Why does she go for help? |

/////

(Chris and Leroy laugh.)

| 38 | 317 | Leroy: | Why does she go for help? Let me think about that right now. //// I'll have to get back to you okay? |

| 39 | | Nora: | Okay. (Transcript, November 20, 1990) |

Chris echoed Nora's question. Leroy did not respond for several seconds, so Nora asked it again. This created another delay in the conversation as Leroy and Chris laughed. Leroy then sidestepped answering. Nora accepted this, but it was unclear from her tone of voice whether she had joined in the game and thought this was fun, or she just did not want to push any further. The group continued with Natashia reading her log, Mondo asking her a "Why?" question, and her responding. The group then turned its attention to Mondo.

| 45 | 352 | Mondo: | So she's gonna go and save her friend and a Nazi is going to take in Ellen. |

////

| 46 | | Natashia: | Speak up! |

///

| 47 | 402 | Nora: | Why is she going to visit her friends? |

| 48 | | Mondo: | Because it's her best friend. |

//////// (Transcript, November 20, 1990)

Mondo's turn resembled all the others. He read, Nora quietly asked him a question, then he responded. The long pauses between interactions are noteworthy. Several seconds continue to elapse between speakers. In fact, these appeared to be getting somewhat longer. Also noteworthy is the type of

questions students were asking. All of them resorted to "Why?" questions. Laura had told student not to ask questions that could be answered simply with a "Yes" or "No." Students had done just as Laura requested. They were not asking questions requiring a "Yes" or "No" answer, but the questions appeared to be artificial to the conversation and they did not lead to increased interaction as Laura had hoped.

During the next segment of interaction, Mondo attempted to get the group to talk about their pictures. Since drawing was his strength, perhaps he was particularly anxious to have the group talk about all the drawings. His efforts were diverted by Leroy who seemed to be working on another agenda.

51	417	Chris:	Uhm, okay, They're [gonna uhm . . .
52		Mondo:	[Tell 'em about your pictures.
53		Chris:	It's gonna be, it's gonna be . . .
54	424	Leroy:	Wait a minute, Chris, Chris . . .
55		Natashia:	I'll tell about the picture.
56		Leroy:	Chris, do you li, li, like this book?
57		Chris:	No.
58	432	Leroy:	Do you like this book?
...			
61		Mondo:	It's okay but I don't know . . .
62		Leroy:	I don't like it either. Do you like it?
63		Chris:	No.
64		Nora:	My picture is . . .
65	440	Leroy:	Do you like it?

65		Nora:	Yes!
66	443	Mondo:	My pictures is . . .
67		Chris:	It was about a happy . . . (Transcript, November 20, 1990)

Leroy wanted the group to discuss whether or not they liked the book. This was a legitimate topic for Book Club groups, but not all members appeared comfortable discussing it. Leroy actively attempted to get every member to answer his question. At first, only Chris responded. Then Mondo began to answer but seemed unwilling to complete his idea (line 62). Leroy continued by stating his preference. Natashia avoided responding, but Nora took a stand, saying "Yes" emphatically. Following her note of approval, Mondo tried again to divert the conversation to their drawings.

Nora and Natashia joined Mondo in trying to involve Leroy and Chris in the conversation about their drawings. After a short time, this was again undermined by Leroy.

69	452	Nora:	Let's tell what our pictures are about guys.
70	455	Natashia:	Let's tell what our pictures are about.
71	457	Mondo:	We're supposed to tell what our pictures are about.
72	459	Nora:	My name is Nora and my pictures about when Lise got . . .

//

73	503	Mondo:	[My picture is about when they were talking . . .
74		Leroy:	[What's you picture about?
75	507	Natashia:	When they came in to check the [bed out . . .

76		Mondo:	[When they were talking and . . .
77	512	Leroy:	Chris? Did you draw a picture Chris?
78	514	Chris:	My picture's blank.
79		Leroy:	Mine is too.
80		Nora:	Okay, we need to share . . . (Transcript, November 20, 1990)

Nora and Natashia appeared to be trying to persuade Leroy and Chris to become involved in the discussion (lines 69 & 70). While neither boy verbally agreed, the others attempted to share pictures. Nora started to describe hers but stopped (line 72). After a brief pause, Mondo began to share his; however, while he was talking, Leroy interrupted with a question to Chris. For a few seconds, several group members talked as Mondo tried to finished his description and Natashia tried to begin hers. Before either could gain the floor and finish, Leroy used a louder voice to call Chris. Then, both he and Chris made clear to the group that they had not done the assignment. Nora's final comment seemed to be a reminder to the boys that they were supposed to share ideas when they were in Book Club. After this, the group took another direction. The reason was unclear.

81	518	Natashia:	When I drawed it, I think that they, when they came they have . . .
82	524	Leroy:	How [do you think those soldiers
83	526	Nora:	[Who came in their [house?
84		Leroy:	[are going to find out?
85		Mondo:	Who came in their house?

86	528	Natashia:	But they are. The soldiers had came in they house.
87	531	Leroy:	I say, how do you think they are going to find out?

/

88	534	Natashia:	I don't know.
89	539	Leroy:	And I I didn't read the story okay?

(Mondo laughs.)

90	542	Leroy:	Yeah, but how do you think they gonna find out that that's <u>really</u> Ellen? / How do you think they gonna find out that that's really Ellen?
91	550	Mondo:	They're gonna, [I know,
92		Nora:	[I know
93		Mondo:	I know they're gonna, they're gonna maybe they're gonna find their [parents
94		Nora:	[They're gonna do a bunch of [research.
95		Mondo:	[They're gonna threaten to kill them and then he's gonna tell where she's living it at.
96	558	Nora:	They're going to do some research and find out that Lise's dead. Because she's been dead for a while now. (Transcript, November 20, 1990)

After Nora's reminder, Natashia began talking about her drawing. Leroy

again interrupted her to ask Nora a question referring back to her very first

comment about the soldiers finding out that Ellen is not the Johansen's child

(line 14). For the first time, Leroy seemed genuinely interested in a response to

a question about the story. This question led to the most sustained interaction

this group participated in during this session. Even though Leroy admitted not

having read the story (line 89) and Mondo laughed at this, they continued to

interact around the ideas Nora had initiated about the text. Soon after this, the

conversation stopped and the group turned off their recorder.

This final segment of the transcript demonstrated that this group could interact over ideas from the text. The first part of the discussion appeared to get caught in a mire of procedure and a lack of interest in the topics of conversation. Why Leroy did not ask his question when Nora first presented her idea was unclear. His other comments indicated his own lack of interest in the book and in Book Club. What changed his participation is unknown. Despite the reasons, once Leroy expressed some interest in a conversation, the group appeared to become engaged in ideas associated with the text.

Perhaps this illustrated Leroy's influence on the group. As long as he was not interested in the conversation, the discussion floundered. As soon as he asked a question in which he appeared legitimately interested, all group members except Chris responded. Perhaps the conversation began because this was the first authentic question and Leroy's role in asking it was minimal. Any student asking a legitimate question might have prompted such interaction.

Choir Members Practicing Alone

Interaction in Book Club, as evidenced by transcripts and notes of these two meetings, was characterized by rigid adoption of procedures and a lack of attention to the topics presented for discussion. Students in both groups used Book Club as time to read their logs in round-robin fashion with little interaction over the ideas presented. Chris's group had reacted to Laura's suggestion that they ask one another questions by rigidly adopting a procedure. They would not ask questions unless the speaker identified them by pointing, they began all questions with "Why," and they were seldom successful in instigating authentic

conversation. The interactions that resulted were strained and the topics insignificant.

In addition, both groups seemed to have at least one member diverting attention away from topics raised. Bart seemed to be involved in some other activity while Leroy continued to interrupt speakers. Thus, students' attention was divided between the speaker who has the floor and other group members.

Continuing the metaphor of a choir helps characterize these two Book Club meetings. Unlike the target group at the end of the section on Japan, these participants were not voices joining in the same melody. Instead, solo performances interrupted other soloists singing a totally different tune. They were not even following the earliest pattern of soloists performing while others listen. Instead, there was competition for the audience. Each singer performed for two or three others, hoping to gain the attention of the entire group.

<u>The "Best Laid Plans"</u>

Over the next few days students read, wrote about, and discussed <u>How Many Days to America?</u>, a picture book Laura had planned to include because it related to the Thanksgiving holiday. Following this, Mr. Milano taught for a three-day period while Laura attended the National Reading Conference. Laura's lesson plans, left for Mr. Milano, focused on three different reading skills: (a) identifying story elements, (b) predicting, and (c) summarizing. Laura's plan was to complete the book with some activities that required more student creativity when she returned.

Laura came back from the conference to find that the students had been quite poorly behaved while she was gone. Mr Milano was unable to complete

most of the lessons Laura had planned and students had fallen far behind in all their work. With Christmas vacation and the end of a grading period approaching, Laura felt frustrated that the class had not been cooperative and pressured to communicate to students the importance of taking responsibility for their actions in completing their school work. Wanting to be alone with her class and free to reschedule time, as needed, for students to complete back work, Laura asked that I not attend class for several days.

Over the next week, Laura rescheduled each day, omitting some recess and elective class periods so that students could catch up on their work. They continued reading, writing, and responding in Book Clubs to Number the Stars at the same time each day and maintained the focus on developing good reading skills and strategies. Since neither Jessica nor I was present, much of the instruction during this period of time is reflected only through my continued discussions with Laura outside class, through her lesson plans, student logs, and tapes of Book Club meetings.

Student logs reflected the emphasis on skill development. Entries became recountings of story events with vague predictions about future happenings. The pattern of themes based on student interests that emerged during the previous section of the literature unit were not present in these logs. While students chose slightly different ways to predict, all entries seemed to adopt a similar summative tone.

Transcripts from Book Club meetings revealed they also followed the pattern established early in the book, Number the Stars. That is, students read their log entry with limited interaction while other group members appeared

preoccupied. Occasionally, students began to interact over ideas, but as with the Book Clubs described above, members appeared unable or unwilling to sustain it.

Laura was not satisfied with the direction of the reading program. At the same time, she was frustrated with how to get students to take more responsibility for their own learning, particularly when she was gone. We discussed this topic several times, wrestling with ways to modify instruction, the groups, or assignments to get students more engaged in their interactions about the text. Both she and I felt increasing frustration with our inability to change the direction of the unit.

Even with the numerous interruptions, the class finished the novel before Christmas vacation. To help round out the picture of the unit, descriptions of two of the final days might prove helpful. I have selected Book Club discussions from different days to illustrate two points. First, on December 17 Laura opened the log prompt by asking students simply to write something to share in Book Club. She did not place requirements on or make specific suggestions about the log entry. Through both log entries and discussions, the target group reflected how they had adjusted to the pattern of prediction and how Book Clubs continued to follow established patterns. Next, on December 19, Laura asked students to predict, but allowed students creative flexibility by asking them to record what they thought the characters might be doing after the war was over. The Book Club following this assignment reflected this creativity.

Established Patterns are Hard to Break

Laura's plans for December 17 included a review of the previous two chapters and silent reading of chapter fifteen. When students had completed the

reading, she asked them to write "something to share" in Book Club. By being more open-ended, Laura hoped to provide students an opportunity to write and discuss topics of choice. She also encouraged them to draw a scene they most remembered from one of the recent chapters. Even though they could write whatever they wanted, all five students chose to provide summaries of events in the book (see Table 5.4).

Case Study Students' Summaries

Bart's summary was the most detailed and complete, relating events in chapter fifteen, the one he had just completed reading. Lissa elected the same event but wrote much less and her handwriting looking hurried as if she did not have or did not take enough time to write legibly. Martisse selected a shorter segment of the same event, focusing on Annemarie's interaction with the soldiers. Martisse and Lissa drew pictures, relating the same event, but Bart chose not to draw anything (see Figures 5.6 & 5.7).

Both Chris and Mondo wrote very brief, one sentence summaries of the chapter (see Table 5.4). In addition, Mondo elected to draw two pictures representing Annemarie's trip through the woods and her meeting the Nazi soldiers (see Figure 5.8). Chris did not draw anything.

Since the Book Club discussions, like the reading logs, adopted very similar patterns, transcripts only from Bart's group are used to help illustrate the prevalent pattern on this particular day.

Bart's Book Club (December 17)

Students began their Book Club as they had in the more recent past, by one member reading a log entry. As before, Bart began after some delay while

TABLE 5.4

Log Entry, December 17

BART: Annemarie was walking down the path and all a sudden she saw two soldiers. the two soldiers stopped her and said (my dogs smell meat) so the soilders went through her bag and took out everything. the soilders took to bread and gave it to the dogs

CHRIS: she went thrue that path to take his lunc to uncle hunrk

LISSA: she was stoped by the saldegers

MARTISSE: Annemarie lied to the Soliders and siad she was a silly girl and she was going to take uncle Henrik a lunch

MONDO: She want to the Path that was brave
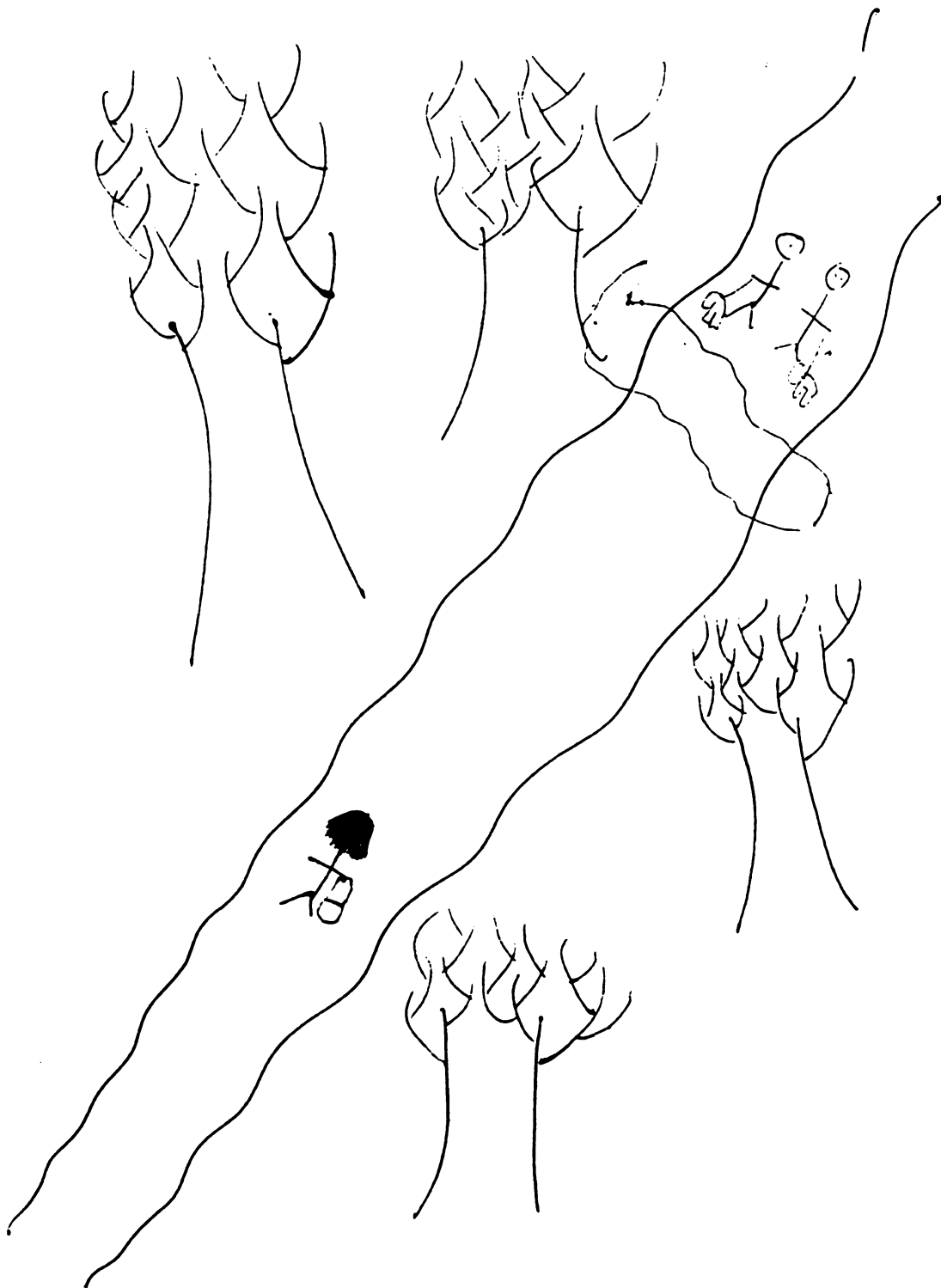
FIGURE 5.6

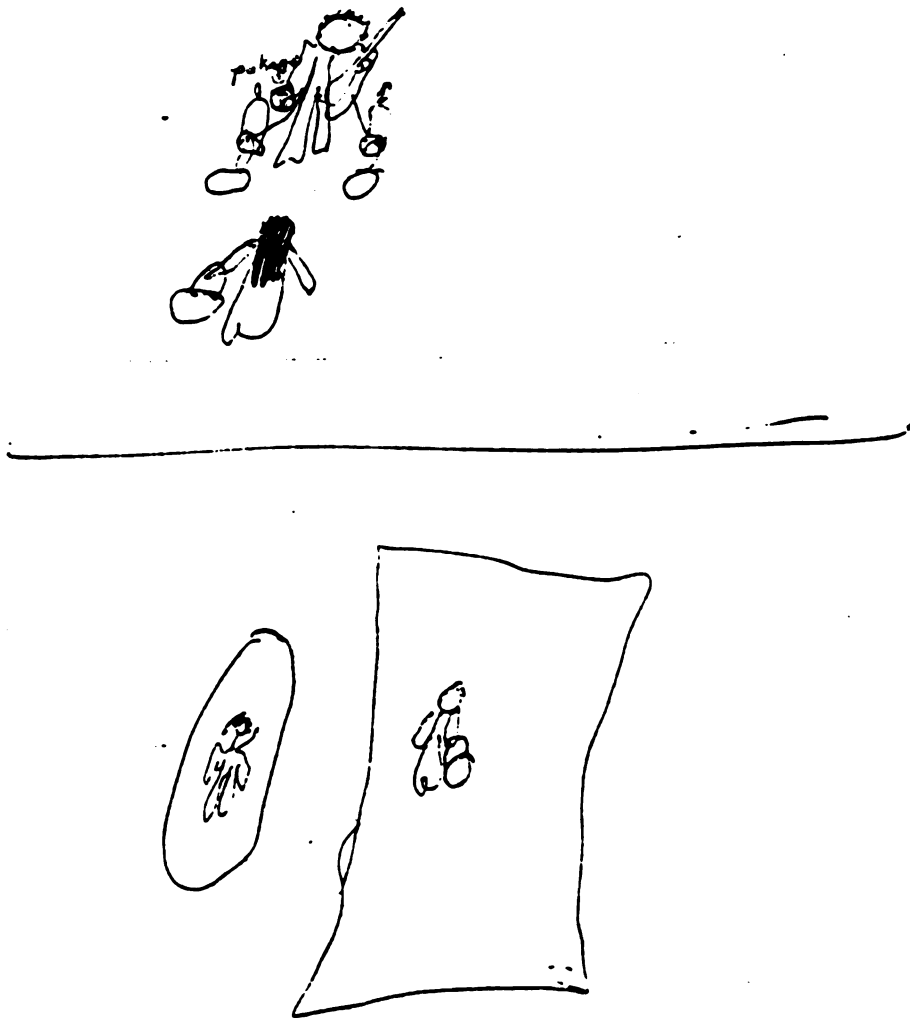**Martisse's Representation of Annemarie Confronting the Nazi Guards**

FIGURE 5.7

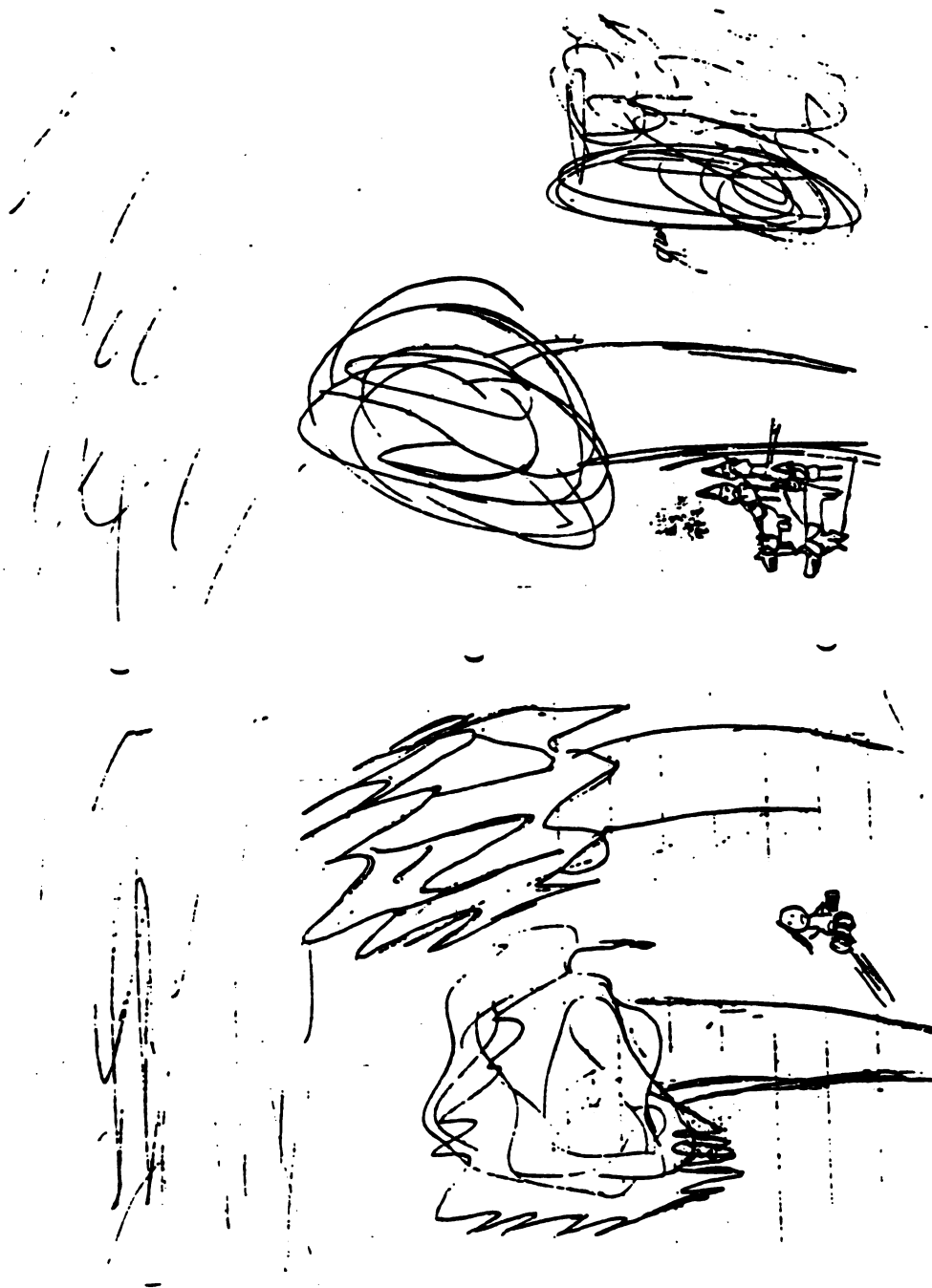**Lissa's Representation of Annemarie Confronting the Nazi Guards**

FIGURE 5.8

Mondo's Representation of Annemarie Confronting the Nazi Guards

he found his log. Martisse made a comment about "chewing" something. It might be in reference to his log getting dogeared since many of the logs were worn from so much use.

| 1 | 018 | Bart: | Bart. I'll go first. |

////// (paper shuffling)

| 2 | 024 | Martisse: | What, you chewing up that? |

| 3 | 025 | Bart: | I wasn't. / I didn't chew that up it was like that. // Anthony chews that up. //// I don't chew it up. // I put, Annemarie was walking down the path and all of a sudden she saw two soldiers. Two soldiers stopped her and said, "My dog's smell meat." / So the two, so the soldiers went through her bag and took everything out, and took everything out, yeah. Two soldiers took the bread and gave it to the two dogs, and, um, so then, um, Annemarie was, was crying like she was thinking all the things Kirsti would do, so she was doing that, and she said (talking in a voice like a child's), "My Uncle Henrich's gonna be mad at me," and she was crying and stuff, so, so then the soldiers said, "All right, go ahead, but tell, tell your Uncle Henrich and your mom that I gave the dogs your bread, so that's what I wrote. |

//

| 4 | | Anthony: | [Okay, I put . . . |

| 5 | | Martisse: | [Uhmm. |

//// (Some whispering)

| 6 | | Bart: | I'm pointing, I'm pointing. |

///

| 7 | | Bart: | Martisse. |

| 8 | 150 | Martisse: | Why do you think the dogs smelled the meat? (Transcript, December 17, 1990) |

Bart began the group following the established pattern of reading the log. As with Chris's group two weeks before, one member, Anthony, started to read his log when Bart appeared finished, forgetting to ask a question. Martisse seemed to catch this and, maintaining her role as conductor, somehow communicated to Bart that he forgot to designate a questioner because he said, "I'm pointing" (line 6). By this time, this group had adopted the same patterns demonstrated in Chris's group earlier. That is, they followed a routinized version of Laura's suggestion that they point to someone to ask a question when they had finished their logs. Further, they had also established asking "Why?" questions as Martisse's request illustrated (line 8). Her question did not really make sense because the book clearly stated the dogs smelled meat. Bart, after some initial confusion about her question, answered that the book made this point clear.

| 9 | 153 | Bart: | Well, I thought that, well, I thought that the dogs smelled the meat. I really, I really <u>knew</u> that the dogs smelled meat because it said in the story, and the soldiers said it, and I, I, the way the dogs were acting, I think they did smell the meat, so that's why. |

///////

| 10 | 217 | Anthony: | I put /// I drew a picture of uhm of I put that there was four soldiers, that they stopped Annemarie because she was going to her, um, Uncle Henrich's house to give him some food, and, um, ////// (Sounds as if Lissa asked a question that the tape did not pick. Bart responded. This seemed to distract Anthony.) and that, um, and that, um, the dog growled at her, and he said that they smelled meat, and he said that they would let the dog, that they'll let Annemarie go, so they let her go. Anthony. |

/////

11   301   Lissa: You got to point. (Whispering)

//

12   303   Anthony: I want, // Bart. (Transcript, December 17, 1990)

After Bart answered his question, no further interaction occurred. Following a brief pause, Anthony read his log. Lissa's comment (line 11) demonstrated that, like Chris's group, this Book Club group had also become dependent on a member pointing to another member before anyone could ask a question or the group could go on. The conversation between Martisse and Bart during Anthony's turn also illustrated how the group continued to pursue other conversations while one member read a log entry.

The meeting continued for several more minutes, but the pattern never changed and the students never really engaged in dialogue about the book. Instead, they followed a regimented pattern of reading their log, designating a questioner, a member asking a "Why?" question, the reader responding, then another member reading the log after a brief pause. When all members had shared their entries, the group ended and turned off the tape recorder.

Bart's Group After Several Weeks Together

In addition to the rigid pattern of turn-taking that emerged, the group seemed to have lost its ability to maintain some flow to the conversation. Unlike earlier conversations where Martisse acted as the conductor, indicating which student should go next and not allowing dead time between speakers, this transcript was marked by long segments in which no one was talking. This silence did not appear to be reflection time since subsequent talk was not related to anything the previous speaker said. As with Chris's group during earlier

discussions, several seconds elapsed before the next speaker took the floor.

Like singers who have performed the same stage show before, the routine became more deeply entrenched with each rehearsal. Solos again dominated the act, but the attention of the audience was divided among other competing performers.

Breaking Out of the Pattern

Two days later, Laura again opened up the log assignment, asking students to imagine what the characters in the book would be doing two years later. This was a prediction activity since the book contains an epilogue relating what had happened to the characters after the war ended, but students seemed to approach it with more openness.

In their reading logs the target students reflected similar interests, such as Annemarie's age in two years and the end of the war. However, they also reflected differences (see Table 5.5). Bart mentioned that they would have meat to eat. Lissa and Mondo related they thought Annemarie would be reunited with her friend, Ellen. Chris thought the characters would have all fled Denmark for Sweden. Martisse alone seemed confused by the assignment and wrote what part of the book she liked best.

Both Book Club groups resembled those recorded throughout the reading of the book; however, at one point in the discussion Chris's group broke out of the established pattern as they had once before in early November.

Chris's Book Club (December 19)

On the last day discussing the book, Chris's group began as they always had. That is, Nora initiated the discussion by reading her log. Natashia followed

TABLE 5.5

Log Entry, December 19

BART: The war should have stopped by now and it should be back to peace. Annmarie should be happy to. every thing should be back to normal. they should have meat to eat by now.

CHRIS: it will be not war and she will be 12 and they will all be in sweed (Sweden).

LISSA: the war is stoped she is 12 and happy mabe she willgo to se Ellen

MARTISSE: Well I like the part when she was going to throw the path and she meet the dogs and they smelt the hankerchief.

MONDO: She proble in the free contry and Annmirie is about 12 or 13 and thay went acoss sweden in a house living with Allen and there going to school. And the war over and everone prouble free

by asking a "Why?" question which Nora answered. Natashia elected to read her

log next. Leroy and Chris seemed to be attending to one another more than the

group.

1	028	Nora:	Wait, okay, this is Nora. Um, I wrote about when Peter died because that was really sad, and they finally fought him, and he died, and blamed Lise.

////

2	044	Natashia:	Why did you write that?

//

3	046	Nora:	I think because it was the only thing to write unless I wanted to write about Lise when, um, she died. (Leroy was talking the entire time but too softly for the tape to pick up.)
4	057	Chris:	Now that's about something . . . (In response to Leroy.)
5	058	Natashia:	I wrote about when they kept that necklace that Ellen had left when snatched it off her neck. (Transcript, December 19, 1990)

As this brief section of the transcript illustrated, the group's interaction pattern

remained the same as the one they established early. Nora always began by

reading her log. Almost without exception, Natashia asked Nora a "Why?"

question as soon as she had finished reading. After a slight delay, Natashia read

her log. While the girls engaged in this, Leroy and Chris participated in a

conversation between the two of them. The major part of the transcript is

marked with sections like this, separated by increased pauses. Noteworthy is

Nora's comment (line 3) that this was one of only two possible choices she

thought she could write about, ". . . because it was the only thing to write unless I

wanted to write about Lise . . ."

Nora appeared to feel constrained. Perhaps the elimination of prompts asking students to share what they found interesting resulted in students feeling bound to the text, even when Laura specifically requested they write whatever they wanted. Nora's comment revealed that perhaps she did not feel free to write anything she wanted in her log, despite Laura's suggestion.

Later in the discussion the group dynamics did change; however, this occurred after Mondo introduced information neither Leroy nor Chris knew.

20	155	Mondo:	I wrote (laughs) when Peter died, and when Peter got caught when he was [at
21		Leroy:	[What's that chile' saying about Peter dying?
22		Mondo:	Lise's, Lise's [funeral.
23		Chris:	[On the second page. On the first page.
24		Mondo:	Go Leroy.
25	219	Chris:	It was the second whatever and we'll say Chapter 17. / So now, I'll go back to the next page it say Peter died. On the top,
26		Natashia:	There [it is
27		Chris:	[there.

(Children talking in the background. They seem to be checking about Peter's death in the book.)

28	231	Mondo:	Go, Leroy.
		Several voices:	Right here. Right up here.
29	235	Laura:	What did it tell?
30		Chris:	[That Peter died.
31		Natashia:	[That Peter died.

32	239	Mondo:	He got shot.
33		Laura:	Is that sad?
34	241	Nora:	And they buried him right where they shot him, and they put a number . . .
35	244	Chris:	They, instead of names, they put numbers, and he asked that he be buried by Lise.
36	250	Laura:	But they didn't do it?
37	253	Chris:	The Nazis did it. But they buried him where he got shot.
38	257	Leroy:	He was trying to (?) the red hair.

/////// (Inaudible)

39	307	Chris:	Lise was running, Lise and, Lise was running' and they "hawked" her down, and she got hit by a car **and** got shot.
40	313	Natashia:	Who?
41	314	Chris:	Lise.

(Noise by someone making sound of gun shooting.)

(General talk about the shooting.)

| 42 | 317 | Nora: | And Peter got shot in the arm, and he had to wear a hat on (?). |

(Too much talking about his death to distinguish what they are saying.)

| 43 | 326 | Mondo: | She got hit by a car (laughing) **and** got shot at the same time. |
| 44 | | Leroy: | No, They shot her then she got hit by a car. (Transcript, December 19, 1990) |

Leroy interrupted Mondo, as soon as he heard Peter got shot, with

questions about the death. Clearly, Leroy had not been listening earlier since

Nora began Book Club by relating that Peter had died (line 20), but Leroy

reacted to Mondo's comment as if he had heard it for the first time. Mondo seemed to want Leroy to continue by reading his log and not want to discuss Peter's death, but it was unclear why (lines 24 & 28). Laura entered the group (line 29), which could have influenced the interaction; however, the students were engaged in this discussion before she approached and after she left. For a few minutes all of the group became actively involved in constructing meaning for what might have been the only time while reading this book.

This conversation seemed to have been prompted by Leroy's legitimate question. Somehow he had missed that one of the characters, Peter, had died. It is highly likely that he had not read the epilogue so could not have possibly known that Peter was dead.

Chris volunteered during two separate interviews that he did not read all of Number the Stars, but he did admit he read parts of it. In concert with Chris, on November 20, Leroy had joked with his group about not reading the assignments. In all likelihood, neither Chris nor Leroy had read all of the book. Chris always chose to sit with his book in his lap and his head down so that I could not determine whether he was reading or not; however, he did admit twice that he had not read the entire book. Even though Leroy was not a targeted student, I could not help but notice his lack of attention to the book during silent reading. He frequently spent reading time looking around the room or shuffling papers in his desk. Laura often walked over to his desk to remind him to read or write in his log. In support of the observations, both Chris and Natashia acknowledged that they knew of students who hated the book and refused to read it.

Despite his self-professed inconsistency in reading the book, Chris appeared to have read the epilogue. Mondo's news that Peter had been shot did not surprise him as it did Leroy. Leroy's authentic question, seeking information about the details of Peter's death, created the most sustained interaction among all the group members about the book. Perhaps because it was a real question instead of one "required" as part of the routine, or because it was Leroy who had suddenly expressed an interest in the topic on the floor, or because of some combination of these factors, the group discussion focused on constructing meaning from the text for the first time. Only Mondo seemed uninterested in pursuing the topic he introduced, trying to get Leroy to read his log.

Chris's Book Club: The Last Day on Number the Stars

In the beginning of this meeting this group performed as before; that is, like a group of competing singers vying for the attention of the audience. Later, however, when a musical selection captured their interest or at least the interest of a key singer, most of them became one group, working together on the same composition.

Two reasons might account for this change. First, it was the second time Leroy seemed interested in the group's discussion. In the past, he used most of his energy to get Chris's attention or to divert the conversation away from their focus on events in the text. This time, he appeared genuinely interested in the topic of discussion.

Second, Chris told me in interviews that the description of Peter's death seemed to have the type of action he liked. He complained that Number the Stars had no action so it was boring. Peter's death and the children's description

of it held the fast-moving action of current, popular movies. Perhaps this captured Chris's interest as Nora's comment had intrigued Leroy several weeks before.

Regardless of possible reasons, the group continued to discuss Peter's death for a few more minutes before ending their discussion. As a final Book Club for the text, the group had been more animated and involved than ever before.

Conclusions

Many aspects of the instructional context contributed to the patterns student groups established in their Book Clubs. First were the interaction patterns that might have been the result of a difference in the composition of the groups. The targeted students appeared to have established patterns of conversation by the end of the first section of the unit. In another group that included Natashia and Nora students also appeared to be interacting well, based upon general impressions recorded in field notes. However, coming together to form new groups required students to establish new interactional patterns. They were attempting to adjust to these new groups as they were also accommodating to a new book and instructional focus.

A second factor might have been related to the types of learning stressed. This was the reading program, so Laura had a responsibility to teach skills and strategies. The unit focusing on Japan also included such reading emphases. However, one primary difference was the amount. During the unit on Japan, reading skills were interspersed with activities emphasizing personal response. On the other hand, the unit on <u>Number the Stars</u> consisted primarily of a focus

on skills and strategies. Students had little opportunity to pursue aspects of the novel they found interesting. The assigned log entries and resulting conversations did not allow students an opportunity to address specifically what they did or did not like about the book, to make connections to early reading or experiences, to clarify confusing parts, or to highlight particular parts of the book they found worthy of discussion. Despite early connections to the other books, students quickly adopted the pattern of reading related answers from their logs and neglected to make connections to other texts. Instruction that focused on the skills of predicting and summarizing also did not facilitate such connections.

The third potential factor related to the patterns established in the new Book Clubs might have been the teacher's role. First, Laura was gone frequently. In her place were several substitute teachers who maintained traditional definitions of reading instruction. They probably communicated this to students who often resorted to their own prior interaction patterns in reading groups. Second, Laura's absences led to frequent interruptions in the class reading of the book. Unlike the unit on Japan during World War II, the initial reading of Number the Stars was interrupted by holidays and marked by substitute teaching. Students could not read the early chapters in succession. Such disruptions might have influenced how they felt about the book and about Book Club meetings.

A fourth factor might have been student attitudes about school and the book. Bart, Martisse and Lissa, as well as Nora and Natashia, appeared to want to do well on school assignments. Such a desire could have led to their rigid adherence to Laura's suggestions. In contrast, Anthony, Chris and Leroy

frequently seemed to prefer disruptive behavior to class work. In addition, Martisse, Lissa, and Nora all expressed liking the book. During interviews, both Martisse and Lissa identified <u>Number the Stars</u> as one of their favorite books while Nora stated emphatically during a Book Club meeting that she enjoyed it. In contrast, Chris, Bart, and Leroy noted that the book was one of their least favorites. Perhaps the mixture of adherence to school task expectations and the strong differences in student attitudes toward the book influenced discussions. Perhaps other groupings of students might have been able to initiate more engaging discussions about the book.

These issues will be among those discussed in the following chapter as I compare the interactions and interests of the targeted students over the course of the semester.

CHAPTER 6

BOOK CLUBS AND LITERATURE-BASED READING INSTRUCTION: WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

This study began as an investigation into children's interactions during

student-led discussion groups, initially framed in terms of the questions: How

will elementary students respond to text during student-led discussion groups?

What roles do students adopt as they interact in groups? What influence will

instruction have on student interactions? To explore these questions, I observed

five students as they read, wrote about, and discussed issues related to literature

selections. In the classroom where I conducted the study, the teacher, Laura

Pardo, had introduced a new approach to teaching reading. Her reading

program included four components: (a) reading, (b) writing, (c) instruction, and

(d) discussion.

For reading, Laura had incorporated the use of trade books in place of

basals. These books represented quality literature relating events that had

occurred in other cultures. The writing component included both reading logs

and think-sheets. During instruction, she presented lessons on reading and

responding, modeling those approaches she wanted students to adopt. For

discussion, she used two methods. First, during what she called "Community

Share," she asked the total class to share ideas they gained from reading or from

their small group discussions. The second aspect of discussion was Book Club,

the small group discussions.

I collected data on the five students over the course of one semester. Data included field notes; formal and informal interviews of the teacher and the students; student documents, including reading logs and think-sheets; audio tapes of Book Club discussions, instruction, and Community Share; and transcriptions of these audio tapes.

Analysis of the data indicated that during the first half of the unit, students came to use their Book Club as a time to share ideas and construct meanings gained through their reading of three books set in Japan during World War II. In contrast, when they regrouped and read the fourth book set in Denmark during World War II, they used Book Club as a place primarily to read log entries.

In this chapter, I discuss the results of this study and the potential implications for both theory and practice. I begin by returning to the social constructivist theoretical perspective that underlies the study. I then explain the findings in terms of this perspective and present the implications and suggestions for future work.

Social Constructivist Theoretical Perspective

Important to a social constructivist perspective is the relationship between thought and language as they interact in social settings. Vygotsky (1986) stressed this relationship particularly within a sociocultural context, noting that:

> "Thought development is determined by language, i.e., by the linguistic tools of thought and by the sociocultural experience of the child. Essentially, the development of inner speech depends on outside factors; the development of logic in the child . . . is a direct function of his socialized speech. The child's intellectual growth is

contingent on his mastering the social means of thought, that is, language" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 94).

In Vygotsky's view, thought is developed through the interactions we have with others in multiple social contexts.

The children in Laura's classroom were members of several social contexts in which language developed their thinking. In addition to their homes, they interacted in their neighborhoods, school, church, and other contexts, including Laura's classroom. How they came to think about reading and learning was the result of many previous encounters with language use.

Further illustrating the relationship between thought and language, Bakhtin (1986) argued that words acquire meanings through social interaction. Rather than learning the meanings of words through the use of dictionaries, people learn them through social interactions. Words simultaneously belong to no one and to everyone. As we interact with others, we listen to their word usage; assimilating, transforming, and then using the words ourselves.

Such meaning acquisition holds as well for classrooms. Students learn to define language as they experience it with the teacher and other students within the class. Laura's students entered her class with extensive vocabularies drawn from their vast experiences in other social settings. Further, they learned to modify existing meanings and gained new ones as they interacted in her class.

Closely connected with our acquisition of word meanings is how we learn to interact in multiple settings. Bakhtin (1986) attempted to explain these adjustments in our language patterns by arguing that, even though individuals maintain unique styles to their language use, they also follow "relatively stable

types of utterances" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 60). These stable ways of speaking he called "speech genres." Each of us use various speech genres, moving easily from one to another, depending on the context.

School interactions constitute different types of speech genres. Within any given day, the teacher interacts with children and they interact with one another over a multitude of topics, using a variety of speech genres. Multiple speech genres might occur at a given time within the classroom as children talk together and with the teacher or as the teacher conducts a lesson. At the same time, one speech genre dominates most classrooms interactions. This pattern of teacher-initiated questions, student response, and teacher evaluation is the one with which students are the most familiar (Cazden, 1988; Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Tharpe & Gallimore, 1988).

When Laura modified her reading program, she was changing much about the social context of school that her students had come to expect. In addition to more standard teacher-directed lessons and discussions, she added student-led discussion groups in which students took responsibility for the content and direction of the conversation. By changing the texts, the activities surrounding reading, and the interactions in which students participated around texts, Laura had created a context designed to alter significantly her students' definition of "reading." This chapter will elaborate on how she modified these aspects of the program then discuss how it affected student interactions.

Redefining "Reading" in Laura's Classroom

The context in which the five target students learned to define reading was Bates Elementary School. As described in Chapter Four, this school was

traditional in many ways. While teachers could use trade books for the teaching of reading, the district bought full sets of basals for every teacher. Except for Laura and one other new teacher in the building, all of the teachers elected to use the basal series the district purchased. As a result, these students had previously participated in traditional reading programs. Therefore, we can assume they had learned a language for reading that more closely fit the skills-based approach of a standard basal program than that of the literature-based reading program Laura initiated.

In efforts to change the meaning of "reading" in her classroom, Laura modified four components of her reading program, as outlined in Chapter Four, to incorporate a social constructivist perspective. That is, she modified: (a) the **types of learning** by changing the reading materials, (b) the **representations** by including alternate forms of representing ideas as well as encompassing multiple written forms, (c) the **interactions** by adding small, student-led discussion groups, and (d) through all of these other changes, her **role as the teacher** as students read, wrote/represented ideas, and interacted around text.

Changing the Definition Means Changing the Texts

Most elementary classroom teachers adopt basal reading texts for instruction. Traditionally these reading programs have focused on the mastery of skills as measured through tests. Critics argue that such programs do not reflect how anyone learns language since they tend to ignore the multiple purposes and functions of literacy (Goodman et al., 1988; Langer, 1986; Smith, 1986). In addition, publishers have controlled for vocabulary levels and skill development in basal texts (Goodman et al., 1988). Even stories selected from trade books for

inclusion in basal series have often been altered to meet criteria related to vocabulary and readability.

Such programs lead children to construct meanings for "reading" linked to texts devised to instruct, not created to relate a story. Thus, students may not understand "reading" as relating to experiences with texts that evoke personal response and enjoyment. Instead, "reading" relates to understanding stories written to teach decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. As a result, "teachers and pupils get a narrowed view of what reading is" (Goodman, et al., 1986, p. 85).

In contrast, Laura implemented a program that used novels and picture books. While readability formulas had established these books were at or above grade level, the stories had not been altered. Instead, the author's words, even in translated versions, were maintained to tell the story, not teach reading. The responsibility for teaching the required reading strategies and skills remained with Laura and were not embedded within the text.

What Students Do Influences How They Define Reading

A second aspect of the reading program Laura adjusted was the activities connected with reading. Frequently, basals have a limited view of the development of strategies for comprehension, focusing on students' abilities to respond with correct answers to questions the teacher's manual identifies as relevant. Researchers and teachers have criticized workbooks, a major component of basal series, for their focus on isolated skill development in their tendency to treat language as isolated sounds, letters, and words (cf. Goodman, et al., 1988; Langer, 1986; Smith, 1986). Therefore, students having experienced

more traditional reading programs come to define "reading" as skills and tests.

In an effort to provide instruction that reflected current beliefs about reading, Laura included activities that took into account the transactive nature of the reading process. Recognizing that the reader brings prior knowledge and experience to the act of reading, she used logs to elicit student ideas about the text. Even when she used prompts that probed for predictions, Laura provided students time and opportunity to add to their previously written responses, stressing how readers frequently change their initial perceptions of a book. Further, Laura moved away from traditional forms of written activities by including other representations of students' ideas. Logs included blank pages on which children could draw favorite scenes or characters. They could also use these to represent ideas about character development and to sequence events. Finally, students could represent their ideas in other ways as well, such as using a reader's theatre to demonstrate their favorite parts of a novel. Laura included all of these activities to help children modify their definitions of what "reading" means.

How Students Use Language Influences How They Define "Reading"

The third way Laura adjusted her instruction was through the interaction patterns in her classroom. The speech genre most students become accustomed to during reading often follows a similar three-part pattern many researchers have described: teacher initiation, student response, and teacher evaluation (cf. Cazden, 1988; Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Tharpe & Gallimore, 1988). Such speech events are usually found in teacher-led lessons during which the teacher controls which speakers have the floor and how the topic develops. The teacher

asks questions to which she knows the correct response; the student's role is to find out which response the teacher wants. The teacher identifies wrong answers by rephrasing the same question. Such patterns control the interactions between student and teacher and do little to encourage discussions among peers.

"Discussion" during reading often follows a similar pattern. In many classrooms, when students meet in groups to read, they read aloud in round-robin style. No one interrupts another, nor do they always listen. Their interactions about books follow the pattern described above with students talking only when the teacher calls on them to read or answer a question. Questions in such groups serve to establish comprehension and rarely elicit authentic student ideas or feelings. Therefore, many children have not had experiences with speech genres in classrooms in which they have control over the topic and direction of interactions nor with interactions focused on the reader's experience with the text.

While the instructional component, and frequently Community Share, resembled the more common classroom speech genre, Laura attempted to encourage students to adopt an additional one during Book Club. Through the use of these student-led small groups, Laura attempted to change their interaction patterns by providing students time for, and instruction about, self-directed discussions. As the year progressed, she hoped they would engage in a speech genre that more closely resembled mature readers' conversations about books than that of traditional reading groups.

How Laura Interacted With Children Changed the Meaning of "Reading"

Through the combination of changes identified above, Laura also changed her role as teacher guiding children through their zones of proximal development. During total-class discussions, she modeled types of both written and oral responses she wanted students to adopt. She monitored these as children responded during Community Share and Book Club and in their logs. In addition, she allowed students opportunities to interact on their own in Book Club. These student-led discussions provided students occasions in which they could practice types of response and help one another develop a speech genre not normally included during classroom reading instruction. The students became responsible for the direction and content of their interactions, thus removing the teacher domination found in most classrooms. Through Laura's leadership, these changes occurred.

Learning the New Meaning

Each year, children successfully adjust to the new expectations of their classroom teacher. Laura began the year as most teachers do by outlining her expectations for the students. Perhaps the most dramatic change Laura expected from the students was to this new meaning of "reading" as interaction between the reader and the text and between the reader and his or her peers. For Laura to have students successfully alter their definition, she had to provide many experiences with the new meaning.

For the first half of the unit, the target group appeared to be struggling with this new meaning of reading. However, as they continued to read, write, and discuss their ideas about texts, they seemed to be adjusting to it and engaged

increasingly more in discussions. At the same time, their trajectory for change altered when they regrouped. As members of other Book Clubs, they did not interact in the ways they had begun to develop as a group. There are at least two interrelated reasons for this. The first has to do with the instructional focus for the total class; the other with the context within each Book Club group. This chapter continues by discussing each of these, then describes some of the more traditional vestiges that remained.

Students Redefining Reading While Interacting Over Books

As described above, Laura's changes in the reading program affected four different components: (a) the books the children read, (b) the activities associated with reading in which they engaged, (c) the small-group interactions called Book Club, and (d) Laura's role as teacher. This chapter continues by discussing each of these as implemented in Laura's classroom.

What they read. The use of trade books instead of a basal was never discussed in Laura's class. As she had in the past, she simply began the year by having children read books. While there was a set of basal readers in her closet, she never opened it. The children in her class only experienced reading books, never the basal and the accompanying work sheets.

How they responded to the reading. As Laura began the reading program, she introduced new terms regarding the reading process. She defined the beginning of the process as "stepping into the world of the book." Laura connected this new term to a strategy with which they were already familiar, prediction; but at the same time, instead of treating prediction as an isolated skill, she linked it to the act of reading. Students were not predicting to come up

with some answer written in a teacher's edition. They were predicting, based on characteristics of the book, to help them make decisions about what they were about to read. Laura accepted all predictions, allowing children time to modify these as they wished.

As she progressed through the unit, Laura continued to introduce new stages in the reading process and connect them to familiar experiences for the children. The instructional focus throughout the beginning was on the idea of reading as process and providing the students with a language to discuss it. However, Laura did not end her efforts to change the students' thinking about reading with this. Reading logs played a key role as well.

As described in Chapter Four, the reading logs contained very specific prompts and unlined pages, eliciting personal reactions or interests during the section of the unit on Japan. Laura's focus during instruction was on students' recording sections of the book they found interesting. She stressed how they could write and draw representations from the reading. She modeled this and incorporated such student responses into her lessons. In addition, she suggested students use these entries as the bases for their discussions in Book Club.

How they interacted over text. In addition to other changes, Laura wanted to incorporate a new speech genre for Book Club that was closer to the interaction patterns mature readers use when discussing books. In such settings, mature readers often build on one another's ideas, debate differences of opinion, and share personal reactions to the texts. Such a pattern differed significantly from the one most commonly found in classrooms.

To introduce this new pattern, Laura began by having children share what

they had written in their logs. This sharing led to children introducing multiple topics for discussion. However, as evidenced in Chapter Five, the students did not know what to do when confronted with such varied ideas. Instead of building on everyone's ideas, they allowed one or two to dominate.

To help foster better interactions, Laura modeled how she wanted them to interact, viewed video tapes of Book Clubs interacting and critiqued transcripts with the students. As the unit progressed, this seemed to help because by the end of the section on Japan the target group had indeed learned to listen more to one another's ideas and build on them. They were capable of debating issues without attacking individual students.

Laura's role as teacher. During the first half of the unit, Laura managed instruction with this change in the context as the ultimate determiner of instruction. She balanced the types of responses she encouraged students to use, the four components of the program (instruction, Community Share, Book Club, and writing/representing), and the reading selections. Students had several opportunities to practice the new speech genres and activities Laura had introduced.

Old language patterns always present. While Laura did much to alter the students definition of "reading," the inclusion of new interactional patterns requires expanding the teacher's knowledge and experiences as well (Florio-Ruane, Mosenthal, Denyer, Harris & Kirschner, 1990), so vestiges of traditional practice also remained. For example, the overall interactional pattern in Laura's classroom varied. While Laura used Book Clubs for student-led conversations about books, during instruction and often for Community Share, Laura remained

in control of the discussion flow. She questioned students, gathered their responses, and summarized main ideas. Thus, the speech genre with which children were most familiar was maintained.

In addition, other vestiges of traditional practice remained. For example, Laura cautioned students to include all members during Book Club meetings. She often asked them whether they had "gone all the way around." Students may have interpreted such a question as a request for a round-robin interactional style.

Yet, despite some evidence of more conventional interactions, Book Clubs during the first half of the unit came to resemble the kinds of conversations Laura had hoped to see. Such changes may be traced to her diligent efforts during instruction to change students' definition of reading from working with controlled texts and isolated skills to writing and discussing ideas gained from reading a novel or picture book.

A Change in Instructional Focus

As the class moved into the fourth book, Number the Stars, Laura adjusted the instructional focus. As already described in Chapter Five, many factors changed in Laura's classroom at this time. One of these was the increased number of days substitute teachers taught the class. Laura soon realized that these teachers maintained a more traditional definition of reading. When they attempted to teach the class following Laura's new meanings, they frequently failed. To adjust to this, Laura returned the instructional focus to the skills and strategies outlined in the district's curriculum guide. Further, when Laura returned to her class, she had to maintain some continuity from lesson to

lesson. As a result of these changes, her focus often rested on the skills and strategies associated with reading as well. Therefore, students' experiences began to resemble more closely their prior histories with reading, thus reinforcing their previous definitions of "reading."

As I focus on issues related to students' experiences with their fourth book, I again discuss: (a) the selections the students read, (b) the activities in which they participated, (c) the interactions in which they engaged, and (d) the role of the teacher.

<u>What they read</u>. Laura incorporated other readings in addition to the novel <u>Number the Stars</u>, including <u>Weekly Readers</u> and a story related to the Thanksgiving holiday. These additional readings were selected from other sources, though never from a basal. Laura continued to select texts that were authentic sources. Therefore, the students' reading experiences involved engagement with texts written to convey meaning, not skills.

<u>What they did</u>. Despite the continued use of trade books and other authentic reading material, the activities associated with these selections resembled those from basal workbooks. The activities Laura incorporated in her lessons included predicting, summarizing, and answering questions. Despite the continued use of reading logs, Laura or the substitute teachers assigned the topic. Therefore, student activities associated with reading frequently returned to more traditional forms.

<u>How they interacted</u>. The student-led discussions, Book Club, were significantly controlled. First, the log entries, which served as a basis for discussions in the previous section of the unit, were frequently confined to

predictions or summaries of the text. Because of this, students may have assumed they could not introduce other ideas stemming from their personal response to the book. As a result, students used Book Club as a time to read their logs but not to interact over them.

Second, to prompt more interaction, Laura encouraged students to ask one another questions. However, much like the teachers Saul (1989) and Eeds and Wells (1989) studied, they adopted teacher-like behavior, asking formulaic questions beginning with "Why?" in routinized ways. In many ways these were like the questions they had observed teachers asking them for their five or six years of schooling. Their questions seldom derived from legitimate issues they wanted clarified. On the few occasions when a student did ask a sincere question, more interaction resulted.

Finally, on days when the substitute teachers were there, Laura assigned specific topics for discussion. Further hampering any chances of sustained interactions about the book, substitute teachers frequently did not understand the purposes of these groups, could not provide the still necessary guidance and modeling when interactions broke down, and often ended them when the noise level rose.

How the teacher interacted. Laura had modified her program because of the number of substitute teachers who maintained the traditional meaning for reading. To help them more easily succeed in classroom management, Laura selected activities and sometimes specific reading materials that would facilitate classroom supervision. Thus, the sequencing of reading and activities fit a coherent managerial plan; however, it had two less fortunate side effects. First,

this often created discontinuity with discussions of the primary novel, Number the Stars, which may have led to an emphasis on what happened in the text. Second, the activities themselves often were created to elicit a convergence of ideas rather than encourage individual response and its inherent diversity. In addition, when the substitute teachers interacted with children, they often adopted the more teacher-dominated role. Thus, despite continued use of authentic material, the substitute teachers frequently reestablished a social context that resembled more traditional meanings for reading.

While the change in instructional focus may have been instrumental to changes in how students read, recorded ideas, and discussed the text, the context within the Book Club contributed as well.

Groups Coming Together to Discuss Text

Early in the year, the five case study students progressed steadily as they attempted to interact over text. While they struggled initially with ways to let everyone participate and they sometimes deviated from the task, they generally spent their time discussing issues from their logs or other ideas related to the books. Not all students had the same opportunities to share in the group. Not all students' ideas were always valued. However, the group appeared to sincerely adopt the new definition of reading as one that included discussing individuals' ideas and interpretations about text. Even though the group had much they could have improved, they had come a long way toward adopting a new speech genre for reading group discussions.

Reasons for this are varied. First, they benefitted from an instructional focus on what and how to share. More than this, however, the group appeared

to enjoy many of their discussions about books. Part of this might be attributed to the books. Bart, being of Japanese ancestry, expressed a strong desire to learn more about his heritage and appeared to like being able to discuss his recent trip to Japan. In addition, all of the case study students selected <u>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes</u> as one of their favorite books. Therefore, the group seemed interested in this book and those related to it.

Another difference between the first and second sections of the unit might have been attributal to the balance in the group. As Laura selected groupings, she considered Cohen's (1986) different statuses. By including students with varied status, perhaps they each brought their strengths to the discussions. Even though some students, like Bart and Chris, dominated, others, like Lissa and Mondo, continued to participate despite repeated failures to attract the group's attention. No student appeared daunted by the dominance of some others. Perhaps this was due to individuals recognizing strengths each had brought to the group. Instead of attributing the relative success of this group early in the year to any one of these reasons, it is more likely that it was the combination of factors that helped them come together as a group as they engaged in conversation about texts.

However, despite the success of the first half of the unit, the Book Clubs did not appear to interact in ways Laura had hoped when they moved to the fourth book, <u>Number the Stars</u>. In addition to how the class came to define "reading" through instruction, the reasons for this might also be found in the context of individual Book Clubs. When students began reading the fourth book, Laura had decided to try to improve interactions by changing group composition.

As a result, the five case study students were separated to contribute to two other groups. At the time, this appeared to be a reasonable decision. However, after examining the results, the difficulties this created become clear.

As students struggled for five weeks within their Book Club, they came to adopt a group understanding of what the new expectations were. They had made progress and, theoretically, could have continued in this direction. However, when they changed membership of their Book Clubs, even though they shared some of the same members, they had to renegotiate a group understanding of the new definition of reading, as well as learn how this new group could interact together. As we might expect, in the five weeks they had participated in Book Club, the students had not yet had time to internalize and own this new meaning of reading. To do this, they needed the continued modeling, scaffolding and reinforcement that Laura had provided for the first half of the unit. However, as already described above, the instructional focus shifted from the new meaning of reading to the more traditional focus on strategies and skills. At the very time students needed the most reinforcement, a situation unrelated to Laura's intended program caused her to remove this support.

However, this might not have been the only factor. When Laura regrouped students, she tried to use the same criteria but discovered that for some students she could not identify the necessary status to help them succeed. Anthony and Roger had no apparent status with their peers. This could have hampered interactions in Bart's group. For Chris's group, there was an unusual number of students with high peer status. Perhaps this led to more competition than cooperation in Book Club meetings

Another reason for the change in interactions within Book Clubs might have been the novel itself. Both Bart and Chris listed Number the Stars as their least favorite book of the year. During Book Club, Leroy also expressed strong disapproval of the book. Their feelings about the book may have been the cause or the result of the difficult group interactions. Even though Martisse and Lissa stated they liked the book, such strong negative feelings about it may have altered group interactions and made it difficult for any member to move the discussions beyond the basic assignments.

<div align="center">A Return to the Questions</div>

The events in Laura's classroom over the course of the semester illustrate several factors of the theory and related research questions.

How Will Elementary Students Respond to Text in Student-led Discussion Groups?

Analysis of the data from this study revealed that when students participated in a literature-based program in which the focus frequently encouraged personal response, they introduced and developed themes and topics interesting to them; however, when the components of the instructional context consistently stressed skills and/or strategies, students responded with text-based summaries. Such changes in response support Rosenblatt's (1938) aesthetic and efferent distinctions in purposes for reading. When Laura encouraged students to respond aesthetically to the experience of reading the text, they explored several key issues the text introduced. The case study group consistently explored: (a) the effects of war, (b) interpersonal relationships, and (c) cultural differences. The multiplicity of ideas regarding three different themes provoked

lively interactions about ideas presented by reading the text. Continued reading, writing, and discussions centered on these themes enabled the group to tie them together during a synthesis Book Club meeting.

At the same time, when Laura pursued the efferent stance by asking students to record predictions or summaries, a stance implying they look for specific events in the text, responses across students remained remarkably similar. Book Club interactions became routinized, resembling round-robin reading groups. Seldom did students engage in debates about ideas. Book Clubs discussing the early chapters of the book were remarkably similar to those at the end, indicating little growth in students' ability to interact like mature readers discussing texts.

Vygotsky's theories about the relationship between thought and language help explain these differences. During the first section of the unit, Laura used words like "share your ideas" or "relate what you find important." Such language enabled students to focus on their own response, not on relating events from the text. During the second section, the language emphasized the text with such terms as "predict" or "summarize." In addition, Laura frequently referred to "going around in your group" which might have triggered images of former reading groups. This language influenced how children thought about their reading experiences. As Bakhtin (1986) noted, words are defined in social settings. Children defined their reading based on the social context of the classroom. This context changed, so they modified their definitions based on the language Laura used when she referred to reading. Their modified definition influenced their interactions in Book Club.

Thus, findings from this study indicate that language associated with the aesthetic stance will more likely prompt students to reveal what they bring to or take from the meaning-making process of reading, whereas language associated with an efferent stance appears to minimize this. Therefore, if the teacher's purpose is to elaborate and connect student feelings, thoughts, or concerns regarding literature, she should incorporate language promoting an aesthetic stance. If her purpose is to provide students opportunities to master skills and strategies to enhance their own reading abilities, she should include language promoting an efferent stance. A balanced reading program would include both (Frippon, 1991; Heibert & Fisher, 1991).

What Roles Will Students Adopt As They Interact in Groups?

Cohen (1986) noted that some students will frequently dominate small group interactions because they have greater status than their peers. Such an idea links to Mead's notions about the "generalized other" (Mead, 1934). Mead argued that when we interact with others, we constantly attempt to read their reactions, trying to see ourselves as they see us. Cohen's findings that student status among peers influences small group discussions demonstrates how individuals' perceptions of self, drawn from the relationship established while interacting with others, affects the conversation.

Throughout the semester, all three Book Club groups I studied displayed interactional patterns in which certain group members dominated. During the first section, Bart and Chris tended to control topic choice as Martisse controlled the conversational flow. These three frequently ignored or silenced Lissa and Mondo. Bart appeared to elaborate his ideas because Chris seemed to enjoy

Bart's answers, imitating what he wrote or drew. This contributed to Bart's sense of self as the leader with ideas to build upon. Chris acknowledged Bart's superior academic standing so he followed Bart's lead for discussions, thus indicating he respected Bart's status to a degree. At the same time, Chris had peer status equal to Bart's so he could also challenge Bart's answers, particularly if he wanted Martisse's attention. All the students appeared to recognize Martisse's academic status since none challenged her ability to conduct the conversational flow. Neither Lissa nor Mondo had sufficient status to direct the discussion. However, neither stopped participating either. Perhaps this is because Lissa's ideas continued to emerge through other children's comments both in Book Club and Community Share. Mondo's ideas frequently were modified and included in the discussions, contributing to his own image as one whose ideas were valued.

With the reconstitution of the groups, student statuses shifted because of new group members. Bart lost Chris as his fan. The new members of Bart's group, Anthony and Roger, did not appear to follow his lead. For example, unlike Chris, neither boy copied what Bart wrote in his log, nor did they respond to his ideas with the enthusiasm that Chris did. Although Bart continued to begin Book Club meetings by reading his log, no one encouraged him to expand the ideas he introduced. At the same time, Martisse's role as conductor was not as necessary because students had adopted a round-robin style of interaction. They did not perceive a need to have one group member direct their interactions.

In Chris's group, Leroy appeared to have more peer status than Chris. This prompted Chris to follow Leroy's lead as he had Bart's earlier. The

difference became critical. Bart had usually introduced the topics of conversation to issues related to the book while Leroy tended to address only those topics of personal interest and often unrelated to the book. Leroy often refused to answer peer questions, made comments indicating his distaste for the book in general, and indicated a dislike for illustrating specific scenes from the book. The results of Chris's support for Leroy's leadership were frequent periods of silence within the group, student-read log entries with little interaction, and smaller groups of students discussing issues unrelated to the book.

Therefore, this study supports Cohen's findings that students with varied statuses can dominate and thus influence the direction of the group's discussion. Further, a social constructivist perspective helps illuminate our understanding that these statuses are not static, but dynamic, depending on the composition of the group. While some might argue for assigning roles to students (e.g. Slavin, 1983) a teacher needs to monitor constantly student interactions to assess how statuses influence discussions. For example, Chris maintained his peer status throughout the semester; however, his status was slightly below both Bart's and Leroy's. As he interacted in Book Club, assessing his standing through the eyes of others in the group, he made decisions about his behavior based on who had more status. When this was Bart, he followed Bart's lead to interact over text. When it was Leroy, Chris followed his lead to interact over issues unrelated to text. In both situations, Chris was dominated. The difference was in his reflection of himself in another's eyes.

What Influence Will the Instructional Context Have on Student Interactions?

Perhaps one of the most interesting findings in this study was the impact of the multiple components of the instructional context on student interactions. These components: (a) the types of learning stressed, (b) the use of multiple representations of knowledge, (c) the interactional patterns modeled and encouraged, and (d) the role of the teacher; came together to promote change in student learning. Laura's focus was on individual interests and interpretations. To encourage this, she promoted it in activities before, after, and during reading. This emphasis within the class as a whole led to changes in the group interactions. Specifically, Laura impacted the types of learning students experienced through her explicit instruction on both what and how to share during the first section of the unit which appeared to further student abilities to interact around ideas presented. When the case group first met, members were more likely to (a) dominate, (b) ignore other members, and (c) elaborate only ideas interesting to dominating members. With continued instruction, monitoring, and assigned activities highlighting personal response, the group began interacting as a whole, constructing joint arguments. When the instructional context supported personal response as the "what" and attending to one another's ideas as the "how," these students came together as a group to make meaning from text.

In contrast, during the second section of the unit, the learning emphasized prediction and summarization. Such a focus caused students to remain closely bound to the text, impatient with alternate readings and hesitant or unable to engage in lengthy discourse about the text. Further, this focus on the text

discouraged debates about ideas since the goal was to predict or summarize events already established within the text.

Just as with the interactional patterns within groups, this comparison of instructional foci demonstrates Vygotsky's belief about the relationship between thought and language. The instructional language throughout the semester developed students' thinking about reading. During the first section of the unit Laura conveyed a process approach to reading, both as a reader and as a participant within Book Club. While students occasionally predicted text events, they also explored how their own ideas and feelings were changing. For example, before reading Faithful Elephants, Laura asked students to predict what they thought the book was about, but afterward focused student attention on their feelings, resulting from the reading experience. This change as a result of reading the text helped children think about the process of response as evolving. In contrast, throughout reading Number the Stars students continued to predict and revise predictions based on the text, rarely including their own thoughts or feelings. Laura's language referred to elements of the text, not the interaction between reader and text. Her language during Number the Stars did not facilitate student thinking about reading as a process. This distinction led students to define reading and interaction over text in different ways.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Following five students as they experienced a dramatically new reading program provided significant descriptions of what they wrote and discussed, as well as how they managed their interactions. The teacher's role and the constraints upon her ability to make changes helped illuminate issues surrounding

the differences in the Book Club groups. This section of the chapter explores the implications of this work.

<u>Theoretical Implications</u>

A social constructivist theory links the close relationship among thought, language, and the social context. This study provides further evidence of this close association. When students were consistently provided instructional support through explanations and modeling of new vocabulary and new expectations, they seemed to be modifying their meaning of the word "reading." When these supports were withdrawn, prior experiences, meanings, and memories of other contexts appeared to override new ones. The social context of the classroom and the interactions between the teacher and the students highly influenced how the students interacted with text.

Such a study highlights the complexity of social interactions. Every teacher inherits a group of students with multiple social experiences that influence how they understand school subjects and expectations. They have adopted particular speech genres for school, home, play, and all the other social activities in which they engage. Since switching from one to another speech genre is often subtle and rarely conscious, trying to alter these is difficult, but not impossible.

<u>Practical Implications: Changing the Definition of "Reading"</u>

The call for educational reform is a national phenomenon. Many groups have their answers for how to best improve education. While such reforms may be possible, they are complex and never easy. Changing how children interact in classrooms is clearly difficult. As Cazden (1988) writes, "Unfortunately, a change

in teacher intent is not sufficient. Teachers and students alike are well practiced in lesson behavior, and talking in another way doesn't come easily" (p. 60). Such a change requires persistent, conscious effort.

While the classroom teacher may occasionally need to be absent from the classroom, maintaining the focus for change is essential. How Laura might have specifically addressed her concerns and maintained her focus with so many substitute teachers is not clear. This was a genuine dilemma. However, the results of returning to a more traditional approach proved problematic for the students and impaired their ability to alter their definition of "reading."

Instead, classroom teachers need support to keep the desired changes in focus. Perhaps an earlier agreement to hire a permanent substitute teacher might have prevented the early damage created by those who still adopted traditional definitions of "reading." Perhaps a commitment from the district to educate the substitute teachers about Laura's new reading program would have helped. Perhaps the inclusion of parent volunteers who understood the program might have facilitated the transitions. Regardless of which alternative the school adopted, Laura needed additional support to alter children's definition of reading. If the district appreciated her professional involvement at local, state, and national levels, it had a responsibility to help her maintain her program while she was away. School districts truly hoping for change need to understand the constraints placed on teachers, recognize when other professional demands (often created by the school district itself) may interfere, and realize the classroom teacher cannot create change without additional support.

A second implication relates to teacher education. Those of us who

propose such major changes in instruction need to consider the depth of the reforms we propose. To ask teachers to modify their reading instruction by including literature and focusing on personal response requires fundamental changes not only in the context of a classroom, but also all prior educational contexts of which students and teachers have been a part. Constraints limiting individual teachers must be considered. These include not only the teacher's role within the classroom, but outside as he or she participates in other professional activities. As teacher educators, we must consider the ramifications of such reform, as well as the required effort. All reform takes time, but reform requiring such integral changes requires not just time, but continual reassessment and adjustment. Teachers will need support if we expect them to modify decades of educational practice.

A third implication of this work relates to the problem of teaching reading while using literature. Regardless of the specific problems that Laura encountered while having the class read the fourth book, at some point she had to address the need to teach those skills and strategies dictated by the district's curriculum. Perhaps it was less the inclusion of these in the reading program than the fact that they were included all at once that proved problematic. Such reading programs need to address curriculum mandates, but with more balance. As L. M. Anderson (1989) argued, programs calling for significant modifications in current practice need to help teachers consider how the new program fits with existing school objectives. The literature-based reading program Laura initiated might have been more effective if it included plans for how to incorporate the required skills and strategies throughout the year.

Finally, this study raises two implications for educational research. First, the length of time devoted to conducting this study. In comparison to prior educational research, one semester is a long time to collect data. However, many questions remain that might have been answered had I continued to collect data. For example, how did students interact around text when Laura's schedule allowed her more time back in her classroom? How might the five case study students have interacted later in the year if they were part of the same group again? As educational researchers, we need to recognize that reform takes considerable time. One semester is not sufficient time to evaluate the success of any change. Researchers exploring reform within instructional contexts need to expand their time frames of data collection to even begin to understand the ramifications of change.

Second, as researchers, we are often hesitant to present evidence that a program did not work. Presenting the data from this study was no exception. However, it was the evidence from this section of the unit when students were not interacting well in groups that helped illuminate what was working in the first section. Had the study ended within the first month, making such changes in reading instruction might have appeared easy. Had it taken place only within the last section of the unit, it would have presented a strong case that such interactions in student-led groups around text were impossible. It was only through the presentation of both sections that we could come to understand the successful and unsuccessful components of the program. Other researchers need to consider how reporting instructional reforms when they are not working also

instructs the educational community, sometimes even more than reports of successful changes.

Limitations of the Study

After data collection, analysis, and reporting the results, a researcher realizes that even the best planned study has limitations. This one is no exception. This section describes the limitations of this study: (a) the number of students studied, (b) the timing of the study, (c) the selections students read, (d) the omission of the participant's definition of reading in their own words before the study began, and (e) the close working relationship between the teacher and researcher.

The first limiting factor of this study was the fact that I studied only one group of five students. Such a focus prohibited any ability to describe the reading experience for the rest of the class. Whether the interactional patterns, the roles group members adopted, or the impact of instruction was in any way similar for the rest of the students is unknown. A larger number of students might have provided more data to explain how this fifth-grade class interacted over text for this first semester.

A second limiting factor was the timing of the study. As mentioned above, this study leaves many questions unanswered that more time within the classroom might have provided. One semester was not sufficient time to understand the results of Laura's attempts to change reading instruction. In addition to this, however, collecting data at that particular time of year was also limitiing.

While beginning as the school year commenced provided interesting data

about the initial implementation of the literature-based program, it also occurred during one of the most disruptive times of the school year due to several holidays distracting children from school work: Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. A ten-week period during the winter might have had fewer disruptions to the schedule and to students' thinking.

Researchers have found that children respond differently to texts they select themselves (Purves & Beach, 1972; Sims, 1983). Laura provided her students choices of topics to read about during this unit, but she selected the specific book and the entire class read the same selections. Therefore, the findings of this study are limited because student interactions and roles might have been altered if they were reading materials they selected themselves.

One of the characteristics of educational research drawn from a naturalistic tradition is that issues emerge during data collection and analysis that prove important to the final report. One such issue was how these students defined "reading." If I had foreseen how important this was, I would have interviewed the five students before school began and during the year to attempt to capture their meaning of "reading." While such reporting is limited, their individual perceptions of reading throughout the year would have enhanced the findings of this study. Thus, the third limitation of the study is that it did not attempt to capture this.

Perhaps a final limitation of the study is the close working relationship I had with Laura. As part of a larger study, we met regularly to discuss the reading program. In these meetings, I contributed ideas about instruction, grouping, and activities. Perhaps a researcher less involved with the specifics of

the program might have gained a distance I could not. While such closeness provided me with considerable information about the program and Laura's thinking, it might have influenced my own thinking as well.

Questions for Future Research

Like all research, this study leaves the investigator with more questions than answers. This chapter concludes with suggestions for future research.

The first question for future research emerged from what appeared to be a close connection between students' written and oral texts. Throughout the entire semester, students maintained reading logs in which they wrote or represented through drawings and/or conceptual maps issues they discussed in Book Club. While there is considerable research about: (a) the role of oral language on emergent literacy (cf. Sulzby, 1987; Teale, 1987), (b) the success or failure during early schooling experiences (cf. Heath, 1983; Micheals, 1981), (c) the secondary students as they read content area materials (cf. Alvermann & Hayes, 1989), and (d) the influence on reading comprehension (Stitch, 1984), further research exploring this relationship as students in upper elementary grades construct meaning from text is needed.

A second question leads directly from the dilemma Laura encountered when attempting to change students' definitions of reading but also remain professionally active in her district and within state and national organizations. As reforms call for greater teacher professional involvement in decision making at the district, state, and national level, further research needs to explore how this impacts classroom instruction. If districts are trying to implement the called-for changes in curriculum, what responsibilities do they have to support this?

Should substitute teachers be educated to help? What about the involvement of parent volunteers in such settings? Frequently the best teachers in a district are the ones pursuing educational reform. Research should investigate how such teachers can maintain quality education within their classroom while also making contributions to the field.

The current research was designed as a case of five students. To build a more complete picture of how the relationship established among the members of this group represents that of other elementary students in general, replications with variations exploring students' oral and written discourse in situations including changes of texts (e.g., other genres or self-selected), contexts (e.g., required vs. optional reading), age levels, reading abilities, and so forth are needed.

Another question raised by this study is: What changes might result if the teacher implemented a more balanced reading program? Supporters of literature response argue that adopting an efferent stance with literary art hampers the reading experience. At the same time, young readers need support and instruction on skills and strategies if they are to improve their reading ability. This study suggests that such positions that dichotomize the reading experience may actually be misleading. Rather than establishing an "either or" situation, the question might be how to combine the two stances. In this study, when students focused on one or the other, the dominant school genre seemed to supercede important instructional issues of how to balance these two extremes. If the classroom teacher did plan a literature-based reading program with reading skills and strategies interspersed with personal response, how might children then

respond? What role might Book Clubs play in such a setting? Perhaps such small student-led groups might be used only when the teacher encouraged personal response. Perhaps other groupings might better facilitate student proficiency of reading skills and strategies.

Another issue raised by this study relates to the selection of books. For this study, all the children read the same books. How would students interact with self-selected books? How might their interactions have changed if they had selected the books and met in groups according to the book read? Researchers have found that children react differently to books they have chosen (Purves & Beach, 1972; Sims, 1983). Such reactions would probably alter group interactions, but how would such self-selected books fit into a reading program?

Finally, this study leads me to question how other age levels of children might interact when participating in a similar program. These were fifth-graders. Could younger children take responsibility to interact around text in small groups? What about older children? Middle school, when children appear much more peer conscious, brings new issues regardinging student interactions. In Chris's group, peer status was the most prevalent. Yet, this group appeared totally ineffective at times. Such peer influences led to a lack of participation for some students and appeared to influence Chris significantly. Would this happen, or perhaps be magnified, with middle school-aged children as well?

Clearly, several issues remain for future work. Since the movement for literature-based reading instruction is relatively new, we have much to learn about how to effectively implement this in classrooms.

APPENDICES

Field Notes
October 8, 1990
Laura Pardo's room
Note taker: Susan McMahon
Sequencing

[Note: I had set up video camera and video taped this lesson. I took some notes, but had to take the camera to Debbie's room, talked briefly to the principal and watched the camera.]

Laura is reviewing the events in the story by listing key events on her easel in the front. Students are sitting on the rug in the front. On the sheet of paper. Laura has written:
[Number indicates final student ranking of events.]

(5) Sadako gets Leukemia
(7) Sadako mails paper cranes
(6) Sadako meets Kenji
(8) Kenji dies
(2) Sadako's grandmother dies
[Laura points out the possessive in this phrase and explains when to use it.]
(1) U.S. drops atomic bomb
(4) Sadako is running to school and she gets dizzy
[Later Martisse asks Laura to change this to "in school" instead of "to school"]
(3) Sadako gets chosen for race

Laura then asks students to decide what happened first in this list. Students agree readily about numbers one and two but disagree about number three. Laura suggests they return to the book and check this.

When students have finished ordering the list, Laura asked whether there were any disagreements or changes. There were none. She then directed them to return to their seats, get their reading logs, and put their spelling away. She then directed them to divide a blank sheet without lines in their reading logs into four equal sections. She drew this on the board. She then told them to draw a sequence of events in their logs. [After students began working she came over to me and said that students were tending to select two of the events they mentioned as a group and two they found themselves to draw about. She also mentioned that Bart told her he drew Sadako in a wheelchair with her eyes crossed to show she was dizzy.]

Laura then suggested that each group share what they drew. The target group is not talking together. Each one is sharing but the others are not listening. Bart and Mondo are talking together. Precious is twisting her hair. Then Bart and Lissa were talking while Mondo was sharing what he drew. Martisse then began looking at herself in the mirror. Chris and Bart were snapping pencils. ["Snapping pencils" is what I use to refer to their habit of having one student hold his pencil up while the other takes his pencil and snaps it at the other. The goal seems to be to break the lead of the other's pencil.]

10:05

BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION: Sadako
PARTICIPANTS: Bart, Martisse, Mondo, Chris, Melissa
DATE: 10/01/90
TEACHER: Pardo
EDITED

1	000.5	Laura:	Ok you've got the tape today, so lets start with them on the image sign, the signs you drew. Remember how we did book club did club last time? How we talked about things? Let's talk about the things that you've drawn and why you've drawn those and if you just want to start and go around. Then let's see, today we have Bart, Chris, Martisse, Melissa, and Mondo. So why don't you go ahead and tell what what you drew and why?
2	004	Chris:	Okey-doke.
3	004	Bart:	Is it on?
4	004.5	Laura:	Yes, it's on. You can see.
5		Chris:	Go.
6	005	Bart:	All Right! Hello, I'm young MC with a story to uhm, ah I'm gonna start over. This is Bart um, / hmm, I drew um, / that um, airplane dropping a bomb on that fair. And there's dead people laying on the ground (He laughs) /// and um it it it exploded, and gas is killing them, they're all falling on the ground // and their eyes are popped out, // an' they're, an' they're, and they're dead. /// And they fell off the roller coaster,
7	011	(Chris Laughs)	
8		Bart:	Splattered (laughter by Bart).
/			
9		Martisse:	Go Chris.
10		Chris:	You through?
11		Bart:	Yeah.
12		Chris:	My name is Chris. /// I drew. I drew.
13		Martisse:	You gotta talk louder.
14	013	Chris:	I drew the story of the bomb // bomb /

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APPENDIX C

Laura's Interview Questions

1. How would you describe each of the case study students in terms of:

    a. Strengths and weaknesses? (academic as well as others)

    b. Interactional patterns with peers? With you? With other adults in the building?

    c. What is your communication with the parents like? How often do you speak with them? How often do you see them at school? Do you see both parents?

    d. Any other information, such as the condition of their health, their general appearance, their attendance, etc.

2. How would you describe the class in general?
    a. Academic abilities?
    b. Interaction patterns?

3. What about the school in general?
    a. Number of children on free lunch?
    b. Age of the building?
    c. Number of students in the school?
    d. Ethnic breakdown of the school? Of your class?
    e. Gender breakdown of the school? Of your class?
    f. Primary employment of the students' parents?
    g. Average income level of families in the district?
    h. School budget for supplies? For curriculum materials?
    i. External support for children with special needs?
    j. Turn-over of student population?
    k. School requirements for reading? For writing?

4. How many years teaching experience do you have? At what levels and grades?

Student Interview Questions

Personal

1. Tell me some things about yourself.
   a. Any brothers or sisters?
   b. Are they older or younger?
   c. Do you get along with them?
   d. Do you do things together? (Like play games, go to movies)

2. What kinds of things do you like to do with your friends?

3. What do like to do in your spare time?
   a. Play games? What kind?
   b. Go to movies? What kind? Which ones are your favorites?
   c. Listen to music? What kind? Who is your favorite?

4. Do you ever travel with your family? Where have you been?

School

1. What do you like about school? What is your favorite subject or time of the day?

2. What don't you like about school? What is your least favorite subject or time of the day?

3. Do you like reading? Do you ever read at home? What kinds of things do you like to read? Why?

4. Do you ever talk about what you are reading with anyone?

5. Do you think you're a good student? (Is the work easy or hard? Is it fun? Is it boring? Do you get your work finished?)

6. Have you ever gotten into trouble in school?

Book Club

1. Of the books we've read, which one is your favorite? Which one is your least favorite?

2. Who have you been in a Book Club with?

3. Was one of your Book Clubs better than another? Why? (What made it better?)

4.   If you could put together your own Book Club, who would be in it? Why?

5.   Is there ever a leader in your Book Club? If so, who is it and why is this person the leader? If not, why doesn't the group have a leader?

6.   Think of a Book Club discussion you thought was a good one. Why was it good?

7.   Think of a Book Club discussion you thought wasn't very good. Why wasn't it good?

8.   What happens when Book club discussions don't go well?

9.   What can Mrs. Pardo or the people in Book Club do to help Book Clubs go better?

10.   Where do you get your ideas for your reading log?

11.   Where do you get your ideas for your drawings?

12.   Which books that we've read this year would you recommend to someone else? Who would you recommend it to? Why?

13.   We just had a war. If you could talk to President Bush or Saddam Hussein, what book that we've read this year would you suggest they read? Why?

14.   If they were here right now and you could tell them what you've learned about war this year, what would you tell them?

15.   We are beginning to think about changes in Book Club for next year. What do you think we should do the same? What should we change? Why?

APPENDIX E

LESSON PLANS FOR <u>NUMBER THE STARS</u>

[These plans begin with November 5, before students began reading <u>Number the Stars</u>, because this was the first meeting after the class finished the section of the unit on Japan. Beginning with this date helps illustrate the number of interruptions in the reading of this book and the school day. These were taken from Laura's plan book. I tried to keep them close to what she had written, but wrote out abbreviations that might be confusing. Please note that these plans were written for Laura alone or occasionally a substitute teacher. The intent is for the reader to gain some sense of the interruptions in the schedule, not to in any way characterize Laura's teaching. Plan books hold sketches of teacher's ideas for plans, not complete goals, methods, or intentions.]

WEEK ONE

NOVEMBER 5:   SHARE WITH MRS. McMALLIAN'S CLASS; READ <u>THE CRANE WIFE</u>.

NOVEMBER 6:   TEACHER PLANNING -- NO SCHOOL.

NOVEMBER 7:   INTRODUCTION TO <u>NUMBER THE STARS</u>. PREDICT FROM THE TITLE AND COVER; GIVE MORE BACKGROUND INFORMATION; READ SOME PREDICTIONS.

NOVEMBER 8:   BOOK CLUB -- WHY THE SOLDIER? HOW WERE THE GIRLS FEELING -- IN LOGS. LESSON -- SETTING; HOW THE WAR FITS TOGETHER.

NOVEMBER 9:   PREDICT CHAPTER 2 IN LOGS; READ; WRITE IN LOGS; BOOK CLUB. (LAURA OUT IN AFTERNOON -- "SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT")

WEEK TWO

NOVEMBER 12:   (SUBSTITUTE TEACHER) <u>THE LITTLE EMPRESS</u> -- TELL THEM IT'S A CHINESE FOLK TALE AND PREDICT WHAT IT WILL BE ABOUT. PASS OUT BOOKS. READ. DISCUSS QUESTIONS ON PAGE 141. ASSIGN IF YOU DESIRE.

NOVEMBER 13:   PREDICT CHAPTER 2 IN LOG; SHARE; READ SILENTLY; WRITE WHAT IT WAS ABOUT IN LOG. BOOK CLUB -- DISCUSS THE WAR.

NOVEMBER 14:   USA TODAY -- READ THE ARTICLE TOGETHER. DO
                ACTIVITY SHEET INDIVIDUALLY.

NOVEMBER 15:   (SUBSTITUTE TEACHER) WEEKLY READER -- DO THE
                NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ON PP 4 & 5; READ ALOUD USING
                JOURNALS AND DISCUSS WORKS BEST. DO OTHER
                ARTICLES IF TIME. THEY CAN DO THE BACK ALSO.

NOVEMBER 16:   PREDICT CHAPTER 3 AS A GROUP; READ ORALLY; IN
                LOG -- WRITE A SUMMARY; HOW TO QUESTION, DO IT
                ORALLY; TRY IN BOOK CLUB.

WEEK THREE

NOVEMBER 19:   PARTNER READ CHAPTER 4; WRITE SUMMARY IN LOG;
                REVIEW QUESTIONING; BOOK CLUB.

NOVEMBER 20:   (SUBSTITUTE TEACHER IN THE ROOM. THIS WAS THE
                DAY I TAUGHT.) ORALLY BRAINSTORM FROM THE
                TITLE P. 39; READ CHAPTER 5 PP 39-49; IN LOGS, "WHAT
                WILL THE REST OF THE STORY BE ABOUT?" BOOK
                CLUB OR WHOLE GROUP.

NOVEMBER 21:   HOW MANY DAYS TO AMERICA?; PREDICT; READ; LOG
                -- DIFFERENCES IN THANKSGIVINGS; BOOK CLUB?

NOVEMBER 22   THANKSGIVING VACATION
& 23:

WEEK FOUR

NOVEMBER 26:   HOW MANY DAYS TO AMERICA?; PREDICT; READ;
                LOGS -- HOW DIFFERENT; BOOK CLUB. (THERE WAS A
                CONFLICT THE DAY BEFORE THANKSGIVING
                VACATION, NOVEMBER 21, SO THE CLASS COULD NOT
                DO AS LAURA HAD PLANNED. THEREFORE, SHE
                IMPLEMENTED THIS LESSON THE FOLLOWING
                MONDAY.)

NOVEMBER 27:   HOW MANY DAYS TO AMERICA?; SIMILAR TO OUR
                THANKSGIVING; BOOK CLUB GROUP NEEDS TO
                DECIDE ON BEST; SHARE WITH WHOLE GROUP.

NOVEMBER 28:   (SUBSTITUTE TEACHER FOR THE NEXT THREE DAYS)
                NUMBER THE STARS--REVIEW AS A GROUP CHAPTERS
                1-5; DISCUSS SETTING AS A WHOLE GROUP; IN LOGS,
                LIST AS MANY SETTINGS AS YOU CAN FROM THE
                STORY SO FAR; TELL THEM THE SETTING WILL NOW

CHANGE; READ CHAPTER 6 PP 50-59 SILENTLY; DISCUSS WHAT THE NEW SETTING IS AND HOW IT MIGHT INFLUENCE THE REST OF THE STORY.

NOVEMBER 29: (SUBSTITUTE TEACHER) PREDICT FROM THE TITLE OF CHAPTER 7 WHAT IT WILL BE ABOUT; READ ALOUD -- ROUND-ROBIN PP 60-66; DESCRIBE THE HOUSE BY THE SEA IN LOGS; BOOK CLUB -- DISCUSS PREDICTION AND REALITY. ASK QUESTIONS IN BOOK CLUB.

NOVEMBER 30: (SUBSTITUTE TEACHER) PREDICT IN WHOLE GROUP WHO'S DEATH IN TITLE CHAPTER 8; READ CHAPTER 8 PP 67-73 WITH A PARTNER; WRITE IN LOGS WHAT YOU FOUND OUT IN CHAPTER 8. WHO IS AUNT BORTE? WHAT'S GOING ON?

WEEK FIVE

DECEMBER 3: REVIEW WHAT'S HAPPENED IN THE LAST THREE DAYS. PREDICT CHAPTER 9 P 74. WHO'S LYING? ROUND ROBIN PP 74-81. WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT? PREDICT IN LOGS. ANNEMARIE HASN'T DONE THE BRAVE THING YET.

DECEMBER 4: (ARROWS FROM THE DAY BEFORE SHOW THAT MONDAY'S LESSON WAS IMPLEMENTED ON TUESDAY. THIS WAS PERHAPS BECAUSE LAURA RETURNED TO FIND THAT STUDENTS HAD FALLEN BEHIND IN THEIR WORK AND SHE SPENT TIME DISCUSSING THIS WITH THEM.)

DECEMBER 5: (SUBSTITUTE TEACHER)
1. PASS OUT LOGS. ANSWER THIS, "HOW DO YOU THINK THE LAST PARAGRAPH OF CHAPTER 9 WILL INFLUENCE THE REST OF THE STORY?" PREDICT THE REST OF THE BOOK.
2. READ CHAPTER 10 PP 82-87.
3. BOOK CLUB TO DISCUSS HOW PREDICTIONS ARE OR ARE NOT COMING TRUE.

DECEMBER 6: READ/REVIEW CHAPTER 10; PREDICT CHAPTER 11; READ PP 88-94; BOOK CLUB.

DECEMBER 7: SEQUENCING -- REVIEW EVENTS IN THE STORY; PUT 3 ON A PAGE; READ CHAPTER 11; ADD A FOURTH; BOOK CLUB. (NO SCHOOL IN THE AFTERNOON.)

WEEK SIX

DECEMBER 10:   1.   DO A MINOR CHARACTER MAP TOGETHER.
                2.   DO ONE IN LOGS
                3.   READ CHAPTER 12 PP 95-100; CAN YOU ADD TO
                      YOUR MAP?
                4.   BOOK CLUB

DECEMBER 11:   FIELD TRIP TO INDIAN CENTER

DECEMBER 12:   IN LOGS -- WRITE WHAT YOUR FAVORITE PART OF
                THE BOOK HAS BEEN; READ CHAPTER 13 PP 101-105;
                DRAW A SCENE WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED; BOOK
                CLUB TO TALK ABOUT LOGS.

DECEMBER 13:   IN LOGS TELL SOME TIMES WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN
                BRAVE; READ CHAPTER 14 PP 106-112 SILENTLY; WRITE
                IN LOG "WHAT DID ANNEMARIE DO THAT WAS BRAVE;
                BOOK CLUB TO DISCUSS LOGS.

DECEMBER 14:   FIELD TRIP TO SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

WEEK SEVEN

DECEMBER 17:   1.   TELL WHAT HAPPENED IN CHAPTERS 13 & 14
                2.   READ CHAPTER 15 PP 113-119
                3.   SOMETHING TO SHARE IN LOGS
                4.   BOOK CLUB

DECEMBER 18:   1.   TODAY WE FIND OUT ABOUT THE HANKY &
                      HOW ANNEMARIE HAS SAVED ELLEN'S LIFE.
                      READ CHAPTER 16 PP 120-127; WRITE IN YOUR
                      LOG AS YOU FIND THESE ANSWERS.
                2.   BOOK CLUB

DECEMBER 19:   1.   THE REST OF THE BOOK IS 2 YEARS LATER.
                      WHAT DO YOU THINK ANNEMARIE AND HER
                      FAMILY ARE DOING? WRITE IN LOGS; DRAW A
                      LINE; ONE MORE THING YOU WANT TO SHARE
                      IN BOOK CLUB
                2.   READ REST, PP 128-137
                3.   BOOK CLUB TO SHARE WHAT YOU THOUGHT
                      AND WHAT IT WAS.

DECEMBER 20:   STEPPING OUT
                      1.   LIST ON CHART PAPER THINGS THE
                            AUTHOR DID WELL, THINGS TO IMPROVE
                            ON -- WHOLE CLASS
                      2.   INDIVIDUALLY PICK PLOT, SETTING,
                            CHARACTER AND FILL OUT THINK-SHEET.

3. WITH A PARTNER OF SAME AREA, DISCUSS IDEAS.

4. ROUGH DRAFT

DECEMBER 21:

5. FINAL COPY

6. VIDEO TAPE THE SHARING

(CHRISTMAS PARTY IN THE AFTERNOON.)

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