

COMPOSITION REVISION FOR GRADE FOUR PUPILS

by

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ACCEPTED

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to compare the effect of three treatments on the writing of boys and girls in Grade Four. The enthusiasm and willing participation of District teachers reflects a growing concern regarding the effectiveness of current methods of writing instruction.

A random sampling of two boys and two girls was taken from each of the twelve classes involved in the study. The total sample of 48 pupils consisted of 24 boys and 24 girls. An examination of the Blishen socio-economic index scores computed for the sampling reveals a mean score of 49.

Twelve Grade Four teachers employed in ten Greater Victoria schools volunteered to participate in this study. Their classes were randomly assigned to one of three experimental groups. As described in the manual prepared by the researcher, the teachers were required to present ten writing experiences to their classes during the ten weeks of the treatment.

During each week of the treatment two lessons were presented. The format of the lessons was such that the time allotted for presentation by the teachers and writing by the pupils was equivalent for all three groups. In the first lesson in each week, the stimulus developed in the teachers' presentation was identical for all three experimental groups, but in the second lesson, during the teachers'

presentation, the procedure for evaluation and the method of skills instruction was different for each experimental group.

At the beginning of the study in September, two composition pre-tests (one descriptive and one narrative) were administered by the teachers. After completion of the treatment the teachers administered two post-tests (one descriptive and one narrative). The spelling on these compositions was corrected by the researcher and the tests were coded for the benefit of the researcher only. The tests were then typed to preserve the anonymity of the pupils.

Three raters were employed by the researcher to evaluate the composition tests. At a training session, the raters practiced their evaluation of the composition tests according to the criteria they had determined. An overall correlation coefficient of .77 among judgements (significant at the .01 level) was determined.

Correlated "t" tests and "F" ratios were used to summarise the findings and to test for significance. Correlated "t" tests were used to measure pupils' gains in quantity and quality of writing. There were no significant differences among treatment groups in pupils' gains. The effect of treatment and sex on pupils' gains in quantity and quality of writing was investigated using two-way analysis of covariance. "F" ratios were used to determine the significance of the effect of these two variables. No significant differences were found.

Some interesting directions were noted by the researcher in a closer analysis of the data.

In respect to quality of writing, the girls achieved consistently higher scores than the boys at the beginning of the study.

This suggested the need for further research to determine the developmental characteristics of boys and girls in written language achievement.

A series of stimulus lessons was developed by the researcher to motivate pupils to write. There is some evidence in this study to suggest that boys and girls had different composition interests. The boys in each treatment group made particularly significant gains in the quality of narrative writing whereas the girls in two treatment groups made significant gains in the quantity of descriptive writing. Further research to determine the intensity and variety of composition interests of boys and girls was recommended.

The results of this study would seem to invite further research into developmental patterns among boys and girls in building writing competence. In addition research into the intensity and variety of composition interests among boys and girls should be considered. Finally, future studies using larger samples and longer terms may well provide more conclusive findings.

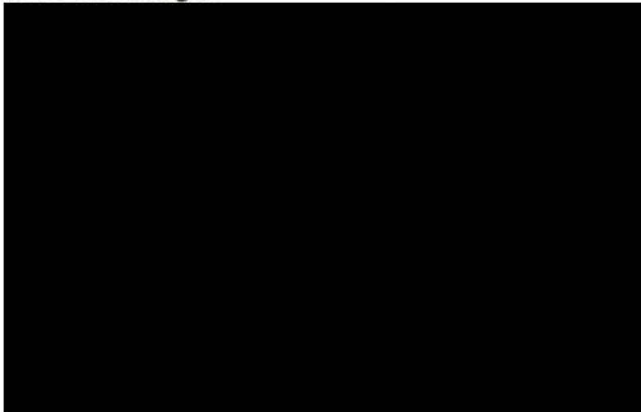


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To my family and
friends, for their
encouragement and
understanding

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Classroom teachers are becoming increasingly more aware of the limitations of their students in written language. When they consider the kinds of writing their students produce many of them are openly questioning the adage "children learn to write by writing." A common concern is becoming evident as these same teachers wonder about the direction they should give within their role of evaluating pupils' compositions and in the development of sequential writing skills programmes.

The Educational Setting for Composition Research

In the Spring of 1974, the Minister of Education for the Province of British Columbia introduced into the Legislature a "white paper", *The Public School System: Directions for Change* (Department of Education, Province of British Columbia, 1974). One of the primary concerns of this paper was the issue of functional literacy, that is the child's ability to compute, to read, to analyse situations critically, and to articulate ideas effectively.

Since that time, a project entitled "Language - B.C." was initiated by members of the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria. The primary purpose of this project was to determine the

state and effectiveness of Language Arts/English instruction in the schools of British Columbia, from Kindergarten through Grade 12. This project later became part of a Provincial Learning Assessment programme undertaken by appointed officials of the Department of Education.

Members of the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria and other members of the educational community are now working together with the Department of Education in the Provincial Assessment programme.

The present study focusses on only one aspect of functional literacy: the ability of a Grade Four pupil to articulate ideas effectively through written expression. It is apparent, as a result of the Province - wide concern regarding literacy, that the present study is topical and is likely to be useful.

In addition, it should be noted that research concerning methods of teaching students to write, to compose, is as important today as it has been in decades past. To the extent that this study is able to provide useful information with respect to the evaluative practices and teaching methods employed by teachers in the development of children's written language, some progress toward establishing a functionally literate society will be attained.

Principles in Teaching Children to Compose

By the time pupils in the elementary school reach Grade Four they have usually participated in a variety of listening and speaking experiences. The pupil is intuitively aware that the English language consists of a complex system of symbols. By Grade Four oral/aural experiences have been followed by practice in varied forms of written

expression. The purpose of the composition programme is to assist the pupil in using the complex system of symbols to communicate. From the pupil's intuitive competence with language the teacher leads the pupil to an awareness of the idiosyncracies of the writing system.

The researcher believes that there are five principles which describe the process of building a pupils' competence in writing.

First, pupils can be stimulated to write through participation in individual or group or whole class experiences. The experiences which generate the best ideas are those suiting the pupils' interests, abilities and studies.

Second, the teacher should assist pupils to appreciate their common experience through discussion. Oral sharing will build the pupils' vocabulary and generate language structures which can be used in the written communication of the experience.

Third, the actual representation of an experience should be carefully evaluated. Criteria present an enabling device by which pupils and teachers can fairly evaluate the effectiveness of the communication. Revision is the result of careful consideration of these criteria.

Fourth, the teacher should remember that the use of a variety of skills - organisational, expressive, and technical - characterises the effective writer. These skills should be taught sequentially as the need for them is evident in the pupils' writing.

Fifth, pupils should be given the opportunity to share their writing. This sharing enables pupils to demonstrate the specific techniques they have used in their writing.

As the pupil becomes more at ease in using the code of the written language, the teacher can begin to introduce controls which will assist the pupil in producing more effective pieces of written communication. The process of building writing competence then is one of taking the pupil from merely fluent writing to controlled effective written communication.

Purpose of the Study

Three aspects of the process of building competence in writing were explored in this study: fluency, evaluation, and skills instruction.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether Grade Four pupils, subjected to identical writing stimuli but differing methods of evaluation and writing skills instruction, would write differently in terms of the quantity and quality of their written language.

The Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the meanings attached to certain terms were as follows:

Composition. A composition is the product of a child's articulation of ideas and feelings through written expression.

Evaluation. Evaluation refers to the measurement of the effectiveness of the written communication according to predetermined criteria.

Fluency of writing. Fluency refers to the ease with which a student writes.

Fluent writing. Writing that flows easily and readily from the pupil.

Quantity of writing. Quantity refers to the amount of writing produced by a student, as measured by the number of words in a composition.

Quality of writing. The quality of writing is an evaluative measure of written language according to predetermined criteria relating to content and to organisational, expressive, and technical skills.

Revision. Revision is the process of rewriting a written composition to correct errors.

Socio-economic status. Gough (1946) defines socio-economic status (S.E.S.) as "the position that an individual or family occupies with reference to the prevailing average standards of the community" (p. 528). A Canadian scale for determining class distribution of groups of people in the Canadian social structure was devised by Blishen (1961) according to the combined standard scores for income and years of schooling of an individual. For this study the *Blishen Occupational Scale* was used to determine the socio-economic status of subjects.

Writing experiences. Writing experiences are the opportunities students are given to communicate their ideas and/or feelings in written form.

Hypotheses

The study was designed to compare the gains in quantity and quality of writing between boys and girls in each of the three treatment groups in the study.

In addition, the effect of treatment and sex in terms of significant differences in quantity and quality of student writing was considered.

The following hypotheses were tested in the experiment:

1. The boys in each treatment group will produce a significantly greater *quantity of writing* on the post-test than on the pre-test measures.

2. The girls in each treatment group will produce a significantly greater *quantity of writing* on the post-test than on the pre-test measures.

3. The boys in each treatment group will achieve a significantly higher *quality of writing* on the post-test than on the pre-test measures.

4. The girls in each treatment group will achieve a significantly higher *quality of writing* on the post-test than on the pre-test measures.

5. There will be no significant difference in *quantity of writing* across the three treatment groups.

6. There will be no significant difference in *quality of writing* across the three treatment groups.

7. There will be no significant difference in *quantity of writing* between boys and girls.

8. There will be no significant difference in *quality of writing* between boys and girls.

Design of the Study

Twelve Grade Four teachers employed in ten Greater Victoria schools volunteered to participate in this study. Their classes were randomly assigned to one of three experimental groups.

Two pre-tests were administered by the teachers at the beginning of the study in September. These tests were forwarded directly in their original form to the researcher.

The teachers were then required to present ten writing experiences to their classes during the ten weeks of the treatment. These were outlined in the manual (See Appendices E, F, G, H) provided by the researcher.

During each week two lessons were presented. The format of the lessons was such that the time allotted for teacher presentations and pupils' writing was equivalent for all three groups. In the first lesson in each week, the stimulus developed in the teachers' presentation was identical for all three experimental groups, but in the second lesson, during the teachers' presentation, the procedure for evaluation and the method of skills instruction was different for each experimental group.

The researcher required that a folder be kept of the pupils' writing during the experiment. These folders were examined by the researcher during a formal visit to each classroom at the conclusion of the study to ensure that appropriate evaluation procedures had been followed.

After completion of the treatment the teachers administered two post-tests. These were forwarded directly in their original form to the researcher.

Two additional pieces of data were requested: a record of pupil attendance during the ten writing experiences, and a form requiring information to compute a Blishen socio-economic index score.

Once those pupils for which there was insufficient data were removed from the study a random sampling of two boys and two girls was taken from each class.

The composition tests for these students were coded and typed in their original form except that spelling errors were corrected by the researcher. The composition tests were rated by three markers and a comparison of pupil gains within the three treatment groups in terms of quantity and quality of writing was made.

Limitations

The validity of the findings of this study was limited in the following ways:

1. This study was conducted within a particular socio-economic area as described by the range of Blishen socio-economic index scores. The generalizations arrived at from the findings will be limited to students of a similar population.
2. This study was conducted with heterogeneously grouped Grade Four classes only.
3. No tests of intellectual ability were administered to the subjects in the study.

4. The stimulus presentations for the composition tests and the treatment lessons are being used for the first time in this study.

5. Standardizing the time allotments for actual writing in all three groups may have determined the kinds of organisational skills employed by the subjects in the study.

Significance of the Study

The present study should provide some guidance with respect to several important issues in the teaching of composition at the Grade Four level:

1. The effect of regular experiences in written communication on the *quantity of writing* Grade Four pupils produce.
2. The effect of certain evaluative procedures and methods of skills instruction on the *quality of writing* Grade Four pupils achieve.
3. The differences in *quantity of pupil writing* and *quality of pupil writing* that may be attributed to a sex variable.

From this information may come some clarification of the ways in which the Grade Four teacher might or should be structuring writing experiences.

Organisation of the Study

This chapter has attempted to set the background for and to introduce the problem to be dealt with in the present study. Hypotheses were stated, terms defined, organisation of and procedure for carrying out the study discussed, and limitations and significance of such a study presented.

The remainder of the report is organised as follows:

Chapter II: Review of the Related Literature

Chapter III: Design of the Study

Chapter IV: Analysis of the Data

Chapter V: Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The first part of this chapter describes the five principles that are part of the process of building writing competence. The second part contains a report on the measurement of quantity of pupils' writing. The third part considers the measurement of quality of pupils' writing.

The Process of Building Writing Competence

A Common Experience

The first step in the sequence of building student writers is to find experiences that demand expression. Applegate (1955) suggests that:

Creation comes out of richness of some sort - experience either real or vicarious. . . . If a teacher will help a child to grow rich in experience that child will usually be more than willing to share his riches in writing (p. 7).

It is a truism that good writing grows out of well stocked minds. An experience motivates students to write because they have something to write about.

From this common experience ideas the substance of all writing expression, are formulated. Hennings and Grant in *Content and Craft* (1973) state:

The formulation of ideas is the first requisite for effective writing. An idea in its simplest form is a unique insight for a particular person as he reacts to a multitude of stimuli from the world around him and from

within himself. He studies his own perceptions and restructures existing elements of knowledge and feeling to form his own product-his idea (p. 34).

They propose that these ideas can be classified into five major categories: reflection of the world, conception of relationships existing in the world, projection of explanatory schema and designs, expression of personal view, and invention (pp. 9-11).

Any experience is capable of generating different kinds of written content which has required different kinds and even levels of thinking on the part of the student. The selection of experiences that richly motivate students to write should be based on a clear understanding of the kinds of content and thinking that is being required.

In addition, expressed interests should be an indirect key to selection of experiences that stimulate students to write. Considerable research needs to be done yet to discover the intensity of the pupils' interests and the relationship of their interests to such factors as IQ and socio-economic level.

Meckel (1963), in his review of the literature on written composition, suggested that there is evidence to support the view that assignments should be: appropriate to the age of children, based on consideration of previous experiences in writing, in harmony with composition objectives at different grade levels, and suitable in subject matter and skills required to meet pupil needs (p. 983).

It is clear that students cannot create out of a vacuum. Care must be taken to provide varied and rich experiences that will motivate expression in written form.

Processing the Experience

The second stage in building writing competence is the processing of experience through discussion. Iverson (1971) gives us James Britton's graphic description of the importance of discussion "Talk is the sea on which everything else floats" (p. 82). Strickland (1960) expresses the same point in saying "growth in the maturity of a child's oral language appears to be the key to growth in all other aspects of language" (p. 433). Loban (1963) reported from evidence obtained in his longitudinal study that children who were rated superior and above average in oral language usage were also rated above average in writing and those below average in oral language were also below average in written language. Ruddell (1966) in summarizing his own research and that of Loban writes that "achievement in oral language appears to be directly associated with written language achievement" (p. 495). There appears to be a general consensus in the literature that oral expression of thought in conversation, discussion, and informal presentations is a critical preliminary to the recording of an experience.

The actual phase of processing an experience has been given many names, for example, "pre-vision" (Carlson, p. 207) 1973, "pre-analysis" (Monk, p. 21) 1971, "talk lessons" (Hennings and Grant, p. 45) 1973. Clearly this phase provides students with opportunities to exchange ideas freely and to develop the ease and power necessary for fluent writing. Processing of experience is an effective teaching procedure to be used in advance of the writing period. As Monk (1971) concludes, "Of all basic procedures, a preanalysis of the topic is

probably the single most valuable activity a teacher and a class can undertake and has the greatest transfer value" (p. 22).

Evaluating the Written Communication

The third phase in building writing competence is the careful evaluation of the representation of an experience. This principle supports the view expressed by Carlson (1973) that "the teacher needs to evaluate a creation in some way which is growth enhancing" (p. 200). Burrows and others (1965) however, did not recommend evaluating all types of student writing:

It became evident that these two kinds of writing must be handled differently. We encouraged personal writing for the sheer fun of doing it, and we gave ample training in practical and utilitarian writing (p. 2).

Squire (1964) highlights the concern for evaluation of student writing this way: "The ability to write or to communicate at a reasonably mature level demands a consciousness of form or of organizational principles" (p. 15). McKee (1944) supports the ever present concern that harmful habits are certain to develop from inadequate attention to proofreading.

If he does not do this thinking and changing or rewriting, the chances are good that his first draft will have supplied him with harmful practice in writing poorly. It is by this correcting, improving, and changing or rewriting that the pupil learns to write well. He learns to write well, not so much by writing first drafts about many different topics as by the right sort of proofreading and rewriting of what he has written (pp. 34-35).

Research by Buxton (1958) clearly demonstrated that paper correction does influence learning and that when teachers take the time to mark errors in thinking and to call for careful revision, children

learn more effectively (Squire, 1964, p. 194). A positive attitude toward editing and proofreading should be encouraged. The desire to communicate accurately is the learner's best motivation for the development of skills necessary for successful written expression. The teacher who is able to stimulate these desires will be successful in teaching composition.

Research in terms of pupil self-evaluation was conducted by Lyman (1931) who sought to determine the extent to which pupils in Grades 6-9 could be taught to discover and correct language errors in their own compositions. He found that pupils could be taught to discover and correct three fifths of their own errors (pp. 748-757). Danowski (1966) proposed a procedure requiring the writer-critic to focus on one aspect (or technique) of writing at a time. The student author is not called on to try to evaluate fully the composition each time he reviews it (p. 249).

Evaluation based on an appropriate sequence of criteria is a necessary pre-requisite to effective and efficient revision on the part of the student writer.

Skills Instruction

As stated in the fourth principle a variety of skills characterise the student writer. Diederich, Carlton, and French of Educational Testing Service have identified five factors which seem to characterise excellence in composition: ideas, form or overall structure, diction or choice of words, flavour or style, and mechanics (Cited in Squire, 1964, p. 16). Care must be taken not to emphasise one

body of skills, for example, mechanics, at the expense of others, such as content and form. In contrast to Diederich *et al.*, Squire (1964) suggests that ordinarily creative compositions should be graded in a manner to give one third credit to each one of these elements of content, pattern (sequence), or organization, and mechanics (p. 16).

Strickland (1960) raises a basic issue in planning sound sequential programmes in composition:

The question is asked whether agreement can be reached upon a body of knowledge and a set of skills as standard at certain points in the curriculum, allowing, of course, for flexibility of planning, individual differences, and patterns of growth (p. 433).

Nelson (1965) in describing modes of teacher leadership during language instruction encourages "a diagnostic approach to individual language needs" (p. 96). The teacher of composition should possess the ability to structure the approach to meet the immediate needs of an individual or the group. Nelson (1965) recommends that teachers augment the process of building writing competence by using the pupil's products:

It involves selecting those aspects of style and content already present in the child's composition which the teacher wishes to encourage in the individuals' work and that he hopes other pupils will emulate (p. 96).

The teachers' efforts "are directed toward building into the child's consciousness a realization of what makes writing good, and the method continues to be that of appreciating the good thing when it appears" (Burrows, 1965, p. 6).

Squire (1964) cautions that sound sequential programmes in composition are not easily achieved:

To impose a rigid sequence of writing experiences that is not carefully related to the ideas and motivations of students is to risk the danger of having students do writing which seems routine and mechanical (p. 16).

The effectiveness of any sequential writing programme rests in the hands of stimulating teachers skilled in diagnosing individual needs. It is these same teachers who will promote progressive, incremental, and developmental writing programmes in their classrooms.

Sharing the Written Communication

The fifth principle recommends that real communication situations be provided for children to share their writing. Children write for an audience. As Burrows (1967) points out:

They want and need the face to face responses of their associates. Developing one's ego is a pervasive task throughout the elementary school years, and the responses of one's peers are as essential to a positive feeling about oneself as is the approval of power-wielding adults. Hence, the creative teacher conditions the class audience to look for opportunities to give honest approval (p. 32)

Listening to others share their writing is a productive way of developing sensitivity to good writing:

The original idea, the fresh invention, or the vivid, individual way of saying a thing is singled out for comment because what is approved determines the direction of growth (Burrows, 1965, p. 6).

Criteria should be employed in the selection of compositions to be read aloud to the group. As Nelson (1965) recommends:

The teacher must be certain that the content, the style, and the form he is encouraging meet the objectives of a sound instructional program in the language arts or are characteristic of fine literature (p. 96).

Sharing can be an effective means of stimulating the thinking of a group and can be an effective method of encouraging a child to explore other

writing techniques.

The Measurement of Quantity of Writing

Quantity Defined

For the purposes of this study quantity has been defined as the amount of writing produced by a student, as measured by the number of words in a composition.

Studies Measuring Quantity of Writing

The quantity that a student writes has been studied by other researchers. As could be expected, Harrell (1957) in studying the written language of children aged nine, eleven, thirteen, and fifteen respectively, found a consistent increase in total length of writing with age. Bear (1939) too, reported that the average number of sentences in compositions increased consistently from 3.3 sentences in Grade One to 10.5 sentences in Grade Eight (p. 318). Schonell's (1956) study showed that the number of words per sentence increased consistently with the student's age.

Methods to Increase Quantity of Writing

Little in the way of conclusive evidence can be cited in support of specific techniques that lead to increasing the quantity of pupil writing. By determining the interests of students, it is possible for the teacher to build in motivation that will stimulate students to write more. Coleman's (1931) study of the written compositions of junior and senior high school pupils suggested that researchers might well consider students' interests before assigning

writing topics. However, considerable research needs to be done yet to discover the intensity of the pupils' interests and the relationship of their interests to such factors as IQ and socio-economic level.

To encourage pupils to write more, variations within students' experiential background should be considered in planning composition assignments. The importance of the writers' own experiences has been pursued in two interesting and similar studies: Anderson (1950) and Edmund (1956). Anderson's college freshmen veterans seemed to write better narration when they based their writing on direct experiences, while Edmund's seventh graders wrote better when they drew their ideas from such derived experiences as television programmes and motion pictures (Cited in Braddock *et al.*, 1963, p. 29).

Through the assignment of reasonable periods of time for writing, pupils may also be encouraged to write more. Braddock *et al.* (1963) report, in their review of composition studies, that "a number of studies purport to evaluate among other things the organization of writing when the examinees were afforded but twenty to thirty minutes to produce an essay" (p. 9). They suggest that, in many instances, this is insufficient time for a student, particularly an older one, to plan and develop a thoughtful composition. It would be highly desirable to discover through research the optimum amount of time needed by students at various levels of maturity to write thoughtful papers. Until such a study has been undertaken, it is an important consideration in planning a writing assignment to determine an appropriate amount of time necessary to complete the task.

The approval of peers as well as the teacher may motivate a

student to write more. The development of a positive, supportive classroom climate may be a critical key to the amount pupils write. As Burrows (1965) suggests:

The teacher must provide freedom from fear and continue taking steps to build self-confidence. This stipulates the absence of negative or reforming criticism in group listening (p. 21).

The degree to which students appreciate the purposes of their work may be yet another significant key to encouraging pupils to write more. As Monk (1971) concludes:

Motivation seems to be a key to the success of composition programs. Undoubtedly students respond when they see purpose in what they are expected to do. They become interested and involved when time is taken to make the work seem important and relevant (p. 21).

The Measurement of Writing Quality

Measures of Writing Quality

The measurement of the quality of writing in student compositions may be accomplished as Braddock *et al.* (1963) report "by objective tests or by composition tests which require samples of the student's writing" (pp. 40-55). Although objective tests can be readily marked, composition teachers object to them as being incapable of measuring the student's ability to write. As Armstrong summarizes:

Objective tests, which measure quantifiable elements of the writing act, have generally high reliability and low validity since the abilities required to perform well on such a test are not, apparently, the same abilities required to produce compositions of high over-all quality (p. 5).

In order to obtain a direct measure of the quality of a student's writing, the composition teacher will require samples of the student's actual writing. If the teacher is interested in diagnosing the

strengths and weaknesses of the various aspects of any individual student's writing, diagnosis should be based on an examination of actual writing. If the composition teacher is interested in evaluating the writing performance of students after instruction, composition papers written by the student should be used.

Variables in Rating Quality

Accurate assessment of the quality of a student's writing is difficult. There appear to be four variables which contribute heavily to the problems that researchers encounter in evaluation of student writing.

A first variable, "the writer variable" (Braddock *et al.*, 1963), encompasses the notion that a student's writing performance varies and that any one composition is not necessarily a reflection of writing ability. Kincaid (1953), after noting the widespread practice of judging a student's writing by one sample of work, sought to determine whether a single paper written by a student on a given topic at a particular time constituted a valid basis for evaluation. He concluded that the justification for grading a college freshman's achievement at the end of a writing course on the basis of one writing sample was a dubious one, especially for better writers. Anderson (1960) also found that the day-to-day performance of individual students varies. He noted that 71 per cent of the 55 eighth grade students he examined on eight different occasions "showed evidence of composition fluctuation" (p. 100). Another aspect of variation in a student's writing performance was raised by Diedrich (1946). He noted

that approximately one-quarter of a group of University of Chicago students changed their marks as a result of writing a second test essay but that less than five per cent changed their marks as the result of writing a third essay. It would appear, therefore, that unlimited practice in writing on the same topic is not necessary before some kind of valid assessment of writing ability can be made. Braddock *et al.* (1963), in reviewing much of the research concerning variation in writing performance, suggested that:

If a researcher wishes to measure individual students' improvement in writing, he should provide for at least two writing occasions as a pre-test, at least two as a post-test and count the rating only of the better composition on each occasion (p. 7).

A second variable to be considered is that of the assignment. Examination of "the assignment variable" (Braddock *et al.*, 1963) must take into account its four aspects: the topic, the mode of discourse, the time afforded for writing, and the examination situation. Particular care must be taken by a researcher in written composition in selecting topics for the students. Wiseman and Wrigley (1958), as a result of a study of the writing performance of eleven year olds, concluded that examinees might as well be given a choice of topics. Braddock *et al.* (1963) disagreed with this position, however, indicating that the practice of the College Entrance Examination Board (which provides for a single topic to be given to all examinees) is preferable because it controls the effects of the topic on the quality of writing. It may be fairly observed that the research to this point does not present conclusive evidence as to whether the student should be permitted to write on only one topic or select from a few topics in the

composition assignment. The second aspect of the assignment variable is the mode of discourse: narration, description, exposition, argument, or criticism. This aspect has been, to a large extent, ignored by those doing research in composition. It is possible that variations in mode of discourse may have more effect on quality of writing than variations in topic. Kincaid (1953) concluded that:

Although the writing of the better students did not seem to vary significantly in quality according to whether the students were writing expository or argumentative papers, the quality of writing by the worse writers did reveal a significant number of variations according to the mode of discourse (p. 112).

Until it is clear what effect the mode of discourse has on writing performance, it would appear necessary that the researcher control this aspect of the assignment variable when planning assignments for research based on the rating of compositions. A third aspect of the assignment variable concerns the time afforded for writing. As previously cited, Braddock *et al.* (1963) conclude that an important consideration in planning a writing assignment is to determine an appropriate amount of time necessary to complete the task. The fourth aspect of the assignment variable is the examination situation. Considerations such as time, conditions of lighting and heating, and so on must be equivalent for both the experimental and control groups. Instructions to be given to students should be written beforehand and presented to the students in identical manner.

A third variable in rating compositions has been described by Braddock *et al.* (1963) as the rater variable. This variable is referred to as the tendency of a rater to vary in his own standards of

evaluation. The interjection of a rater's personal feelings into evaluation can be prevented by procedures that will preserve the anonymity of the student. As with the two previously mentioned variables, allowances can be made to limit the effect of a rater variable in a study.

The final variable to be considered is the colleague variable. This variable refers to the variations in judgment from rater to rater. Braddock *et al.* (1963) in summarizing this variation in the literature report agreement between raters varying from .31 to .96. It can be concluded that raters do tend to place different values on the various aspects of a composition. As a result, the researcher must take care to ensure that the raters use a common set of criteria with which to evaluate the quality of writing in a student composition. There is some evidence to suggest that the colleague variable can be further controlled by having raters practice together. The correlation between reader ratings as Stalnaker (1937) and Stalnaker and Stalnaker (1934) pointed out, can be raised by carefully training the readers. According to Diedrich (1957), teachers operating under strict rules of grading and careful supervision can raise the correlation coefficient which describes agreement between raters.

The Use of Criteria

One means of increasing reliability between raters is to employ criteria in judging compositions. The use of criteria provides raters with a clear statement of what constitutes quality in writing. The raters can then recognize the elusive qualities of excellence. In

planning criteria to used consideration should be given to only a few criteria. Diedrich (1957) concluded that judges tend to reduce many items to a few general areas. The commitment each rater feels to a common set of criteria is another consideration. As Braddock *et al.* (1963) report:

If he has shared in developing the criteria or had an opportunity to share in revising them . . . he ordinarily should be expected to enter into rating with an honest effort to make the criteria work (p. 15).

A final consideration is that criteria be specific and well defined. The kinds of criteria employed by raters are many and varied. Armstrong (1965) examined six sets of criteria developed by the Association of Teachers of English, Coutts-Baker, National Council of Teachers of English, Remondino, Schonnell, and Zollinger. He found many separate but overlapping items which seemed to group into four major categories: 1) ideas or content, 2) organization, sequence, or unity, 3) style, 4) presentation, or neatness and mechanics (p. 7). A review of the literature reveals that the weighting of the categories of criteria shows considerable variation. Armstrong (1965) determined that the comparative values attached to the four major categories by the authors of the six sets of criteria are quite different (p. 11). Squire (1964) in reviewing the five factors characterizing excellence in composition that were identified by the Educational Testing Service describes the weighting of the factors this way: "Attention to the mechanics of the language is, of course, important but not at the expense of content and form" (p. 16).

Instructional Factors
Affecting Quality

The amount of writing that a student does has long been considered an important variable in composition research. Some teachers believe that the development of skill in writing is related to the amount of practice that a student is given. The relationship of practice to skill is significant but everything depends on the kind of practice pupils are given.

Lokke and Wykoff (1948) increased the number of themes required in two small experimental freshman classes from sixteen to thirty-two per semester. The conclusion they reached was that added practice in writing reduced failures by 66 per cent and produced a 60 per cent improvement in grades.

Dressel, Schmid and Kincaid (1952) involved 2400 freshmen in a study of written composition. The students were questioned with respect to the amount of writing that they did in all courses during the academic year. The improvement of students doing the most writing was compared with that of students doing the least. The conclusion that they reached was that mere practice in writing will not improve composition skills unless attention is given to the quality of writing.

Maize (1954) involved 149 remedial freshmen in his study of written composition. The experimental group wrote twenty-six themes in addition to an autobiography, a research paper, and several business and social letters. These papers were read and corrected in class by the students under the guidance and direction of the instructor; no time outside of class was used to mark themes. The control group wrote

fourteen themes which were marked outside the classroom by the instructor. The control group was taught language according to traditional workbook drill methods. The statistically significant results obtained by the experimental group suggest that some combination of frequent writing practice and student correction is effective. A close analysis of the design of Maize's study does reveal some limitations in the generalizations that can be drawn from the findings because the control group did receive inferior instruction.

In a study undertaken by Buxton (1959) 257 college freshmen participated. A control group consisting of 86 subjects received no regular instruction and practice in theme writing. One experimental group wrote a theme each week which was submitted, marked, and returned. The second experimental group, consisting of 85 students - the first experimental group, like the control group, consisted of 86 subjects - also prepared a theme each week. However, the second experimental group was given much greater direction before the writing was begun; instruction was given following completion of the marking; revision was required once the theme had been returned. Buxton concluded that:

College freshmen whose writing is graded and thoroughly marked and criticized and who revise their papers in the light of these matters can improve their writing more than college freshmen whose writing receives a few general suggestions but no grades or intensive marking and who do not revise their papers (p. 99).

Heys' (1962) study demonstrated that frequency of writing does not necessarily lead students to proficiency. Twenty-eight classes writing weekly themes were paired with twenty-eight which substituted for such intensive writing the reading of books and very little writing.

At the end of the year the reading group made greater progress in writing than the group which had regular practice in writing. Squire (1964) observes that Heys' study requires careful reading for it seems to demonstrate that writing cannot be taught without much reading and discussion (p. 5).

With regard to the issue of writing practice as an instructional technique per se, Braddock *et al.* (1963) state:

Although most of the research in this area supports the familiar contention that students learn to write by writing with the help of a qualified teacher, it is not clear with what kinds of writing it is true, how much is the optimum amount, and with what kinds of students such generalizations are effective (p. 35).

A second instructional factor influencing composition learning is the procedure of revision. As noted previously, Buxton (1959) found that it was valuable for college freshmen to revise their papers under supervision. Fellows (1930) conducted a short experiment of twelve weeks with ninth graders. He compared two methods of instruction: instruction unaccompanied by correction and instruction accompanied by the vigorous correction of the mechanical errors in pupil themes. Results of error counts showed: (1) that the group of pupils in which detailed theme correction was used made but slightly greater gains than in the non-theme correction group; (2) that theme correction tended to operate most effectively with the "bright" pupils and very indifferently with the "dull" pupils; (3) that the reduction of errors in punctuation and grammar was greater than the reduction of errors in spelling and capitalization (Cited in Lyman, 1932, pp. 30-31). This last conclusion would suggest the need for further research to determine

which skills of writing/composition are learned better through revision.

Research has also been undertaken to involve the student in revision after the correction of his/her own composition. Lyman (1931) conducted an experiment with 1,039 children in Grades 6 through 9. The major purposes of his study were: (1) to determine the extent to which a limited number of experiences can enable pupils to establish patterns of planning compositions, and (2) to discover the extent to which related practice in appraising their own compositions will enable children to find and correct language errors in their own first drafts. The seven successive compositions were written on a weekly basis. Even in this short period of time, Lyman was able to conclude that pupils can learn to use appropriate work patterns and that much of the labour presently expended by teachers in detecting errors may be profitably carried out by pupils themselves under supervision.

The little research that has been done to consider the influence of composition revision seems to suggest the efficacy of the practice.

Pupil Sex as a Variable in Quality of Writing

In describing language development in children, McCarthy (1946) concluded that:

One of the most consistent findings to emerge from the mass of data accumulated to date on language development seems to be a slight difference in favour of girls in nearly all aspects of language that have been studied (p. 55).

Some investigators have found a different pattern emerging and

one that is less one-sided. Loban (1964) found that while boys in the low group made poorer subordination scores than did the girls, the boys in the high group made better subordination scores (p. 64).

Armstrong (1965) concludes his own study with the caution that sex differences in writing quality should be investigated fully; "for too long, sex differences have been a peripheral consideration" (p. 71).

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the study which forms the basis of the present paper.

The Study

Pupils from the Fourth Grade were used as subjects in this study, because of the researcher's teaching experience at this level as well as the researcher's familiarity with the Grade Four curriculum as prescribed by the British Columbia Department of Education.

On April 22, 1975 a letter was forwarded to L. A. Lamrock, Director of Research and Testing for the Greater Victoria School Board, requesting permission to conduct this study within six Victoria elementary schools within a similar socio-economic setting (See Appendix A).

A commitment of approximately twenty-five hours of school instructional time as well as a minimum of ten hours out of school time for evaluating compositions, maintaining attendance records, collating pupil folders, recording information on socio-economic status, preparing materials and attending inservice sessions, was needed from six teachers.

Permission to conduct the study was received on June 15, 1975. One condition was stipulated to the researcher, namely, that

participation in this study would be voluntary and not required.

On August 4, 1975 a letter was sent to principals of twelve elementary schools, servicing similar middle class socio-economic area, requesting that they inquire whether their Grade Four teachers would be willing to participate in this study (See Appendix B). Included with this letter to the principal was a letter to Grade Four teachers inviting them to participate in the study (See Appendix C).

By September 5, 1975 in eleven schools out of the twelve approached, thirteen teachers had volunteered to participate in the study. The researcher was surprised by the enthusiastic response and expanded the dimensions of the study to include thirteen teachers instead of just six as had been originally anticipated.

When the teachers had accepted the invitation to participate, a letter advising them of significant dates to be timetabled into their program, of procedures to forward pre-test samples, and of regular distribution times for the lessons in the manual, was sent to them (See Appendix D).

The Sample

Although the study began with thirteen teachers within thirteen Grade Four classrooms, one teacher and therefore one class withdrew from the study. The total population of the twelve Grade Four classes was reduced when those students for which there was insufficient data were removed, as can be seen in the table below.

Table 1
 Summary of Class Enrollment at Beginning of Study
 and After Students Having Insufficient
 Data are Removed

Class Number	Enrollment	Incomplete Data	Usable Cases
1	32	7	25
2	36	16	20
3	31	6	25
4	27	5	22
5	37	11	26
6	33	15	18
7	26	14	12
8	32	7	25
9	30	2	28
10	31	19	12
11	30	0	30
12	27	0	27
TOTALS	372	102	270

Sufficient data for a student included these items:

- (1) two pre-tests (descriptive and narrative)
- (2) two post-tests (descriptive and narrative)
- (3) attendance during a minimum of eight of ten writing lessons
- (4) sufficient information to compute a Blishen socio-economic index score

A random sampling of two boys and two girls was taken from each of the twelve classes. The total sample of 48 pupils consisted of 24 boys and 24 girls. An examination of the Blishen socio-economic index scores computed for the sampling reveals a mean score of 49. Although the range of scores went from 27.5 to 76 the measures of central tendency, the median of 47, the mode of 49 and the mean of 49 were very similar.

The Treatment

The twelve Grade Four classes were randomly assigned to one of three treatment groups.

The teachers were required to present ten writing experiences to their classes during the ten weeks of the treatment. These were outlined in the manual provided by the researcher (See Appendices E, F, G, H).

During each week two lessons were presented. The format of the lessons was established so that the time allotted for teachers' presentations and pupil writing was equivalent for all three experimental groups.

In the first lesson in each week, the stimulus developed in the teachers' presentation was identical for all three experimental groups (See Appendix E). The writing that was required of the pupils was mainly on descriptive and narrative themes. In the second lesson, during the teachers' presentation, the procedure for evaluation and the method of skills instruction was different for each treatment group.

In Treatment Group One no evaluation was made of the pupils' work. During the teachers' presentation six stories that illustrated the

effective employment of a particular writing skill were read by the teacher. The teacher then asked the class to improve their work by rewriting a section of their composition (See Appendix F).

In Treatment Group Two some written evaluation was made of the pupils' work by the teacher before the second lesson. Within each pupil's composition one example was circled where an improvement could be made using a specific writing skill. At the end of the composition, a suggested improvement to the example was given. During the teachers' presentation two compositions that illustrated the effective use of a particular writing skill were read. In addition, the teacher read out loud examples and suggested improvements from six students' stories. At the conclusion of the teacher presentation students were asked to improve their work by rewriting a section of their compositions (See Appendix G).

In Treatment Group Three the same written evaluation as in Group Two was completed before the second lesson. The teacher's presentation began with a formal skills lesson that was given to the whole class. During this oral lesson specific skills were identified and then put into practice. The brief skills lesson was followed with the teacher reading two circled examples and suggested improvements in the pupils' compositions. Then the teacher read one composition that illustrated effective use of the particular writing skill being developed in the lesson. At the conclusion of the presentation, the teacher asked the class members to improve their writing by rewriting a section of their compositions (See Appendix H).

The teachers telephoned the researcher as questions arose

during the study. On three separate occasions the researcher telephoned each individual teacher to inquire as to whether they had any concerns or questions.

During the second week of the treatment, the researcher arranged that the teachers in each experimental group could meet with teachers within their group to voice concerns and questions of mutual interest.

The researcher required that a folder be kept of the pupils' writing during the experiment. A letter was forwarded to the teachers on December 1, 1975 reminding them that the researcher would be making a formal visit to each classroom at the conclusion of the study to ensure that appropriate evaluation procedures had been followed (See Appendix I).

The Test

From her teaching experience and knowledge of the Grade Four curriculum the researcher developed stimulating materials that would challenge pupils in a middle class socio-economic area to express themselves in writing. The stimulus materials were a vehicle to encourage pupils to write effectively. They became the means whereby pupils could apply their awareness of specific writing techniques.

Description of the Materials Used

The researcher requested that each subject complete two pre-test composition samples and two post-test composition samples. This procedure was developed as a result of the previously cited recommendation of Braddock *et al.* (p. 22) on providing for variation in

writing performance. The pre-tests and post-test afforded pupils the opportunity to write using descriptive and narrative modes of discourse. This procedure acknowledged the inconclusive research on the effect of modes of discourse as highlighted by Kincaid's study (cited in Braddock *et al.*, p. 23).

Organization of Test Materials

The two descriptive tests and two narrative tests (see Appendix J) were developed to be parallel forms and were randomly administered on either the pre-test or post-test. During the pre-testing period a pupil completed a descriptive and a narrative composition sample. Similarly, during the post-testing period, a pupil completed a descriptive and a narrative composition sample.

As previously mentioned, the materials were developed so that the time allotted for teachers' presentation and pupils' writing was the same for all pupils writing that particular form.

Justification of Test Materials

Two key principles of writing were embodied in the development of the stimulus lessons that preceded the subjects' composition tests. First, a common experience designed to appeal to the students' supposed interests was given to stimulate thinking and written expression. Second, the pupils were encouraged to process this experience through discussion. They were given the opportunity to exchange ideas freely and to develop the ease and power necessary for writing.

Data Collection

The teachers were asked to administer the pre-tests during two weeks (September 15 to September 19, and September 22 to 26). The researcher requested that the teachers follow a timetable of one test for each week. These pre-tests were forwarded directly in their original state to the researcher.

The two post-tests were administered by the teachers during the week of December 8 to December 12. The teachers were requested to arrange the timetabling of these tests so that at least one day would intervene between them. These post-tests were forwarded directly in their original form to the researcher.

In addition the teachers were requested to complete a form on each student which would supply sufficient information on the occupation of the father to compute a Blishen socio-economic index score (See Appendix K). These forms were forwarded to the researcher with a class list and attendance record at the conclusion of the study.

Principles of Scoring

Each of the pre-tests and post-tests were scored by the raters as follows:

Content	10 marks
Expressive and Organizational Skills.	10 marks
Technical Skills.	5 marks
 Total	 25 marks

The raters marked the composition papers in three sittings.

The three sittings were an outgrowth of the three categories of quality described by the researcher. The sittings were structured so that the rater would first read all the compositions, then place them in piles according to quality attained, and finally record, on the back, the mark attained. The raters were required to see that the piles of marked student compositions corresponded to the distribution one would expect to see in a normal curve.

Scoring Procedure

Computer cards on each student contained the following coded information:

- (1) Student's identification number
- (2) Teacher's identification number
- (3) Treatment group's number
- (4) Pupil's sex
- (5) Count of words on each of the two pre-tests and post-tests
- (6) Total scores on quality given by each of the raters
- (7) Sub-total scores on quality given by each of the raters
- (8) Blishen socio-economic index score

Reliability of Scoring

During one practice session the raters discussed specific items to be considered in each of the categories the researcher had chosen to define quality in written expression. The criteria listed in Table 2 were never part of a formal checklist to be used by the raters. Rather, once the specific items in each category were agreed upon, the raters

practiced marking compositions of subjects not included in the stratified random sampling.

Table 2
Criteria for Judging Compositions

- I. Content
 - (1) Completeness of ideas
 - (2) Originality

 - II. Organisational and Expressive Skills
 - (1) Sequence of ideas
 - (2) Unity
 - (3) Sentence variety
 - (4) Clarity in sentence construction
 - (5) Word choice

 - III. Technical Skills
 - (1) Capitalization
 - (2) Punctuation
 - (3) Usage
-

Thorough discussion and consultation about the marks arrived at in the practice session led to a noticeable consistency in rater evaluation. All composition tests were typed in their original state except for the spelling errors which had been corrected by the researcher. An identification code was placed at the top of each composition for the benefit only of the researcher.

Analysis of the Data

The pupils' gains in quantity of writing (both descriptive and narrative) and quality of writing (both descriptive and narrative) was investigated using correlated "t" tests.

The effect of treatment and sex on pupils' gains in quantity of writing (descriptive and narrative) and quality of writing (descriptive and narrative) was investigated using the two way analysis of covariance.

The levels of significance used throughout this investigation were the .05 level and the .01 level.

The following analysis was made of the data. First, the total quality scores given on each composition test by the three raters were compared. Correlation coefficients were calculated to determine the reliability of the raters. Second, once the reliability of the raters was established a mean score (of the three ratings) was computed. The significance of the difference between the means of the pre-tests and the post-tests was derived from correlated "t" tests. Third, a two way analysis of covariance allowed the researcher to determine the effect of treatment and sex on gains in fluency and quality. "F" ratios were used to determine the significance of the effect of these two variables.

Tables were used extensively to present the findings of the analysis described above.

Summary

This chapter has endeavoured to describe the sample used to test quantity and quality of writing and the manner in which the scoring

of the test was devised and applied to the responses obtained from the sample. A brief description of how the data was collected and analysed was also given.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter presents an analysis of the data collected from the measures outlined in Chapter III, namely, composition pre-tests (descriptive and narrative) and post-tests (descriptive and narrative). It discusses the statistical analyses carried out. Finally it reports the procedures used to test the hypotheses.

Comparison of Raters' Scoring

Before further analysis could be made on pupils' test scores, it was necessary to determine the degree of agreement between the raters' scores for each composition test. The most common correlational procedure (Popham, 1967), the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient, was used to quantify the relationship between the scores given by the raters. Using the appendix in Popham (1967), the researcher converted the computed "r" into a corresponding Fisher's "Zr" coefficient (p. 404). From the standardized "Zr's" the mean "Zr" was obtained. This was then converted back to the Pearson "r" and the significance of the coefficient was then determined. The strength of a correlation is usually interpreted according to the nearness of "r" to the perfect correlations of + or - 1.00. As can be seen in Table 3 the correlation coefficients obtained were all significant at the .01 level (Popham, 1967).

Table 3
Measuring Reliability of Raters Using
Correlation Coefficients

Source	Variable	r	Fisher Zr	\bar{X} Zr	\bar{X} r	
Descriptive	Rater 1, 2	.768	1.02	-	-	
	Pre	Rater 2, 3	.805	1.13	-	-
	Test	Rater 1, 3	.730	.93	1.03	.77 **
Narrative	Rater 1, 2	.870	1.33	-	-	
	Pre	Rater 2, 3	.805	1.13	-	-
	Test	Rater 1, 3	.789	1.07	1.18	.83 **
Descriptive	Rater 1, 2	.716	.91	-	-	
	Post	Rater 2, 3	.741	.95	-	-
	Test	Rater 1, 3	.617	.73	.86	.69 **
Narrative	Rater 1, 2	.722	.91	-	-	
	Post	Rater 2, 3	.829	1.19	-	-
	Test	Rater 1, 3	.677	.83	.98	.75 **

**Significant at the .01 level

In addition a correlation coefficient was computed for pre-tests as .80 and could be compared to the post-test correlation coefficient which was .73. An overall correlation coefficient of .77 was determined. The statistical significance of the correlation coefficients having been established, the researcher then began a further analysis of pupils' test scores.

Comparison of Gains

The researcher chose to use correlated "t" tests to measure pupils' gains in quantity of writing (both descriptive and narrative) and quality of writing (both descriptive and narrative). The "t" test was used to determine just how great the difference between the two test means (pre-test and post-test) must be for it to be judged significant.

The first hypothesis investigated in this experiment was that the boys in each treatment group will produce a significantly greater *quantity of writing* on the post-test than on the pre-test measures. This hypothesis was not supported by the results of the investigation. See Table 4. Treatment Group Two boys did show a significant gain in quantity of descriptive writing. Treatment Group Three boys showed a significant gain in quantity of narrative writing.

Table 4

Measuring Gains in Quantity of Writing for Boys
with Correlated t Tests

Group	Pre-test \bar{X}	Post-test \bar{X}	t
DESCRIPTIVE TESTS			
1	141.000	123.875	0.58
2	98.125	174.125	3.34 *
3	82.125	121.750	2.04
NARRATIVE TESTS			
1	118.250	128.625	.95
2	82.625	105.875	1.40
3	89.875	133.625	2.95 *

*significant at the .05 level

**significant at the .01 level

The second hypothesis investigated in this experiment was that the girls in each treatment group will produce a significantly greater *quantity of writing* on the post-test than on the pre-test measures. This hypothesis was not supported by the results of the investigation. See Table 5.

Table 5
Measuring Gains in Quantity of Writing for Girls
with Correlated t Tests

Group	Pre-test \bar{X}	Post-test \bar{X}	t
DESCRIPTIVE TESTS			
1	94.625	150.250	4.06 **
2	136.250	152.875	.97
3	118.000	169.125	2.49 *
NARRATIVE TESTS			
1	94.750	111.375	.97
2	129.375	142.000	.52
3	124.625	132.375	.39

*significant at the .05 level

**significant at the .01 level

Treatment Group Three showed a significant gain in descriptive fluency at the .05 level while Treatment Group One also demonstrated a similar gain, but at the .01 level of significance.

The third hypothesis investigated in this experiment was that the boys in each treatment group will achieve a significantly higher

quality of writing on the post-test than on the pre-test measures. This hypothesis was not entirely supported in this investigation. See Table 6.

Table 6
Measuring Gains in Quality of Writing for Boys
with Correlated t Tests

Group	Pre-test \bar{X}	Post-test \bar{X}	t
DESCRIPTIVE TESTS			
1	11.875	14.583	3.93 **
2	11.25	14.50	1.69
3	11.66	15.625	3.02 *
NARRATIVE TESTS			
1	12.708	15.375	2.93 *
2	9.625	13.375	5.16 **
3	13.500	17.417	2.52 *

*significant at the .05 level
**significant at the .01 level

Boys in each treatment group did achieve significant gains in narrative quality. Boys in treatment Groups One and Three did achieve significant gains in descriptive quality.

The fourth hypothesis investigated in this experiment was that the girls in each treatment group will achieve a significantly higher *quality of writing* on the post-test than on the pre-test measures. This hypothesis was not supported by the results of the investigation. See Table 7.

Table 7
Measuring Gains in Quality of Writing for Girls
with Correlated t Tests

Group	Pre-test \bar{X}	Post-test \bar{X}	t
DESCRIPTIVE TESTS			
1	13.917	16.917	2.25
2	13.458	14.833	2.80 *
3	16.250	17.833	1.03
NARRATIVE TESTS			
1	13.833	15.750	1.48
2	14.000	14.292	.30
3	17.000	18.750	1.19

*significant at the .05 level

**significant at the .01 level

Only the girls in Treatment Group Two showed a significant gain, in descriptive quality.

Comparison of Effect of Variables

The effect of treatment and sex on pupils' gains in *quantity of writing* (descriptive and narrative) and *quality of writing* (descriptive and narrative) was investigated using the two way analysis of covariance. "F" ratios were used to determine the significance of the effect of these two variables.

The fifth hypothesis investigated in this study was that there will be no significant difference in *quantity of writing* across the

three treatment groups. This null hypothesis was supported by the results of the investigation. See Tables 8 and 9. No significant difference was attained.

Table 8

Measuring Effect of Treatment and Sex on Pupils'

Gains with Analysis of Covariance

Quantity of Descriptive Writing				
Source	MS	df	F	P
Treatment	2980.16	2	1.04	0.36
Sex	1859.88	1	0.65	0.43
Interaction	8949.28	2	3.11	0.06
Error	2875.45	41		

*significant at the .05 level

Table 9

Measuring Effect of Treatment and Sex on Pupils'

Gains with Analysis of Covariance

Quantity of Narrative Writing				
Source	MS	df	F	P
Treatment	651.71	2	0.30	0.75
Sex	384.37	1	0.17	0.68
Interaction	930.40	2	0.42	0.66
Error	2201.86	41		

*significant at the .05 level

The sixth hypothesis investigated in this study was that there will be no significant difference in *quality of writing* across the three treatment groups. This null hypothesis was supported by the results of the investigation. See Tables 10 and 11. No significant difference was attained.

The seventh hypothesis investigated in this study was that there will be no significant difference in *quantity of writing* between boys and girls. This null hypothesis was supported by the results of the investigation. See Tables 8 and 9. No significant difference was attained.

Table 10

Measuring Effect of Treatment and Sex on Pupils'

Gains with Analysis of Covariance

Quality of Descriptive Writing				
Source	MS	df	F	P
Treatment	4.90	2	0.40	0.67
Sex	0.18	1	0.01	0.90
Interaction	4.86	2	0.40	0.68
Error	12.29	41		

*significant at the .05 level

Table 11
 Measuring Effect of Treatment and Sex on Pupils'
 Gains with Analysis of Covariance

Quality of Narrative Writing				
Source	MS	df	F	P
Treatment	16.49	2	1.80	0.18
Sex	9.43	1	1.03	0.32
Interaction	2.09	2	.23	0.80
Error	9.14	41		

*significant at the .05 level

The eighth hypothesis investigated in this study was that there will be no significant difference in *quality of writing* between boys and girls. This null hypothesis was supported by the results of the investigation. See Tables 10 and 11. No significant difference was attained.

Summary

This chapter reported the analyses and procedures used to test the reliability of the scores for evaluating *quality of writing* given by the raters. In addition, the disposition of the hypotheses was reported.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to specify conclusions that can be drawn from this study. The researcher will then present a clear outline of some of the limitations which hampered this study. Some implications will then be drawn from these limitations. Finally, recommendations for further research will be considered.

Conclusions

Correlation coefficients, significant at the .01 level, assured the researcher that the scores assigned to the compositions by the raters were reliable.

Correlated "t" tests established that no significant difference could be seen in pupil gains in *quantity* and *quality of writing*.

Through the technique of two way analysis of covariance no significant difference could be seen in terms of the variables of sex and treatment.

Some interesting directions can be noted in a closer analysis of the data:

(1) The boys involved in the study seem to have an advantage over the girls in terms of significant gains in *quantity of writing* and *quality of writing*.

(2) The boys in each treatment group made particularly significant gains in narrative quality whereas the girls in two treatment groups made significant gains in quantity of descriptive writing.

(3) The boys in all treatment groups began with lower quality scores than the girls.

(4) The gains of the girls may have been affected by a "topping" of scores.

(5) Little difference can be seen in group gains although there appears to be a slight advantage in favour of experimental Group Three.

Limitations

Two key factors limited the researcher in the design of this study.

The first factor involved timetabling the study. The block of time set aside for the study was tied to the first term in the school year. This timing was critical in order to minimize the effect of different teaching strategies on the total pupil growth in *quantity* and *quality of writing*. The first concern of the researcher that was related to timetabling was that this block of time was not long enough to allow for a sufficiently flexible time schedule. Teachers' illness, reporting periods, and special school programmes interfered with the scheduled weekly lessons. It was fortunate indeed that all the participating teachers managed to complete a minimum of eight scheduled lessons. A second concern related to timetabling was the actual length

of time provided for the treatment. The length of the treatment had to be shortened from twelve weeks to ten in order to accommodate the wishes of the volunteering teachers and the principals. The teachers were firm in their requests that the study begin after the school year was well underway and the principals were concerned that the study end before the teachers were involved in preparing for Christmas programmes.

The second factor which affected the design of the study was the sampling procedure. The researcher was limited in the size of the sample she could work with as a result of the prohibitive cost of typing the composition pre-tests and post-tests, making multiple copies of the tests and employing markers to evaluate these papers. The population of 372 students at the onset of the study was a substantial one. It is unfortunate that the sample taken from this population could not have been larger.

Implications

(1) The enthusiastic and willing participation of Grade Four teachers in this study reflects a growing concern as to the most effective methods of teaching composition.

(2) Flexible scheduling must be a part of classroom research. Teachers' illness, reporting periods, and special school programmes must be allowed for.

(3) Cautions from statistical experts such as Popham (1967) regarding sample sizes cannot go unheeded - "the larger the sample sizes, the greater the degrees of freedom, the smaller the critical "t" value needed for significance" (p. 28). A study of the size proposed

by the researcher would require funds be available for a larger sample. The data generated was of considerable interest and it is possible that the results are inconclusive largely due to the small sampling taken.

Recommendations

(1) A series of stimulus lessons was developed by the researcher to motivate pupils to write. There is some conclusive evidence in this study to suggest that the boys and girls had different composition interests. Further research to determine the intensity and variety of composition interests of boys and girls is recommended.

(2) In regard to quality of writing, the girls achieved consistently higher scores than the boys at the beginning of the study. This would seem to suggest the need for further research to determine the developmental characteristics of boys and girls in written language achievement.

(3) The effects of three specific kinds of treatment in written composition were explored in this study. Further research is recommended to determine the long term effects of these specific treatments.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER TO DIRECTOR
OF RESEARCH AND TESTING

APPENDICES

April 22, 1975.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct an experimental research project in the Greater Victoria Schools.

Inservice activities will be presented to the teachers involved during the first week of September to familiarize them with the procedures to be followed. The study will begin with pre-tests that will be administered during the week beginning on Monday, September 8, 1975. The treatment will follow starting the next week and will continue for twelve successive weeks. The experiment will conclude with post tests to be administered on December 15 and December 16, 1975. Follow-up tests will be administered on January 15 and January 16, 1976.

The sample I will be seeking is one from a specific population. Six heterogeneously grouped grade four classes, representing a normal student population, from six schools will be necessary. The selected schools should be within the same socio economic group that generally characterises the schools in the Gordon Head area. Would it be possible to consider six schools from this list of schools for the study; Hillcrest, Gordon Head, Frank Hobbs, Fairburn, Campus View, Doncaster, Braefoot, Uplands?

The study is concerned with the place of skill development and evaluation in the process of a child's learning to write. The teachers of each of the six grade four classes from six schools within a similar socio-economic setting will be asked to present twelve successive writing experiences to their students during the twelve weeks of the treatment. After receiving guidance on how to present these experiences, it is expected that the teacher will follow the written lesson plan he/she has been given. A teacher's manual will be developed for this expressed purpose. The six grade four classes will be assigned to one of three groupings, on a random basis, so that two classes will comprise the control group; two classes will be designated as the first experimental group; the other two classes will comprise the second experimental group. The teachers in these groups will follow these procedures for evaluation and revision.

The teachers of the students in the control group will do no evaluation of student papers. They will return the compositions to the students for revision, suggesting that the papers should be improved during the period. The teacher will provide no assistance to the students during the revision period.

The teachers of the students in the first experimental group will evaluate the student compositions out of class. The papers will have notations that relate to one specific writing skill which requires improvement. The teacher will return the papers to the students for revision and suggest that the papers should be improved keeping the notations in mind. The teacher will provide no further assistance to the students during the revision period.

The teachers of students in the second experimental group will evaluate the student papers out of class. The errors that relate to one specific writing skill which requires improvement will be circled to draw the students' attention to them. The teachers will begin the revision period with a large group instructional activity that will focus on one specific writing skill that requires improvement by the class as a whole. During the revision period, the teacher will individually counsel and assist as many students as he/she possibly can.

At the conclusion of the study, I am planning to share the results with the schools and the teachers in the whole district. I have already discussed some possibilities for sharing this study with Mr. Roy Lister and the local intermediate teacher's specialist association, of which I am the past co-chairman.

I would appreciate your prompt consideration of this request.

Respectfully yours,

Mrs. Phyllis Mitchell.

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

August 4, 1975.

As part of my graduate program at the University of Victoria, I am planning to conduct an experimental study this fall that will be concerned with the development of composition skills in the Grade Four Language Arts program. On June 15, 1975, Mr. Lamrock, on behalf of the Greater Victoria School Board, granted me permission to conduct this study. It is intended that six schools from a similar socio-economic area will be involved in the study. Rather than approaching you in late June at a particularly inconvenient time of the school year, I decided that it might be more appropriate to involve you at a time when you could examine the project in a more leisurely fashion. As a result, I am writing you now to request that you consider approaching one of your Grade Four teachers (single grade) to see if he or she would be interested in becoming part of the study.

The research I am conducting will examine the responsible role that a teacher has in the development of composition skills. The six teachers involved will meet informally with me once during the second week in September. At that time, they will receive a manual which will contain all of the information on twelve successive writing experiences that I would like them to present to their classes. Essentially all that will be required of them during the study is to present one of these experiences each week to their Grade Four classes following the sequence and according to the procedures I have prescribed. The study will begin during the third week in September and will conclude in the third week of December.

I have carefully structured the study so that the teachers involved will spend no more time than they would normally in the development of composition skills. There are some distinct advantages to their involvement in the study in that the planning and preparation of the composition program within their classroom has already been done. In addition, you can rest assured that the children in these classes will benefit from a sound developmental composition program.

I would be pleased to discuss the study with you further, at your convenience. I will be available throughout August and can be reached by telephone at 477-5770. I have enclosed a letter which may be given to the Grade Four teacher who could be involved in the project.

I would appreciate knowing by September 5 whether a teacher from your school wishes to be involved in the study.

Thank you, in advance, for your assistance.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Phyllis Mitchell

Enclosure (1)

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO TEACHERS
INVITING THEIR PARTICIPATION

August 4, 1975.

If you are a Grade Four teacher (single grade) and you are concerned about the composition skills of the students in your class, then I would like to involve you in an experimental study that I will be undertaking this fall.

The purpose of the study will be to examine a portion of the process by which children learn to write/compose. Six Grade Four classes from six different schools within a similar socio-economic area will be involved in the study. The study will begin during the third week of September and will continue for twelve successive weeks, concluding during the third week in December.

The teachers involved will meet with me informally during the second week in September. At that time, they will be given a manual which will contain all of the information and materials required. All that will be requested of the teachers who are participating in the study is that the writing experiences outlined in the manual be presented weekly in the sequence and according to the procedures prescribed.

I am certain that the writing experiences that the children will complete will require no more class time than might normally be spent in the development of composition skills. Moreover, the teachers involved will benefit from a composition program that has been carefully planned and prepared for their students. Perhaps one of the most rewarding aspects of participation will be the assurance that the students will be undertaking a sound developmental composition program.

I hope that you will consider participation in this study. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have. I am available throughout August and may be reached by telephone at 477-5770.

I would appreciate your communicating with your principal to let him know if you are willing to become part of this study. I will be in touch with all of the schools approached by September 5.

Thank you, in advance, for your prompt consideration of my request.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Phyllis Mitchell

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO TEACHERS
CONFIRMING PARTICIPATION
IN THE STUDY

September 10, 1975.

I would like to thank you for volunteering to participate in the experimental study concerned with student composition skills. I am delighted with the favourable response each one of you has given the project. I am hopeful that you and your class will truly benefit from this experience.

At present, thirteen Grade Four classes from eleven different schools within a similar socio-economic area will be involved in the study. You will probably know many of the teachers who are involved. For the purposes of the study, I would appreciate your limiting your discussion of the study with others who are also involved. Certainly, general thoughts on the project might come up in conversation and these are acceptable. My concern is only when the conversations begin to deal with specific details such as what each of the three experimental groups are doing. *It is of primary importance that you do follow the instructions exactly as they are presented in the manual.* I would appreciate your not becoming specifically concerned with what others are doing with respect to this study.

The following information should assist you in fitting the study into the rest of your class program:

Pre-tests: Administer during these two weeks

September 15 to September 19

September 22 to September 26

(Preferably one test a week)

Writing Lessons: Administer one a week for ten consecutive weeks. These lessons are in two parts and will require approximately two forty minute lessons a week.

Lessons begin in week of
September 29 to October 5

Lessons end week of
December 1 to December 5

Post tests: Administer during this week

December 8 to December 12

After you have administered the two pre-tests to your students please bundle up their papers and forward them to me at Hillcrest Elementary. In addition I will require a class list with the names of all the

students who will be involved in the study included in the bundle. Because these tests will form an integral portion of the statistical analysis of the study, it is essential that they are forwarded in their original state. Do not ask the students to revise or edit their papers. Please forward these papers as soon as possible.

You will be receiving a folder and the first writing lesson shortly. Thereafter you will receive the next lesson a few days before it is to be presented. If you have not received a new lesson by Thursday at 3:30 P.M. of the week just before the lesson is to be presented, please contact me at school. I will see that you have the new lesson delivered personally by Friday.

I hope you will contact me at school (Hillcrest Elementary, 477-6968) or at home (477-5770) as problems arise. I am most interested in your reactions to all parts of the study and I would enjoy hearing from you. I will be in touch with you throughout the duration of the study.

Thank you for your participation.

Yours truly,

(Mrs.) Phyllis Mitchell

APPENDIX E

A MANUAL FOR TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN THE
EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH STUDY ON THE TEACHING
OF COMPOSITION (WRITING) SKILLS

INTRODUCTION

This manual is intended as a guide for teachers participating in research on the teaching of composition skills at the Grade 4 level. When the study has been completed, the teachers involved may wish to use these same writing experiences to develop a composition program for another class. If this is the case, the researcher will be pleased to grant permission for use of these materials again.

Each teacher, whether in Experimental Group 1, 2, or 3, will receive the same stimulus materials to develop the ten writing experiences. The evaluation procedures, however, will be different for each of the experimental groups.

It is important, for the purposes of this study, that the teachers involved follow the instructions given in this manual. There will be two lessons -- one to present a stimulus to the class; the other to be concerned with evaluation -- each week. If for any reason one of these cannot be presented in the required week, please contact the researcher (Mrs. Phyllis Mitchell, Hillcrest Elementary) as soon as possible. Do not assign the presentation of these experiences to a substitute teacher or to a student teacher or to any other person. Special arrangements will need to be made to accommodate any delay in the presentation of these experiences in order to avoid affecting the results of the study.

The teachers involved in this experimental study may want their students to keep their compositions, as well as their revisions, in a special booklet. Such a collection of student work may be useful for parent interviews or as a diagnostic instrument for use in the development of a composition program later in the year.

In order to prevent students from being "dropped" in the statistical analysis of the study, it is important that all students in the classes involved write the pre-test and post-test samples. In addition, all students must participate in the ten writing experiences in order to be counted as a subject within the study. The researcher would appreciate any efforts made by the teachers involved to keep an up-to-date record of the attendance of each student in the class. Further, any assistance that can be given through providing absentees with the writing experiences they have missed would be an invaluable help to the researcher.

September, 1975.

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK ONE: September 29 - October 3, 1975

*The Deserted House*Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Objective

The student will be stimulated to write more descriptively through listening to a variety of sounds and through an oral discussion of their shared learning experiences.

Materials

A bag of dry leaves

Procedures

1. Begin by having the students listen to the sounds produced by the dry leaves in different circumstances. (For example: when the leaves are stepped on by someone who is walking; when the bag is shaken.) Record on the blackboard the words the students have come up with to describe the sounds they have heard.
2. Ask the students questions about sounds that could be heard when a person is walking alone on a clear night. Again, record on the blackboard some of the words they suggest to describe the sounds they might hear.
3. Have the students imagine that they are alone inside an old house. Discuss with them the sounds they hear. Encourage them to describe these sounds as accurately as possible.
4. Finally, ask the students to write about what they heard during a walk at night through a forest and during their visit to an old deserted house. Encourage them to choose an appropriately descriptive title.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?

Composition Study,
Week One: September 29 - October 3, 1975

Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus.	20 minutes, approximately
Actual writing.	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK TWO: October 6 - 10, 1975

*My Favourite Recipe*Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Objective

The student will be stimulated to write more effectively through the experience of watching the steps in the preparation of a simple food and as a result of an oral discussion of the procedures used in recording a recipe.

Materials

Several pictures of attractive foods; the ingredients for a simple recipe which will require no cooking; samples of recipe books and/or individual recipe cards.

Procedures

1. After providing the students with the opportunity to view the pictures of attractive foods, initiate a discussion on the general method for preparing all foods. Reinforce the ideas related to a record of ingredients as well as a listing of steps to be followed.
2. Following a simple demonstration of food preparation, question the students as to the exact ingredients contained in the recipe. Then, question the students as to the steps that were needed to prepare the food. Record the steps to be followed on the black-board. Reinforce the logical ordering of the steps.
3. Encourage the students to develop their own individual record of a favourite recipe. Guide the students in starting by:
 - having them note the title (the name of what they are preparing);
 - having them place the exact ingredients under the sub-heading *Ingredients*;
 - having them place the steps to be followed under the sub-heading *Method*.
4. When the students have finished writing, they may wish to browse in the recipe books and cards you have brought.

Composition Study,
Week Two: October 6 - 10, 1975

Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each child put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus.	20 minutes approximately
Actual writing.	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK THREE: October 14 - 17, 1975

*The Panther*Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Objective

The student will be stimulated to write more descriptively through an oral discussion that has been structured to give a greater awareness of the characteristic behaviour of the panther.

Materials

None

Procedures

1. Ask the students to identify the animal described in the following passage:

He was barely visible in the dusk light. A silent stranger he rested motionless on the branch. Yellow eyes gleamed from his black face. He was the sleek black prince of the jungle.

2. Once the animal has been identified as the panther, ask the students questions about the life of the panther:

- what does the panther eat?
- when does the panther go hunting?
- where does the panther hunt?
- how does the panther kill its prey?
- when does the panther rest?
- where does the panther rest?

3. On the blackboard, under the headings RESTING, HUNTING, and EATING, record some of the colourful words that the students suggest to describe the particular actions of the panther.

4. Finally, have the students write about a day in the life of the panther.

Composition Study,
Week Three: October 14 - 17, 1975

Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each child put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus.	20 minutes approximately
Actual writing.	20 minutes or when 90% of the class are finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK FOUR: October 20 - 24, 1975

*An Unusual Happening*Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Objective

The student will be stimulated to record his/her ideas accurately through an oral discussion of an experience in which he/she was an "eye witness".

Materials

A safety patrol hat; a small mirror and flashlight.

Procedures

1. After showing the students the safety patrol hat, ask them questions that pertain to the uses of the hat. Have them consider the dangers from which the hat would protect them.
 2. Caution the students to remain in their seats while you dim the lights in the classroom. Ask the students to imagine that they are alone walking in the darkness when a strange happening occurs in the sky. Begin the flash light from the flashlight into the mirror. Have the students suggest what the flashing light might be.
 3. Ask the students to project themselves into one of two situations. Have them complete one of these reports as their writing assignment:
 - (a) You are sitting on the front steps of the school watching the street when a very unusual situation occurs: the safety patrol person has suddenly disappeared. All that remains is the hat. A policeman has asked you to write down what happened.
- or
- (b) You have caught sight of a strange object flashing across the sky at night. The local newspaper has asked you to write a detailed report of what you saw.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?

Composition Study,
Week Four: October 20 - 24, 1975

Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus.	20 minutes, approximately
Actual writing.	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK FIVE: October 27 - 31, 1975

*Animals in Conflict*Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Objective

The student will be stimulated to write his/her ideas sequentially as a result of an oral discussion of the sequence of happenings that occur when animals are in conflict.

Materials

None

Procedures

1. Place the title "Oliver Battles the Beagles" on the blackboard. Ask the students some questions:
 - who might Oliver be?
 - what is a beagle?
 - why would Oliver wish to fight the beagle
 - when would he choose to fight?
 - how might the fight begin?
 - what would the fight be like?
 - when would the fight end?
 - how would the animals feel after the fight is over?
2. On the blackboard, record the students' suggestions for other animal conflicts. For example:
 - a cat and a bumblebee
 - a dog and a crow
 - a leopard and a lion
 - a skunk and a bear
3. Finally, ask the students to write a story about two animals in conflict.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each child put his/her name on the composition?

Composition Study,
Week Five: October 27 - 31, 1975

Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus.	20 minutes approximately
Actual writing.	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK SIX: November 3 - 7, 1975

*The Capture of a Proud Lioness*Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Objective

The student will be stimulated to write about his/her imagined feelings as a captured lioness through an oral discussion about the experiences and feelings of a captured lioness.

Materials

The seven questions that will be used to guide the discussion should be printed on the blackboard before the lesson begins.

Procedures

1. Initiate the discussion by suggesting that the students imagine that they are each a lioness. Ask them to tell how they feel about the things that happen to them.
2. Ask the students to respond orally to the questions on the blackboard:
 - You are resting in the noonday sun. Your lion cubs are sprawled out around you. Remember that you are the lioness. What thoughts pass through your mind as you rest there?
 - Suddenly a strange noise can be heard in the bushes behind you. The cubs sit up alert. How do you feel about this sound?
 - You nip your cubs on the ear. They follow you obediently and are well hidden in the underbrush. You are conscious of movement all around you. How do you feel as you begin to run?
 - A sharp crack from a tranquillizer gun can be heard. A sudden piercing pain in your shoulder makes you stop and collapse. How do you feel as you begin to lose consciousness?
 - When you wake up you find yourself on a hard floor with black bars all around you. How do you feel in these strange surroundings?
 - The floor begins to rumble as though you are moving. How do you feel sensing that you are leaving your home and family?
 - The rumbling stops. The bars on one side begin to lift. You run to get out. Suddenly you realize that you are in a larger box with bars all around. Strange people are taunting you. How do you feel about this new place?

Composition Study,
Week Six: November 3 - 7, 1975

Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

3. Finally, ask the students to provide their own written response to each of the questions on the blackboard. Encourage them to answer each of the questions in a separate paragraph in the order that they are given. When they have finished, they will have their own story about being a captured lioness.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus.	20 minutes approximately
Actual writing.	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK SEVEN: November 10 - 14, 1975

*Alone on a Deserted Island*Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Objective

The student will be stimulated to write fluently about life on a deserted island following an oral discussion about the daily happenings that would occur in such a situation.

Materials

A knife with a wooden handle

Procedures

1. Prepare the students for the discussion by asking them to imagine a time about two hundred years ago. They are on a large sailing ship bound for the East (the Orient). A violent storm overturns the ship and tosses them all out into the black, foaming sea. Only one person survives in the icy water and many hours later, he/she crawls up on the shore of an apparently deserted island.
2. Suggest to the students that after several more hours items from the shipwreck come floating to shore. The knife would prove to be one of the more useful items. Ask the students to consider what they think the other items might be that would float to shore.
3. Question the students about what the lone survivor might do with these items on the deserted island. Record their ideas on the blackboard under the following headings: *Shelter, Clothing, Food, Tools, Medicine.*
4. Finally, ask the students to write about their daily life on this deserted island. Encourage them to write about their experiences in a way that, for example, all of the sentences about *shelter* are grouped together in a single paragraph.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?

Composition Study,
Week Seven: November 10 - 14, 1975

Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus.	20 minutes approximately
Actual writing.	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK EIGHT: November 17 - 21, 1975

*The Penpal Everyone Wants*Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Objective

The student will be stimulated to write a commercial to advertise himself/herself as the penpal everyone would want through an oral discussion and the development of an oral presentation about a student in the class.

Materials

Some personal mementos belonging to one student in the class that reflect his/her outside interests and hobbies and some of his/her more memorable experiences. Permit six mementos only, with one applicable to each of these six categories: family, home, school, hobbies or interests, memorable experiences, favourite things.

Procedures

1. Suggest to the student that he/she present the mementos to the class one at a time. Permit the class to ask questions about the mementos and their meaning to the student. Gradually lead to the conclusion that the purpose of the discussion is to generate ideas about the student as a person.
2. Encourage the class to make up an oral presentation about the student. Begin by asking them to make up interesting sentences that include the ideas under the headings on the blackboard (the six categories: family, home, school, hobbies or interests, memorable experiences, favourite things). Gradually, with the students' help (each student being responsible for only one sentence) build up the oral presentation. Reinforce the idea that variety in sentences is desirable.
3. Have each student write the six categories as headings on a piece of newsprint. Ask them to note a few ideas about themselves under these headings.
4. Discuss with the students what they consider to be the desirable characteristics of a penpal.
5. Finally, with these characteristics in mind, ask the students to write a commercial to advertise themselves as the penpal everyone wants.

Composition Study,
Week Eight: November 17 - 21, 1975

Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each child put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus.	20 minutes approximately
Actual writing.	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK NINE: November 24 - 28, 1975

*An Escape from Danger*Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Objective

The student will be stimulated to write fluently about an encounter with danger in pioneer times through an oral discussion of pioneer life and the dangers that haunted pioneers.

Materials

A rolling pin; an empty plate; an older piece of woman's jewellery (a pendant, a brooch, or a pair of earrings)

Procedures

1. Ask the students to imagine that they are living in pioneer times. Elicit from their responses some ideas as to what life was like then.
2. After showing the students the rolling pin, begin to question them about the kinds of baking a rolling pin would be used for in pioneer days.
3. When showing the students the piece of jewellery, ask them to describe the lady who might have owned it. You may wish to record some portions of their descriptions on the blackboard.
4. Present the students with the empty plate. Have them speculate about what might have happened to the baking that was on the plate.
5. Have the students consider the possibility that the baking was used to save the lady from further danger. Determine what dangers the lady might face which the baking could save her from: danger from animals, Indians, lack of certain foodstuffs in the diet.
6. Ask the students to write a story about life in the time of the pioneers. Suggest that the story should reveal how a pioneer woman was saved from danger by her baking.
7. When the students have finished writing their story, have them read through the following questions (which should be written on the blackboard) to determine whether they have included all the information that is needed:
 - Where did this story take place?

Composition Study,
Week Nine: November 24 - 28, 1975

Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

- Who was the lady?
- What was she baking?
- What danger did she face?
- How did she save herself from danger?

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher.	20 minutes, approximately
Actual writing	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK TEN: December 1 - 5, 1975

*Invisible*Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

Objective

The student will be stimulated to write an original story about "Invisibility" following an oral discussion of two plots that both relate to the theme of invisibility.

Materials

The following recipe should be written on the blackboard:

Ingredients

2 tsp. ground brown snails	3 small old worms
1 minced snake skin	1 oyster
2 freshly killed wasps	5 minced onions
1 egg	10 cups warm water

Method

Whip the egg and oyster (raw) for 3 minutes at low speed in the blender. Gradually add the ground snails and minced snake skin to the mixture, mixing thoroughly after each addition. Cut the worms into small chunks and add these quickly to the mixture. While still blending the mixture, add the onions and mashed wasps. Finally, pour this mixture and 10 cups of warm water into a large saucepan. Cook this mixture over a low heat for ten minutes. Let cool at warm temperature.

Procedures

1. Explain to the students that the recipe written on the blackboard was given to you by a very strange woman. She said that if you drank this mixture once a day, four times a week for six months, you would become invisible.
2. Begin the discussion by questioning the students:
 - why would anyone want to become invisible?
 - what are some things you could do when you are invisible?
 - how could you become visible afterwards?

Composition Study,
Week Ten: December 1 - 5, 1975

Lesson 1: Stimulus for Writing

3. Present the class with a blank white sheet of paper. Suggest to the students that a message has been written on this paper with invisible ink. Initiate a discussion by asking the students the following questions:

- who might have written the message with invisible ink?
- what might the message say?
- how could invisible ink be made?

4. Finally have the students write a mysterious story about an invisible person or an adventure with invisible ink. Encourage them to make their story as different as possible from those written by others in the class.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher.	20 minutes approximately
Actual writing	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

APPENDIX F

EVALUATION OF STUDENT
WRITING IN TREATMENT

GROUP ONE

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK ONE: September 29 - October 3, 1975

The Deserted House

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ONE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for interesting noun modifiers by listening to six student stories containing interesting noun modifiers and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Six student stories containing representative samples of interesting noun modifiers.

Procedures

1. Present the six stories to the students by reading each story out loud as expressively as possible.
2. Have the students read their own stories over silently.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK TWO: October 6 - 10, 1975

My Favourite Recipe

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ONE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the effective use of connectives by listening to six student recipes containing the effective use of connectives and by rewriting the method portion of their own recipes.

Materials

Six student recipes containing representative samples of the effective use of connectives.

Procedures

1. Present the six recipes to the students by reading the method portion of each recipe out loud.
2. Have the students read their own recipes over silently.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite the method portion of their recipes. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK THREE: October 14 - 17, 1975

*The Panther*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ONE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for colourful action words by listening to six student stories containing colourful action words and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Six student stories containing representative samples of colourful action words.

Procedures

1. Present the six stories to the students by reading each story out loud as expressively as possible.
2. Have the students read their own stories silently.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK FOUR: October 20 - 24, 1975

*An Unusual Happening*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ONE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the effective use of exact words by listening to six student "eye witness" reports containing effective factual sentences (avoiding vagueness) and by rewriting a portion of their own reports.

Materials

Six student "eye witness" reports containing representative samples of effective factual sentences.

Procedures

1. Present the six reports to the students by reading each report out loud.
2. Have the students read their own reports over silently.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their reports. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK FIVE: October 27 - 31, 1975

*Animals in Conflict*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ONE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the sequential presentation of their ideas by listening to six student stories containing sequential ordering of happenings and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Six student stories which contain plots which are sequentially ordered.

Procedures

1. Present the six stories to the students by reading each story out loud.
2. Have the students read their own stories silently.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their own stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK SIX: November 3 - 7, 1975

*The Capture of a Proud Lioness*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ONE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for effective paragraphing (unit of ideas within each paragraph) by listening to six student stories containing effective paragraphing and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Six student stories containing effective paragraphing.

Procedures

1. Present the six stories to the students by reading each story out loud.
2. Have the students read over their own stories silently.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK SEVEN: November 10 - 14, 1975

*Alone on a Deserted Island*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ONE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for topic sentences at the beginning of paragraphs by listening to six student stories containing good topic sentences and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Six student stories containing good topic sentences

Procedures

1. Present the six stories to the students by reading each story out loud.
2. Have the students read over their own stories silently.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK EIGHT: November 17 - 21, 1975

*The Penpal Everyone Wants*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ONE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for an effective variety of sentence patterns by listening to six student commercials containing a variety of sentence patterns and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Six student commercials containing a variety of sentence patterns.

Procedures

1. Present the six commercials to the students by reading each one out loud.
2. Have the students read over their own stories/commercials silently.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their commercials. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK NINE: November 24 - 28, 1975

*An Escape from Danger*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ONE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the presentation of a consistent point of view by listening to six student stories containing a consistent point of view and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Researcher's Note: A consistent point of view is the writer's perspective in the story; for example, he/she is the central character in the story; he/she is looking back to those events that happened at an earlier time.

Materials

Six student stories containing a consistent point of view.

Procedures

1. Present the six student stories to the students by reading each one out loud.
2. Have the students read over their own stories silently.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Composition Study,
Week Nine: November 24 - 28, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK TEN: December 1 - 5, 1975

Invisible

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ONE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for an original treatment of the topic by listening to six original stories and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Six original student stories

Procedures

1. Present the six student stories to the students by reading each one out loud.
2. Have the students read over their own stories silently.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

APPENDIX G

EVALUATION OF STUDENT

WRITING IN TREATMENT

GROUP TWO

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK ONE: September 29 - October 3, 1975

The Deserted House

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TWO

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for interesting noun modifiers by listening to two student stories containing interesting noun modifiers, by reading the circled example and sample improvement on their own papers and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Two student stories containing representative samples of interesting noun modifiers.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, an example where an interesting noun modifier could be used. In addition, an improved example should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Present the two stories to the students by reading each story out loud as expressively as possible.
2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from six student stories.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Composition Study,
Week One: September 29 - October 3, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK TWO: October 6 - 10, 1975

*My Favourite Recipe*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TWO

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the effective use of connectives by listening to two student recipes containing the effective use of connectives, by reading the circled example and sample improvement on their own recipes, and by rewriting the method portion of their own recipes.

Materials

Two student recipes containing a representative sample of the effective use of connectives.

Each student recipe should have an example circled in red in which an effective connective could be used. In addition, a suggestion for improvement (an improved example) should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Present the two recipes to the students by reading the method portion of each out loud.
2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from six student recipes.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite the method portion of their recipes. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Composition Study,
Week Two: October 6 - 10, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK THREE: October 13 - 17, 1975

*The Panther*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TWO

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for colourful action words by listening to two student stories containing colourful action words, by reading the circled example and sample improvement on their own papers and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Two student stories containing representative samples of colourful action words.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, an example where a colourful action word could be used. In addition, an improved example should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Present the two stories to the students by reading each story out loud as expressively as possible.
2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from six student stories.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Composition Study,
Week Three: October 13 - 17, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK FOUR: October 20 - 24, 1975

*An Unusual Happening*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TWO

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the effective use of exact words by listening to two student "eye witness" reports containing effective factual sentences (avoiding vagueness), by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Two student "eye witness" reports containing representative samples of effective factual sentences.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, an example where a more exact word could be used. In addition, an improved example should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Present the two reports to the students by reading each report out loud.
2. Read out loud and suggested improvements from six student reports.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their reports. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Composition Study,
Week Four: October 20 - 24, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK FIVE: October 27 - 31, 1975

*Animals in Conflict*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TWO

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the sequential presentation of their ideas by listening to two student stories containing a sequential ordering of happenings, by reading the circled example (of an event in the wrong order) and sample improvement (where the idea should be placed) on their own papers, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Two student stories which contain plots which are sequentially ordered.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, an example of an idea or event in the wrong order. In addition, a sample improvement suggesting where the idea could be placed should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Present the two stories to the students by reading each story out loud.
2. Read out loud examples of incorrectly ordered items and suggested improvements from six student stories.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?

Composition Study,
Week Five: October 27 - 31, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK SIX: November 3 - 7, 1975

*The Capture of a Proud Lioness*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TWO

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for effective paragraphing (unity of ideas within each paragraph) by listening to two student stories containing effective paragraphing, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Two student stories containing effective paragraphing.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, a sentence that does not relate to the central idea of the paragraph. In addition, an appropriate sentence substitute that is directly related to the central idea of the paragraph should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Present the two stories to the students by reading each story out loud.
2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from six student stories.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name of the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Composition Study,
Week Six: November 3 - 7, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK SEVEN: November 10 - 14, 1975

*Alone on a Deserted Island*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TWO

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for topic sentences at the beginning of paragraphs by listening to two student stories containing good topic sentences, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Two student stories containing good topic sentences.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, an example in which a better topic sentence could have been used. In addition, an improved topic sentence should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Present the two stories to the students by reading each story out loud.
2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from six student stories.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Composition Study,
Week Seven: November 10 - 14, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK EIGHT: November 17 - 21, 1975

*The Penpal Everyone Wants*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TWO

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for an effective variety of sentence patterns by listening to two student commercials containing a variety of sentence patterns, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Two student commercials containing a variety of sentence patterns.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, a sentence that does not possess the variety in pattern that it should. In addition, an appropriate sentence substitute that has the needed variety in patterns should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Present the two commercials to the students by reading each out loud.
2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from six student stories.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their commercials. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Composition Study,
Week Eight: November 17 - 21, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher Exactly 15 minutes

Student rewriting Approximately
15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK NINE: November 24 - 28, 1975

*An Escape from Danger*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TWO

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the presentation of a consistent point of view by listening to two student stories containing a consistent point of view, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Researcher's Note: A consistent point of view is the writer's perspective in the story; for example, he/she is the central character in the story; he/she is looking back to those events that happened at an earlier time.

Materials

Two student stories containing a consistent point of view.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, a sentence that does not adhere to the consistent point of view that has been developed in the story. In addition, an appropriate sentence substitute that follows the consistent point of view that has been developed should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Present the two student stories to the students by reading each one out loud.
2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from six student stories.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?

Composition Study,
Week Nine: November 24 - 28, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK TEN: December 1 - 5, 1975

*Invisible*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TWO

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for an original treatment of the topic by listening to two original stories, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

Two original student stories.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, an example in which a more original treatment of an idea is possible. In addition, some suggestions for improving the example *could* be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Present the two student stories to the students by reading each one out loud.
2. Read out examples and suggested improvements from six student stories.
3. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their own stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Composition Study,
Week Ten: December 1 - 5, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

APPENDIX H
EVALUATION OF
STUDENT WRITING
IN TREATMENT GROUP THREE

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK ONE: September 29 - October 3, 1975

*The Deserted House*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP THREE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for interesting noun modifiers by participation in a large group oral lesson, by reading the circled example and sample improvement on their own papers, by listening to one student story containing interesting noun modifiers and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

One student story containing a representative sample of interesting noun modifiers.

Each student story should have an example circled in red in which an interesting noun modifier could be used. In addition, a suggestion for improvement (an improved example) should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Have the students suggest words (noun modifiers) that might make these words look interesting: *leaves, path, door, stairs, shutters*. Ask the students to make up complete sentences using these words with their suggested modifiers (to be done orally).
2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from two student stories.
3. Present one story to the students by reading it out loud as expressively as possible.
4. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?

Composition Study,
 Week One: September 29 - October 3, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK TWO: October 6 - 10, 1975

*My Favourite Recipe*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP THREE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the effective use of connectives by participation in a large group oral lesson, by reading the circled example and sample improvement on their own papers, by listening to one student recipe containing the effective use of connectives and by rewriting the method portion of their own recipes.

Materials

One student recipe containing a representative sample of the effective use of connectives.

Each student recipe should have an example circled in red in which an effective connective could be used. In addition, a suggestion for improvement (an improved example) should be noted at the end of the paper.

On the blackboard, a list of steps to be followed in a recipe should be printed.

Procedures

1. Have the students suggest words to join these steps which are to be followed in a recipe:
 - beat the egg
 - mix the sugar in slowly
 - add spices, salt, baking soda
 - add flour slowly
 - mix until all ingredients are moist
 - drop mixture, one teaspoonful at a time onto a greased cookie sheet
2. Ask the students to suggest other effective joining words. Record these on the blackboard.
3. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from two student recipes.

Composition Study,
Week Two: October 6 - 10, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

4. Present the method portion of one recipe to the students by reading it out loud.
5. Suggest to the students that they rewrite the method portion of their recipes. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK THREE: October 13 - 17, 1975

*The Panther*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP THREE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for colourful action words by participation in a large group oral lesson, by reading the circled example and sample improvement on their own papers, by listening to one student story containing colourful action words and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

One student story containing a representative sample of colourful action words.

Each student story should have an example circled in red in which a colourful action word could be used. In addition, a suggestion for improvement (an improved example) should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Have the students suggest more colourful action words to replace the underlined words in these sentences:
 - The black panther *was* on a thick branch.
 - The silent cat *went after* the unsuspecting prey.
 - Suddenly a black blur *came* from the tree tops.
 - The savage panther *killed* the prey.
 - The now satisfied panther *took* the prey home to feed her young.
2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from two student stories.
3. Present one story to the students by reading it out loud as expressively as possible.
4. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Composition Study,
Week Three: October 13 - 17, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK FOUR: October 20 - 24, 1975

*An Unusual Happening*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP THREE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the effective use of exact words through participation in a large group oral lesson, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own reports, by listening to one student "eye witness" report containing effective factual sentences (avoiding vagueness), and by rewriting a portion of their own reports.

Materials

One student "eye witness" report containing a representative sample of effective factual sentences.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, an example where a more exact word could be used. In addition, an improved example should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Have the students suggest words that are more exact to replace the following vague words:
 - one day
 - strange sound
 - nice man
 - queer light
 - lost child
2. Encourage the students to make up (orally) complete factual sentences using these more exact words.
3. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from two student reports.
4. Present one report to the students by reading it out loud.

Composition Study,
Week Four: October 20 - 24, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

5. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK FIVE: October 27 - 31, 1975

*Animals in Conflict*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP THREE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the sequential presentation of their ideas by participating in a large group oral lesson, by reading the circled example (of an event in the wrong order) and sample improvement (where the idea should be placed) on their own papers, by listening to one student story containing a sequential ordering of happenings, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

One student story which contains a plot which is sequentially ordered.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, an example of an idea in the wrong order. In addition, a sample improvement suggesting where the idea could be placed should be noted at the end of the paper.

A list of happenings (as outlined in Procedure 1) on the blackboard.

Procedures

1. Have the students re-order these happenings:

Oliver Battles the Beagle

- Oliver snuck up behind Buttons,
- He took a hard swipe at Buttons' sleeping face.
- Oliver was a small, brown and ginger kitten.
- He liked to tease the beagle, Buttons.
- Buttons' eyes opened wide and he began running after Oliver.
- Buttons had just eaten his supper and was resting on the floor.
- He chased Oliver 'round and 'round the house.
- Oliver looked forward to the next chase.
- Finally, Buttons grew tired and went back to rest on the floor.

Composition Study,
Week Five: October 27 - 31, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from two student stories.
3. Present one student story to the students by reading it out loud.
4. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Study rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK SIX: November 3 - 7, 1975

The Capture of a Proud Lioness

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP THREE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for effective paragraphing (unity of ideas within each paragraph) by participating in a large group oral lesson, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, by listening to one student story containing effective paragraphing, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

One student story containing effective paragraphing.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, a sentence that does not relate to the central idea of the paragraph. In addition, an appropriate sentence substitute that is directly related to the central idea of the paragraph should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Read orally the following three paragraphs that have been printed on the blackboard. Ask the students to consider if there are any sentences that do not relate to the central idea of the paragraph (in each instance). Have the students suggest appropriate sentence substitutes if sentences that are unrelated to the central idea are found.

- How do you feel as you begin to run?

Hurry! Hurry! Hurry! Something is happening. Twigs are being broken. Leaves are rustling. Is that a human voice I hear? One lion cub liked to chase his tail. Is that a dog barking? Help! Danger is too near!

- How do you feel as you begin to lose consciousness?

I am running hard. The cubs follow obediently. My heart is pounding in my chest. I am in the centre of the forest. My body wants to rest but I know I must go on. I have never run as fast before. I am conscious of a sharp pain in my left shoulder. I feel dizzy. Everything is becoming a cloudy blur.

Composition Study,
Week Six: November 3 - 7, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

- How do you feel about these strange surroundings?

As I awake I feel the cold, rough floor underneath me. I wish it were warm like the floor of the forest. A black spider weaves a web. I wish I were in the quiet forest.

2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from two student stories.
3. Present one story to the students by reading it out loud.
4. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK SEVEN: November 10 - 14, 1975

*Alone on a Deserted Island*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP THREE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for topic sentences at the beginning of paragraphs by participating in a large group oral lesson, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, by listening to one student story containing good topic sentences, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

One student story containing good topic sentences.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, an example in which a better topic sentence could have been used. In addition, an improved topic sentence should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Have the students suggest a topic sentence to begin each of the following groups of sentences that they see written on the blackboard:

Group 1

Some fallen logs would provide stakes for the outside walls. In between the stakes I packed wet, sticky mud. Using a large branch I swept the area that would become the floor. On top of the stake-like logs I piled long, narrow poles that stretched right across the top. Again I used wet, sticky mud in the cracks between these narrow poles. Finally, I piled branches on top of these poles.

Group 2

At first all I found was some wild berries and fallen nuts to eat. Later, as I was exploring, I discovered some wild fruit trees. I soon learned how to dig for clams and often I found small crabs that I could boil and eat. I made a strong wooden bow and with arrows weighted with very sharp stones, I was able to kill wild game.

2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from two student stories.

Composition Study,
 Week Seven: November 10 - 14, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

3. Present one story to the students by reading it out loud.
4. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK EIGHT: November 17 - 21, 1975

*The Penpal Everyone Wants*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP THREE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for an effective variety of sentence patterns by participating in a large group oral lesson, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, by listening to one student commercial containing a variety of sentence patterns, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

One student commercial containing a variety of sentence patterns.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, a sentence that does not possess the variety in sentence pattern that it should. In addition, an appropriate sentence substitute that has the needed variety in pattern should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Have the students read orally the following sentences that have been printed on the blackboard. Suggest that these sentences could be improved by changing the way in which the ideas are expressed. Encourage the students to keep ideas that are related to each other close together (eg. sports - football, soccer; or love of animals - family pet). Have the students improve these sentences to form an effective commercial.

- I have six people in my family.
- I have a B.C. Lions banner in my bedroom.
- I play soccer for the school team after school.
- I like to make things like models.
- I can remember when our dog died.
- Animals and chocolate milk shakes are my favourite things.

2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from two student stories.

Composition Study,
Week Eight: November 17 - 21, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

3. Present one story to the students by reading it out loud.
4. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their commercials. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK NINE: November 24 - 28, 1975

*An Escape from Danger*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP THREE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for the presentation of a consistent point of view by participating in a large group oral lesson, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, by listening to one student story containing a consistent point of view, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Researcher's Note: A consistent point of view is the writer's perspective in the story; for example, he/she is the central character in the story; he/she is looking back to those events that happened at an earlier time.

Materials

One student story containing a consistent point of view.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, a sentence that does not adhere to the consistent point of view that has been developed in the story. In addition, an appropriate sentence substitute that follows the consistent point of view that has been developed should be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Suggest to the students that the following discussions about a writer's point of view should help them in the development of a consistent point of view in their own stories:
 - (a) You are the only person to witness the landing of the first martian on earth. Give an oral report of what you saw of the landing, just as though the landing were happening right now.
 - (b) The first Thanksgiving happened many, many years ago. Give an oral report of what the first Thanksgiving was like, as if you were someone interested in history and reporting on an event that occurred a long time ago.
2. Read out loud examples and suggested improvements from two student stories.

Composition Study,
Week Nine: November 24 - 28, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

3. Present one story to the students by reading it out loud.
4. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

COMPOSITION STUDY

WEEK TEN: December 1 - 5, 1975

*Invisible*Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP THREE

Objective

The students will evaluate their writing for an original treatment of the topic by participating in a large group oral lesson, by reading the circled example and sample improvement in their own papers, by listening to one original student story, and by rewriting a portion of their own stories.

Materials

One original student story.

Each student composition should have, circled in red, an example in which a more original treatment of an idea is possible. In addition, some suggestions for improving the example *could* be noted at the end of the paper.

Procedures

1. Have the students suggest more original ideas to replace the ideas in the following sentences:

(1) An old woman walked up to me. (eg. A young woman with bright yellow hair suddenly jumped in front of me.)

(2) She gave me a bottle. (eg. In her huge hands was a tiny flask of red liquid.)

(3) I drank it. (eg. She invited me to taste this liquid, saying it was sweet and that it had magical powers.)

(4) She told me to taste it daily. (eg. Then she told me to sip this liquid every day while standing on my head.)

(5) I made invisible ink from cornstarch and water. (eg. I mixed the white of an egg and a little milk together. Then I let it stand in the refrigerator for a day before putting it in an old fountain pen.)

(6) My writing was gone. (eg. My homework was invisible. Wouldn't my teacher be surprised when I made it visible again?)

2. Read out examples and suggested improvements from two student stories.

Composition Study,
Week Ten: December 1 - 5, 1975

Lesson 2: Evaluation of Student Writing

3. Present one story to the students by reading it out loud.
4. Suggest to the students that they rewrite a portion of their stories. Reinforce the idea that the purpose of this rewriting is to improve the effectiveness of their composition writing.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each student put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for those students who are absent today to complete this writing experience at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation by teacher	Exactly 15 minutes
Student rewriting	Approximately 15 minutes

APPENDIX I

LETTER TO TEACHERS
SUMMARIZING CONCLUDING
ACTIVITIES IN STUDY

December 1, 1975.

Dear Colleague:

We are now entering the final phase of the experimental study that has been concerned with student composition skills. Enclosed you will find the two post tests which should be administered during the week of December 8 to December 12, unless you have notified me of the necessity for alternate arrangements. Please try to arrange the administration of these tests so that at least one day will intervene between them.

After you have administered the two post tests to your students, please bundle up their papers and forward them to me at Hillcrest Elementary School. In addition, I will require a class list with the names of all of the students who were involved in the post tests; this class list should be included in the bundle of student test papers. Because these tests will form an integral part of the statistical analysis of the study, it is essential that they be forwarded in their original state -- do not ask the students to revise or edit these papers. Please forward these papers as soon as possible. *It is essential that I receive all materials on or before December 19, 1975.*

In addition, I will need information concerning the socio-economic status of the family. You will recall that I spoke to you with respect to this matter during our meeting at Hillcrest Elementary School earlier in the fall. The Blishen Index consists of a ranking of the students according to the occupation of the father. I will require that the enclosed forms be completed in full for each student in your class. I would ask that you complete each form as exactly as you possibly can and that you arrange the completed forms in alphabetical order. Please telephone me if any questions occur to you as you are completing these forms.

School: 477-6968

Home: 477-5770

The final part of the study concerns the one visit that I will make to your classroom after school during the week of December 8 - 12 or December 15 - 19. During this visit I will collect your attendance record for the period of the study. I will also check five or six of the student composition folders to see that you have evaluated the compositions according to the procedures outlined in the manual. I will be telephoning you to arrange a convenient day to get together.

Finally, I would like to extend to you my sincere thanks for your assistance at this very busy time and throughout the study.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Phyllis Mitchell

APPENDIX J

COMPOSITION

TESTS

COMPOSITION STUDY

TEST: DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

I Wish I Was Only Three Inches Tall

Materials

Nine unlit birthday candles on a piece of styrofoam (or similar base)

Procedures

1. While holding the candles and artificial base, ask the students if they have ever made a wish before blowing out the candles on a birthday cake. If they could make a wish and know it would come true, what would they wish for?
2. The students will then be asked to suppose that what they wished for most was to become very small. Inform them that this wish will be granted.
3. Have the students suggest reasons for why they wished they were very small.
4. Light the candles and have everyone wish they were only three inches tall before having one student blow the candles out.
5. Ask the students to pretend that their wishes have been granted. Ask them questions about the family room in which they were having the birthday party:
 - What does the television set look like now that they are so very small?
 - How is the telephone different?
 - What do the coffee and end tables look like now?
 - What could the ashtrays be used for now? (perhaps glass wading pools)
 - How big is the smallest thing in the room?
 - What is the largest item in the room now?
6. Encourage the students to tell about the interesting activities they can do now that they are small. Have them also suggest some of the dangers they face now that they are small.
7. Finally, ask the students to write about their life as a very tiny person.

Composition Study

Test: Descriptive Writing

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each child put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for students who are absent to write this test at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus	20 minutes
Actual writing	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

TEST: DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

In the Body of a Giant

Materials

A long, gnarled stick

Procedures

1. While holding the stick, ask the students to imagine that they have been given a stick by an old woman in return for helping her to find a special ring that she had lost.
 - How do they feel about getting this ugly old stick as a reward?
 - What special quality would this stick have to possess in order to convince the students to keep it?
2. Have the students suppose that this is a magic stick. Tell them that the old woman said that they would magically turn into huge giants if the head of the stick were tapped on the floor three times.
3. Before tapping the head of the stick on the floor, ask the students why they would want to become giants. Continue to question them as to what particularly would be appealing about being a giant.
4. Tap the head of the stick three times (on the floor). Ask the students to imagine that they have all been turned into giants. Ask them about their surroundings:
 - What has happened to the roof that was over their heads?
 - On what are their feet standing?
 - What do the houses around the school look like?
 - Can they see their homes?
 - Can they see the Mainland and Vancouver?
5. Finally, ask the students to write about their new life as a giant.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each child put his/her name on the composition?

Composition Study

Test: Descriptive Writing

3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?
4. Have I made arrangements for students who are absent to write this test at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus	20 minutes
Actual writing	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

TEST: NARRATIVE WRITING

Danger on the Open Sea

Materials

On the blackboard, a rough sketch or picture of an 18th Century sailing ship (see *World Book* encyclopedia)

Procedures

1. Introduce the writing assignment by providing this background information:

Many years ago men longed for adventure. They were curious and wanted to explore the world. When large sailing ships came into being, men would travel on long sea voyages. It was not long until one day the men grew tired of staying close to land when they sailed. They wanted to explore further out in the ocean and they began to sail directly out to the open sea. What they did not realize was some of the dangers they would face on the open sea.

2. Men who luckily survived shipwrecks told their families and friends about the dangers on the open sea. Question the students as to what the brave adventurers were describing when they told of:

- a gigantic foaming sea
- the crashing torrent threw a monstrous creature on to the ship
- an impassable net of weed held the ship tightly
- eight legs were reaching for something to grasp
- a shower of knives were thrown
- a white blanket hung in the air and we could see nothing around us.

3. Finally, ask the students to write a story about a sailing crew and the dangers they faced on the open sea.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each child put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?

Composition Study

Test: Narrative Writing

4. Have I made arrangements for students who are absent to write this test at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus	20 minutes
Actual writing	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

COMPOSITION STUDY

TEST: NARRATIVE WRITING

Beowulf the Hero

Materials

On the blackboard, a rough sketch or picture of a roughly hewn metal sword and a round Anglo-Saxon wooden shield.

Procedures

1. Introduce the writing assignment by providing this background information:

Many years ago, men used to spend their evenings around a huge fire telling each other of the brave deed they had done. Often, in order to impress their friends, they added bits to their stories that were not true. Sometimes they liked to make up stories about their favourite hero, Beowulf. Beowulf was an exceptionally strong man who would use only a wooden shield and a very rough metal sword to protect himself.

2. Perhaps one of the most exciting stories they liked to tell occurred when Beowulf once saved a whole village of people from the man-eating beast, Grendel. Suggest to the students that this monster (Grendel) looked like he was half-man and half-beast. Ask the students to imagine what Grendel must have looked like:

- his head resembled that of what large animal?
- his hands and feet were claws. What kind of animal claws were they?
- thick, long hair covered his whole body. What kind of animal would have this hair?
- huge fangs, like what animal, protruded from his mouth?
- his body was huge, as big as what size of man?

3. Finally, assign the students the task of writing an imaginary story about a terrible fight between Beowulf and Grendel.

Checklist

1. Did I record attendance on the sheet provided for this purpose?
2. Did I notice whether each child put his/her name on the composition?
3. Did I collect a paper from every student in the class?

Composition Study

Test: Narrative Writing

4. Have I made arrangements for students who are absent to write this test at another time?

Suggested Time

Presentation of stimulus	20 minutes
Actual writing	20 minutes or when 90% of the class has finished

APPENDIX K

FORM REQUIRING
INFORMATION TO COMPUTE
BLISHEN SOCIO-ECONOMIC
INDEX SCORE

COMPOSITION STUDY

STUDENT'S NAME _____
Surname Given Name

STUDENT'S AGE _____ STUDENT'S SEX
(as of September 15, 1975) Male Female

FATHER'S OCCUPATION _____
(Be very specific as to the kind of work the father
is engaged in)

FATHER'S PLACE OF WORK _____
(Specify as exactly as possible)

NOTE: Please arrange all forms in alphabetical order.

VITA

Surname: MITCHELL Given Names: PHYLLIS MAY JEANNE

Place of Birth: VERNON, B.C. Date of Birth: MARCH 26, 1946

Educational Institutions Attended, with Dates of Entering and Leaving:

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA, VICTORIA, B.C. 1964 to 1969

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA, VICTORIA, B.C. 1971 to 1976

Degrees, Diplomas, Etc., Awarded, with Dates and Names of Institutions:

B.Ed. (Elem.) 1969 University of Victoria, Victoria

Honors and Awards:

Distinguished Achievement Award for Excellence in Educational

Journalism, Special Publication (Creativity), Educational Press

Association of America, 1975

Publications:

Magazines: Mitchell, P. M. (Editor) *Human life science*. A Curriculum Magazine for Intermediate Teachers. Vancouver: British Columbia Teacher's Federation and Evergreen Press, December 1973, 59 p.

Mitchell, P. M. (Editor) *Creativity*. A Curriculum Magazine for Intermediate Teachers. Vancouver: British Columbia Teacher's Federation and Evergreen Press, April 1974, 117 p.

Mitchell, P. M. (Editor) *Focus on math for the '70s*. A Curriculum Magazine for Intermediate Teachers. Vancouver: British Columbia Teacher's Federation and Evergreen Press, March 1975, 108 p.

Mitchell, P. M. (Editor) *The Intermediate Teacher*. A Curriculum Magazine for Intermediate Teachers. Vancouver: British Columbia Teacher's Federation and Evergreen Press, April 1976, 42 p.

Mitchell, P. M. (Editor) *The Intermediate Teacher*. A Curriculum Magazine for Intermediate Teachers. Vancouver: British Columbia Teacher's Federation and Evergreen Press, August 1976, 77 p.

Articles: Mitchell, P. M. The open classroom: challenge of the future. *The B.C. Teacher*, 1972, 52, 82-85.

Mitchell, P. M. The creative writing process. *Creativity*, 1974, 14, 53-60.

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Title of Thesis/Dissertation

COMPOSITION REVISION FOR GRADE FOUR PUPILS

Author


PHYLLIS MAY JEANNE MITCHELL

Name

October 26, 1976

Date