Young Children's Oral and Artistic Responses to Five Picturebooks by Anthony Browne

by

Adrianne Stacey
Bachelor of Music, University of Victoria, 1997

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Young Children's Oral and Artistic Responses to Five Picturebooks
by Anthony Browne

by

Adrianne Stacey
Bachelor of Music, University of Victoria, 1997

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo, Department of Curriculum and Instruction in Education
Supervisor

Dr. Alison Preece, Department of Curriculum and Instruction in Education
Departmental Member

Dr. Robert Dalton, Department of Curriculum and Instruction in Education
Departmental Member

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo, Department of Curriculum and Instruction in Education
Supervisor

Dr. Alison Preece, Department of Curriculum and Instruction in Education
Departmental Member

Dr. Robert Dalton, Department of Curriculum and Instruction in Education
Departmental Member

Abstract

The purpose of the 6-week qualitative study was to explore how Grade 1 children responded to five picturebooks by Anthony Browne during interactive read-alouds. The 13 participants and the other non-participants were organized into four mixed gender and mixed reading-ability groups. Data included transcripts from 20 small group read-aloud sessions and field notes that documented additional student affective responses to the texts. Other data included the children's drawings that were completed after each picturebook small group read-aloud session, as well as transcripts of the students' individual interviews about their artistic responses. Coding of student conversation turns during the read-aloud sessions revealed the identification of six categories of statements. These six categories were then applied to the students' individual interview data to facilitate comparison between the two settings. The artwork and interviews of three students were analyzed as three individual cases and represented a sample of student readers of differing abilities.

Data analysis of the read-aloud session transcripts revealed that labelling statements accounted for approximately one-third of all student comments. The remaining students' statements were categorized as following: approximately one-quarter

were character description, one-fifth were ‘other,’ (i.e. indecipherable statements and/or off-topic comments), approximately one-tenth were character feeling, less than one-tenth were autobiographical, and a small amount were intertextual in nature. The comparison of the three focus children’s individual interviews to their small group conversations revealed that the children generated a greater number of autobiographical statements during the individual interviews about their art. Implications for research and pedagogy included teaching and conducting research about visual literacy that involves pre- and post-treatment study, and examining children’s conversations about characters in picturebooks by numerous authors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research project could not have been possible without the support of the following people:

Thank you to Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo, whose insight, encouragement and careful review of my work has inspired me to do my best on this thesis.

Thank you to Dr. Robert Dalton, who carefully reviewed my plans in the early stages and guided me in understanding how children view art.

Thank you to Dr. Alison Preece, who provided additional support and feedback about my research.

Thank you to my friend Lynda, who graciously allowed me to take time with her students in order to complete this project.

Thank you to the students who participated so whole-heartedly in this research project. I hope you enjoyed the process and learned a great deal about picturebooks.

DEDICATION

To my husband Andrew:

For your love and patient encouragement through this process.

I am grateful to have you by my side.

To my parents, Roberta J. Stacey and Maurice D. Cox

For your unfailing belief in me, that I could accomplish great things.

To my children:

Sarah - for your thoughtful comments about my research.

Lindsay - for cheerleading me when I completed a task.

William - for your interest in picturebooks and my research.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

> Picture books develop children's thinking…. Their themes include those areas of life which concern adults as well as children: jealousy, anger, fear, friendship, family relationships and death. Because these aspects of life are complex, the situations in which they are presented are open to interpretation and therefore invite discussion. (Jordan, 1996, pp. 50-51)

Rationale for Study

Contemporary children's picturebooks are a rich medium for children to explore the dynamics of character relationships through text and illustrations. Nikolajeva (2002) noted that from about the 1960's there has been a shift in Western children's fiction toward aspects of psychological and character-oriented elements in, whereas previously children's fiction primarily centered around plot with less emphasis on more complex aspects of characterization. Nikolajeva suggested this shift might be due in part to the rise of female authors, who may have been nurtured to value stereotypical feminine traits such as empathy for others. As a theorist, Nikolajeva has written extensively on aspects of character in children's fiction, and remarked that empirical study into aspects of characterization has seldom focused on children's perspectives of characters in literature.

Character study in contemporary classrooms provides an avenue for fulfilling several objectives in British Columbia Ministry of Education Language Arts (2006) curriculum documents. Stated aims of the English Language Arts curriculum for the primary grades are "to provide students with opportunities for personal and intellectual

growth through speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and representing to make meaning of the world and to prepare them to participate effectively in all aspects of society" (p. 2). Goals for the English Language Arts in British Columbia are that students should:

> Comprehend and respond to oral and written language critically, creatively, and articulately … [and gain competence in communicating] ideas, information, and feelings … [in order to] think critically and creatively, and reflect on and articulate learning, [and] develop a continuously increasing understanding of self and others. (p. 2)

Literature can be used to promote young children's growth of understanding as they share ideas and exchange information about books they read. As they negotiate meanings and ideas, young children can think more deeply about characters within literature. An exploratory inquiry of children's fiction can provide opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of elements of characterization, setting, and plot, and through this interaction with literature children might make "text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections [where they may] … read and view to expand knowledge, by predicting and connecting, comparing and inferring, [and] inquiring and explaining" (p. 52).

As children immerse themselves in character study in picturebooks, they have opportunities to be involved as "active, meaning-seeking" readers (Lewis, 2001, p. 55). Children can learn from narration, dialogue and pictures how characters look, how they feel, what they think, and how they interact with other characters. Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) wrote about the process active readers engage in when constructing understanding

of a character through viewing and reading about characters' personalities and behavior and combining this information with their own intertextual experiences and their imagination.

Dresang (1999) noted that contemporary literature for young people is experiencing a transition that involves characters being portrayed with increasing complexity. Dresang wrote about many boundary-breaking features in contemporary picturebooks, which may include a child's own perspective being explored in greater depth with characters who may "speak for themselves" (p. 24). She noted that contemporary authors may embed secondary stories and "multiple layers of meaning" through the use of visual metaphor, indirect dialogue or inner monologue in order to provide a deeper psychological aspect of a character (p. 19). As children immerse themselves in contemporary picturebooks, they can be challenged to think more deeply about characters and how the characters in picturebooks may or may not relate to their own lives.

Many picturebooks written and illustrated by Anthony Browne are sophisticated and complex in design. Browne's picturebooks focus on themes that feature young children in natural or imaginary settings, and can be used to assist children in learning more about strategies for thinking about text, elements of characterization, plot, and setting. Jane Doonan (1989) wrote that Anthony Browne combines an "originality of vision [with] the capacity to select themes worth considering, and honesty in dealing with them" (p. 9). In an interview, Anthony Browne (Browne & Evans, 1998) noted that he deliberately makes his books open to differing interpretations. Doonan (1989) wrote that

Browne invites readers to construct a personal meaning that is inclusive of culture and experience, using personal survival themes that

> stimulate reflection upon the nature of society and its complex values … His heroes and heroines build bridges between social differences, deal with loneliness, jealousy, boredom, they compensate for spiritual neglect, overcome inappropriate dependency, and they attempt to conform to the roles society expects of them. (Doonan, p. 10)

In this way Anthony Browne presents serious issues of life from the perspective of the child, showing "the way things are, and how his protagonists respond" (p. 10), within a medium that is both entertaining and sensitively crafted.

I chose to use Anthony Browne's picturebooks in my study of young children's perceptions of characters in picturebooks because many of his picturebooks broach subjects of serious concern to young children. The picturebooks I chose for my study feature characters that must deal with issues such as divorce or separation, loneliness, insecurity, bravery, and fear. While Browne does not broach these subjects directly in his picturebooks, he provides opportunities for children to link their own experiences with the text and artwork and to fill in the gaps that he leaves for the reader's imagination. Through his use of illusion and metaphor, Browne invites the reader to ponder the deeper messages in his picturebooks, with a playful complexity that is accessible to young children. As Browne indirectly deals with serious issues where readers have opportunities to infer meaning and link their own experiences with the text, I believe that Browne's books were an appropriate choice for my study which investigated children's autobiographical and intertextual connections to characters in picturebooks.

Purpose of the Study

Some contemporary picturebooks situate young children within a complex world where problems must be solved and where characters face "numerous life situations, challenges, and conflicts" (Smith-D'Arezzo & Thompson, 2006, p. 335). Today's parents and teachers are concerned that books benefit young children – that books reflect "authentic situations in life [that children] can relate to" (p. 335). As children make connections between their own experiences and the experiences of picturebook characters with problems, they may benefit by learning empathy for others. Children might also gain awareness that they are not alone in dealing with difficult situations where bullying, neglect and child abuse are concerned. Smith-D'Arezzo and Thompson (2006) acknowledged the need for research that explores difficult themes in children's books. Styles (1996) suggested that "picture books offer children access to the serious issues of life in an accessible form and with humour" (p. 30). Through an exploration involving young children reading contemporary picturebooks, creating visual arts responses, discussing selected picturebooks in small-group settings and engaging in individual interviews about their visual arts responses to the picturebooks, my research sought to illuminate the connections children make between their 'lived experience' and those of picturebook characters they learn about – characters with very real lives and problems.

The purpose of my research was to explore young children's responses to contemporary picturebooks that feature dynamic characters that develop through their experiences with problems in relationships. The character relationships explored through Anthony Browne's texts and visual artistry reveal authentic, real-life situations that young children may relate to, yet Browne's inclusion of subtle visual details and indirect

dialogue and monologue in many of his picturebooks provide complexity and require the reader to infer the nature of the relationship between characters. Through an immersion study of Browne's books, young children had the opportunity to respond in individual ways. Through interactive read-alouds and individual conversations about individual student's artwork, I explored children's autobiographical and intertextual connections between their own lives and those of the characters they were introduced to in Anthony Browne's picturebooks.

Researcher and Researcher Role

I first became interested in the study of children's literature during a college course taken in 1991, which examined historical examples of children's literature from the nineteenth century. My interest in aspects of characterization within contemporary picturebooks began with my work as a teacher-librarian and primary grade classroom teacher. I found that during read-aloud sessions young children were eager to discuss aspects of the plot and characters, often connecting parts of the story to their own personal experiences. My additional experience teaching primary music, drama and art offered opportunities to connect picturebooks within varied fine art strands. These experiences revealed to me children's motivation to express their understandings through varied artistic forms. I found that a variety of instructional strategies benefited students' literacy skills, while engaging students in creative and kinesthetic ways that in turn motivated them to reflect in greater depth on their learning. My studies in graduate education inspired me to delve deeper into contemporary children's picturebooks and to embark on a study of children's understanding and opinion of characters, children's expression of their understandings, and the connections they make in their own personal

lives to the characters they learn about. At the heart of my research I wanted to provide opportunity for children to develop visual literacy skills as they read about, view, critique, reflect on, and make personal connections to characters in selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne. Along with an interest in character study, I was interested in studying children's literature that addresses complex personal and family issues that contemporary children may face, as this type of literature may function as a bibliotherapeutic tool (Berns, 2004; Heath, Sheen, Leavy, Young, & Money, 2005; Iaquinta & Hipsky, 2006; Manifold, 2007; Parslow, Morgan, Allen, Jorm, O'Donnell, & Purcell, 2008; Pehrsson, 2007; Prater, Johnstun, Dyches, & Johnstun, 2006; Shechtman, 2006).

Research Questions

As stated previously, I was interested in exploring children's perceptions and autobiographical connections to characters in Anthony Browne's picturebooks within the context of a primary classroom environment. I was a participant researcher within the classroom of another teacher during this investigation. The questions that guided this research were:

a) What do young children discuss about characters within selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne?

b) Do young children make intertextual connections between characters, illustrations, or events in Browne's picturebooks and other texts they have read, and if so, what is the nature of these connections?

c) What does young children's artwork and discussion about their art reveal about their understanding of characters?

d) Do young children make autobiographical connections between their own lives and the characters in selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne, as revealed through visual arts and oral responses, and if so, what is the nature of these responses?

In the following section I provide a definition of terms that are explored in further depth in the literature review. These terms are defined in order to give clarity to how they are used within my discussion of relevant literature and empirical research within the literature review.

Definition of Terms

Character Development – The motives and reactions of characters in relation to their thoughts, feelings, desires, and beliefs that cause the characters to change (Emery, 1996).

Emic Perspective – "The research participants' perceptions and understanding of their social reality" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005, p. 548).

Etic Perspective – "The researchers' conceptual and theoretical understanding of the research participants' social reality" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005, p. 549).

Interanimation – Sipe (1998) described the relationship between the text and illustration sequence in a picturebook as one of "synergy," where each aspect "would be incomplete without the other…[and] the total effect depends not only on the union of the text and illustrations but also on the perceived interactions or transactions between these two parts" (pp. 98-99).

Intertextuality – The connections readers make between the text they are reading and other texts that they know (Sipe, 2000).

Irony – "A dynamic, performative bringing together of the said and the unsaid, each of which takes on meaning only in relation to the other" (Kummerling-Meibauer, 1999, p. 168).

Mimetic – In understanding characters within a novel or picturebook, the reader makes use of personal knowledge of culture, history, gender or personal experiences that are outside of the text in forming a fuller portrait of a character. A mimetic view of a character is one in which the reader believes the character is a real entity, which contrasts with a semiotic view of a character, which views the character as fictitious and bound within the signs and symbols created by the text (Nikolajeva, 2002, 2005a).

Picturebook – Lewis (2001) describes his interpretation of a 'picturebook' as the "combination of words and images working together" within a text that also involves the meaning-seeking reader (p. xiv). Lewis refers to various spellings of picturebook, yet suggests that the aforementioned spelling signifies the interconnected nature of this literary form, such that the relationship between words and pictures cannot be considered complete unless considered in unity.

Reader-Text Transaction – Rosenblatt (1978) described the transactional process that goes on when a reader transacts with text, which can occur along an efferent (taking away information) or aesthetic (experiencing pleasure and gaining meaning from) continuum. Readers adopt a preferred stance that will primarily favor either an efferent or aesthetic reading, although this preferred stance occurs along a continuum.

Resistance – The reader's opposition to various aspects of a story, which may include its "message, content, language, or illustrations" (Sipe & McGuire, 2006, p. 6).

Semiotics – The study of signs, which can "take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects. Contemporary semioticians study signs not in isolation but as part of semiotic 'sign-systems' … they study how meanings are made and how reality is represented" (Chandler, 2007, p. 2).

Visual Culture – Visual culture refers to the central role of imagery within contemporary society's creation of identity and distribution of knowledge (Duncum, 2001).

Visual Literacy – "Visual literacy refers to the ability to comprehend and create images in a variety of media in order to communicate effectively" (Considine, 1986, p. 38)

Project Organization

This chapter has introduced a rationale for the study of children's perceptions of and autobiographical connections to contemporary characters in picturebooks. Young children's small group discussions, individual interviews, and exploratory artwork about characters in contemporary picturebooks can offer opportunities for educators to engage with and encourage students who face difficult life circumstances. My study aimed to address the paucity of research in this area.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the philosophical foundations of the study and the guiding theoretical frameworks of visual literacy and semiotics. The literature review addresses visual literacy, intertextuality, reader-response theory, interactive read-alouds, picturebooks, and characterization in picturebooks. The literature review concludes with

an examination of relevant research and empirical studies that focus on young children's verbal and visual arts responses to contemporary picturebooks.

Chapter 3 provides a description of the methodology that was used in the study. Within this section, the research questions, general approach, research design, participants, data collection instruments such as the use of an audio recorder and reflective journal, and the procedures I used to collect the data are described, along with the procedures I used to analyze the data. The strengths and limitations of the study are also discussed.

Chapter 4 describes the findings from the analysis of the conversational turns of the participants in their small-group read-aloud sessions. Chapter 5 presents the findings from the analysis of the individual conversations and artistic response drawings of three focus children in my study. These three children were a sample of readers within the small groups. According to the British Columbia Ministry of Education Performance Standards in reading (2009), the three focus children varied in their achievement level in reading.

Chapter 6 summarizes the key findings from the research using the guiding research questions, connects these findings to the theoretical frameworks and the relevant research literature, and discusses the conclusions. Recommendations for teachers and implications for further research are presented and the chapter concludes with my personal reflections on the research process.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

> "There are parts of the world we can never know, and understanding that we can never communicate to others, if all of the sign systems are not available. Sign systems are thus multiple ways of knowing about the world."
> (Short, Kauffman, & Kahn, 2000, p. 167)

My research explored how the child views him/herself within the social world. Using picturebooks that involve child protagonists who experience social problems, I engaged students in small-group discussions, visual arts responses, and individual interviews about their arts responses. Below, I review the defining principles of Social Constructivism and Symbolic Interactionism and discuss how my research links to these philosophical foundations. I then present relevant literature in the intersecting fields of visual literacy and semiotic theory, and discuss how picturebooks are connected to these theoretical frameworks. I also review the literature on reader-response theory, intertextuality, characterization in picturebooks, interactive read-alouds and children's psychological and artistic developmental stages as they relate to my study. Finally, I review recent research on young children's verbal and artistic responses to literature.

Philosophical Foundations on the Social Nature of Learning

This study was based on a pragmatist philosophical foundation that recognizes "reality as dynamic, unfinished, and pluralistic" (Sandstrom, Martin, & Fine, 2006, p. 2). Many scholars have referred to the writings of John Dewey, who recognized that reality is open to many interpretations and that meaning is revealed through the course of

interaction (Hirtle, 1996; Sandstrom et al., 2006). Sandstrom et al. (2006) referred to John Dewey's work, and stated that pragmatists recognize "it is the human knower who establishes the 'meaning' of objects through his or her practical skills, symbolic abilities, and manipulative powers" (pp. 2-3). Sandstrom et al. proposed that truth is not 'out there', but rather is created by people as they "test out the usefulness of various ideas through their ongoing actions" (p. 3), and reasoned that pragmatists view the acquisition of knowledge as practical in that it should provide means for people to solve real problems.

George Herbert Mead, a pragmatist who translated pragmatist thought into a theory and application for the social sciences, emphasized that human beings are distinct from other species in that they have the capacity to use language, and that through thinking, reasoning, and communicating, humans have created a social world (Hewitt, 2007; Sandstrom et al., 2006). Mead reasoned that when humans use language they are engaged in using signs and symbols – known as semiotics. Mead stressed that much of human communication relies on the use of significant symbols, where meanings are known and understood among people, thereby allowing shared meanings of objects, events, or phenomena.

Mead's writings have impacted many researchers, including Herbert Blumer (1969), who coined the term 'Symbolic Interactionism' to describe a particular branch of sociology that recognized the following three premises: (a) human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings those things have for them; (b) the meaning of such things arises out of the social interaction that one person has with another, and; (c) meanings are modified through an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with

the things he/she encounters. Hewitt (2007) noted that symbolic interactionists view the self in relation to the social group and therefore view learning as social and complex. He recognized that humans transform meaning as they define and act in various situations. Hewitt proposed that humans have the free will to make decisions, yet they also acknowledge their culture and want to find a sense of social identity through participation in groups. This view of symbolic interactionism is similar to social constructivism, which views the learning community as one where "learners mediate knowledge within a social context. The role of language in a constructivist environment is that of mediator between the learner and the world, shaping and extending thought" (Hirtle, 1996, p. 91).

The views of symbolic interactionism and social constructivism provided an important foundation for my research, which examined young children's interactive small-group discussions of picturebooks, as well as their construction of understanding about the picturebooks through their individual visual arts responses and comments about the picturebooks and their art. My belief that learners make choices as they mediate between their own thoughts and the conversations of a group recognizes these complementary philosophical perspectives, and I designed my study with these philosophical perspectives in mind. Within these philosophical perspectives is a recognition that humans use signs in their communications to make meaning of events. Semiotic theory, which is the study of signs is discussed in the next section.

Semiotic Theory

Understanding the complexity of the picturebook necessitates the study of the meanings of signs, known as semiotics. Signs may take various forms, such as words, images, sounds, acts or objects, "but such things have no intrinsic meaning and become

signs only when we invest them with meaning" (Chandler, 2007, p. 13). The study of semiotics began with structuralist semioticians Saussure and Peirce, who offered models for how language (langue) and speech (parole) were structured within text. Chandler (2007) outlined the foundational influences of the work of both Saussure and Peirce, and noted the overarching influence of semiotics in our lives. Chandler stated, "we are thus the subjects of our sign-systems rather than being simply instrumental 'user[s]' who are fully in control of them. While we are not determined by semiotic processes, we are shaped by them far more than we realize" (p. 216).

In his exposition of semiotics, Chandler (2007) also referred to the work of Derrida (1967) and reasoned that "signs thus always refer to other signs, and there is no final sign referring only to itself" (p. 79). In media such as the picturebook, the visual and verbal signs combine to offer a composite work that challenges the reader to construct meaning. While Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) reasoned that "the visual component of a text is an independently organized and structured message – connected with the verbal text, but in no way dependent on it" (p. 17), Saraceni (2001) argued for an analysis of visually and verbally combined texts that acknowledges the composite nature of the work under examination. Kress and van Leeuwan (2006) discussed how the semiotic modes of writing and visual communication each have their own quite particular means of realizing what may be quite similar semantic relations. They stated, "while both visual structures and verbal structures can be used to express meanings drawn from a common cultural source, the two modes are not simply alternative means of representing 'the same thing'" (p. 76). These authors suggested that some modes of communication are realized more

easily through either visual or linguistic means. Contemporary media combines modes, and multimodality acknowledges the interconnectedness of multiple sign systems.

Jewitt (2008) wrote that multimodality has developed in different ways since it came to the fore in 1996 and referred to how multimodality attends to meaning "as it is made through the situated configurations across image, gesture, gaze, body posture, sound, writing, music, speech, and so on" (p. 246). Bezemer and Kress (2008), who examined the shift in design of educational materials between 1930 and 2005, noted the increasing emphasis on multimodal texts as well as web-based materials for learning. Their aim was to show how visual artists, editors and writers have used writing, image, layout, and various other semiotic resources to create potentials for learning (p. 168). Bezemer and Kress reasoned that "a mode is a socially and culturally shaped resource for making meaning," and that image, writing, speech and layout, as well as the moving image are examples of modes, all of which have differing modal resources (p. 171). Bezemer and Kress discussed how each type of mode can be used to do different semiotic work, such as the differences between written communication and image. They acknowledged that the medium (such as oil, pencil, typeface print or web-based learning resources) needs to be considered along with the mode and that the shifts in design and layout are facilitated by advances in sociocultural and technological practices.

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) advocated for a 'grammar of visual design' that might address how images function in relation to other subjects or objects within the composite image, and how the image communicates meaning. Kress and van Leeuwan discussed how visuals are signs, and that signs are not arbitrary, but are motivated acts of communication. Although they acknowledged that writing is a "form of visual

communication" (p. 17), they wanted to treat communication comprised of images as seriously as linguistic forms have been. These authors discussed several symbolic processes in visuals, noting that attributes can be made salient in various ways. This salience may involve characters' placement in the foreground, their exaggerated size, features of lighting, features of fine detail or sharp focus, or through conspicuous color or tone (p. 105). They also referred to other symbolic processes that included whether an object or person was being pointed at through gesture, or if the subject character looked out of place within the composite picture in some way, or if the subject character was associated with established symbolic values within a given society (p. 105). Kress and van Leeuwan likened images in pictures to language processes, in that they can also be represented in multiple ways. They emphasized that character arrangements, such as numerous people arranged in a symmetrical fashion and classified in a unified way, or attributes such as skin color, hair color and type, or items of clothing could serve to unite groupings into an arrangement that held a complex meaning for the viewer (pp. 107-108). Kress and van Leeuwan also referred to size of frame, horizontal angle of the visual in relation to other objects in the frame, and social distance as holding particular meaning for the viewer. While all of these visual signs are not arbitary, as Kress and van Leeuwan discussed, at every viewing is an involved 'reader' who must make sense of the visual and verbal within illustrations. Kress and van Leeuwen advocated for visual literacy instruction and noted that picturebooks can be used to introduce children to visual literacy skills.

Visual Literacy

Picturebooks are composed of an interconnected combination of text and images that unite into a composite whole (Lewis, 2001). Reading a picturebook involves reading both the words and viewing the accompanying illustrations. Many researchers have discussed the nature and role of visual literacy with respect to numerous types of media, including picturebooks, television, and computers. Considine (1986) offered a comprehensive definition of visual literacy: "the ability to comprehend and create images in a variety of media in order to communicate effectively" (p. 38). He extended this definition beyond critical-viewing skills and added that to be visually literate, one must be able to not only understand, analyze and appreciate visual messages, but also be able to interpret and produce visual messages (p. 38). Galda and Short (1993) stated that while children "constantly use and interpret visual images, they often are unable to analyze and think critically about these images" (p. 506). They reasoned that children require the skills to be able to comprehend the images they view in a variety of visual media and advocated for visual literacy instruction. Many theorists and educators have considered the important role of visual literacy in education and advocate for visual literacy instruction (Considine, 1986; Galda & Short, 1993; Pantaleo, 2008; Rice, 1989; Sipe, 2001; Stewig, 2001).

Scholars note that contemporary children are immersed in a rich culture of visual and verbal texts that combine to convey meaning (Nikolajeva, 2001; Saraceni, 2001). Various terms have been used to describe the set of skills that comprise visual literacy. While Duncum (2001) wrote about the shift in contemporary cultural life to that of a visual culture and used that term to discuss the necessity for instruction in visual culture,

Anderson, Kauffman and Short (1998) discussed visual literacy and wrote about the complex set of skills children need to use in order to critically view, show awareness of, and respond to complex multiple points of view within written and illustrated text. They reasoned that "readers have to interpret both print and pictures" and that illustrations are not merely an extension of print but that they "are essential for constructing understandings of the story" (p. 147). Other researchers, such as Pantaleo (2008) have written about the visual literacy skills needed to read texts with Radical Change (Dresang, 1999) and metafictive characteristics.

Visual literacy skills can assist children to interpret the diversely rich visual information that characterizes the current information age (Considine, 1994). Anderson, Kauffman and Short (1998) reasoned that children may intently pore over single illustrations and notice details that adults might miss, yet

> While children constantly use and interpret visual images, they often are unable to analyse and think critically about those images. They need to 'see' in the fullest sense and to recognize the significance of what they are seeing to become truly visually literate. (p. 147)

Anderson et al. advocated for greater inclusion of visual literacy instruction in aiding students to think more critically about what they view, which in turn could assist young readers in constructing deeper meaning from literature. They also stated that children should be immersed in both interpreting and creating their own art and that if children "see themselves as artists and authors, their responses to picture books are more complex because of 'insider' knowledge on how to tell stories through illustrations and words" (p. 148).

Sipe (2001) reasoned that picturebooks can be used to teach children about the conventions and principles of design, including the concepts of color, line, shape and texture. He noted that all parts of a book's design, including the exterior covers, endpages, dedication page, half-title and title pages are integral parts of a child's aesthetic experience of a book (p. 198). Sipe also stated that the publisher's design choices about typeface, placement of text, and placement and size of illustrations combine to create a holistic reading experience of the picturebook. As picturebooks feature illustration by artists it is important to understand that children proceed through general developmental stages in their understanding of art.

Children's Developmental Understanding of Art

Most children between the ages of five and seven in our society achieve notable expressiveness in their artistic creations and gain some control over artistic media (Gardner, 1980; Korzenik, 1972). Korzenik (1972) reasoned that "artistic media provide a special, even unique, avenue for grappling with issues of importance and complexity which do not, however, lend themselves to verbal discussion at this age" (p. 141). Artistic media provide a further avenue of response that may support and add to a child's conversational responses. Klepsch and Logie (1982) rationalized that "we communicate not only with words but with unconscious gestures … whether the subject wills it or not, the self is projected" through various actions that proceed from the human body, including art (p. 5). They purported that "a drawing captures symbolically on paper some of the subject's thoughts and feelings. It makes a portion of the inner self visible … In other words [the artist] leaves an imprint, however incomplete, of his inner self upon his drawing" (p. 6).

In *How We Understand Art: A Cognitive Developmental Account of Aesthetic Experience* (1987) Parsons described five sequential developmental stages in a person's aesthetic understanding of paintings. He researched how humans understand art using subjects from pre-school age through to art professors. His method involved presenting six paintings to a person and then asking him/her a series of standard topic questions about the subject of paintings; the feelings that were aroused from viewing the painting; the colors, form, and texture; the apparent difficulty the artist may have experienced in creating the painting; and the viewer's attraction to or dislike of the painting. His method was designed to elicit the subjects' spontaneous answers. From his data, Parsons developed a framework for how humans understand art. He found that at stage one a subject typically concentrated on favoritism, and provided answers such as, "It's my favorite color" and "I like it because of the dog" (p. 22). In stage two a subject concentrated on beauty and realism, making comments such as, "It's gross! It's really ugly!" or "It's really just scribbling. My little brother could do that," and "You can see how carefully he's done it. It's really good!" (p. 22). In stage three a subject concentrated on expressiveness, providing such answers as, "That really grabs me!" or "We all have a different experience of it. There's no point in talking about good and bad. It's all in the individual" (p. 23). In stage four a subject focussed on style and form, stating, "See the grief in the tension in the lines …" or "look at the way light strikes the tablecloth; the colors are so varied and yet the overall effect is white …" (p. 24). Stage five subjects concentrated on autonomy, providing comments such as, "It seems to me that it breaks out of the limitations of the style by emphasizing the flatness of the surface" or "In the end the style is too loose, self-indulgent" (p. 25).

In describing the five stages Parsons (1987) reasoned that “young children respond aesthetically from the beginning, and that their response is strong and untaught” (p. 26). In describing the earliest stages one and two, he focused on what a subject is able to do in understanding art, and provided a sequential analysis of how young children develop their aesthetic appreciation for art. An understanding of key stages in aesthetic development of art is important in recognizing what young children focus on in creating their own artistic works. Parsons further purported that by the time children go to elementary school they have typically reached stage two, where they have a clear understanding that paintings express realism and picture concrete objects.

Klepsch and Logie (1982) reasoned that drawing reflects personal thoughts and values and may measure the self in relation to others, group values, and attitudes. They stated that children’s drawing responses enables children to convey in their drawings thoughts and feelings they may not be able to express in alternative sign systems of speech or writing. Gardner (1973) also wrote that children may have difficulties verbally articulating a response to art, and that alternatively “nonverbal means, preferably involving the medium itself, would seem preferable for determining the full range of the child’s competence” (p. 180). My study involved Grade 1 children creating artistic responses to interactive picturebook read-alouds followed by individual interviews with each participant about his/her artwork. As children are immersed in early school years in learning to read, they are introduced to a wide range of picturebooks that are comprised of a great variety of styles of art. The next section discusses the picturebook and how it is viewed by scholars.

Picturebooks

A quality picturebook can be seen as an outstanding union of storytelling through a creative fusion of pictures and print (Anderson, 1998; Considine, 1994). Lewis (2001) spelled 'picturebook' as a single word that referred to the composite nature of this literary form, such that the relationship between words and pictures in the picturebook cannot be viewed as complete unless considered in its entirety. He described how "the words come to life in the context, the environment, of the pictures and vice versa" (p. 48). Behrendt (1996) referred to the active reader's interconnection of words and pictures in picturebooks as reading the "third text" and described it as "an interdisciplinary 'metatext' in which verbal and visual elements each offer their own particular and often irreconcilable contributions" (p. 45), and thereby require the active reader to make sense of the combination of visual and verbal elements. Schwartz and Schwartz (1991) described picturebooks as complex creations where components of style and structure, along with color, angles of lighting and proportions "hold illusions, associations, and overtones [and] may eventually turn into metaphors and symbols expressing points of view" (p. 2). Schwartz and Schwartz acknowledged the design and creation of a picturebook as the joining of two distinct art forms into one unified whole, producing an integrated intertwining of two languages into a seamless artifact.

A variety of metaphors have been used to describe the complicated and subtle relationship between the verbal and visual sign systems in picturebooks. Various terms such as synergy (Sipe, 1998), interdependent storytelling (Agosto, 1999), symmetry, complementary, enhancement, counterpoint, and contradiction (Nikolajeva, 2001, 2003; Nikolajeva & Scott, 2000, 2006), along with other musical and scientific metaphors, have

been used to describe the relationship between words and pictures. While some theorists have attempted to place picturebooks into tidy categories, Lewis (2001) has suggested that many examples of picturebooks exhibit more than one type of categorization, and cautioned that the unit of the picturebook is too broad to be confined by such analysis. He proposed that this word-image interanimation (p. 41) be considered within the smaller unit of pictures and picture sequences.

Day (1996) reasoned that the combination of pictures and text in many contemporary picturebooks comprise surprising complexity and "demand and reward the curiosity and attention of their readers" (p. 69) and suggested that books with pictures should not be viewed as only for very young readers. She advocated that active reading should be encouraged and that sharing children's literature in a group context has moved beyond one "correct" interpretation to a valuing that encourages multiple interpretations. Styles (1996) suggested that picturebooks offer unique opportunities for individual interpretations and learning as "picture books tackle powerful issues and probe difficult areas of life in a way that the rest of the curriculum cannot do" (p. 28). She stated that "picture books offer children access to the serious issues of life in an accessible form and with humour" (p. 30). While many picturebooks make use of both visuals and text to convey meaning, wordless picturebooks employ only the visual medium in developing a story.

Wordless picturebooks do not provide written text for the reader, and readers must invent their own text to accompany the illustrations. This visual storytelling provides opportunities for readers to infer meaning and to make imaginative leaps as they string together the sequence of page openings into the composite whole. Artists such as

David Wiesner, a multiple Caldecott winner, make use of shifting perspective, size, color and detail in developing a story exclusively through pictures. The reading of both picturebooks and wordless picturebooks require readers to be skilled in reading visual images. Many illustrators make use of illusion or metaphor in creating a visually appealing text.

Illustrators who use illusionary and metaphorical devices within picturebooks provide an invitation for children to process the text at a higher level. Children may perceive that pictures contain additional or contradictory information not provided in the text, and the latter can activate deeper thinking (Anderson, 1998). Chandler (2007) noted that metaphors may be visual or verbal, and that while metaphors require an imaginative leap to understand, many may become so habitual in their use as to not be recognized as metaphors at all. Chandler referred to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who argued that "the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (cited in Chandler, p. 127). Lakoff and Johnson also noted that metaphors can vary from culture to culture and are "derived initially from our physical, social and cultural experience" (cited in Chandler, p. 129).

One type of visual metaphor illustrators may use in picturebooks or graphic novels involves the use of anthropomorphic characters, a term also referred to by Saraceni (2001) as 'zoomorphication', which refers to animal characters that stand in the place of human characters. In his analysis of Spiegelman's *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* (1986), Saraceni pointed out that Spiegelman used mice and cats to refer to the Jews and Nazi characters respectively, although he did not refer to them as such. In this way he invites the reader to process the pictures and text in greater depth through his

sophisticated metaphor that plays on the ‘cat and mouse game’. In Browne’s *Willy and Hugh* (1991), Browne depicts Willy as a chimpanzee and Hugh as a large gorilla. Both characters wear clothing and behave as realistic boys, and no mention is ever made in the text that they are not human. Browne invites readers to take an imaginative leap in identifying with the visual metaphor exemplified by his anthropomorphic characters.

Picturebooks are complex in their design. Authors and illustrators combine their knowledge and use of artistic media, semiotics and visual literacy in the creation of their works of art. The next section discusses how picturebooks are connected to visual literacy and semiotics.

Picturebooks and Visual Literacy and Semiotics

Picturebooks are made up of signs – or semiotic codes which combine to create meaning in picturebooks (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2006). Chandler (2007) offered the following types of codes in his analysis of semiotics: social codes, which may be realized through verbal language; bodily codes such as bodily contact, proximity, physical orientation, appearance, facial expression, gaze, gestures or posture; textual codes; aesthetic codes, such as painting or music in the arts; genre codes, such as description, narration, argument or exposition; interpretive codes, and; perceptual codes such as visual perception (pp. 149-150). Chandler reasoned that people are rarely aware of codes, as this knowledge appears habitual and ingrained. He referred to the work of Nichols (1981), who commented that “just as we must learn to read an image, we must learn to read the physical world. Once we have developed this skill (which we do very early in life), it is very easy to mistake it for an automatic or unlearned process” (cited in Chandler, p. 152). In learning to identify codes within picturebooks it is essential to

understand how our social, textual and interpretive understandings, which are contextual, are developed. Chandler noted that semioticians reason that "although exposure over time leads 'visual language' to seem natural, we need to learn how to 'read' even visual and audio-visual texts" (p. 161).

When designing visual images within picturebooks, illustrators can employ social codes to portray emotional characteristics such as fear. For example, in *The Tunnel* (1989), Browne slows down the scene of the girl running through the forest. As readers look carefully at the ominous and frightening creatures hidden within the trees they can consider the meaning of the illustration in a deeper way. Although Browne does not state it within the text, the reader may sense the girl's fear in this forest scene. Facial expression, posture and physical orientation in the illustration can lead the reader to infer emotion within the scene.

Anthony Browne's skillful use of visual codes offers readers of all ages complex material to ponder as they synthesize the text and illustrations. Within his picturebooks he frequently employs surrealist techniques that can challenge readers to make connections between animals and human beings (Styles & Arizpe, 2001). Through careful crafting of images portraying animals within a zoo, Browne invites the reader to consider issues such as animal captivity in *Zoo* (1992). In an interview with Styles and Arizpe (2001), Browne discussed the sophistication of child readers and stated that

> Children are capable of much more than people think they are … the creative aspect of children's minds is very exciting … You hint at a lot of things that are going on … it makes [readers] concentrate on looking as well … [they] are taught that looking [is] … the most important thing in the world. (p. 265)

Through Anthony Browne's integrated crafting of visual and verbal sign systems he offers readers opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of how characters are portrayed and developed within picturebooks and to contemplate and discuss important issues in life.

Characters and Characterization in Picturebooks

The development of a character's personality can be revealed through the complex interanimation of text and visuals in picturebooks. For example, an artist's use of a sequence of frames provides a method to develop a character's personality or to portray a series of progressive events in a story. In Anthony Browne's *Zoo* (1992) the Father character is introduced in the second opening. The text reveals that he likes to tell unappealing jokes, he quarrels with a ticket booth attendant, tells his boys off for arguing, and snarls when he does not achieve his aim. This story, written from the perspective of the young son, reveals that Dad can sometimes "be really embarrassing" (unpaginated). Throughout the next few openings Browne's artistry builds upon the development of the Father figure, whose moods and temperament are revealed within the complex interanimation of words and pictures. Through Browne's surrealistic artistry the reader sees the looming figure of the Father looking down upon them. Browne's skillfully painted clouds in the sky take on the appearance of horns attached to the Father's head. This visual feature enhances the reader's perception of the Father character, providing development and greater depth that exceeds words alone. When considered in the sequence of several frames and through the combination of text and illustrations, the reader develops a greater understanding of the complexity of the Father character. Nikolajeva and Scott (2000) discussed the counterpointing effect of text and illustrations

as a dynamic that occurs when words and pictures “collaborate to communicate meanings beyond the scope of either one alone” (p. 226). They also acknowledged that characters’ size and placing on the page may reflect their attitudes towards other characters or their surrounding, or suggest shifts in mood, or psychological changes within the characters themselves. Through the subtle crafting of the visual and the verbal, the relationships between characters can be increasingly dynamic and offer multiple perspectives that readers can consider when looking at the composite work of a picturebook.

According to Nikolajeva (2001), while characters and characterization are central aspects of literacy instruction in many classrooms in Western Canada and throughout the world, they are very seldom discussed in critical or empirical research. The fuller portrait of a character is realized not only through the interplay of words and images within a picturebook, but also through the involvement and interpretation of the reader. Lewis (2001) cautioned that any discussion of interanimation in a picturebook must involve the ‘meaning-seeking’ reader, who interacts reciprocally with the text and illustrations in a dynamic relationship, that might “shift and change, page by page and moment by moment” (p. 54). In their work with emergent readers, Richards and Anderson (2003) suggested that readers must “infer information from text *and* [italics in original] illustrations to fully comprehend and enjoy the story” (p. 290). Nikolajeva and Scott (2001) suggested that within the picturebook a reader develops a fuller impression of a character through the storyteller’s addition of visual and aural dimensions. They stated that “by extracting relevant information about the character from the text, by making inferences from the character’s behavior, by synthesizing snippets of information

included in the text, and by amplifying these from their own imagination" (p. 81), readers construct meaning.

Nikolajeva (2002, 2005b) discussed the mimetic and semiotic approaches in interpreting characters in fiction. She questioned whether we are to view characters "as real people, with psychologically credible features, or merely as textual constructs" (2002, p. x). According to Nikolajeva (2002), a semiotic approach is one that assumes characters are textual constructions and the readers' interpretation of character is gleaned solely from the text where we must then "extract the essential traits of the characters exclusively from their words and actions" (p. 185), and a mimetic approach is one in which the reader views characters as psychologically 'real' entities. In a mimetic reading, readers draw upon their own personal experiences, and consider their personal worlds with their own ethnicity, gender, culture, and upbringing influencing the reading and making the characters and events appear realistic.

Nikolajeva (2002, 2005b) cautioned educators and researchers against utilizing an exclusively mimetic approach in leading children to an understanding characters, as readers may ascribe features or stereotypes not intended by the author. Nikolajeva (2002) stated that, "we should remember that literary characters are, by definition, more semiotic than real people, since they are part of a design" (pp. 9-10). Nikolajeva suggested that a continuum between the semiotic and mimetic approaches, rather than an exclusive either/or approach more accurately reflects the reading event and acknowledged the lack of empirical research on whether readers take a semiotic or mimetic approach in understanding characters. She reasoned that young readers usually perceive characters as 'real,' whereas sophisticated readers are able to detach themselves from the text and view

repulsive or morally depraved characters within a text. Nikolajeva stated that young readers seldom have problems identifying with anthropomorphic animal or toy characters "as long as these hold the disempowered subject positions similar to their own" (p. 7). She referred to research that revealed that young children most easily identify with child characters of a similar age to themselves, and that an age difference of more than two years can be significant, as children may not grasp the social issues hinted at in literature that is not age-appropriate.

Children frequently choose stories with characters that are sometimes like them or that they can relate to. Sipe and McGuire (2006) discussed children's resistance to stories and wrote that "reality testing" is a type of "conflict between the world represented in the story and the child's understanding of reality" (p. 7). They noted that this type of resistance occurs with many children in early grades, who might prefer stories that mirror their personal experience. In Browne's picturebooks the reader is introduced to many child characters who experience and resolve problems that may be similar to those of real children. His characters go through varying experiences and changes in order to develop more fully. As readers transact with the text and illustrations, they construct meaning about a character. Louise Rosenblatt's description of how a reader transacts with text is critical to understanding the role of the social context of the reading event.

Reader-Response Theory

Many scholars have used Louise Rosenblatt's (1994) account of the process of how a reader transacts with text when describing their own research. Rosenblatt explained how the reader calls upon past experience in actively constructing meaning, and stated that when a reader encounters a text, the text provides "a stimulus that focuses

the reader's attention so that elements of past experience – concepts linked with verbal symbols – are activated" (p. 11). She referred to the transaction between the reader and the text as a total event that occurs between the reader and the text, "each conditioned by and conditioning the other" (p. 17). She further stated that "the transactional view is especially reinforced by the frequent observation of psychologists that interest, expectations, anxieties, and other factors based on past experience affect what an individual perceives" (p. 19).

Rosenblatt (1994) differentiated between an efferent and an aesthetic stance in approaching a text. She reasoned that efferent reading occurs when readers are primarily seeking to discover facts, whereas in aesthetic reading

> the reader's primary concern is with what happens *during* the actual reading event … [so that the reader] pays attention to the associations, feelings, attitudes, and ideas that these words and their referents arouse within him … In aesthetic reading, the reader's attention is centered directly on what he is living through during his relationship with that particular text. (pp. 24 – 25)

Rosenblatt also noted that a reader adopts a predominant stance, either efferent or aesthetic, and that this stance exists along a continuum.

Rosenblatt (1978) explained that "the reader carries on a dynamic, personal, and unique activity" during the reading event (p. 15). She reasoned the transactional process engaged in by the reader "draws on his own internalized culture in order to elicit from the text this world which may differ from his own in many respects" (p. 56). In this way a reader works with the text to create a uniquely composite work that may take on a meaning quite different than that imagined for the implied reader that authors and

publishers may have in mind. Rosenblatt highlighted that the personal transaction between the reader and the text, which includes the context of the reading, indicates that something unique is happening in the minds of readers during the reading event.

Rosenblatt's work on reader-response has provided a foundation for many theorists and researchers, who have used her transactional theory as the foundation of their research. For example, Galda and Beach (2001) reasoned that readers hold expectations for characters' actions, and these expectations shape their responses, which are influenced by their personal experiences and the greater culture in which they live. Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) referred to the role of readers' personal experiences in shaping their understanding of text as they suggested that "by extracting relevant information about the character from text, by making inferences from the character's behavior, by synthesizing snippets of information included in the text, and by amplifying these from their own imagination" (p. 81), the reader constructs meaning. Day (1996), a teacher who wrote about how readers transact with text, recognized that "the goal of interpreting text has moved from deriving a unique or 'correct' interpretation to inviting comparison of multiple interpretations" (p. 70), a position that invites conversation among students as they delve deeper into a picturebook. Day implored teachers to act as experienced guides who ask questions and facilitate discussions that "lead to possibilities beyond the page" (p. 73). Lewis (2001) reasoned that the true interanimation of words and pictures in picturebooks are brought to life because "an active, meaning-seeking reader is at work" (p. 55). Whether in group discussions or in a more individual or intimate setting, the mind of the reader transacts with the words and pictures in a picturebook (Rosenblatt, 1994). Nodelman (1996), echoing Rosenblatt's original ideas,

stated that “until read, a text is merely something with the potential to come into existence, and texts come into existence only in the minds of readers” (p. 17).

Nikolajeva (2005a) contrasted two models of reader-response theory: the first focused on phenomenology, or “examining what happens in our minds when we read” (p. 251); the second focused on hermeneutics, or “examining how we make things mean” (p. 251). She discussed that phenomena “are not what we think they are, that art is only a reflection of reality [and that] our ability to understand art and literature is therefore based on our experience, literary as well as extraliterary” (p. 252). Like Rosenblatt (1978), Nikolajeva reasoned that it is up to the reader to make meaning of the text and that the reader does not “simply retrieve the preset meaning from the book, but the meaning is created from our reactions and responses to what we read, including emotional responses” in understanding deeper meanings of the text (p. 252). Thus, like Rosenblatt, Nikolajeva described the reading event as a transaction between the reader and the text, emphasizing that no text or reader stands alone with a single interpretation, as readers bring their unique history and interconnection of other reading and viewing experiences to the reading event.

Intertextuality

As every individual brings different interests, expectations, prior reading experiences and viewpoints to the reading event, there is “never a single or correct way to read a text” (Allen, 2000, p. 7). Prior reading experiences with other texts influence the reading of the current text being read. Intertextuality is a term coined by Kristeva in 1966 to denote “the interdependence of any one literary text with all those that have gone before it … so that meanings in one kind of discourse are overlaid with meanings from

another kind of discourse" (Cuddon, 1991, p. 454). Kristeva (1980) reasoned that "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" (p. 66). Allen (2000) noted that Saussure's work on the social influence of signs and Bakhtin's work on dialogism, or the nature of language to "bear traces of previous utterances" (p. 21), foregrounded Kristeva's work on intertextuality.

Kristeva (1980) discussed how authors are not the originators of the texts they write, but rather, a text is "a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the space of a given text," where "several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another" (pp. 35-36). These ideas question the origin and authorship of a work. Allen (2000) noted that "meaning, we might say, is always at one and the same time 'inside' and 'outside' the text" (p. 37). Allen continued that "authors communicate to readers at the same moment as their words or texts communicate the existence of past texts within them" (p. 39).

Kristeva (1980) noted that there is a horizontal and vertical relationship between authors and readers. She described a horizontal relationship, where the word in the text belongs to both the subject and the addressee, and a vertical relationship, where the word in the text originates from an earlier piece of writing. Allen (2000) commented on this horizontal and vertical relationship, and stated that the subject of utterance is "best conceived of as a character speaking or thinking" directly (p. 40), whereas when words are written down and perhaps read in the future, the author is now no longer directly involved, and his/her subject is that of enunciation. The author is no longer present to state his/her intended meanings, and the reader is now free to transpose the work, taking into account his/her previous experiences with texts, personal history, and interests. Allen

noted that any application of intertextuality today can itself be an intertextuality of work that has transpired historically and posited that readers consider the historical and cultural manifestations of text.

Numerous scholars have debated the nature of a 'text' in referring to intertextuality (Bloome, 1992; Hartman, 1992, 1995; Short, 1992), and have noted how views of what constitutes a text, a reader, an author, and a context have been altered by postmodern theories of intertextuality (Hartman, 1992). What constitutes a text can be thought of as a tangible object one reads, or it can be thought of as a thought, an utterance, a gesture, a piece of art, music, or drama, or it can be referred to as a chunk of meaning that can be of any size and can occur at many levels (Hartman, 1995). Hartman (1992) referred to studies that have focused on intertextuality and stated a text is never "an *ex-nihilo* (i.e., out of nothing) creation; it presupposes other texts and has a multiplicity of sources" (p. 296). Hartman referred to the text as a site of interior dialogue that is rampant "with vectors to other texts, utterances, images, and motifs" (p. 296), as well as a site of exterior dialogue with other utterances where "various discourses, motifs, and images are situated together into a patchwork intertext that resembles a collage/montage of others' voices" (p. 297). According to Hartman, the implication of this multifaceted view disrupts the notion that a text is something in isolation.

Short (1992) defined intertextuality as "the process of making connections between current and past texts; of interpreting one text by means of previously composed texts" (p. 315). However, where a reader is not familiar with the hypotext, for example in Anthony Browne's *Piggybook* the reader must associate the term 'pig' with a messy person, there can be no intertextual connection made by the reader.

The view of intertextuality used in my study is grounded in cognitive psychology, semiotics, and literary theory. These three traditions view reading as a process, acknowledging that meaning resides in the reader and that an interconnectedness, which is open and indeterminate is conditional upon the context, culture, and social aspects that inform meaning. I acknowledge the debate in scholarly writing about what constitutes a text, and recognize it becomes difficult to separate an intertextual connection from an autobiographical one, given the various meanings of the word 'text' within the literature. For the purpose of my study, I chose to define 'text' in the view of the author's work – a tangible object such as a picturebook, so that intertextual connections might be separated from autobiographical connections. I refer to a textual object as a sign that is referenced to a book, a piece of art, a movie, television show, or computer game or program. I hold the position that an autobiographical connection goes further into one's personal life, taking into account a reader's set of life experiences, personal history, and culture. Researchers have utilized both views of what constitutes a text within their work, and acknowledge this ongoing debate within intertextuality-informed research.

This research explored the conversations that the Grade 1 children participated in while listening to and viewing picturebooks. Below I review relevant research on interactive read-alouds and discuss numerous studies on how children visually and verbally respond to picturebooks.

Interactive Read-Alouds

Reading aloud to children is a common practice in many primary classrooms. Research and teacher practice "support the use of teacher read-alouds as a significant component of instruction" (Barrentine, 1996; Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2004;

Pantaleo, 2007; Sipe, 2000). Reading aloud to children is part of a balanced literacy program that helps children experience and think about literature they do not yet have the skill to read independently (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). The read-aloud event is an active demonstration that occurs in a natural setting and provides a method for children to learn how stories work and supports content instruction in many areas. Additional benefits include the demonstration of an adult leader reading for a purpose and providing fluent and phrased reading, the childrens' development of a sense of story, the childrens' development of knowledge of written language syntax and knowledge of how texts are structured, the promotion of oral language development among children through sharing aspects of the story, the provision of complex ideas for the children to use as springboards to other learning activities, and the establishment of known texts for the children to use as a basis for writing and other activities through rereading (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, p. 22). The benefits of reading aloud to children are thus numerous as research and teacher practice suggest.

Barrentine (1996) stated that many educators are dissatisfied with reading events that leave students to listen passively and she offered suggestions to teachers to help them increase student involvement during read-alouds. Barrentine acknowledged that teachers differ in their read-aloud styles and that some teachers limit the amount of dialogue during the reading event and then follow up with an in-depth discussion after the book is finished, while other teachers prefer to conduct the read-aloud as an interactive event that encourages student dialogue during the reading. She noted that teachers who treat the read-aloud as an interactive opportunity pose questions during the reading that enhance meaning construction and also show the students how to make sense of text. Students are

encouraged to spontaneously respond during the reading event and are actively engaged with the reading process and how it works. Barrentine stated that interactive read-aloud discussions have been less documented in the literature than after-story reading methods.

Fisher, Flood, Lapp and Frey (2004) questioned whether there was a common set of implementation practices for interactive read-alouds. They studied the read-aloud practices of exemplary teachers who were recognized as expert leaders and whose students excelled in reading achievement. During phase I of their study they selected 25 teachers from 25 different schools to observe and gathered data on the read-aloud practices of these teachers. During phase II of their research they randomly selected 120 teachers in 15 schools who had not been nominated as experts, but who had regularly served as cooperating teachers for student teachers from San Diego State University. Data from phase I of the study were analyzed and a rubric was developed to determine procedures that were considered essential components of a quality read-aloud. Fisher et al. found seven components of an effective interactive read-aloud that all of the expert teachers included in their read-aloud procedures: the books chosen were appropriate to students' interests and matched to their developmental, emotional, and social levels; the selections had been previewed and practiced by the teachers; the read-aloud had a clearly established purpose; the teachers modeled fluent oral reading during the read-aloud; the teachers were animated and used expression; the teachers stopped periodically and questioned the students to focus them on aspects of the text, and; the teachers made connections to independent reading and writing during and after the read-aloud (pp. 10-13). During phase II of the study, Fisher et al. questioned how widespread the use of these seven components were in read-alouds. They studied the read-aloud practices of

120 teachers to see how many of the components were evident. Using inter-rater reliability they established that while all of the teachers used some of the components of an effective read-aloud, not all of the seven components were used consistently during the read-alouds. Among their results they found that many teachers did not connect the reading event to other classroom activities and likened the event to "channel surfing," where there was "not a clear focus for the read-aloud or a transition to the next classroom event" (p. 14). This study was important because it identified the components of an effective interactive read-aloud as evidenced by master teachers. The following section examines research on interactive read-alouds in classroom settings.

Young Children's Visual and Verbal Responses to Picturebooks

Kiefer (1995) researched children's responses to picturebooks in a study that examined Grades 1 - 5 students' interactive read-aloud sessions and subsequent interviews about the functional types of language children used in their conversations. Her research showed that children were active meaning-makers as they constructed understanding of the visuals and text in picturebooks. Kiefer adapted four of Halliday's (1975) functions of language in her analysis of transcripts and field notes and found that the children used informative language, heuristic language, imaginative language, and personal language to tell about the text and pictures.

Kiefer (1995) wrote that children's use of informative language often served as a telling function, where children reported on the content of illustrations or described or compared narrated events and pictures. Heuristic language was used when the children wondered about contents of illustrations or text, made predictions, attempted to solve a problem, made an inference, or offered a solution. Imaginative language included

recalling, creating, or participating in the imaginary world of the book as either an onlooker or character. Kiefer noted that the younger children in particular would choose a favorite character and then imagine themselves as that character as they read and looked through a book. Personal language was used when children attempted to connect the events of the story to their personal experiences or state an opinion or emotion.

Kiefer (1995) found that at all grade levels, children were eager to state their opinions and were able to critically think about the picturebooks in her study. She noted that younger children "evaluated books using their own subjective criteria rather than relying on some objective quality in the book itself," (p. 33) while older children often supported their reasoning with objective facts gleaned from the text. According to Kiefer, the children were adept at finding small details in text that might be overlooked by adult readers, and that the children became increasingly sensitive to the visual artistry in picturebooks. Kiefer wrote that during group discussions, the children extended or supported the understandings of their classmates in a "fluid and dynamic" manner (p. 34) and that as they responded to the visual art and text in picturebooks, they "developed more critical thinking about cognitive and aesthetic factors" (p. 35). She did note, however, that this awareness was developmental and depended on the age of the child. However at all ages, the children in Kiefer's research used some "artistic and technical language relating to book production," and when they lacked specific terminology, such as in the case of early primary-aged children, they easily improvised their own meaningful terms (p. 37). Kiefer reasoned that picturebooks can "increase [children's] literacy, deepen their response to books, and open up their awareness of art and aesthetics" (p. 41). This study was a thorough inquiry into how children use functions of

language to talk about books and revealed that picturebooks provide children with meaningful opportunities to discuss texts.

Madura (1998), a teacher-researcher, also explored the types of responses that emerged in children's conversations about picturebooks. She studied four second- and third-grade transitional readers to find out the patterns of written and oral responses that emerged when studying the picturebooks of Patricia Polacco and Gerald McDermott. Her inquiry occurred in the natural setting of everyday class events and involved whole-class and small-group sharing of literature. Madura's data collection included written samples of the four children's responses to the picturebooks, field notes, and videotaped discussions the four students participated in during their activities with the picturebooks. Madura categorized the data using Kiefer's (1995) adaptation of Halliday's (1973) functions of language, as well as Cox and Many's (1992) interpretation of Rosenblatt's (1978) theory of aesthetic response to literature. Madura found that 28% of all responses were descriptive responses, and of these descriptive responses, 16% were retelling and summaries, and 12% included comments on illustrations and how artists created their works. She found that 55% of the student responses were interpretive, with 38% of these being linked directly to the events of the story, and 17% being personal extensions. Data analysis revealed that 17% of the responses involved the students discussing themes in the picturebooks, with 13% of these responses being intertextual in nature (although she did not use this terminology), and 4% of this category included students talking about the work of other authors in an interpretive way that included themes, ideas or techniques in artistry. Madura's results revealed that most students' responses linked to the story they were discussing, rather than intertextually connecting to other stories. An important

finding in her work was the trend that as students became increasingly involved in the mechanics of learning to read and write in school, some of the creativity of visual arts response was lost or dormant. She noted Gardner's (1973/1994) work on the 'U curve' in creative development and found that the children in her study were at the bottom of this curve. She appealed to educators on the worth and value of including picturebooks as an object of study in children's literacy instruction. It should be noted that Madura's study was limited as she observed only four students. Another limitation to her study was that she did not include the children's artistic responses as part of her data set, even though she mentioned that she had the children respond artistically to the picturebooks she presented in her study.

Other researchers, such as Arizpe and Styles (2003), have conducted more comprehensive studies on children's verbal and visual responses to picturebooks. Arizpe and Styles investigated the particular skills children use when interpreting visual texts, how young readers understand narrative through pictures, how children relate text and pictures, and how they best respond to the picturebook form (visually or verbally). They also considered children's linguistic and cultural differences and explored how bilingual learners approached picturebooks, and how repeated readings at a later time affected student responses. Arizpe and Styles used Anthony Browne's *Zoo* (1994 edition) and *The Tunnel* (1989), as well as Kitamura's *Lily Takes a Walk* (1997) in their research, which involved children between the ages of 4 and 11 years from seven primary schools in urban and suburban regions of London and Essex. They conducted classroom readings and group discussions of one of each of the books per school, followed by semi-

structured interviews with a small representative sample of students from each class. Interviews were followed by visual art responses and student questionnaires.

Arizpe and Styles (2003) utilized Kenneth Clark's (1960) four stages of response to visual texts and Parson's (1987) developmental model for response to art in their analysis of the children's understanding and responses to the visual images in the picturebooks used in their study. Clark's stages involved: (1) the initial impact or general impression on the viewer; (2) scrutiny, which involved more careful looking; (3) recollection, where the children made connections between the visual images and their own experiences or questioned the painting, and; (4) renewal, where the images are re-examined in greater depth, revealing previously overlooked features. Results from their study revealed that the children were engaged with the texts, evidenced by their excitement and aesthetic pleasure in Browne and Kitamura's images and the children's willingness to spend considerable time analyzing the meanings in the texts. They found that the majority of children in their study were able to engage with the picturebooks and moved beyond Clark's stage one to the later stages of scrutiny, recollection and renewal, which included a more careful looking at the visuals and an experience of a "text-to-life moment," which Arizpe and Styles referred to as a creative process which is a "mixture of imagination, fantasy, recollection and wonder – the unconscious in collaboration with cognitive activity" (pp. 44-45). Arizpe and Styles also found many of the children entering Clark's stage of renewal, where they would go back to the books, looking at them with fresh eyes. These researchers acknowledged that these insightful experiences took place over several hours, and remarked that it appeared the children could be highly

capable of understanding visuals if visual texts and art appreciation were given serious consideration in the curriculum.

In utilizing Parson's (1987) developmental stages of art appreciation, Arizpe and Styles (2003) found that while many of the children's initial responses revealed they reached stages one and two (favoritism and realism), some of the children in their study gave examples of fulfilling stage 3 (expressiveness), stage 4 (medium, style and form) and stage 5 (autonomy, judgement and dialogue). Arizpe and Styles found that while Parson's own research reserved these later three categories for children or adults who were older and more experienced at looking at visuals than their own study participants, Arizpe and Styles found evidence in their research that many of the children aged 4 to 11 were indeed capable of the insightful discoveries and judgement reserved for these later stages. This team of researchers wrote in a separate publication that even young readers who were not experienced with texts "could make deep and insightful interpretations of visual texts" (Styles & Arizpe, 2001, p. 266).

In sharing their research results using Browne's *Zoo* (1992), Styles and Arizpe (2001) and Arizpe and Styles (2003) wrote how children below the age of 7 found the irony or surrealistic pictures in Browne's text difficult to grapple with, and most were satisfied with seeing the straightforward things in the text, whereas older children pursued the text as an intellectual challenge filled with intriguing puzzles to unravel. Some of the younger children (4- and 5-year-olds) responded to the tensions between the words and images, however, and were emotionally engaged and empathized with the suffering of animals revealed in the pictures, even though this suffering was not mentioned in the text. Some young children commented that Browne "hides things"

(2003, p. 86), while older children more frequently commented on positioning, body language, colour imagery and perspective, along with taking up a moral and ethical stance on animal captivity as portrayed in the book. Arizpe and Styles (2003) commented on their amazement that even some of the youngest children expressed "the first glimmerings of understanding" of the complex images in *Zoo* and that "by the age of 7, children were able to provide a simple explanation, linking freedom with happiness and captivity with sadness" (p. 88). They found that when prompted by open-ended questions, even 4- or 5-year-old children were able to analyze and make meaning of visual metaphors such as the butterfly perched freely on the green grass outside of the bleak surroundings of the tiger cage. They also found that children's artistic responses confirmed and accentuated their verbal understandings, and that while some children had more difficulty articulating their thoughts in interviews or group conversations, their understanding was revealed by some of the bold artistic statements they made in response to *Zoo* (the children's artistic responses to text are discussed in a further section). The children in these studies explored their own feelings in response to the visual imagery in the texts, and they discussed and analyzed the puzzling and ambiguous features of the imagery. The research provided an avenue for the children to consider and reason about their own moral and ethical positions on the topics presented in these picturebooks.

Other researchers, such as Pantaleo, have conducted empirical studies into how young children respond to postmodern and metafictive characteristics of texts. Pantaleo (2003, 2004, 2005, 2008) researched young children's understandings of and responses to a selection of contemporary picturebooks with Radical Change (Dresang, 1999) characteristics. She positioned herself as a teacher/researcher in the classrooms of two

Grade 1 teachers. In her first study, Pantaleo (2004) explored Grade 1 students' autobiographical, intertextual and intratextual connections to picturebooks in an Ontario school that involved a classroom of 23 students. Pantaleo's method included audiorecording interactive small-group readings of nine picturebooks that included storybooks, nonfiction, informational narrative, and wordless texts. Pantaleo conducted six small groups and one subsequent whole class read-aloud for each focus book in her study. The children completed an independent writing and visual arts response after the small-group read-alouds for the first five books in her study. However, for the remaining four books, the personal response activity followed the whole class read-aloud session to ensure that the children were independently completing their work and that she and the teacher could provide assistance when needed. The results of Pantaleo's data analysis of the small group interactive read-alouds revealed that 20.1% of conversational turns were categorized as intertextual, 30.1% of conversation turns were categorized as intratextual, and 49.8% of conversational turns were categorized as autobiographical connections, which included life-to-text or text-to-life connections. Pantaleo found that during each read-aloud session, "the students accessed their life experiences and literary histories and provided 'additional' information or commentary about textual and illustrative aspects" (p. 220). She also found that this group of students' textual connections served several purposes: hermeneutic (interpreting the story); aesthetic (entering the story); agential (co-authoring the story); personal (telling about oneself); heuristic (extending understanding); informative (communicating to others); and communal (creating a common knowledge base) (p. 221). Pantaleo wrote that "individuals extend their repertoires of literary and life experiences by reading and listening to stories," (p. 222), and that exposure to various

types of literature further extends into other interactive experiences including writing and viewing various types of live and recorded media.

In her second study in British Columbia, Pantaleo (2007, 2008) explored the literary understanding of young students by examining their verbal, visual arts, and written responses to various texts that she identified as containing Radical Change characteristics and/or one or more metafictive device (Waugh, 1984). In commenting on her analysis of students' responses to *The Three Pigs* (Wiesner, 2001) and *Voices in the Park* (Browne, 1997), Pantaleo (2008) found that during the interactive read-aloud sessions, "the students drew inferences, made interpretations, generated hypotheses … [and] made intra- and intertextual connections" (p. 67). She noted how texts exhibiting metafictive devices place demands for active involvement upon the reader, and stated that "picturebooks with Radical Change characteristics provide opportunities for readers to develop their abilities in comprehending text both inferentially and critically … and can teach critical thinking skills, visual literacy skills and interpretive strategies" (p. 67). Pantaleo also found that these types of texts extended the students' literary understandings of how stories function. Pantaleo's studies are important as they provide a comprehensive analysis of how children understand and respond to contemporary picturebooks that exhibit Radical Change characteristics and provide direction for teachers in how to provide opportunities that might increase students' literary understandings of picturebooks with metafictive devices.

As part of her larger study that involved young children responding to picturebooks that exhibit Radical Change (Dresang, 1999) characteristics, Pantaleo (2008) discussed Grade 1 children's verbal responses to *Willy the Dreamer* (Browne,

1997), *Tuesday* (Wiesner, 1991), and *Shortcut* (Macaulay, 1995), three picturebooks that exhibit metafictive devices (Waugh, 1984). Her analysis of the children's verbal responses revealed how highly engaged the children were with these texts. She reasoned that these types of texts had the capacity to teach the young readers about "intertextualities, multistranded narratives, narrative framing devices (stories within stories), disruptions of traditional time and space relationships in narratives, nonlinear and nonsequential plots, parodic appropriations, and indeterminacy" (p. 99). Pantaleo additionally pointed out the educational value of these texts as they can extend students' understanding of story schemata and introduce children to literary and illustrative devices that are "fundamental to children's growth as readers and to their future successful transactions with more sophisticated texts" (p. 100). Pantaleo also discussed the benefits of both the small group and whole class discussions that she and the students engaged in. She used Mercer's (2000) term 'interthinking' to describe the collective and exploratory kind of talk that she and her students used as they developed ideas together and built upon each other's suggestions, thoughts, and comments, and arrived at collective meanings of stories through their use of oral language. Pantaleo stated that the students' interactions with each other (and with her) affected the children's "intertextual histories" (p. 102), which continually expanded as they discussed other selections of literature. Pantaleo (2008) demonstrated the benefit of varying types of small- and whole-class strategies that can provide opportunities for students to examine and discuss texts in detail – an aspect of literacy instruction that is of major importance to classroom teachers. Pantaleo's research extends current knowledge about children's literary understanding of texts and is of importance to educators and researchers in understanding children's

responses to and interpretations of contemporary picturebooks that display metafictive and Radical Change characteristics. Her work on children's literary understanding is of importance to my research which looked at young children's autobiographical and intertextual connections to characters in picturebooks by a single author.

Sipe (2008) also explored how children grow in their literary understanding when participating in interactive read-alouds. Sipe developed a grounded theory about young children's literary understanding gained through data collected during interactive read-aloud sessions in naturalistic settings. The synthesis of his research was based on five studies that involved Grades K-2 children's responses to picturebooks and explored how teachers' supported the acquisition of students' literary understanding. He analyzed 101 transcribed picture storybook read-alouds involving children of varying ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Students in the studies were accustomed to daily storybook readalouds where they were invited to respond at any time during the story.

Sipe's (2008) analysis of data revealed that children's responses fell into five major conceptual categories: analytical responses, intertextual responses, personal responses, transparent responses, and performative responses. The unit of analysis that Sipe utilized was the conversational turn. Analytical responses included children's comments of an analytical nature where they discussed the structure and meaning of the verbal text, the illustration sequence, the ways in which the text and illustrations were related to each other (including peritextual features), and aspects of setting, characters, plot and theme. Analytical comments by the children also included references to the book as an object or cultural product, analysis of specific language in the story, analysis of illustration and design elements and their semiotic significance, and the relationship

between fiction and reality. Sipe found that 73% of the children's conversational turns fit into the analytical category. Intertextual responses formed Sipe's second category of children's conversational turns and comprised 10% of conversational turns of the data. Intertextual responses "reflected the children's abilities to relate the text being read aloud to other cultural texts and products" (p. 85) which included other books, references to other artists and illustrators, TV programs, movies, videos and advertisements, or the writing or art of fellow classmates. The third category, comprising of 10% of children's personal responses to texts, detailed where the children made connections between their personal lives and the text. Sipe found that "a life-to-text connection was one in which the children utilized some experience from their own lives to understand or illuminate the text being read aloud" (p. 86) thus personalizing the text in some way to their own experience. The fourth category Sipe identified was the transparent, which included responses that suggested the children had merged with the narrative world of the story and where the text had momentarily seemed "identical with and transparent to the children's world" (p. 86). This category comprised 2% of children's conversational turns in the coded data. The performative, the fifth category revealed in Sipe's analysis of coded data, comprised 5% of the children's conversational turns. This category included children's responses that indicated they were "entering the world of the text in order to manipulate or steer it toward their own purposes" (p. 86) and was distinguished from the transparent category in that children were manipulating the text, rather than being steered by the text as in the transparent category. Sipe found that in the performative mode "the text became a playground for what [he] called a 'carnivalesque romp'" (p. 86) where the children used the text as a basis for a flight into their own imagination. Sipe's research

involved a comprehensive look at the children's responses while reading and discussing picturebooks, and formed an important basis for my own research as I adapted some aspects of Sipe's five categories of responses in my analysis of children's interactive read-aloud sessions with picturebooks.

Other researchers such as Stewig (1994) have explored children's responses to picturebooks. Stewig (1994) researched first-graders' responses to paintings and picturebooks in a year-long study that involved teaching the children aspects of visual literacy. Stewig's research participants included five high-, five average-, and five low-ability language users in each of two Grade 1 classrooms. He taught the students once weekly for the entire school year and conducted group discussions where the children were encouraged to describe and compare differing works of art. Varying strategies were used to get the children talking about the art, including writing, making up fictional stories about the art, and responding visually to the art. The children were also taught visual elements such as line, shape, color, space, form, texture, and dimension. Stewig recorded the children's comments in a pre- and post-treatment analysis to examine the effectiveness of two differing styles of painting as a stimulus for oral language fluency. He analyzed the quantity and quality of the language generated by the three ability groups. His results revealed that all ability groups commented frequently on aspects of object identification, color, description of objects, and relationship between objects, while high-ability users commented more frequently on action. While Stewig provided a comprehensive program that taught the children skills in visual literacy and examined the amount of language generated among the three groups, his quantitative analysis did not

reveal the complexity of comments that some students may have made or how their learning affected their comments at the post-treatment stage.

Young Children's Artistic Responses to Picturebooks

As well as examining children's oral responses, some researchers have explored students' artistic responses to picturebooks (Anderson, 1998; Harst, Short, & Burke, 1988; Pantaleo, 2005, 2008; Rabey, 2003; Short, Kauffman, & Kahn, 2000; Whitin, 2002). Anderson's (1998) dissertation study, which took place in a Grades 4 and 5 multiage intermediate classroom, focused on students' verbal and artistic responses to picturebooks. She explored how the learning environment was constructed to support children's responses to picturebooks, how the children responded to picturebooks, what types of responses children made to the illustrations in picturebooks, and how children created their own interpretations of the illustrations and written language in picturebooks. Through literature discussions and individual interviews, her microethnography focused on the responses of three students, where she explored the students' views of themselves as young artists and their connections, understandings and interpretations of the illustrations in a variety of picturebooks that focused on various themes. As the students read each text in an individual set, they developed questions about the artist of and the medium used in each book. The children learned about the artist and the style and then had an opportunity to create their own artistic responses in the given style. Anderson developed each successive text set based on the questions and interest generated by the previous text set, thus connecting each successive text set to the previous set.

In discussing her results, Anderson (1998) found that the three students used literary symbolism to make meaning of stories, they generated predictions, they made

intertextual and personal connections, they discussed story elements and structure, and they examined details they noticed in illustrations. She found that "the students intensely searched the illustrations to find details to support the theories they were forming throughout their thinking" (p. 148). Anderson also found that the students socially constructed meanings to broaden their perceptions of the visual art images presented within the picturebooks. She wrote that the three children noticed and wondered about the media that was used to create the illustrations and the technique employed by illustrators. The students discussed elements of art, compositional principles, book layout and publishing and made references to artists. Anderson reasoned that as students were exposed to a closer examination of picturebooks in combination with their own studio experiences, they increasingly began to think like artists. While Anderson's study was an in-depth look at how children perceive and create art, it was limited in scope as she gathered data from only three children.

Other researchers have developed strategies for introducing larger groups of children to the art in picturebooks. For example, in developing a strategy for children to respond to art, Harste, Short, and Burke (1988) introduced a method they referred to as 'Sketch-to-Stretch' in which groups of children create drawings to expand on the meanings they construct from reading texts. In this method, each child completes his/her visual response and then presents his/her work to a small group. Subsequently, the group of children participate in an interactive discussion about each child's art. Finally, the student who composed the work provides an interpretation for his/her sketch, and the process continues with all students presenting their work. Noden and Moss (1995) discussed how this method facilitated the movement between visual and verbal sign

systems in response to text. Kauffman (2006) shared Noden and Moss's views and reasoned that this type of "engagement helped children explore solutions to conflicts in their lives by creating images of their worlds, and by allowing them to imagine new possibilities for themselves and others in that world" (p. 502).

Short, Kauffman, and Kahn (2000) described a classroom project using the Sketch-to-Stretch strategy that was used by Kahn and Kauffman, where Grades 4 and 5 children were invited to "actively construct understandings as they entered the world of literature to learn about life and to make sense of their experiences and feelings" (p. 160). They interviewed the students several weeks later and found that this type of activity gave the children opportunity to express their feelings, to make links to the emotions of the characters in the story, and to learn more about the book as they explored the ideas in their minds. The authors reasoned that the experience gave children a tool for thinking that encouraged them "to move their responses from language into art" (p. 163). Short et al. reminded readers that during the Sketch-to-Stretch activity the children were not drawing an image from the book or a concise portrait of the plot, but were rather connecting to the images and feelings that the book raised for them. The authors emphasized how the use of multiple signs systems gave students "multiple ways of knowing about the world" (p. 167). This research pointed to the effectiveness of utilizing both the visual and verbal sign systems to help children work through meaning in literature and was a thorough study on how children use art to explore picturebooks.

Whitin (2002) also used the 'Sketch-to-Stretch' strategy in her elementary classroom. She found that each child's sketch revealed interesting details about both the read-aloud and the personality of the young artist. The children were invited to move

beyond a simple retelling of the story in order to create personal meaning. She reasoned that the "Sketch-to-Stretch strategy is by nature interpretive. Instead of paraphrasing the text … children created metaphors for their ideas" (p. 449), and that through creating pictures and abstract symbols children might have a deeper aesthetic experience of the story and its connection to their own lives. Thus, the research on the Sketch-to-Stretch activity is important as it reveals the powerful nature of utilizing art as a means for personal reflection and meaning-making in response to literature. As Whitin was a teacher in this class and was able to offer multiple opportunities for the students to respond using the Sketch-to-Stretch strategy, this study provided information about the children's responses over a period of time.

Other researchers have also studied the use of interactive read-alouds of picturebooks followed by students' artistic responses. Rabey (2003) was a teacher/researcher involved in the study described earlier by Arizpe and Styles (2003) that explored children's artistic and verbal responses to picturebooks by Browne and Kitamura. At the time of the study she was teaching a class of four- and five-year-olds and was able to schedule extended time involving the children in art and discussion of the three picturebooks in the main study. Additionally, she analyzed the visual responses of older students in the main study by Arizpe and Styles. Rabey found that "children can communicate what they see through their drawings and their drawings, in turn, reflect their responses to the visual stimuli they encounter" (p. 117). She analyzed the drawings by looking at the children's literal understanding and ability to communicate the content of the story, the overall effect of the drawings, considering the aesthetics of the image along with its emphasis on fundamentals of tone, colour, form and line, and the internal

structure of the visual response, “examining the composition for balance and the relationship between characters and objects, along with their relative scale” (p. 118). Additionally, she noted developmental differences among the different children in the study.

Rabey (2003) found that the children showed literal understanding of the stories, with the younger children generally showing an animal subject (in response to *Zoo*) in a focal position, occupying a large portion of the centre plane of the picture. Rabey noted that the overall effect of visual responses to the three books was very different, and that children’s exposure to various illustrators was evident in their visual arts responses. She noted that the younger children’s compositions were freer than those of the older children and that the drawings exhibited a spontaneity not seen in older students’ artistic responses. In her analysis of the internal structure of the drawings of her own younger students, Rabey found that the younger children’s visual responses were “graphic and direct” (p. 126) and displayed an increasing accuracy and control over the several months that she worked on artistic responses to picturebooks with her young students. She summarized that explicit instruction on visual elements such as tone, colour, line and form “can develop children’s capacities to internalize this visual language and, in so doing, come to understand and communicate through their pictures” (p. 138). This study is significant because it was conducted over a longer period of time and incorporated teaching the students aspects of visual literacy.

A small body of empirical studies has focused on children’s visual responses to picturebook read-alouds (Anderson, 1998; Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Rabey, 2003; Pantaleo, 2005, 2008; Short, Kauffman, & Kahn, 2000; Whitin, 2002). As described previously,

Pantaleo (2004, 2005, 2008) conducted research that explored young students' literary understandings of picturebooks that exhibit metafictive devices. In addition to analyzing the students' verbal responses to the literature, Pantaleo examined the Grade 1 students' visual arts responses and dictated sentences. Following the picturebook read-alouds, Pantaleo (2005) encouraged the children to respond to each picturebook from an aesthetic stance. When analyzing the children's visual responses, Pantaleo considered two aspects of Agosto's (1999) analytical framework – parallel storytelling and interdependent storytelling. Pantaleo (2005) found that "approximately 60% of the work completed by the first-grade students reflected interdependent storytelling as the text and the pictures communicated alternative information" (p. 9). Further analysis of the various types of interdependent storytelling in the children's visual and verbal responses revealed examples where students' dictated sentences extended the meaning of the picture (30%), where the picture extended the meaning of the dictated sentence (16%), and where the text extended the pictures and the pictures extended the text (14%). Pantaleo found that all students, except for one, exhibited interdependent storytelling in at least one or more examples of their work. Pantaleo's research revealed how the students were able to both visually and verbally articulate their understandings of stories and how analyzing visual texts makes significant demands on young readers. Teachers and researchers can benefit from analyzing children's visual responses in addition to their oral and written responses as communicating visually offers a useful alternative medium for children to communicate meanings that might be more difficult to accomplish using other sign systems.

Intertextuality Research Among School-Aged Students

Several of the studies discussed in the previous sections also examined students' intertextual connections (Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Madura, 1998; Pantaleo, 2004, 2007, 2008; Sipe, 2008; Styles & Arizpe, 2001). Hartman (1995) noted that most studies of intertextuality among school-aged students stem from the practice of reading and instructional strategies used in schools, from reading assessment, and from research on what capable readers do when reading text. He reported that most studies assess intertextuality over single passages rather than over multiple passages. Hartman explored the intertextual nature of reading with eight middle-grade students who were proficient readers by assessing the students across multiple passages of text. His method involved working in a laboratory setting where participants read five short passages of text and then discussed the passages as they made connections between the passages. Hartman found that the students were able to articulate their thoughts and make intertextual connections as they read through five passages of text. While this study offered a snapshot of how individual readers make intertextual connections during reading, the study was conducted in a laboratory setting and did not look at responses over a longer period of time and through multiple types of passages. Additionally, this study did not examine the role of intertextuality in group discussion.

Many and Anderson (1992) studied the types of intertextual and autobiographical connections made by readers in Grades 4, 6, and 8. They presented three realistic short stories to students and then questioned each student about the connections he/she made between the story and his/her own life or previous texts, including other books, movies or television programs. The researchers identified students' responses along an efferent and

aesthetic continuum (Rosenblatt, 1978). Their results revealed that fourth- and sixth-graders made intertextual connections on a literal level and that the students did not tie their connections back into the story. However, Many and Anderson found that some eighth-grade students made intertextual connections that included inferences that went beyond the literal level. The researchers also found that only a few students in all grades made autobiographical connections that related back to the story. Many and Anderson suggested that students' intertextual and autobiographical responses need to be probed in further depth in order for students to make meaningful intertextual and autobiographical associations that may add to their literary experience. While this quantitative analysis added to the research on students' autobiographical and intertextual associations, the method of using structured questions in interviews may have limited students' connections and responses to their own intertextual or autobiographical histories.

Pantaleo (2004) explored Grade 1 student's textual connections in a classroom of 23 students in Ontario, Canada. As descriobed previously, she read nine picturebooks to the students that were representative of various picturebook types (e.g., informational narrative, storybook, nonfiction, wordless etc.). Pantaleo's method involved reading to six small groups of 3 or 4 students once weekly in interactive reading sessions that lasted approximately 25 minutes. Pantaleo encouraged students to interact freely and she also drew the students' attention to "textual and illustrative aspects" (p. 214) within each text. These sessions were followed by a whole class re-reading of each picturebook where students were encouraged to comment on the text. All of the sessions were audio recorded. After these whole class sessions the students participated in a literature extension activity where the students were reminded to think about what they were

"feeling, thinking, wondering about, questioning, or imagining as they listened to and talked about the story before they began writing" (p. 215). Students also participated in a drama or visual arts activity following the writing in order to extend their experience with the story. Pantaleo's data analysis revealed that 20.1% of the total conversational turns were categorized as textual connections. Of these textual connections 30.1% were categorized as intratextual, while 49.8% were categorized as autobiographical (life-to-text or text-to-life). Pantaleo noted that "this group of students' intertextual, intratextual, and autobiographical connections served several purposes: hermeneutic, aesthetic, agential, personal, heuristic, informative, and communal" (p. 221). She also found that "many of the children's textual connections served multiple purposes simultaneously" (p. 221). Pantaleo's research revealed that the relationship between text, context and readers is a "complex and synergistic" (p. 222) one and invited continued research into how alternative genres and contextual factors affect students' literary understanding and how students' textual connections contribute to their comprehension and interpretation of text.

Cairney (1990) explored the types of intertextual links made by Grade 6 students in their writing. His study involved interviewing 80 high- and low-ability readers about the types of intertextual links they made between reading and writing. He found that 90% of the students recalled specific instances of making intertextual links. He categorized student responses and found that high-ability readers indicated that they made intertextual links through their knowledge of genre, used specific ideas without copying the plot, copied the plot with different ideas or events, copied both the plot and ideas, or created a narrative out of a number of other narratives. He additionally found that low-ability readers did not use their knowledge of genre, did not directly copy the plot and ideas, and

did not create a narrative out of a combination of other narratives. Unlike the high-ability group, Cairney found that the low ability readers made use of elements of characterization and transferred content from expository to narrative in their writing (p. 482). His results revealed that both high- and low-ability readers made some types of intertextual connections between their reading and writing, and that all students "poach from stories they've read" (p. 483). While Cairney's research revealed that all students made intertextual connections, he had only one point of contact with the students during their interviews – a factor that limited his results and did not reveal how students' intertextual histories can develop over time.

Summary

My study was based on the pragmatist philosophical foundation of social constructivism and symbolic interactionism and was grounded in semiotic theory. In the literature review I discussed visual literacy, children's developmental understanding of art, picturebooks and the connections between picturebooks and visual literacy and semiotics. I discussed characters and characterization in picturebooks, reader-response theory, and intertextuality. I reviewed literature on interactive read-alouds, and literature and empirical studies on young children's visual, verbal, and artistic responses to picturebooks, and more generally on intertextuality research among school-aged students.

In the next chapter I discuss qualitative research and case study design and their appropriateness to my study. I present my research questions, describe the context of my research, my research design, the pre-study preparations I took in setting up the research, the picturebooks I used in my study, and the data analysis methods I used within my study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

> One feels that the child is speaking directly through his drawings, that each line, shape, and form conveys the inner feelings as well as explicit themes of the young child. Indeed the child himself often seems most at home in expressing himself through his drawings.
>
> (Gardner, 1980, p. 114)

My investigations of the research literature revealed that much research has focused on children's discussions about picturebooks, but little research had been conducted with an emphasis on students' thinking about central characters and their motives and on young children's intertextual and autobiographical connections to the central characters in picturebooks. I believed that research that included young children's oral discussions and visual arts responses in combination with the children's discussions about their own art might yield more information about how young children think about characters. I also wanted to feature a single illustrator and study the responses over a range of one author/illustrator's picturebooks as I thought this method would not confound the data concerning children's conversations about central characters in the books. This study also sought to build on the research conducted by Anderson (1998) who studied primary grade children's artistic and oral responses using a spiral curriculum that involved a combination of illustrators. The design of my study recognized the social nature of learning, the philosophical perspectives of symbolic interactionism and social constructivism, and semiotics. This chapter describes the qualitative nature and

significance of the study, my central research questions, the research context and design, and the methods used for gathering and analyzing the data.

Philosophical Foundations

As described in Chapter 2, my research was situated in the philosophical foundations of Social Constructivism and Symbolic Interactionism. Both emphasize that human beings are distinct from other species in that they have the capacity to use the tool of language, and that through thinking, reasoning, and communicating, humans have created a social world (Hewitt, 2007; Sandstrom et al., 2006). Both of these theoretical positions emphasize that learning is a social and complex process and have implications for research involving social groups of children. The type of rich and detailed insights that I sought to feature in my study were complementary with the aims of qualitative research.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is "grounded in the assumption that individuals construct social reality in the form of meanings and interpretations, and that these constructions are transitory and situational" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005, p. 555). Denzin and Lincoln (2008) noted that qualitative researchers study events and people in natural settings, and attempt to interpret phenomena in terms of the understandings and meanings people bring to them. The "qualitative or naturalistic research paradigm [focuses on the] discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied" (Merriam, 1988, p. 3). Simons, Lathlean, and Squire (2008) noted that "the very essence of qualitative research is the rich and detailed insights that can be afforded by the in-depth examination of a phenomenon" (p. 120). Katsuko (1995) discussed how the strengths of qualitative

inquiry are that the researcher is in a key position to influence the research through his/her personal knowledge and experience, is able to account for and describe the influences of interpersonal, social, and cultural factors, and is able to explain the psychological dimensions of human beings in a holistic way.

Qualitative or naturalistic inquiry methods were appropriate for my investigation of children's autobiographical and intertextual connections to characters in picturebooks as these methods provided opportunity for intense investigation of children's perceptions within a natural setting. Qualitative inquiry enabled me to report on the detailed insights of the children as they discussed visual and textual aspects of the picturebooks within their small focus groups and during their individual interviews. The analysis and reporting of this qualitative study incorporated the interpersonal, social and cultural aspects of the children's responses within my study and enabled me to integrate my own interactions with those of the children and to investigate how my questioning influenced the conversations that took place.

There are various types of qualitative research, including hermeneutic, heuristic, feminist, phenomenological, postmodern, grounded theory, and participatory action research. The particular research design for this qualitative inquiry was the case study.

Case Study Design

The design of my study recognized the social nature of learning, the philosophical perspectives of symbolic interactionism and social constructivism, and semiotics. The particular research design for this qualitative inquiry was the case study. Stake (2000) noted that "a case may be simple or complex. It may be a child, or a classroom of children" (p. 436). Stake wrote that a case may be singular but it may also have

subsections that include individual students in a group. Yin (1994) defined the case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Merriam (1988) wrote that the “uniqueness of a case study lies not so much in the methods employed … as in the questions asked and their relationship to the end product” (p. 14). The qualitative case study was an appropriate design for my research as I examined the real-life interactions of individuals both within the small group conversations and during individual interviews.

This qualitative case study provided me with the opportunity to take a holistic approach to my investigation by asking how the children’s words and symbols carried and conveyed meaning in the context of small-group interactive read-alouds and in individual interviews about the art the children created (Patton, 2002). A case study is the chosen strategy of many researchers when they seek answers to “how” and “why” questions, when researchers are studying a natural event over which they have little control, and when the research focus is on a phenomenon within a real-life context (Yin, 1994). These types of cases seek to explain a phenomenon, and can be categorized as exploratory and/or descriptive. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) noted that case studies may focus on historical organizational study, observational study, life history, document analysis, situational analysis, or microethnography. My research was a situational analysis of young children’s interactions during small group conversations. My study also incorporated document analysis of the children’s visual arts responses and in particular the child’s conversations about his/her artwork.

Stake (2000) identified three types of case studies: an intrinsic case study, where the researcher seeks to better understand a particular case and is not attempting to build theory; an instrumental case study, where a particular case is examined to give insight or to arrive at a generalization, and; a collective case study, where a researcher examines a number of cases in order to gain insight into a general condition, phenomenon, or population (p. 437). The type of case study I designed was a collective case study of a group of children. The design of my study focused on exploring young children's autobiographical and intertextual connections to characters in Anthony Browne's picturebooks and recognized the influences of group interaction upon individual children's contributions (Hewitt, 2007; Hirtle, 1996; Sandstrom et al., 2006). The design of my study enabled me to take a closer look at individual children's responses within the small group and the individual interview setting over several picturebook readings. I additionally incorporated the children's visual responses into my data set. The four central research questions that focused on young children's connections to characters in picturebooks by Anthony Browne are as follows:

The Research Questions

1) What do young children discuss about characters within selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne?
2) Do children make intertextual connections between characters, illustrations, or events in Browne's picturebooks and other texts they have read, and if so, what is the nature of these connection?
3) What does young children's artwork and discussion about their art reveal about their understanding of characters?

4) Do young children make autobiographical connections between their own lives and the characters in selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne, as revealed through visual arts and oral responses, and if so, what is the nature of these responses?

Research Context

Research Site

Data collection took place over a 5-week period during the months of May and June, 2009. The small inner city public school, which enrolled 153 students from Kindergarten to Grade 5, is located in a medium sized city in western Canada. A subsidized hot lunch program was available to children based on parental income. Approximately 26% of the school's population were either Aboriginal or enrolled in an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) program.

Participants

During the organization phase of my study I progressed through the following steps in securing participants. Prior to beginning my research in May of 2009, I applied for and received ethical approval from the University of Victoria Reasearch on Human Ethics Committee (see Appendix A). I then secured written approval to commence my research from the Superintendent of Schools in my school district (see Appendix B), the principal of my school (see Appendix C), and the teacher whose students had been selected as potential participants for the study (see Appendix D).

I selected a Grade 1 classroom of students to conduct my research with because many of the students were familiar with me as I was often collecting children from their classroom for individual and small group intensive reading instruction. Additionally, the

teacher in the classroom was supportive of my research and modified her schedule to support the small focus group read-aloud sessions.

Because I was a teacher in the school where I was conducting research and was responsible for part of the educational program for some of the students in my research group, it was essential that I took steps to separate these two roles as much as was possible. These procedures began with me reading a script to the students (see Appendix E) using age appropriate language about the nature of the study. Following the reading of the script I distributed a sealed information consent package (see Appendix F) to each of the students who took this material home for their parents. This package included: information about the purpose of the study, the process by which data would be collected and stored, the actions used to protect student anonymity (i.e. pseudonyms), and the assurance that students could withdraw from the study at any point if they so chose. I also instructed the students and their parents to not discuss with me whether or not they consented to participate in the study. The consent forms were to be returned to the school secretary, who kept them in a locked file until the completion of the study. Thus, I did not know the identity of the students who agreed to participate in the research until after all of the data had been collected, which occurred during the third week of June 2009. At that time I found out that 13 of the 21 students enrolled in the classroom had agreed to participate in the study. Eight of the participants were girls and five were boys.

During the gathering of the data all of the children in this Grade 1 classroom were organized into four groups. Three of the groups contained five students and one group contained six students. The classroom teacher of these students formed the groupings to accommodate her reading group schedule and so the groupings contained students with

mixed-ability reading levels. I would have preferred to have smaller sized groups of four students, but the classroom teacher expressed a concern about my research interrupting the regular educational program of the students if they were organized into five rather than four groups. Thus, the students were grouped by the classroom teacher into four mixed-gender groupings with no particular emphasis on reading ability or ethnic or racial background.

Prior to the beginning of the data collection phase of my study I worked twice in the Grade 1 students' classroom in April, 2009, to familiarize the students with the techniques and materials that would be used during the study. Below I discuss the pre-study sessions that took place prior to the start of the data collection.

Investigative Procedures

Pre-study Preparations: Introducing the Author and Artistic Methods

Prior to the collection of data, the Grade 1 children became familiar with the work of Anthony Browne through the whole classroom read-aloud of *Silly Billy* (Browne, 2006). My goal was to build enthusiasm for the picturebook research and to use this book as an introduction to the work of Anthony Browne. Additionally, I used this session as an introduction to the art materials that I would have the children use during the small focus groups. I also modeled the types of questions I would ask during the research and encouraged the children to interact and provide comments and ask questions similar to what they would be doing during the interactive read-aloud groups. I attempted to create an environment where the students could interact with one another by asking them to respond to the comments of each other, and by encouraging them to discuss the book with as little interference from me as possible. I pointed out how Browne (and other

picturebook illustrators) might use color or black-and-white images to convey meaning and how the thickness and thinness of line can affect the drawings. Below I describe four pages from *Silly Billy* (unpaginated) to convey how I scaffolded the children's understandings of how they might transact with a picturebook, and in particular with the work of Anthony Browne.

The first three pages of the section in the picturebook I describe depict Billy, the central character, alone in his bedroom. The text of the first recto page reads "Billy worried about clouds" (unpaginated). The artwork is rendered in black and white pencil with a thick colored border and shows Billy alone in his bed with the covers pulled up high. Above Billy is a dark cloud casting its shadow upon him and Billy has downcast eyebrows and a worried look on his face. The wallpaper of the story shows a pattern of small rainclouds and the bedroom light is out. The text of the next verso reads "and rain" (unpaginated) and depicts Billy with downcast eyebrows and a slight frown on his face. The artwork is again rendered in black and white with a colored border surrounding the picture. In this picture Billy's bed is surrounded by the choppy flooding waters of a lake and a small duck is floating by. Browne has drawn rainclouds with drops falling both in the room and from the clouds on the wallpaper. The recto of the third page depicts Billy being carried away by a giant bird. The text reads, "Billy even worried about giant birds." The wallpaper has changed to reveal a pattern of birds. This page is also done in black and white, although many pages in this picturebook are drawn in full color. The next opening depicts Billy and his father in full color. The text reads, "His dad tried to help. 'Don't worry, son,' he said. 'None of those things could happen. It's just your imagination'" (unpaginated). I asked the children, "How did Anthony Browne show that

Billy was worried?" and "What do you notice about the wallpaper in these pages?" and "What do you think about Anthony Browne using black and white instead of color?" I encouraged the children to explore the expressions on Billy's face, asked them to think and discuss with a partner about what small visual details they noticed in Anthony Browne's artwork, including changes in color, line and space, and to notice the perspective of the characters and background on each of the pages. I spent some time explaining to the children how an author might use line, space and color in artwork and showed them several examples from the text and then the children talked with a partner about the details they had noticed. I then asked the children to share their comments with the group. I instructed the children that they could ask me to turn to particular openings if they wished. Once the children had discussed their insights about Anthony Browne's artwork I modeled my own autobiographical connections to the events in these pages by remarking, "Sometimes when I am alone in my bed my mind thinks about bad things happening, but I know these events probably could never happen." I asked the children to think about their own connections to Billy's experience and to consider how he may have felt. Several students shared their connections and experiences that were related to Billy. I then asked the students to think about and share with the whole group whether they knew of any other stories or television programs they might have seen that reminded them of this story. Responses were encouraged from each child in the group. The read-aloud of *Silly Billy* focused equally on Anthony Browne's artwork and the children's autobiographical and intertextual connections to the character of Billy in the story. The whole-group read-aloud of this picturebook took place in one 30 minute session. This session was not audio-taped, but I explained to the children that during our small-group

read-aloud sessions I would be recording their conversations on my audio-recorder to include for my research.

At the conclusion of the reading *Silly Billy* (Browne, 2006) I distributed the types of markers and paper we would be using in our small focus groups and instructed the students to respond to the picturebook by asking them to think about their own experiences that were similar to Billy's experiences. I also told them they could use ideas from the book that were similar to other books or television programs they had viewed. I encouraged them to explore color, black and white and line, much as Anthony Browne had done. Most students finished their pictures in approximately 20 minutes. When the students had finished their pictures the classroom teacher and myself approached each student asking each person to discuss the picture she/he had drawn. We asked in particular what connections each student had personally made between themselves and Billy in the story, if their picture included a connection to another book or television program they had seen, and how they had used color and line in their drawing. The classroom teacher and I asked each child a few of these questions in order to model the nature of the individual interview I would have with each child during the study. I did not go through the complete set of questions however, in order to keep to the time schedule granted me by the classroom teacher. This artwork and unstructured interview session took place in one 30 minute class session. In the next section I describe the picturebooks I used for my research.

Picturebooks Used For Research

As described previously, author and illustrator Anthony Browne creates picturebooks that offer rich opportunities for readers to explore characters in great depth

as his picturebooks often depict the central character as "poised for change, whether by circumstance or through physical or personal development" (Doonan, 1999, p. 32). For my research I originally selected six picturebooks among the more than two dozen Browne has authored and/or illustrated. I based my book selections on the following criteria: each book must represent a dynamic relationship between a child (or anthropomorphic) character and other characters in the story through the use of both words and illustrations; each book selected must be written after 1980; each book must currently be available in print or through a library; and each book must include subtle visual details and symbols that may function as metaphor. Within Browne's work I found the topic of family issues through the eyes of a child that I sought to study, as well as the inclusion of detailed intratextual and intertextual elements that can function as metaphor. I chose to focus on the work of a single author/illustrator as I wanted to limit the design and style of the picturebooks to not confound the data. I planned to use six picturebooks by Anthony Browne, but due to time constraints because of a health education program offered to the students in this classroom, I had time to complete only five weeks of research. The five books included in my study were read in the following order:

Pre-Study Week – Familiarization with Anthony Browne and the artistic technique and materials used for the study.

Silly Billy – Anthony Browne (2006)

Week 1 – *The Tunnel* – Anthony Browne (1989)

Week 2 – *Willy the Wimp* – Anthony Browne (1984)

Week 3 – *Gorilla* – Anthony Browne (1983)

Week 4 – *Zoo* – Anthony Browne (1992)

Week 5 – *Piggybook* – Anthony Browne (1986)

A synopsis of each picturebook chosen for inclusion in the study is presented below.

The Tunnel (Browne, 1989) depicts the sibling rivalry between a brother and a sister who are in "every way … different" (unpaginated). They are sent outside by their mother to work out their differences. The brother embarks on an exploration through a dark culvert (tunnel) and the sister reluctantly follows. When she finally finds him after her frightening journey through the woods, he has become "still as stone" (unpaginated). Her concern for her brother warms him up and he regains his life. The children return to their home with a new understanding of their relationship. Themes explored in this picturebook include childhood imaginations when playing outside the safety of home, children's independence, and sibling relationships.

Willy the Wimp (Browne, 1984) features Willy, a small chimpanzee who does everything a real child might, yet he is of small stature. In the story, Willy is intimidated by neighborhood bullies and ponders how he will be able to defend himself. Willy finally gains confidence while embarking on a personal training program. His newfound confidence is put to the test when he defends his young friend Milly when she is surrounded by the bullies. Themes explored in this picturebook include the main character exploring his own self-image, the impact of bullying on children, and resilience gained through personal growth.

Gorilla (Browne, 1983) features a young girl who loves gorillas, even though she has never seen a live one. Her relationship with her father, who is visually shown as busy reading the paper or at his desk working, reveals that he does not seem to have time for

her. A mother figure is absent from the story, although there is no textual reference to this aspect in the narrative. The story takes place on the night before the young girl's birthday, and shows her alone watching television in a barren room without furniture. The girl talks to her stuffed gorilla before going to sleep. During the night the gorilla grows into a full-sized figure and dresses in her father's clothing. He takes her on a delightful tour of the zoo to see the 'real' gorillas, out for dessert, a dance in the park, and off to a movie about a 'super-gorilla'. The next morning she wakes up and finds her father leaning over her and asking her to go to the zoo. Underlying themes include the nature of captivity of animals in the zoo and the relationship of a father and a child.

In *Zoo* (Browne, 1992) a family of two parents and two boys embark on a family outing to the zoo. Through traffic jams, arguments, and their zoo adventure, the nature of the sarcastic and immature father is contrasted with the surprisingly mature and insightful character of the younger son. Underlying themes of father and son relationships as well as animals in captivity are explored in this picturebook.

Piggybook (Browne, 1986) features a family of two boys, a mother and a father. The father and the boys are untidy and unhelpful and are constantly demanding things from the wife/mother in the story. The wife/mother is illustrated in graying tones with an expressionless face. One day she leaves, telling them, "You are pigs" (unpaginated). The father and boys attempt to keep house and cook for themselves in her absence, but as time goes on the house becomes dirtier and more unkempt. Small intratextual images of 'pig' features can be seen as the story progresses, with many images taking on pig-like features. The father and boys eventually turn into pigs themselves. The story concludes with the mother's return home, and the father's and boys' new willingness to help around

the house. Themes explored in this book include the household expectations of parents and children in a family and traditional versus changing gender roles and expectations in families, a mother's self-fulfillment, and individual identity.

Research Design

The Small-group Interactive Read-aloud Sessions

I conducted four small-group interactive read-aloud groups weekly during the months of May and June 2009. Each read-aloud and visual arts response session took place in a small classroom in the school that was used as an intensive reading centre. During each session one picturebook by Anthony Browne was read, followed by a personal visual arts response and interview of each child in the group. In this way I featured one book weekly for a period of five weeks. Each small-group session lasted approximately 50 minutes. Prior to reading each picturebook I distributed personal copies of the focus book to each child in the group, with the need to share between only two students in the group of six members. I introduced the book's title, we discussed the cover pages, and each group was reminded that people need to "talk one at a time so the recorder could hear them." I also reminded the children to be good listeners and that they could make comments throughout the book and stop me at any time and ask me to turn back in the story if they wanted to make a comment about something they had already seen. I reminded them to "look closely at the pictures" and to think about what the characters felt like. I also asked them to tell me about their personal "connections to the characters" that we were reading about and to think about their connections to other stories they might know. I explained to the children that a connection would be where they or someone they knew had experienced something like one of the characters in the

story and that a connection to another story or television program would be where something they had seen or read reminded them of the events in the story. During each read-aloud session, the students were encouraged to talk to one another or to me and to share their thoughts about the book we were reading. I shared in the dialogue to a minimal extent, mainly asking the students to speak clearly or stating their name so I could more easily identify which child was making comments on the recording. At times I joined in the fun and laughter and also asked the students what they thought about a character or the characters' feelings. I attempted to allow for an unstructured and natural conversation to occur and helped the students to clarify and construct their understandings by listening, commenting and asking questions as we progressed through the books. In this way I wanted to maintain the spontaneous and natural conversation among the students and myself in as much of an unfettered way as possible. I recognized that the position of participant-researcher was a delicate one where I had to maintain a balance between observing the group and joining in the conversation. I was careful not to lead the conversation, except in asking questions to elicit fuller responses from the children. A hand-held audio recorder was used to capture the conversations before and during the picturebook reading events that occurred during each small-group session.

For the children's individual interviews that followed their artwork, I designed an interview guide and a semi-structured question set in order to provide consistency across individual interviews. Beginning each individual interview I welcomed the child to the interview chair and we then looked together at his/her visual art response. I then began the semi-structured interview with a set of probing questions. Following the interview I

thanked the child for sharing his/her ideas and his/her picture with me. The following questions guided the semi-structured interviews:

(1) Tell me about the picture you have finished today.

(2) Who are the characters in your picture?

(3) Why did you decide to draw about these characters?

(4) Are any of the characters like anyone you know?

(5) Are you one of the characters? If so which one?

(6) Are there any details you want me to notice in your picture?

(7) Why did you decide to use these colors ? Shapes? Sizes?

(8) Tell me how your picture relates to Anthony Browne's picturebook.

(9) Is there anything else would you like to tell me about your picture?

Table 1 connects each individual interview question to the central research questions explored in this study. Anfara et al. (2002) proposed that connecting research questions to interview questions assists in revealing the inner workings of a research study and serves to make the data collection and analysis more public.

Table 1

Research Questions in Relation to Interview Questions

Research Question	Interview Question (II= Individual Interview)
What do young children discuss about characters within these selected picturebooks?	II8, II9
Do children make intertextual connections between characters, illustrations, or events in Browne's picturebooks and other texts they have read, and if so, what is the nature of these connections?	II1, II2, II3, II4, II6, II7, II8, II9
What does young children's artwork and discussion about their art reveal about their understanding of characters?	II1, II2, II3, II4, II5, II6, II7, II8, II9
Do young children make autobiographical connections between their own lives and the characters in selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne, as revealed through visual arts and oral responses, and if so, what is the nature of these responses?	II1, II2, II4, II5, II9

After each read-aloud session, either during the time students were completing their drawings or after they had left the room, I recorded field notes in my reflexive journal to document particulars such as who was in the group that session, whether a child seemed particularly talkative or quiet that day, and any affective responses to the books such as body or facial gestures made at certain points in the story (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Later at night I added my own thoughts, feelings, questions and ideas about the study to the journal (Patton, 2002; Purcell-Gates, 2004). I realized that my own thoughts and ideas were important in the research as "the other can be understood only as part of a relationship with the self … one that conceives the observer as possessing a self-identity

that by definition is re-created in its relationship with the observed" (Vidich & Lyman, 2000, p. 38). Sensitivity to my position as participant-researcher was therefore a necessary part of data collection and analysis of the transcripts of interviews in my study.

Children's Visual Arts Responses

Once each group discussion and picturebook read-aloud session was finished, I provided the children with felt markers and paper to use to respond through art to the picturebook the group had just read. Young children are often able to articulate their thoughts and work out their feelings through drawing in a way that other mediums such as conversation may not afford (Gardner, 1980). I believed it was important to provide an opportunity for the children to be able to express themselves through both conversation and personal art in order to glean a greater understanding of how young children view characters in picturebooks. To preserve the uniqueness of each child's visual art response, the children were given minimal directions about what they might draw. I directed them to think about the story and what it meant to them and to "think about the characters." The children were also told that they could put themselves or someone they knew into their picture if they wished. While the children were completing their pictures I made notes in my reflexive journal, and did not interfere, circulate among the children, or provide further direction. There was some variation in the time it took for each child to finish his/her drawing, but each child stayed with me until I had interviewed him/her about their completed picture.

Once finished their artwork, each child came up to me and sat in a chair where I asked him/her a series of questions to engage in a conversation about the art he/she had just completed. Most of these interviews lasted one to two minutes. I audio-taped these

interviews and later transcribed them and filed them with each child's picture for data analysis. I chose to audio-tape these conversations rather than have the children write their thoughts down because I thought that having them converse about their pictures would ensure that I received the greatest amount of information in a shorter period of time.

This section described the pre-study preparations I made to prepare the children for my research study, a synopsis of the picturebooks I used during my study and a detailed account of the interactive small-group read-alouds I conducted during my research. It also described the visual arts sessions and interviews I conducted with the children during the research. The next section describes the methods I used to analyze the transcripts of interactive small-group read-alouds, visual artifacts and transcripts of personal interviews with each child.

Data Analysis

Organizing the Data

Audio-recordings of all of the interactive small-group read-aloud discussions and individual interviews were transcribed and used as the primary source for my data analysis. Recordings in my reflexive journal in the form of words or sketches to depict what I heard, saw, thought about and questioned as I collected and reflected upon the data were also used to assist me in gaining a greater understanding of how the children constructed meaning about characters and whether they made autobiographical and intertextual connections to the characters in the picturebooks.

Each interactive small-group read-aloud session of the five picturebooks was transcribed verbatim from audio-taped recordings, producing a total of 20 transcriptions.

My field notes were incorporated into my transcripts and the addition of these phrases and pictures assisted me in identifying the presence and nature of the children's affective responses, as well as bodily movements (such as banging their fists on their chest to show they were a super gorilla). My field notes also included verbal changes, such as laughter and sound effects and non-verbal facial gestures (nodding in agreement/disagreement, hand gestures, body movements). These notes assisted me in adding to my data during the transcription stage of my research.

During the study I did not know the identities of those children who consented to participate in the research, so all 21 of the children's comments were included in the transcriptions and interviews. The children's comments were not edited for grammar. At the completion of the study I learned that 13 of the children consented to participate in the research. By this time I had completed transcribing over 50% of the read-alouds, so I continued transcribing read-aloud sessions of the rest of the picturebooks. During the data analysis I highlighted the children who had agreed to participate in the research and used only their comments in my results. Comments by the children who did not participate were summarized to preserve the natural topic flow of conversation, but they were not included in the results of my research. Once I had transcribed the children's conversations of the picturebook read-alouds I turned to existing frameworks of children's conversational analysis for guidance in applying a categorization scheme to my own transcripts.

Existing Frameworks for Children's Conversation Analysis

To broaden my understanding of categorization schemes that have been used for analyzing children's talk, I studied the work of Kiefer (1995) and Sipe (2008) who

provided differing frameworks which I believed might provide an organizational framework for the conversational data of my study. I studied Kiefer's work first and originally thought an adaptation of her categorization scheme might be appropriate for my work. As I described in Chapter 2, Kiefer adapted four of Halliday's (1975) functions of language in her analysis of transcripts of children's conversations about picturebooks they read. She found that children used informative language (reporting on the contents of illustrations or describing and comparing narrated events and pictures), heuristic language (wondering, making predictions, offering solutions or attempting to solve problems, imaginative language (recalling, creating, or participating in the imaginary world of the book either as an onlooker or character), and personal language (attempting to connect the events of the story to their personal experiences, or stating an opinion or emotion). While aspects of these functions of language were all evident in my data, my study also focused on the children's intertextual talk and analysis of characters and artwork and these categories were not included in Kiefer's work.

I then turned to Sipe's (2008) grounded theory of young children's conversations during read-alouds as I thought his framework for analyzing children's conversation more closely resembled what I wished to glean from my own study. To review, Sipe's categories of children's responses to picturebook read-alouds focused on: (a) analytical responses; (b) intertextual responses; (c) personal/autobiographical responses; (d) transparent responses; and (e) performative responses. Although Sipe's categorization of children's responses allowed for the identification of intertextual and personal (autobiographical) responses, it did not include space for the analysis of characters' traits or the children's thoughts and feelings about the characters in the stories. As my research

questions focused specifically on aspects of children's thoughts about characters, as well as their autobiographical and intertextual connections, I found it necessary to develop my own unique categorization system.

Categorization Scheme Used in the Research

My understanding of existing categorization schemes such as Keifer's (1995) and Sipe's (2008) assisted me in developing categories for the discussions captured on the transcripts of the children's conversations. Initially I was interested in identifying where a speaker referred to a character, or made an autobiographical or intertextual connection. Analysis began with these three categories of conversation but I found that many instances of conversation did not fit into one of these categories. I then broadened my coding scheme to the following five categories of talk:

(a) statements about characters (e.g., what a character is thinking, feeling and what a character looks like or what he or she is doing);

(b) statements, labels or observations about the actions, events, or picture details in the story (e.g., "the wallpaper looks like a pig");

(c) intertextual references (to another book, movie, game or television);

(d) autobiographical references (such as "My dad is nice, but sometimes he…"), and;

(e) other references (other conversational units that did not fit into the categories and may include asking a question, or saying "I don't know" or performative responses such as singing and laughter that were indecipherable).

After reading through the four transcripts of *The Tunnel* three times I found that the existing categorization of statements about characters (item a) proved limiting and did not allow for differing types of talk about characters, so I further divided this category into two distinct categories:

(a) statements about characters (descriptive statements about a character's actions, such as, "The Dad and the two brothers are getting a piggyback ride from the Mom," or "The Dad is wearing a blue shirt," or predictions about what a character might do), and;

(b) references to characters' thoughts and feelings, (comments and predictions about characters' emotions such as, "She looks sad because her head is down.").

After coding the transcripts from the picturebook *The Tunnel* (Browne, 1989), I wanted to make sure my categorization scheme was efficient and related to my central research questions. I asked two colleagues with graduate degrees to code a sample of the transcripts. I brought two clean transcripts from one group's reading of *The Tunnel* and markers for my colleagues to code the transcripts. We initially met in a quiet location at my university and I explained that my coding scheme was to focus on aspects of talk that included intertextual comments, autobiographical comments, comments about labeling and identifying objects in the pictures, and comments about characters and a character's thoughts and feelings. I explained to them that they were to code each conversational turn as a unit and that each conversational turn may be included in more than one category. I also explained to my colleagues that a conversational turn was represented by a change of speaker, where the speaker could utter a word or several sentences (Lindfors, 1999).

Once my colleagues had finished coding their transcript we compared our coding and discussed the categorization scheme and the few discrepancies that appeared unclear. We agreed that the categorization scheme that divided character statements into two distinct categories would provide a way to identify the aspects of characterization that I wished to focus on in my research.

I then applied the modified coding scheme that included organizing character statements into two distinct categories to the rest of the transcripts. I first read through the transcripts book by book so that I was working on a group of four transcripts in a sequence. I read through each of the four transcripts three times and then applied my categorization scheme on the fourth reading. On the transcripts, the children's conversational turns were highlighted using six differing symbols according to my classification system. All of the 21 students' comments were included in this initial analysis. Each category of talk was counted and percentages of talk based on each category, where one or more categories might be contained in a conversation turn, were calculated to determine the amount of talk in each category. To account for the overlap of types of conversation, where one conversational turn was coded as both intertextual and a statement about a character, I counted that conversational unit twice. In my calculation of conversational turns I did not include my prompts to the children to keep the conversation going, such as repeating their names for clarity on the recording, asking a question or joining in the talk with a statement or reiteration. I did however analyze my own talk later in the data analysis (the analysis follows the analysis of the children's conversation). The transcript excerpt below, from one group's transactions with *The Tunnel* illustrates how I coded the children's conversational turns. Readers are reminded that I did not edit the

children's comments for grammar. The following colors are used to represent each type of talk: statements about characters' actions and appearance, statements about characters' thoughts and feelings, statements about the details in a picture including labeling objects, intertextual and intratextual references, autobiographical references, other types of talk (which may include performative responses such as singing, laughter, asking a question, or saying "I don't know"). To represent overlap among categories, some colors are used more than once within a conversational turn. For example, Edward's (all children's names are pseudonyms) first conversational turn in the excerpt shows two colors, represented by two types of statements in the conversational turn. For example "He is…" shows the beginning of a character statement; "it's obvious because she really loves gorillas" is a statement about the character's emotions or thoughts and feelings; "She even has gorilla cereal" is a character statement that refers to a general observation about a character.

Valerie:	There is a gorilla right there, (points to the cover of book).
A:	On the cover of the book?
Valerie:	Yeah…she's writing about the lovely pretty gorilla.
A:	The lovely pretty gorilla.
All:	(Laughter).
A:	Ok…remember we talk one at a time so that the tape deck can hear us. Alright, turn the page (reading story). "*Hannah loved gorillas. She read books about gorillas, she watched gorillas on television and she drew pictures of gorillas. But she had never seen a real gorilla. Her father didn't have time to take her to see one at the zoo. He didn't have time for anything.*" What do you think about these pictures? Abigail?
Abigail:	That he doesn't have anything…that he doesn't have time for anything, but he has time to read a newspaper.
A:	A newspaper…Rebecca?
Rebecca:	That there's a little blue thing up there…or is that just a bowl?
A:	Oh the blue bowl on the counter…yeah. What do you think about this Edward?

Edward: He is…it's obvious because she really loves gorillas. She even has gorilla cereal.
A: Oh she has gorilla cereal…yeah.
Edward: My brother does.
A: Your brother does what?
Edward: He has the same cereal. He loves gorilla.
A: With gorillas on it? What kind of cereal is that?
Edward: Uhm…it's called Gorilla Munch.
A: Gorilla Munch…Really? Oh isn't that interesting. Is it good?
Edward: I don't know…I've never tasted it. Oh yeah, I think this one says Gorilla Crunch. Yeah…that's it.
Rebecca: Maybe they made a mistake. (she refers to the name of the cereal).
A: What else do you notice about this picture? Yes…Abigail?
Abilgail: That it's kind of blue.
A: It's kind of blue?
Abigail: Yeah, everything's kind of blue.
A: Why do you think it's kind of blue?
Abigail: Because maybe gorilla's like blue or something. (Laughter).
A: What do you think Rebecca?
Rebecca: Maybe that's because she's feeling a bit blue.
A: Maybe she's feeling a bit blue. What does it mean to feel blue?
Rebecca: Like she's really sad and stuff.
A: So maybe the kitchen is blue because she's sad?
Rebecca: Yeah.

My own reading or comments are not coded in this excerpt, but I have analyzed my own questions and comments to the children to reveal how my participation influenced the conversation. The categorization scheme I used was as follows: (a) a general question to a child about a picture such as "What else do you notice about this picture?"; (b) a reiteration or a question to clarify the child's comment; (c) a question to probe for more conversation such as, "What does it mean to feel blue?"; (d) joining with the children in performative laughter, and; (e) calling upon a child by name. The analysis of my own comments and questions follows.

Valerie: There is a gorilla right there, (points to the cover of book).
A: On the cover of the book?
Valerie: Yeah…she's writing about the lovely pretty gorilla.
A: The lovely pretty gorilla.

All: (Laughter).
A: Ok…remember we talk one at a time so that the tape deck can hear us. Alright, turn the page (reading story). *"Hannah loved gorillas. She read books about gorillas, she watched gorillas on television and she drew pictures of gorillas. But she had never seen a real gorilla. Her father didn't have time to take her to see one at the zoo. He didn't have time for anything."*
What do you think about these pictures? Abigail?
Abigail: That he doesn't have anything…that he doesn't have time for anything, but he has time to read a newspaper.
A: A newspaper…Rebecca?
Rebecca: That there's a little blue thing up there…or is that just a bowl?
A: Oh the blue bowl on the counter…yeah. What do you think about this Edward?
Edward: He is…it's obvious because she really loves gorillas. She even has gorilla cereal.
A: Oh she has gorilla cereal…yeah.
Edward: My brother does.
A: Your brother does what?
Edward: He has the same cereal. He loves gorilla.
A: With gorillas on it? What kind of cereal is that?
Edward: Uhm…it's called Gorilla Munch.
A: Gorilla Munch…Really? Oh isn't that interesting. Is it good?
Edward: I don't know…I've never tasted it. Oh yeah, I think this one says Gorilla Crunch. Yeah…that's it.
Rebecca: Maybe they made a mistake. (She refers to the name of the cereal.)
A: What else do you notice about this picture? Yes…Abigail?
Abilgail: That it's kind of blue.
A: It's kind of blue?
Abigail: Yeah, everything's kind of blue.
A: Why do you think it's kind of blue?
Abigail: Because maybe gorilla's like blue or something. (Laughter)
A: What do you think Rebecca?
Rebecca: Maybe that's because she's feeling a bit blue.
A: Maybe she's feeling a bit blue. What does it mean to feel blue?
Rebecca: Like she's really sad and stuff.
A: So maybe the kitchen is blue because she's sad?
Rebecca: Yeah.

In this excerpt my comments and questions served to slow down the reading and focused the children's attention on details in the story and illustrations. At times my comments facilitated turn taking, providing clarity for the audio-recording, served to

clarify a child's thoughts, or prompted a child to extend his/her thinking. For example, in the excerpt above Edward is discussing the cereal the girl is eating. My first comment to him is a reiteration that elicits further conversation from him. Edward then makes an autobiographical connection, stating, "My brother does." I asked him to clarify by asking the probing question, "Your brother does what?" Edward then articulated both an autobiographical and an intertextual connection by stating, "He has the same cereal. He loves gorilla." I then asked, "With gorillas on it? What kind of cereal is that?" Edward continued with an intertextual statement saying, "Uhm…it's called Gorilla Munch." This example reveals how my conversation elicited further prompting for Edward to more fully explain his thoughts. I expand further on my role in questioning and commenting during the children's conversations in Chapter 4.

Personal Visual Arts Responses

As described previously, the children were encouraged to respond to each picturebook by creating a personal drawing that reflected their understanding of the characters in the story. The opportunity to draw provided the children an additional way to respond to the picturebooks that may have not been captured through their oral discussions. The only direction I gave at the beginning of the visual arts sessions was that they must have a character in their drawing, and that character could be themselves or someone they knew. In addition to having the students respond through art each child was interviewed immediately after each drawing was finished. I audio-taped these interviews for later transcription and analysis. I then examined each of the 13 participants' drawings alongside their interview data. The interviews helped me to gain

insight into each child's construction of understanding about the characters in the picturebooks.

Originally, I considered developing a new coding scheme to analyze these interviews, but with much deliberation I thought it would be advantageous to use the same coding scheme I used in analyzing their small-group interactive read-aloud sessions. I used the same coding scheme throughout to enhance clarity so that I would be comparing each child's individual responses in the group with his/her responses during the individual interviews about the visual arts responses. I found that using one categorization scheme enabled the comparison of two sets of data. I chose to examine my research data from both a macroscopic and a microscopic perspective to provide the richest view of the emerging patterns this way, which is at the heart of qualitative case study research design. To review, themes that were identified in the children's interviews about their drawings and which related back to my central research questions and analysis of the small-group transcripts included the following: (a) statements about characters that included a character's actions or appearance; (b) statements about a character's thoughts or feelings (c) statements or observations about the actions, events, or picture details in the story (I classified these as labeling statements); (d) intertextual references to another book, movie, game or television program; (e) autobiographical references, and; (f) other conversational units that did not fit the categories such as asking a question, saying "I don't know" or performative responses such as singing and laughter. I then examined the findings of the data in relation to my research questions.

To summarize, this section described the methods I used to prepare the students for the study of Anthony Browne's picturebooks, the methods used to gather data during

the study and the analysis used in understanding the data. For three of the guiding research questions of my study I looked at the unit of the whole group of participants from a macroscopic perspective in order to determine the children's focus. This perspective was used to answer the questions (a) what do young children discuss about characters within selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne, (b) do children make intertextual connections between characters, illustrations, or events in Browne's picturebooks and other texts they have read, and if so, what is the nature of these connections, and, (c) do young children make autobiographical connections between their own lives and the characters in selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne, as revealed through visual arts and oral responses, and if so, what is the nature of these responses. I looked at the unit of the individual as a micro-analysis to analyze the final research question (d) what does young children's artwork and their discussion about their art reveal about their understanding of characters. I then compared individual student comments with what these same 13 students said in small-group interactive read-alouds to see if their conversations revealed similarities or differences when they moved to individual interviews. While I examined all of the data in this manner, I also focused on three individual students for my data analysis in Chapter 4. I chose three children who represented a range of reading abilities according to the British Columbia Ministry of Education Performance Standards in Reading for Grade 1 (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006). The students' reading abilities were communicated to me by the classroom teacher.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Ensuring trustworthiness in research is the process by which investigators use multiple sources of data to enhance the validity of the information in qualitative research. Yin (1994) noted three principles to enhance the validity of the information in case studies. He recommended that researchers use multiple sources of evidence, create a systematic and organized case study database, and maintain a chain of evidence, whereby a reader of the study could follow the steps that lead backwards and forwards from the initial research questions to the conclusions. According to Merriam (1988) the following six basic strategies can enhance trustworthiness of a study, including: triangulation, member checks, long-term or repeated observation of the same phenomenon, peer examination, participatory involvement in all aspects of the study, and checks on researcher bias. Researchers may use "multiple methods to collect data about the same phenomenon in order to enhance the soundness of their findings – a process called triangulation" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005, p. 312). Merriam (1988) noted that trustworthiness "is enhanced by the investigator explaining the assumptions and theory underlying the study, by triangulating data, and by leaving an audit trail, that [describes] in detail how the study was conducted and how the findings were derived from the data" (p. 183).

A number of steps were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of my study. To increase the credibility and confirmability of the study, and to increase public disclosure of the data, I collected multiple sources of data, including the following: (a) transcripts of audio-recordings of the children's oral responses to the five Anthony Browne books; (b) drawing artifacts from each child in response to each picturebook after it had been read to

each small group; (c) a reflexive journal that contained my thoughts, feelings, ideas and questions about the study as it progressed; and, (d) field notes of my observations of the children's behaviours during the readings.

An audit trail (Merriam, 1988) assisted in maintaining the trustworthiness of the study. During the study, I kept a reflexive journal and noted and described the research context, processes and questions involved. I kept these contexts, processes and any questions I might have asked the children as consistent as possible between groups. As described earlier in this chapter, two colleagues with graduate degrees performed inter-rater reliability checks to confirm my classifications of the students' conversational turns during their small-group interactive read-alouds and during the individual interviews. I believe these steps worked to maintain the trustworthiness of the study and to lend confirmability to the data.

Strengths and Limitations

Although my research had some limitations, it had two main strengths. First, the children were introduced to the author Anthony Browne and several exclaimed how much they liked his artwork and stories. This immersion in an author/illustrator study was the first experience of this kind for these children, and they were delighted in finding the small covert details characteristic of Anthony Browne's illustrations. The children were also enthusiastic about participating in the small-group read-alouds and this eagerness affected their esteem for Anthony Browne's work and for picturebooks in general. Many of the children commented to me that they were disappointed that they could not continue studying picturebooks with me when the study was finished. Although it is beyond the

scope of my research, I believe that this experience enhanced their interest in reading other literature.

A second strength of the research design lay in the opportunities the children had to engage in small group read-alouds with their peers. The children's comments throughout the study revealed that they were comfortable in sharing their personal insights and feelings about the literature and their eager engagement revealed to me that they were comfortable in the research context. The children's rich and varied insights in response to authentic works of literature led me to believe that this experience was a valuable learning opportunity for these young children. As is discussed in Chapter 4, the children's responses revealed how they grew in their understanding of characters and of each other and in the greater context of the world in which they live.

A third strength in the study was my position as a teacher/researcher. I believe my experience in facilitating discussions among young children and my familiar presence in the school where I conducted the research provided a level of comfort to the children and presented a unique opportunity for me to study the children's oral and visual arts responses. While I feel that being a teacher/researcher was a strength, my position also presented some limitations. Being a teacher/researcher involves a delicate balance of maintaining one's own distance to allow for the spontaneous flow of student-led discussion and still providing adequate prompts, feedback and questions to stimulate the conversation. I was concerned throughout the study about whether I had achieved this delicate balance between being a participant and an observer in the research. An example of my difficulty in maintaining this balance became evident as I transcribed the interactive small-group read-alouds. I found that I was frequently prompting or calling on

students to respond. I tried to keep my thoughts to myself, but found myself frequently reiterating or asking for clarification. I was also concerned that some students did not participate as much and these reticent students preferred to have two or three other children in the group to dominate the conversation.

Another limitation relates to the small number of research participants. While I had hoped that all 21 students in the classroom would participate in the research, only 13 of the students consented to participate. This small sample size meant that I could not include all of the drawings and interviews and that according to the requirements of my university ethics approval, I had to summarize comments made during group interviews. This limitation did not allow for the richness of some of the conversations to be documented and reported in the thesis. The findings are therefore limited to the 13 participants.

A third limitation concerns my use of an audio-recording device and field notes as sources of data collection. While the combination of field notes and audio-recordings was a strength and worked well because these methods allowed me to capture both the non-verbal and verbal responses of the children, I was concerned with the possibility that I had missed something during the process, as I was reading and interacting with the children while I was making notes in my book. I was also concerned that I was not always able to make notes in my journal immediately following each session, due to constraints in the school timetable. Making notes later in the day or evening may have meant that I missed something pertinent to the sessions that were conducted that day.

Chapter Summary

This qualitative research study took place over a 6-week period in May and June of 2009. The guiding research questions explored (a) young children's discussion about characters within selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne; (b) young children's intertextual connections between characters, illustrations, or events in Browne's picturebooks and other texts they have read; (c) young children's understanding of characters as revealed by their discussion about their art, and; (d) young children's autobiographical connections between their own lives and the characters in selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne. Because the students had little experience in small-group interactive read-alouds, one picturebook was read to the whole class of 21 students where they were invited to participate and comment on aspects of the book. Additionally, students received instruction in visual literacy terminology such as color, line and point of view in this initial whole group session. Five picturebooks by Anthony Browne were explored during the study, with one book introduced each week in the four small groups. I led each small-group interactive read-aloud and the children were prompted with minimal direction to question the text, notice details in the illustrations and comment on the physical and emotional aspects of the characters. The children drew a response to each picturebook after it was read and each child was individually interviewed about his/her drawing.

Data collection included transcripts of the children's small-group interactive read-aloud audio-recordings, the children's personal visual arts responses, transcriptions of personal interviews about the children's visual arts responses, field notes, and my reflexive journal that included my thoughts, questions and feelings as the research

progressed. These multiple sources of data were analyzed qualitatively to determine emerging patterns in the types of conversation, and quantitatively with respect to the amount of conversation of each category. Chapter 4 describes the findings from this inquiry that pertain to 13 children's oral responses. Chapter 5 presents the findings from this inquiry that pertain to three of the children's oral responses during individual interviews about their visual art responses.

CHAPTER 4

THE CHILDREN'S TALK IN SMALL GROUPS

> "A specific reader and a specific text at a specific time
> and place: change any of these, and there occurs a
> different circuit, a different event" (Rosenblatt, 1994, p. 14).

In this chapter I present the findings from the small group read-aloud sessions of five Anthony Browne picturebooks. A description of the particular nature of the picturebooks used for the study is followed by an overview of the students in each of the four groups. I then present the data on the total number of conversation turns generated during each group read-aloud. Subsequently, I discuss the data on the types and amounts of conversation statements made by the students during each read-aloud event. As described in Chapter 3, analysis of the data revealed that the students made six types of conversation statements: labeling statements; character description statements; character feeling statements; autobiographical statements; intertextual statements, and; other statements. In this section I also present and discuss excerpts of conversations that ensued during the read-alouds.

In Chapter 3 I described how analyzing the data for my study proceeded through a book by book analysis of the Grade 1 students' conversations about the characters and events in the selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne. The 20 transcriptions of the conversations with the young children were categorized into patterns during the analysis of the data. I created one table for each book that showed the types of statements made by the students (see Appendix H). As described above, the analysis revealed five categories of talk, with a sixth category comprising questions or statements made by the students

that were either off topic, a simple agreement or disagreement with another student or myself without further conversation, or a student question. I then analyzed each category of talk separately by compiling the data from each group of 4 to 6 students over the sequence of the five picturebooks. I also examined my own comments and questions to convey how I, as the participant/researcher, influenced the dialogue. As was discussed in Chapter 3, the conversational excerpts of my own comments and questions mainly served to slow the reading down, elicit more conversation, or focus the children's thoughts on the events of the story.

A Synopsis of the Five Picturebooks

Each of the picturebooks used for my study involve one or more protagonists who experience a series of events that results in a character change. Anthony Browne's skills in crafting his picturebooks required the students to glean information from both the text and the illustrations in order to fully understand the stories. Below, the picturebooks are described in the order I presented them to the students.

The Tunnel is about a brother and a sister who often fight with one another. During the picturebook the siblings discover a magical land where they battle with fear of the unknown. The brother becomes frozen like a statue and must rely on his sister to bring him back to life. When the two children complete their adventure they discover a newfound trust for one another.

Willy the Wimp features the chimpanzee Willy, who wants to be bigger and stronger like the other gorilla characters in the picturebook. Through a number of humorous and ridiculous adventures, Willy accomplishes his change into a large gorilla. Near the end of the story Willy successfully deals with a confrontation involving a gang

of bullies. He learns that on the inside he has not really changed at all and in the end returns to his normal self.

The picturebook *Gorilla* features a young girl and her father. The night before her birthday the young girl dreams of going to the zoo to see the real gorillas and she embarks on an adventure with her toy gorilla, who has magically become a real gorilla. The two have a delightful evening together and when the girl wakes up the morning of her birthday her father offers to take her to the zoo, thus fulfilling a long-awaited wish.

Zoo is about a family who embarks on an adventure to the zoo. The story is told through the eyes of the youngest boy. During the picturebook the character of the father is highlighted and contrasted with the more mature young son. Scenes of animal captivity are also featured in the picturebook.

Piggybook features a mother, a father and their two sons. The father and sons became increasingly messy in the picturebook and the mother decides to leave the family for a short while. The males in the family transform into pigs, and many pig-like details are included in the illustrations of the story. In the end the mother returns to the family and she experiences a role-reversal by taking on non-traditional tasks.

A Synopsis of the Four Groups

The classroom teacher whom I worked with during the research organized the students into groups according to the classroom tasks she had planned for the children. Although no emphasis was placed into organizing the students into groups based on their reading achievement, the reading achievement of the students was communicated to me by the classroom teacher prior to the start of the study. Below I present a synopsis of the four groups and their total number of conversation turns during each group read-aloud.

The Red Group

The Red Group, which was comprised of 3 girls and 2 boys, contained 3 readers who were minimally meeting expectations in reading, 1 reader who was meeting expectations in reading and 1 reader who was exceeding expectations in reading according to the British Columbia Ministry of Education Performance Standards for Reading (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2009). All 3 students who were minimally meeting expectations in reading were attending Reading Recovery lessons during the time of the study. Two of these readers were more reticent during the read-alouds and preferred to allow the other 3 group members to talk the majority of the time. The 3 highly verbal students, and particularly the reader who was exceeding expectations in reading, kept the conversation going at a lively pace. Table 2 presents an overview of the total conversation turns for each of the five read-alouds conducted with the Red Group.

Table 2

Total Number Conversation Turns and Number of Students Per Read-aloud for the Red Group

	The Tunnel	*Willy the Wimp*	*Gorilla*	*Zoo*	*Piggybook*
Number of Students	5	5	5	4	5
Total Conversation Turns	109	127	211	99	199

During the five read-alouds the students in the Red Group made a total of 745 conversation turns. The smaller number of conversation turns for *Zoo* may be accounted

for by the absence of one highly verbal student during this read-aloud. The number of conversation turns for *The Tunnel* may be due to the fact that this book was used for the first small group read-aloud session and the students were being introduced to the interactive nature of the read-aloud format. It is evident from Table 2 that the students were highly engaged with *Gorilla* and *Piggybook*. Although the students' enjoyment of *Willy the Wimp* was most evident, they did not comment as frequently on this book as *Gorilla* and *Piggybook*. Upon looking back over my transcripts of the Red Group's reading of *Willy the Wimp* I discovered that one generally verbal student was unusually quiet that day and in an uncooperative mood. I believe his change in mood affected the amount of conversation for this group during this read-aloud.

The Blue Group

Of the 2 girls and 3 boys in the Blue Group, the teacher identified 2 children as minimally meeting expectations in reading, 2 children as meeting expectations in reading and 1 child as exceeding expectations in reading according to the British Columbia Ministry of Education Performance Standard in Reading (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2009). The readers who were minimally meeting expectations in reading were attending a small group format of intensive reading lessons during the time of the study in addition to the guided reading lessons conducted in their classroom. These 2 readers were both highly engaged during the discussions. The 2 readers who were meeting expectations in reading were more reticent during the read-alouds. The reader in the group who was exceeding expectations in reading was highly verbal and enjoyed making physical gestures to punctuate his conversation statements. Table 3 presents an overview

of the total number of conversation turns for each of the five read-alouds conducted with the Blue Group.

Table 3

Total Number Conversation Turns and Number of Students Per Read-aloud for the Blue Group

	The Tunnel	*Willy the Wimp*	*Gorilla*	*Zoo*	*Piggybook*
Number of Students	4	5	5	5	5
Total Conversation	121	175	177	152	116

Overall, the Blue Group made a total of 741 conversation turns during the read-aloud sessions. The smaller number of conversation turns for *The Tunnel* was likely due to the introduction of the small group format during this first read-aloud. Although 1 student was absent for the read-aloud of *The Tunnel*, I do not believe this student's absence affected the number of conversation turns to a large degree because this student was frequently silent during the four other read-alouds. The smaller amount of conversation turns for *Piggybook* was likely due to the students being less engaged with this picturebook than the other books. The numerous comments about the illustrations and text in *Willy the Wimp*, *Gorilla* and *Zoo* revealed the students' enjoyment of these picturebooks.

The Yellow Group

The Yellow Group was comprised of 3 girls and 2 boys: 3 readers who were minimally meeting expectations in reading, 1 reader who was meeting expectations in reading and 1 reader who was exceeding expectations in reading according to the British

Columbia Ministry of Education Performance Standards for Reading in Grade 1 (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2009). Two of the 3 readers who were minimally meeting expectations in reading were attending Reading Recovery lessons during the time of the study. The third reader, who was minimally meeting expectations in reading, attended small group intensive reading lessons in addition to the guided reading groups conducted by his classroom teacher. Of these 3 readers, 2 were more reticent during the read-alouds and seemed to prefer that the other 3 students talk the majority of the time. These 3 students were highly verbal and were actively engaged with the picturebooks. Table 4 presents an overview of the total number of conversation turns for each of the five read-alouds sessions conducted with the Yellow Group.

Table 4

Total Number Conversation Turns and Number of Students Per Read-aloud for the Yellow Group

	The Tunnel	*Willy the Wimp*	*Gorilla*	*Zoo*	*Piggybook*
Number of Students	5	5	5	4	4
Total Conversation Turns	120	89	126	107	104

During the five read-alouds the students in the Yellow Group made a total of 546 conversation turns, which was considerably less than the read-alouds for the other 3 groups. I believe this finding may have been due to the fact that 2 of the 5 children in this group were also English-as-a-second-language students and although they were verbal, they were not as quick to offer responses as most of the students in the other groups due

to some difficulties with the English language. The smaller number of conversation turns for *Willy the Wimp* was likely due to the students being less engaged with this picturebook than the other four read-aloud selections. One student was absent for each of the read-aloud sessions of *Zoo* and *Piggybook*. I believe that the student absence for *Zoo* may have affected the total number of conversation turns for this read-aloud as the absent student made frequent comments during the other four read-alouds. However, I do not believe that the absent student for the read-aloud of *Piggybook* affected the total number of conversation turns as this particular student was usually silent during most of the interactive read-aloud sessions. The slightly larger amount of conversation turns for this group for *The Tunnel* and *Gorilla* revealed more student engagement with these picturebooks than with the other three selections.

The Green Group

The Green Group was comprised of 4 girls and 2 boys. Two of the readers were minimally meeting expectations in reading, 1 reader was meeting expectations in reading and 3 readers were exceeding expectations in reading according to the British Columbia Ministry of Education Performance Standards for Reading in Grade 1 (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2009). The 2 readers who were minimally meeting expectations in reading were attending a small group format of intensive reading lessons during the time of this study in addition to the guided reading lessons conducted in their classroom. Four of the 6 students were highly engaged with the picturebooks and commented frequently on the text and illustrations. One reader who was exceeding expectations in reading particularly made many insightful comments during the read-alouds. Table 5 presents an

overview of the total conversation turns for each of the five read-alouds conducted with the Green Group.

Table 5

Total Number Conversation Turns and Number of Students Per Read-aloud for the Green Group

	The Tunnel	*Willy the Wimp*	*Gorilla*	*Zoo*	*Piggybook*
Number of Students	6	5	5	6	6
Total Conversation Turns	107	156	181	194	193

During the five read-aloud sessions the students in the Green Group made a total of 831 conversation turns, which was appreciably more when compared to the total number of conversation turns for the other 3 groups and may have been due to the extra group member during most of the read-alouds. The Green Group's smaller number of conversation turns for *The Tunnel* may be due to the fact that this book was used for the first small group read-aloud session and the students were being introduced to the interactive nature of the read-aloud format. Although 1 student was absent for the read-aloud sessions of *Willy the Wimp* and *Gorilla*, I do not believe the student absences contributed to the number of conversation turns for these two books; the particular students who were absent commented infrequently during the group setting. The overall number of student conversation turns for *Gorilla*, *Zoo* and *Piggybook*, which were similar, reflected the children's engagement with these picturebooks.

Each small group was unique in the number of conversation turns for each book and in how they responded to the picturebook selections. Data analysis revealed that all four groups were highly engaged with *Gorilla*, which may have been due to the order I chose to present the books, as *Willy the Wimp*, which was presented prior to *Gorilla,* was also about gorillas and a chimpanzee. Overall, the data revealed that the students made the fewest comments about *The Tunnel*, which may have been due to the fact that this book was presented first and the children were becoming accustomed to the interactive nature of the small group read-alouds.

Types and Frequency of Statements During the Small Group Read-aloud Sessions

As discussed in Chapter 3, analysis of the 20 transcripts of the small group read-aloud sessions revealed that the students made labeling statements, character description statements, character feeling statements, autobiographical statements, intertextual statements, and other statements. Other statements were characterized as student statements that were off topic (such as "When is it lunchtime?"), a simple agreement or disagreement with no explanation, or asking a question. Below I present the statements in order from the category with the largest number of statements to the least, with the exception of the category of other statements, which is discussed last even though it was the third most frequently occurring type of statement. As explained previously, I analyzed the unit of the conversational turn, sometimes identifying more than one categorical type of talk per conversation turn. In Tables 6-11 in the following sections, "n" represents the amount of type of talk in proportion to the overall number of statements per read aloud session. A percentage, representing the proportion of each type of statement for each read-aloud was also calculated, and enabled the comparison of the amounts of talk in

each section. Appendix H Tables 15-19 provide further information about the amount and percentages of each type of talk from each group's transcript for each picturebook.

Labeling Talk

To review, labeling statements were those where a student commented on the picture details and labeled items without any reference to a character in particular. The children were not asked to label items in the illustrations so these types of comments were unsolicited. As is evident by Tables 16-20 in Appendix H, analysis of the 20 transcripts revealed that labeling was the category with the greatest number of statements for the read-alouds for each group. Table 6 provides an overview of the student labeling talk that occurred during the small group interactive read-alouds of the five picturebooks.

Table 6

Labeling Statements During the Five Read-alouds

	Red Group		*Blue Group*		*Yellow Group*		*Green Group*		*Average*
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*%*
The Tunnel	36/109	33.0	40/121	33.1	37/120	30.8	39/107	36.4	33.3
Willy the Wimp	28/127	22.0	30/175	17.1	9/89	10.1	20/156	12.8	15.5
Gorilla	64/211	30.3	67/177	37.8	54/126	42.9	43/181	23.8	33.7
Zoo	47/99	47.5	53/152	34.9	56/107	52.3	72/194	37.1	43.0
Piggybook	72/199	36.2	61/116	52.6	42/104	40.4	90/193	46.6	44.0
Total Conversation Turns and Average Percentage	247/745	33.2	251/741	33.9	198/546	36.3	264/831	31.2	33.9

Table 6 reveals that although the overall number of labeling statements varied for each group and for each book, the average percentage of labeling statements was similar for all four groups over the five read-alouds accounting for approximately one-third of overall conversation turns. The Yellow Group, which had the lowest number of total conversation turns during the five read-alouds, had the highest percentage of labeling statements (36.3%).

The small group read-alouds of *Piggybook* generated the greatest average percentage of labeling statements by the students (44.0%). Analysis of the Blue Group's conversation for this read-aloud revealed that over one-half of their statements (i.e. 52.6%) were labeling. The Blue Group was particularly enamored by the illustrations in *Piggybook* and delighted in labeling the items they saw in the picturebook. Nearly one-half of the Green Group's overall comments (46.6%) were labeling statements. However, this group was comprised of 6 students and the latter (compared to the other groups that had either 4 or 5 members) may have accounted for the greater net number of labeling statements. Labeling statements accounted for over one-third (40.4%) of the total number of conversation turns of the Yellow Group. Although data analysis revealed similarity between the Green Group and the Red Group with respect to their overall number of conversation turns for the *Piggybook*, these two groups differed in their percentage of labeling statements (i.e., 46.6% and 36.2% respectively).

In *Piggybook* Anthony Browne drew many small details with figures of pigs embedded in the pictures and the children commented frequently on such items in the illustrations. An example of this type of labeling talk is provided below in a discussion excerpt from the Green Group. My comments are indicated by the letter A.

A: (reading) *She was nowhere to be found. On the mantelpiece was an envelope. Mr. Piggott opened it. Inside was a piece of paper. "You are pigs," it said.*
Edward: Uhm … there's pig walls instead of flowers and there's also a pig vase and a pig scene and pigs all over here and pigs on the wall.
All: (much boisterous discussion … inaudible)
Camila: Maybe it's a piggy house.
A: Even on the fireplace … yeah.
Edward: I also saw a pig hand and there's a pig pen.

In this excerpt I began by reading the text where Mrs. Piggott has left a note on the mantelpiece. The students immediately focused their attention on the illustration of this double-page spread and largely ignored the unfolding drama presented by the text. The students commented on the illustrations and made frequent remarks that referred to pigs. At one point the exchange became so boisterous that I was unable to hear or respond to their comments or transcribe this section from the recording. The students were excited about all the pigs they saw in the illustrations and each student was spurred on by previous comments about pigs in the artwork. As is evident from this passage, most of the statements were labeling statements without any particular reference to a character.

Table 6 reveals that the small group read-aloud sessions of *Zoo* generated an almost identical percentage of labeling statements (43.0%) as the read-alouds of *Piggybook*. The four students in the Yellow Group generated the highest percentage of labeling statements with over one-half of all their statements being in this category (i.e. 52.3%). Nearly one-half of the Red Group's overall statements (47.5%) were also labeling statements. Although the Green Group with 6 students had the highest net amount of labeling statements, the latter accounted for approximately one-third (37.1%) of their total conversation turns. Data analysis of the Blue Group's conversation also revealed that approximately one-third (34.9%) of their overall statements were

labeling.The high number of labeling statements for all groups during the read-aloud of *Zoo* was likely due to the anthropomorphic illustrations in the story. The students made many remarks that people looked like animals, such as in the Red Group's conversation excerpt below.

A:	(reading) *Last Sunday we all went to the zoo. Me and my brother were really excited. But there were masses of cars on the road and it took ages to get there.*
Wayne:	It looks like a gorilla driving the truck.
Oliver:	No. I think that's like a gorilla man.
Wayne:	Look at the gorilla man driving the truck.
Oliver:	With bananas.
A:	And he's saying "Grrrr …" (reading) *After a while Harry and I got …"* (students interject with more comments)
Oliver:	Oh … look at the snail.
Wayne:	And look here … there's a lion.
A:	Oh … you're noticing lots of things in the pictures.
Oliver:	It looks like a wolf kind of.
Wayne:	And this girl has … this girl has frog feet.
A:	Oh … the girl has frog feet … What do you notice Elizabeth? Nice and loud …
Elizabeth:	Well this man has horns.
A:	The man in the booth has horns.
Wayne:	And I see a man with a beak … with a beak.

In this excerpt Wayne and Oliver made several labeling statements as they debated the visual of the truck driver. I tried to begin the reading again after I commented that the illustration reveals the speech balloon of him saying "Grrrr …," but Oliver and Wayne continued labeling items in the illustration. The students largely ignored the text in this passage, and they made no comments about the traffic jam or the main characters in the car. In this passage the students' labeling comments were unsolicited by myself, except for Elizabeth's, who I encouraged as she was frequently quiet and had been patiently waiting with her hand up. I found it challenging to continue reading the story as the students delighted in speaking about the details within the illustrations in *Zoo.*

The small group read-alouds of *Gorilla* generated the third largest percentage of labeling statements (33.7%). Although the Yellow Group had the lowest number of conversational turns for this picturebook, data analysis revealed that this group had the greatest percentage of labeling statements (42.9%). Over one-third (37.8%) of the Blue Group's and nearly one-third (30.3%) of the Red Group's overall conversational turns for *Gorilla* were labeling statements. The Green Group had the lowest percentage of labeling statements for *Gorilla* with less than one-quarter of their conversational turns (23.8%) being categorized as such. As each group was comprised of 5 students during the read-alouds of *Gorilla*, the different number of labeling statements may have been due to the students' varying engagement with the story.

As is evident in Table 6, the four small group interactive read-alouds of *The Tunnel* generated approximately the same overall average of labeling statements as *Gorilla*. The Green Group and the Red Group had similar total conversational turns for this picturebook, as did the Blue Group and the Yellow Group. Data analysis revealed that approximately one-third of each group's conversational turns about *The Tunnel* were comprised of labeling statements (36.4%, 33.1%, 33.0% and 30.8% respectively). The similar percentages of labeling statements cannot be due to the varying number of students in each of the groups, but may be due to the storyline of *The Tunnel* itself, which features two protagonists, and much of the conversation of each group of Grade 1 children focused on the events of the characters and the storyline as opposed to focusing on labeling items in the illustrations. As discussed in the following sections, for this set of read-alouds the students' statements were generally linked to character description statements or various other types of statements.

The smallest percentage of labeling statements (average 15.5%) occurred during the small group read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp*. Approximately one-quarter of the Red Group's total conversational turns were labeling statements (22.0%). For the Blue Group, 17.1% of their total conversational turns were analyzed as labeling statements. Data analysis revealed that the percentage of labeling statements articulated by the Green Group and the Yellow Group were similar (12.8% and 10.1% respectively). The lesser amount of labeling statements for the four read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp* may have been due to the fact that this picturebook contains a single well-developed protagonist who progresses through a sequence of transformations as the story develops, often with humorous and exaggerated drawings accompanying the text, and while the students did label items in the illustrations, they were often associated with the character of Willy and were categorized under character description statements.

Throughout the small group read-alouds the students labeled many items in the illustrations. The students generated the highest overall percentage of labeling statements during the read-alouds of *Piggybook* and *Zoo*: over two-fifths of overall conversation turns were labeling for these books. Approximately one-third of all statements were labeling during the read-alouds of *Gorilla* and *The Tunnel*. During the read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp* the students generated the fewest labeling statements.

Character Description Talk

To review, statements about characters were descriptive statements about a character's actions, such as, "The Dad and the two brothers are getting a piggyback ride from the Mom," or "The Dad is wearing a blue shirt," or predictions about what a character might do. Character description statements always involved one or more of the

protagonists in the picturebook and were thus categorized as differing from labeling statements or statements about a character's thoughts or feelings. Table 7 compares the number of character description statements made by each group over the sequence of the five picturebooks.

Table 7

Character Description Statements During the Five Read-alouds

	Red Group		*Blue Group*		*Yellow Group*		*Green Group*		*Average*
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*%*
The Tunnel	20/109	18.3	26/121	21.5	32/120	26.7	16/107	15.0	20.4
Willy the Wimp	50/127	39.4	93/175	53.1	37/89	41.6	56/156	35.9	42.5
Gorilla	54/211	25.6	38/177	21.5	20/126	15.9	43/181	23.8	21.7
Zoo	16/99	16.2	32/152	21.1	7/107	6.5	34/194	17.5	15.3
Piggybook	54/199	27.1	18/116	15.5	25/104	24.0	31/193	16.1	20.7
Total Conversation Turns and Average Percentage	194/745	26.0	207/741	27.9	121/546	22.2	180/831	21.7	24.1

The average percentage of character description statements was somewhat similar for all groups over the five read-alouds, ranging from 21.7% to 27.9% of all the analyzed statements. However, Table 7 reveals many differences among the groups when the number of character description statements for each picturebook is examined.

The picturebook readings of *Willy the Wimp* generated the largest average amount of character description statements by the students, accounting for an average of 42.5% of all statements made during the read-alouds. The 5 students in the Blue Group were

particularly verbal during this read-aloud, with over one-half of all of their statements made about character description (53.1%). The Yellow Group and the Red Group were similar as approximately two-fifths of their conversation turns were character description statements (41.6% and 39.4% respectively). Over one-third (35.9%) of the Green Group's statements during the read aloud of *Willy the Wimp* were character description statements. The students in all of the groups were fascinated with the protagonist Willy and made many comments about his appearance, which were categorized as character description statements. The high percentage of character description statements for the read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp* were likely due to the fact that this picturebook contained a single protagonist and the storyline focused on the character Willy and his dynamic changes. In the excerpt below the students in the Blue Group were observing the front and back cover of the picturebook and making predictions about what might happen in the story.

A:	What do you think is going to happen in this story? Look at the cover. Patrick?
Patrick:	He's going to get brain damage… because he's walking.
A:	What do you think?
Student:	(comments that she thinks he's going to go jogging).
A:	So you think he's going to go jogging. Brian?
Brian:	He's going to wrestle because it looks like uhmm these gloves look like wrestling and it looks like he's kind of scared.
A:	Ooo… Why do you think he looks scared?
Brian:	Because his eyes are like that and I think there's a guy gonna push him.
A:	Oh my goodness. Ooo… Let's find out. Look at the back cover. Look at the back (student laughter). What's going on here? What's going on Brian?
Brian:	Uhmm … He's lifting weights and uhmm a big thing that I don't know what it's called.
David:	Oh I know.
A:	What do you know?

David:	Uhmm… Willy, he's doing … Willy is a strong one and he goes like this (David makes strong arms) strong … And he does this and he … Lifts a long time (David motions weight lifting).
A:	So Willy lifts it up to his head and he can do it for a long time. Yes, Patrick … Oh, Brian, go ahead.
Brian:	Uhmm that because he's getting his fight and he wants to be stronger… And he wants to be way bigger than the guy that he wants to fight.
A:	What do you think Patrick?
Patrick:	That he has really big ears. One really big ear and one tiny ear.

As evident by the transcript excerpt, the students were immediately engrossed with the protagonist Willy. The comments were largely about Willy's appearance and actions, with one character feeling statement made by Brian that he thought Willy looked scared. Brian and David continued this line of character description statements with an observation that Willy was a "strong one" and David embellished his talk with strong arm motions about what he thought Willy's actions might be like. This preliminary opening to the story for each group set the stage for much of the descriptive talk about Willy and may have accounted for the greater percentage of character description statements.

For *Gorilla*, the four interactive read-aloud sessions with 5 students per group generated an average of 21.7% character description statements. Nearly one-quarter of the conversation turns of the Red Group and Green Group were of this type (25.6% and 23.8% respectively). For the Blue Group, approximately one-fifth of their statements were character description comments (21.5%). The Yellow Group made the fewest character description statements (15.9%) when discussing *Gorilla*. The variety in the percentage of character description statements by the four groups revealed a greater engagement by some groups when describing the anthropomorphic protagonist featured in the picturebook. An excerpt highlighting character description statements from the Red Group follows.

A:	Let's talk about the story. Why do you think this father is working all the time?
Wayne:	Because he was… he's trying to make money.
A:	Yeah.
Wayne:	And get money from the government.
Oliver:	I think he has to keep getting money so he… so they could still live in that house or any house.
A:	So you think he has to get money so he can keep living in that house?
Wayne:	No … they're renting the house, but they're renting an apartment building.
A:	Do you think so? So I get that his work must be pretty important to him.
Student:	(agrees with me).
A:	Yeah.
Oliver:	Let's turn the page.
A:	Ok… turn the page. (reading) *But the next day he was always too busy. Not now, maybe at the weekend, he would say. But at the weekend he was always too tired. They never did anything together.* Oh my goodness. What do you think about that?
Ainsley:	She doesn't even have a bed! She doesn't even have a bed.
A:	What do you notice Ainsley?
Ainsley:	She has a TV but not a bed
A:	So how do you think she feels in that picture?
Ainsley:	Sad.

In this excerpt I began the conversation with an open-ended question about why the father in the story is working so much. Wayne and Oliver constructively built upon each other's understanding by using their background knowledge which resulted in four character description comments by the boys. I continued reading the story and again asked an open-ended question about the text I had just read. Ainsley replied in shock that the girl did not even have a bed. She largely ignored my question about the text and directed her attention to the illustration which showed the girl alone in the corner on the floor watching television with no other furniture apparent in the room. This character description comment was then followed by my question that elicited a feeling comment from Ainsley. This excerpt illustrates how the students freely made character description

statements even when the storyline or my questioning might have elicited a different type of response.

Data analysis revealed that the four groups made a similar number of character description statements about *Piggybook* as those that occurred during the read-alouds of *Gorilla.* Approximately one-quarter of the overall statements made by the Red Group and the Yellow Group were character description statements (27.1% and 24.0% respectively). For both the Green Group and the Blue Group, approximately one-sixth of their overall comments were character description statements (16.1% and 15.5% respectively). My analysis of the groups revealed that the Red and the Yellow Groups were highly engaged with *Piggybook* and commented with more overall statements during the read-aloud of this picturebook.

Table 7 reveals that the small group interactive read-alouds of *The Tunnel* also generated nearly the same percentage of character description statements as the read-alouds of *Piggybook* and *Gorilla* (i.e., 20.4%). Approximately one-quarter of the Yellow Group's total conversational turns were character description statements (26.7%). For the Blue Group, approximately one-fifth (21.5%) of their total conversational turns were character description statements. Data analysis revealed that less than one-fifth of all the statements analyzed for the Red Group and the Green Group were character description statements (18.3% and 15.0% respectively). During the read-alouds of *The Tunnel* the students made more labeling statements, which was the larger category (see Table 6).

The lowest percentage of character description statements occurred during the small group read-alouds of *Zoo*, which averaged 15.3% of all conversational turns. The Blue Group generated the greatest number of character description statements with

approximately one-fifth of all statements being of this type (21.1%). For the Green Group and the Red Group, approximately one-sixth of their total statements were categorized as character description (17.5% and 16.2% respectively). The Yellow Group generated the smallest percentage of character description statements (6.5%). As mentioned above, the Yellow Group was less verbal in nature when compared to the other three groups and on the day when I read aloud *Zoo*, the most verbal member of the group was absent. Data analysis revealed that the Blue and Green Groups were more highly engaged with this picturebook than the other two groups, evidenced by their overall conversational turns for the read-alouds of *Zoo.*

In summary of the five picturebooks selected, the read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp, Gorilla* and *Piggybook* generated the greatest amount of character description comments overall. The findings may be due to the fact that these three selections all feature anthropomorphic protagonists, while *The Tunnel* and *Zoo* do not.

Character Feeling Talk

The third greatest percentage of talk over the sequence of the five read-alouds per small group was character feeling talk. As described in Chapter 3, statements about a character's feelings were descriptive statements about a character's thoughts or feelings, such as, "She is scared," or "I think he must be mad." Character feeling statements always involved one or more of the protagonists in the picturebooks and were thus categorized as differing from labeling statements or descriptions about a character's actions or appearance. Table 8 compares the number of character feeling statements articulated by each group over the sequence of the five picturebooks.

Table 8

Character Feeling Statements During the Five Read-alouds

	Red Group		*Blue Group*		*Yellow Group*		*Green Group*		*Average*
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*%*
The Tunnel	1/109	0.9	6/121	5.0	20/120	16.7	7/107	6.5	7.3
Willy the Wimp	18/127	14.2	12/175	6.9	23/89	25.8	47/156	30.1	19.3
Gorilla	10/211	4.7	20/177	11.3	11/126	8.7	26/181	14.4	9.8
Zoo	9/99	9.1	15/152	9.9	13/107	12.1	23/194	11.9	10.8
Piggybook	11/199	5.5	12/116	10.3	13/104	12.5	10/193	5.2	8.4
Total Conversation Turns and Average Percentage	49/745	6.6	65/741	8.8	80/546	14.7	113/831	13.6	11.1

Data analysis revealed that the overall average percentage of character feeling statements for the group read-alouds of *The Tunnel*, *Piggybook*, *Gorilla,* and *Zoo* and *Piggybook* were similar (i.e., 7.3%, 8.4%, 9.8%, and 10.8% respectively). This similarity may be explained by the plot development in each of these picturebooks, as each features two or more protagonists who experience a character change as the drama unfolds. The students empathized with the characters in each of these picturebooks.

Table 8 also reveals that both the net amount of character feeling statements and percentages of statements varied over the five read-alouds by the groups. The Yellow Group and the Green Group were closely similar in the average percentage of character feeling statements (14.7% and 13.6% respectively). The average percentage of character feeling statements for the Blue Group and the Red Group were also similar (i.e., 8.8%

and 6.6% respectively). The range of character feeling statements over the five read-alouds by the groups may have been attributed to the empathetic nature of the students within each of the groups and how the conversation moved from topic to topic.

The small group read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp* generated the highest average percentage of character feeling statements (19.3%). Of the Green Group's overall conversational turns, nearly one-third were character feeling statements (30.1%), The high amount of character feeling statements by this group may be attributed to the greater net amount of statements by this group of students. Analysis of the Yellow Group's conversational turns revealed that approximately one-quarter of all statements were character feeling (25.8%). During the Red Group's discussion, 14.2% of the conversation turns were character feeling statements. Although the Blue Group had the most overall conversational turns for this picturebook, they generated the lowest percentage of character feeling statements of the four groups (6.9%). All the groups contained 5 students for this set of read-alouds, so the range of character feeling statements may be due to the group composition, the individual conversations of each group, and the picturebook itself, which features a single protagonist who tries with great difficulty to change himself. An excerpt from the Yellow Group's read-aloud of *Willy the Wimp* follows.

A:	(reading) *He went to aerobics classes where everybody danced to disco music. Willy felt a bit silly.*
	What do you think about Willy in that picture? What do you think Roger?
Roger:	Because uhmm … he has to copy the disco moves.
A:	Yeah … do you think he feels silly?
ALL:	Yeah.
A:	How do you know?
Roger:	We he could … he has to dance and then he feels embarrassed.
A:	It makes him feel embarrassed … so does he look embarrassed there?

Roger: Kind of …
A: How do you know that?
Roger: Well because of his face.

In this excerpt I opened the dialogue by asking the students what they thought about Willy in the illustration. After some further probing, Roger noted that Willy felt embarrassed because of the look on his face. I found that during the read-aloud sessions of this book I had to prompt the students for character feeling comments.

Data analysis of the read-alouds of *Zoo* revealed that the four groups were similar in the percentage of character feeling statements they generated during the read-aloud sessions, with an overall average of 10.8%. The Yellow Group of 4 students and the Green Group of 6 students generated the highest percentages of character feeling statements (12.1% and 11.9% respectively). The Blue Group and Red Group generated a nearly identical percentage of character feeling statements (9.9% and 9.1% respectively).

The analysis of the small group interactive read-alouds of *Gorilla* revealed a nearly identical average percentage of character feeling statements (9.8%) with that of *Zoo*. The Green Group generated the greatest percentage of character feeling statements (14.4%). Although the Blue Group produced nearly an identical number of total conversation turns as the Green Group, data analysis revealed that the Blue Group produced a lower percentage of character feeling comments (11.3%). The Yellow Group generated the third greatest percentage of statements of this type (8.7%). Although the most highly verbal group for this read-aloud was the Red Group (211 statements in total), only 10 of their statements (4.7%) were character feeling statements. An excerpt from the Blue Group's read-aloud of *Gorilla* follows.

A: (reading) *Hannah loved gorillas. She read books about gorillas. She watched gorillas on television, and she drew pictures of gorillas. But she had never seen a real gorilla. Her father didn't have time to take her to see one at the zoo. He didn't have time for anything.*
Patrick: He doesn't have time to read a paper.
A: What do you think about that?
David: He has time to look at a newspaper all day.
A: He does, doesn't he?
Brian: He doesn't love his girl.
A: He doesn't love his girl? Why do you think not Brian?
Brian: Because he's just wasting his time not doing anything for her, just reading the newspaper.

In this excerpt the students responded to both the text and the illustrations in Anthony Browne's picturebook *Gorilla.* Brian's character feeling comment about the father not loving his daughter was an insightful interpretation of the events and drama unfolding in the picturebook. Brian provided support for his opinion that the father did not love the daughter by exclaiming that the father was, "just wasting his time not doing anything for her."

The small group read-alouds of *Piggybook* generated a similar percentage of character feeling statements (8.4%) as *Gorilla* and *Zoo.* As is evident in Table 8, all four groups articulated a similar number of character feeling statements for *Piggybook*. The groups differed in the percentage of statements however, with the Blue Group and Yellow Group generating nearly twice the percentage of character feeling statements as the other two groups (12.5% and 10.3% respectively). The Red Group and Green Group were also approximately identical in the percentage of statements of this type (5.5% and 5.2% respectively). Analysis of the transcripts revealed that the Red Group and Green Group spoke nearly twice as frequently during the read-aloud as the other two groups. While this finding did not reflect in the percentage of character feeling statements, data

analysis revealed that the Green Group generated a higher frequency of other statements, while the Red Group generated twice as many autobiographical statements as the other groups. The students in the Red Group had a particularly interesting exchange about Anthony Browne's illustration of the mother performing household tasks. The following excerpt begins at the panel of illustrations that features the mother in sepia-tone shading.

A:	What do you think about the colors?
Andrea:	They're yellow.
A:	Yeah … why do you think he did it sort of yellow?
Andrea:	Maybe because it was like early. She had no time for work … so she went to work early. Like she was late for work … because she was doing too much work.
A:	Hmm … Wayne?
Wayne:	Ehh … Andrea? Can I talk to you for a sec? I know why the pictures are yellow.
A:	Why?
Wayne:	Because … because … she's sad.
A:	Because she's sad … really? Why do you think so?
Wayne:	Because yellow is a sad color.
A:	Oh … that's interesting.
Andrea:	Actually … blue is a sad color.
Wayne:	No … yellow.
Oliver:	Every time she's sad it's yellow.

In this excerpt the students seemed to link their background knowledge of visual elements such as colour to character feelings. During the read-alouds I posed this same question to the four groups: several students made comments about colour and the feelings of the mother in the story during this portion of the book.

Data analysis revealed an approximately overall equal average percentage of character feeling statements during the read-alouds of *The Tunnel* (7.3%) with the read-alouds of *Piggybook* and *Gorilla.* As is evident in Table 8, the Yellow Group generated the greatest percentage of character feeling statements (16.7%). The Green and the Blue Groups were similar in their percentages of character feeling statements (6.5% and 5.0%

respectively). In the Red Group only one student made a character feeling comment during the read-aloud session, which may be due to the fact that this picturebook was the first group read-aloud of the study and I did not prompt the group for character feeling comments as I did in later group sessions. An excerpt from the Green Group's reading of *The Tunnel* follows.

Camila:	I think the boy was sitting and his mask is the same color as the bed and he crept into her room and she opened her eyes … and she saw him and she screamed, but actually the only thing that they don't show you where she's screaming.
A:	They don't show you where she's screaming, but you think she's screaming. Yes, Abigail?
Abigail:	Uhmm, I think she's scared of this thing.
A:	Of her red coat?
Abigail:	Yes, because it looks like a head and a hand and feet.
A:	It looks like a head and a hand and feet? Wow … What do you think Rebecca?
Rebecca:	I think that there's … maybe she's scared of those, or maybe she's scared that her mother or father is looking under her bed for a monster to make her feel a bit more safe.

In this excerpt from *The Tunnel* the Green Group responded to the illustration of Rose laying on her bed while her brother peers into her room wearing a monster mask. Camila contributed a character feeling statement that described Rose screaming, even though the illustration in the picturebook does not show this action. Abigail and Rebecca picked up on Camila's conversation about Rose's thoughts of fear and commented on other possibilities that might be making the protagonist feel frightened.

Character feeling statements generally occurred after I prompted the groups with a question asking the students to consider the feelings of a character. At times this prompt produced a string of character feeling statements by the members of a group. I found that

fewer character feeling statements were generated during the read-alouds when I did not prompt the students.

Autobiographical Talk

Autobiographical conversation turns generated the fourth greatest percentage of talk over the sequence of the five read-alouds per small group. As described in Chapter 3, autobiographical conversation turns were statements where the students included details about their personal lives during the conversation. These types of details might be a recollection of a personal experience that was similar to something in the picturebook or be a comparison to an event in their own lives. I categorized a conversation turn as autobiographical talk when the students made statements such as "I" or "My brother … ," or described an event that happened in the student's life. Table 9 shows the amount of statements articulated by each group and the overall percentage of these autobiographical statements that occurred during the five read-alouds.

Table 9

Autobiographical Statements During the Five Read-alouds

	Red Group		*Blue Group*		*Yellow Group*		*Green Group*		*Average*
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*%*
The Tunnel	3/109	2.8	10/121	8.3	6/120	5.0	7/107	6.5	5.7
Willy the Wimp	14/127	11.0	4/175	2.3	9/89	10.1	10/156	6.4	7.5
Gorilla	7/211	3.3	0/177	0.0	7/126	5.6	29/181	16.0	6.2
Zoo	3/99	3.0	10/152	6.6	4/107	3.7	20/194	10.3	5.9
Piggybook	23/199	11.6	7/116	6.0	7/104	6.7	12/193	6.2	7.6
Total Conversation Turns and Average Percentage	50/745	6.7	31/741	4.2	33/546	6.0	78/831	9.4	6.6

Table 9 reveals that while the overall average percentage of autobiographical statements was similar for each picturebook for the groups, the net amount of autobiographical statements varied. During the read-alouds of *Piggybook* and *Willy the Wimp* a nearly identical average of autobiographical statements were contributed by the students (7.6% and 7.5% respectively). Data analysis revealed that the other three read-aloud sessions of the picturebooks were also similar in the percentage of autobiographical statements that were generated by the children (*Gorilla* - 6.2%; *Zoo* - 5.9%, *The Tunnel* - 5.7%).

Data analysis of the autobiographical conversational turns of each of the groups revealed that the Green Group generated the greatest percentage of autobiographical

statements (9.4%). The Red Group and the Yellow Group were almost identical in the percentage of conversational turns (6.7% and 6.0% respectively), while the Blue Group had the smallest percentage of autobiographical statements (4.2%). The overall presence or absence of autobiographical statements may be directly related to the students' background knowledge and understanding of the issues and characters presented in each of the five unique picturebooks, as well as the students' comfort level with sharing personal details and experiences.

The small group read-alouds of *Piggybook* generated the highest percentage of autobiographical conversational turns over the five books (7.6%). The Red Group articulated the greatest percentage of autobiographical statements (11.6%). The Yellow Group, Green Group and Blue Group were nearly identical in their percentage of autobiographical conversation turns (6.7%, 6.2% and 6.0% respectively). The high percentage of autobiographical conversation turns for the Red Group may be due to the fact that 3 highly verbal students in that group all shared details of their personal lives several times throughout the read-aloud. An excerpt from the Red Group is detailed below.

A:	(reading) "*Hurry up with the meal Old Girl," Mr. Piggott called every evening when he came home from his very important job.*
Andrea:	I would never say that … I would never say that to my Mom.
Oliver:	Me too …
A:	No? What do you think it feels like for the mom to hear that?
Wayne:	Bad …
Oliver:	Bad …
Andrea:	Sad …
Oliver:	I would never do that.
Andrea:	I would never do that if I was him.
Oliver:	Well if I did I would probably have no more TV or computer forever.
Andrea:	Or videogames.
Oliver:	I don't even play videogames … well maybe once.

In this excerpt I began the reading at the portion of the picturebook that showed the Father and two sons sitting at the table demanding their supper. Andrea interjected with an autobiographical comment that was followed by an agreement from Oliver. I then posed a question which elicited three short comments by the students that were all character feeling statements. Oliver and Andrea continued the dialogue with several more autobiographical statements.

The small group read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp* generated a nearly identical percentage of autobiographical conversational turns (7.5%) to those generated during the read-alouds of *Piggybook.* All four groups contained five students during these read-alouds. The Red Group and Yellow Group generated a similar percentage of autobiographical statements (11.0% and 10.1% respectively). The Green Group generated the third greatest percentage of conversational statements of this type (6.4%), while the Blue Group generated a small percentage of autobiographical statements (2.3%). Even though I prompted the students in the Blue Group during this read-aloud, only one student made an autobiographical comment. The varying net amounts and percentages of autobiographical statements appeared to be due to the number of prompts I provided during the read-alouds and the relative comfort level of the students in talking freely about their personal lives.

The small group read-alouds of *Gorilla, Zoo* and *The Tunnel* generated a similar average percentage of autobiographical statements (6.2%, 5.9% and 5.7% respectively). All four read-alouds of *Gorilla* contained 5 students/group. The Green Group shared the most autobiographical conversational statements (16.0% of overall statements). The Yellow and Red Groups made the same net amount of statements (7), but differed in the

percentage of overall statements (5.6% and 3.3% respectively). The Blue Group made no autobiographical statements during this read-aloud. An excerpt from the Green Group is detailed below. The reading below is taken from the text where Hannah is observing her Father working at his desk. Hannah asks him a question, to which he responds, "Not now, I'm busy. Maybe tomorrow."

Rebecca:	Like … that he's not very nice. Because when my Dad is playing on the computer and I come downstairs to ask him a question he just stops and stuff and he listens and answers me.
A:	So your Dad listens and answers. So your Dad is different than this Dad. Yeah, this Dad doesn't even turn around to talk to Hannah. Yes, Edward?
Edward:	Maybe if she asks him and he says tomorrow, then she says, "It's tomorrow." Then he says "Maybe" … "Well, I don't have time today and maybe tomorrow." Then she asks him again and he has no time and no time, and he keeps on going and he has no time.
A:	So he always says tomorrow, tomorrow … But tomorrow never comes.
Edward:	Yeah.
A:	Ooo … Ooo …
Camila:	My Dad always says that.
A:	Does he?
Camila:	Uh hmm …
A:	Does he have time for you?
Camila:	Nope … Cause I have to go to school.
Edward:	Then maybe you don't have time for him.
Abigail:	You know my Dad actually only a little bit asks me a question. Because he's a bumper guy and he is helping even in the night and in the day so he doesn't have time for me at all maybe. But sometimes he does.
A:	Sometimes he does.
Abigail:	Yeah … but maybe when it's a break.
A:	When it's a break. Camila?
Camila:	My Dad is an electrician and he fixes lights and stuff and now he's working nights at Walmart. And my Mom really works in a hotel but maybe she might come back to work because she has her ankle sore and it band-aid up.
A:	Uh hmm … hmmm. Anything else you want to say about this? No…? Turn the page.

In this excerpt Rebecca began with a character feeling comment about the Father and then continued with an autobiographical statement about her own Father. I

summarized her comment and then Edward made a character description statement that was a summary about the events in the picturebook. Camila then made several autobiographical statements about her own Father. Abigail followed with an anecdotal story about her Father that was also autobiographical in nature. I repeated her final comments and then Camila made an autobiographical connection to her Father and Mother and their employment. Her final comment trailed off however, even though I prompted her to complete her thought and say more. In this excerpt my comments mainly served to keep the conversation going and acknowledged the students' comments about the text. I asked one direct question that elicited an autobiographical statement when I asked Camila if her Father had time for her.

Data analysis of the small group read-alouds of *Zoo* revealed that the Green Group generated the highest percentage of autobiographical statements (10.3%). Analysis of the Blue Group's conversation revealed that 6.6% of their statements were about autobiographical details. The Yellow Group and the Red Group generated a similar percentage of autobiographical statements (3.7% and 3.0% respectively). The higher frequency of autobiographical statements shared by the Green Group may have been due to the fact that this group contained 6 students. Four of these students were highly verbal and seemed confident to share their personal connections to the picturebook.

The small group read-alouds of *The Tunnel* generated an average of 5.7% autobiographical conversational turns during the read-alouds. Table 9 reveals that overall, the Blue Group spoke most frequently about autobiographical details (8.3%). The Green Group contributed 7 autobiographical connections (6.5% of their overall conversation turns), while the Yellow Group shared 6 autobiographical connections (5.0% of their

overall statements). Comparatively, the Red Group generated the lowest percentage of autobiographical statements (2.8%). An excerpt from the Yellow Group follows. The reading begins at the part of the picturebook where the brother and the sister are playing on a junk-filled piece of waste ground.

A:	So … what do you think about this place that he wants to play?
Matthew:	It would totally creep me out.
A:	It would totally creep you out? Yeah… a pretty scary place.
Roger:	Yeah and maybe there'll be drunk in there. People that drink wine all the time.
A:	Yeah there could be people that drink wine all the time.
Roger:	And I know what they are called.
A:	What are they called?
Roger:	Drunk. They hide in the night so the police don't find them and their body hurts if they don't get any wine and they just like lie to people so they get their money so they can buy some more.
Catherine:	You know what? In (a country in Europe) we have a lot of them because they always lie and they drink and they say bad things…we have a lot of that.
A:	Oh… so you know quite a lot about that.
Roger:	I saw one drunk person. He was like saying bad words at us and waving his fist at us.

After my question Matthew communicated his own fear of places such as those illustrated in the picturebook. Roger then related a personal story making another series of autobiographical connections. Catherine remarked after Roger's story by speaking about her own experiences living in Europe. The excerpt reveals how some students shared autobiographical details about sophisticated subjects.

Analysis of the 20 transcripts revealed that generally the same students tended to make autobiographical comments over the five read-aloud selections. It was evident that some students felt more comfortable speaking about their personal lives in the group setting. As is evident by the transcript excerpts, I did not directly ask students to make

autobiographical connections, although I did provide prompts to elicit more conversation that had already begun.

Intertextual Talk

Intertextual talk accounted for the smallest amount of talk over the five read-alouds per small group. As described in Chapter 3, intertextual statements were statements where the student made references to a particular book or character in a book, movie, game, television program or computer program. Intertextual talk might include references to fictional characters such as Cinderella or King Kong. Table 10 reveals the number and percentage of intertextual statements per group that occurred during the read-aloud sessions.

Table 10

Intertextual Statements During the Five Read-alouds

	Red Group		*Blue Group*		*Yellow Group*		*Green Group*		*Average*
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*%*
The Tunnel	8/109	7.3	5/121	4.1	5/120	4.2	4/107	3.7	4.8
Willy the Wimp	5/127	4.0	3/175	1.7	2/89	2.2	1/156	0.7	2.2
Gorilla	30/211	14.2	13/177	7.3	12/126	9.6	9/181	5.0	9.0
Zoo	2/99	2.0	0/152	0.0	0/107	0.0	4/194	2.1	1.0
Piggybook	16/199	8.0	0/116	0.0	8/104	7.7	8/193	4.1	5.0
Total Conversation Turns and Average Percentage	61/745	8.2	21/741	2.8	27/546	4.9	26/831	3.1	4.4

The average amount of intertextual conversation statements was limited and varied over the 20 read-aloud sessions. The total average percentage of intertextual statements was greatest during the five read-alouds with the Red Group (8.2% of overall statements were of this type). The Yellow Group generated the second greatest overall percentage of intertextual conversational turns (4.9%). The Green Group and the Blue Group were similar in both their net amount of statements and their percentages of intertextual statements during the read-alouds (3.1% and 2.8% respectively).

The small group read-alouds of *Gorilla* generated the greatest average percentage of intertextual talk among the five picturebooks (9.0%). All four groups contained 5 students for these read-alouds. Once during each group read-aloud of *Gorilla* I directly asked the students if the picturebook or characters reminded them of another book. The Red Group generated the greatest percentage of intertextual statements (14.2%), making 30 conversational turns of this type. Data anlaysis revealed that 9.6% of the Yellow Group's conversation turns were intertextual in nature. The Blue Group generated 7.3% intertextual statements, while the Green Group generated the lowest percentage of intertextual comments (5.0%).

During the small group read-alouds of *Gorilla* references were made to movies such as *Superman* (Salkind, 2006), *Batman* (Uslan, 2007), *King Kong* (Barry & Laurentiis, 1976), *Kung Fu Panda* (Aibel & Berger, 2008), *Godzilla* (Fried, Van Horn, & Winther, 1998), and the character Darth Vader in *Star Wars IV: A New Hope* (Lucas, 1977). References were also made to television series such as *George of the Jungle* (Bullwinkle Studios, & Studio B Productions, 2007), and to other picturebooks, such as the brother and sister in *The Tunnel* and the book *Little Chimp* (Harry, 2007). References

were also made to places such as Paris, France, London, Victoria, and Scotland Yard as well as to the Statue of Liberty. A reference was also made to Gorilla Crunch cereal that one boy's brother ate and Mario in the video game *Donkey Kong* (Miyamoto, 1981). An excerpt from the Red Group's read-aloud follows below.

A:	What do you think about this picturebook? Does it remind you of any other picturebooks that you know?
Wayne:	Uhh…no…it doesn't remind me of *Kung Fu Panda*.
Oliver:	*King Kong*.
Wayne:	Uhh… *Super Man*.
A:	Super Man.
Oliver:	*Super Man* and *King Kong*.
A:	(I call on another student who has been waiting to comment).
Student:	It reminds me of *Kung Fu Panda*.
A:	Yeah? What about you Elizabeth?
Elizabeth:	Uhmm… *George of the Jungle*.
A:	George of the Jungle? Oh… how come?
Elizabeth:	Uhmm… Because *George of the Jungle* he's like a guy who lives in the jungle and he's like a person and and he has like a friend monkey.

This excerpt began at the end of the read-aloud. In this example I directly asked the students if the picturebook reminded them of other picturebooks they knew. Four of the 5 students made intertextual connections to other fictional characters from either books or films. Elizabeth shared a detailed explanation for her connection to the gorilla in the picturebook we were reading. The occurrence of the students' intertextual connections to the read-alouds of *Gorilla* were likely inspired by the anthropomorphic protagonist featured in the picturebook, as many of the connections were to other gorilla-like characters.

Table 10 reveals that the small group read-alouds of *Piggybook* generated the second greatest percentage of intertextual statements (5.0%) with a range between 0 and 16 statements for the four groups. The Red Group and the Yellow Group generated a

similar percentage of intertextual statements (8.0% and 7.7% respectively). The Green Group generated 8 intertextual statements (i.e., 4.1%) during the read aloud session. The Blue Group made no intertextual statements during the read-aloud of *Piggybook.*

Although during the read-alouds of *Piggybook* I did not directly ask the students if the book reminded them of any other story they knew, they did make intertextual references to Patrick from the television series *Sponge Bob SquarePants* (Hillenberg, 1999), *Cinderella* (Buena Vista Home Entertainment, 2005), *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Disney, 1999), *Jack-in-the-Beanstalk* (Brighter Child Editorial, 2002), The Man in the Moon (*Lady Sun and the Man in the Moon,* Waller, 2008), *Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf* (Holiday, 1992), *Gorilla*, and the television program *The Week the Women Went* (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2008).

Overall, the small group read-alouds of *The Tunnel* generated an almost identical percentage of intertextual statements as the read-alouds of *Piggybook* (4.8%). Most of the intertextual statements were made at the double-page spread at the center of the book, where Rose is running through the dark wood. The Red Group produced the greatest percentage of intertextual statements (7.3%). Analysis of the transcripts revealed that the Yellow Group, the Blue Group and the Green Group generated a nearly identical percentage of intertextual statements (4.2%, 4.1% and 3.7% respectively). During the read-alouds of *The Tunnel* the students made intertextual connections to books such as *Goldilocks and The Three Bears* (Marshall, 1998), *Little Red Riding Hood* (Brighter Child Editorial, 2002), *Scaredy Cat* (Fine, 1985), *Three Pigs and The Big Bad Wolf* (Holiday, 1992), and the girl Rosie in *Coco's Bell* (Kelly, 2000). The students also made intertextual connections to the movie *Lemony Snickett: A Series of Unfortunate Events*

(MacDonald, Parkes, & Van Wyck, 2004) and the author Dr. Seuss. The conversation excerpt of the Red Group below begins at the double-page spread where Rose is running through the dark and scary wood.

A:	So do these…Do these characters remind you of anyone you know?
Oliver:	And why is there screaming? And why…
Wayne:	*Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.
ALL:	(shouting) Yeah!
A:	*Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.
ALL:	Yeah!
A:	Really?
Wayne:	Little pig …
A:	Why do …
Oliver:	No that's not *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. That's the *Three Little Pigs*.
Wayne:	No. That's *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.
A:	What makes you think it's Goldilocks and the three bears?
Wayne:	Because she's red…she has a red coat.
A:	Oh…because she has a red coat.
Oliver:	What does it remind me of? Oh. *Little Red Riding Hood*.
A:	Oh … *Little Red Riding Hood*. What does it remind you of?
Oliver:	Hmm…I got to think about this.

I began the discussion by asking the students a question that might elicit an intertextual response. Oliver articulated a question, and then Wayne interjected with an intertextual statement that the characters reminded him of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (Marshall, 1998), to which all the students shouted their agreement. Wayne and Oliver debated the intertextual connections that they made and Oliver made two more intertextual connections to the *Three Little Pigs* (Golden Books, 2004) and to *Little Red Riding Hood* (Brighter Child Editorial, 2002), but he was not sure and stated he had to think more about his response. Later on during the read-aloud session (not shown in conversation excerpt) Wayne again reiterated that the scene reminded him of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (Marshall, 1998).

Data analysis of the transcripts of the read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp* revealed that the students generated an overall average of 2.2% intertextual statements (ranging from 1 to 5 comments/group). All the groups contained 5 students for this set of read-alouds. Table 10 reveals that the Red Group generated the greatest percentage of conversational turns that were intertextual in nature (4.0%), the Yellow Group and the Blue Group were similar in their percentage of intertextual statements (2.2% and 1.7% respectively), and the Green Group had the lowest percentage of intertextual statements (0.7%). The low percentages of intertextual statements for the read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp* might be due to the fact that I did not ask the students direct questions that would have elicited or encouraged an intertextual response.

During the read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp* the students made intertextual references to the sport of Kung Fu, to the comic book character Bananaman (Thomas, 1980), to the movie *King Kong* (Laurentiis & Barry, 1976), and to structures such as the Eiffel Tower and the Empire State Building.

The small group read-alouds of *Zoo* generated few intertextual statements with a range between 0 and 4 statements for the four groups. The Green Group and the Red Group were almost identical in their percentage of intertextual statements (2.1% and 2.0% respectively), while the Blue Group and the Yellow Group shared no statements of this type. The low percentage of intertextual statements might be due to the content of the picturebook itself, which may not have reminded the students of any other media that they might relate to. During the read-alouds of *Zoo* the students made intertextual connections to the movie *King Kong* (Laurentiis & Barry, 1976), and to two previously read picturebooks: *Willy the Wimp* and *Gorilla*. One student also made an intertextual

connection to another book with a zebra in it, although she could not remember the book's title.

Analysis of the read-aloud transcripts revealed a direct correlation between the percentage of intertextual statements and whether I specifically prompted the students to recall examples of this type. As is evident, the students' intertextual connections were linked to their exposure to various other media including picturebooks.

Other Talk

Other talk beyond those conversational turns categorized in the preceding sections was evident in the transcripts. As described in Chapter 3, 'other' references included conversational talk that did not fit the categories that I determined to be relevant to my central research questions. This type of talk included a student asking a question such as, "I wonder why she's … ?" or saying "I don't know." Other talk also included performative singing that was indecipherable, laughter, or where a student made a comment unrelated to the picturebook discussion, such as, "When is it lunchtime?" In this category I also included talk where the students answered a closed question with a simple agreement or disagreement, without offering further explanation. Table 11 details the amount and percentage of other statements generated per group during the read-alouds.

Table 11

Other Statements During the Five Read-alouds

	Red Group		*Blue Group*		*Yellow Group*		*Green Group*		*Average*
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*%*
The Tunnel	41/109	37.6	34/121	28.0	20/120	16.7	34/107	31.8	28.5
Willy the Wimp	12/127	9.4	33/175	18.9	11/89	12.4	22/156	14.1	13.7
Gorilla	46/211	21.8	39/177	22.0	22/126	17.5	31/181	17.1	19.6
Zoo	22/99	22.2	42/152	27.6	27/107	25.2	41/194	21.1	24.0
Piggybook	23/199	11.6	18/116	15.5	9/104	8.7	42/193	21.8	14.4
Total Conversation Turns and Average Percentage	144/745	19.3	166/741	22.4	89/546	16.3	170/831	20.5	20.0

All four groups made numerous statements that were classified as other statements during the interactive small group discussions about Anthony Browne's picturebooks. The Blue Group, the Green Group and the Red Group were similar in their average percentage of other statements (22.4%, 20.5% and 19.3% respectively). The Yellow Group generated the lowest percentage of other statements over the five read-alouds (16.3%). The high incidence of other statements may have been due to many of the read-alouds occurring either before lunch or at the end of the school day, resulting in off-topic comments by the students. Another reason for many other statements might have been due to my inexperience as a participant/researcher; when I began to analyze the transcripts I noted I asked several closed questions during each of the readings that

might have resulted in the students providing simple agreements or disagreements that were not followed by explanations.

The greatest average percentage of other statements occurred during the read-alouds of *The Tunnel* (28.5%). The Red Group produced the greatest percentage of other statements (37.6%). The Green Group and the Blue Group also made many other statements that were not categorized as pertaining to my central research questions (31.8% and 28.0% respectively). The Yellow Group had the lowest percentage of other statements (16.7%). The large percentage of other statements during the read-alouds of this picturebook was not surprising as this read-aloud occurred first in the series of picturebooks and both the students and myself were becoming accustomed to the small group format, resulting in numerous off-topic comments and simple answers.

The small group read-alouds of *Zoo* generated the second greatest percentage of other statements (24.0%). The Blue Group and the Yellow Group were similar in their percentage of other statements (27.6% and 25.2% respectively). The Red and Green Groups were also nearly identical in the percentage of other statements (22.2% and 21.1% respectively) categorized for this read-aloud. Below are four examples of conversations I had with the children during the read-alouds of *Zoo* that feature the types of conversation turns that were categorized as other statements.

Example 1

A: What do you notice on the cover?
David: Uhm … This book is from the public library and it has this thing that says 'Public Library.'

Example 2

David: I know …

A: Uh hmm …
David: Uhmm … we learned describing words at school … In our class describing words means giving us more details.
A: Right … and we're learning about giving more details and describing things as we talk in our group here.
David: This morning we learned describing words like I think … I see a fish that is yellow as a sun.
A: OK… Let's turn the page.

Example 3

Matthew: Because the Dad looks kind of mad and the Mom looks kind of sad.
A: Oh … the Dad looks kind of mad and the Mom looks kind of sad. You were going to say that too (student)?
Student: Yes.

Example 4

A: What do you think about this Dad lying about his son's age? (I call on a student).
Student: He's mad.
A: He's mad … hmm … what do you think, Andrea?
Andrea: Don't know.
A: Elizabeth?
Elizabeth: Don't know …

The student's comment in Example 1 did not fit with any of the five categories that pertained to my research. However, David's comment was evidence of his awareness of many of the visual elements that constituted this picturebook. As is evident in Example 2, I categorized parts of conversations such as this one as pertaining to the other category, as the content did not relate directly to the picturebook or the information I was exploring in my research. This conversation constituted 3 other statements. Example 3 offers detail that a student's response is preceded by my own closed question. In this excerpt Matthew makes a character feeling comment, which I repeated for clarity on the audio recording. I then asked a closed question to a student, who replied with a simple answer. In Example 4 I asked a specific question about the Father's motives in the picturebook. One student

replied with a character feeling comment, but 2 other students stated they “don’t know.” During data analysis I categorized the latter two statements as ‘other’ statements.

The read-alouds of *Gorilla* generated the third highest average percentage of other statements (19.6%). The Blue and Red Groups were almost identical in their percentage of other statements (22.0% and 21.8% respectively). The Yellow and Green Groups also had nearly identical percentages of statements that were categorized as other (17.5% and 17.1% respectively).

Data analysis revealed that during the four small group read-alouds of *Piggybook* an overall average of 14.4% of the students’ contributions were categorized as other statements. The net range of statements varied, however, with the greatest percentage of other statements generated by the Green Group (21.8%). Other statements accounted for 15.5% of the Blue Group’s overall conversation turns and 11.6% of the Red Group’s. The Yellow Group generated the lowest percentage of other statements (8.7%), with only 9 conversational turns made by the students being categorized as other statements.

The small group read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp* were almost identical in average percentage to those of *Piggybook* with respect to other statements made by the students (13.7%). The Blue Group produced 18.9% of other statements (18.9%), the Green Group and the Yellow Group were similar in their percentages of other conversational statements (14.1% and 12.4% respectively), while the Red Group generated the lowest percentage of other statements (9.4%) for this picturebook.

The amount of other statements generated during the 20 read-alouds can be attributed to the idiosyncratic nature of the students or whether or not the children maintained focus on the topics addressed in the picturebooks or wandered to other topics

and events. In some cases my inexperience as a novice researcher affected the amount of other statements as I asked several closed questions during the read-alouds, which led to simple yes or no answers without explanations.

Summary of the Types of Talk That Occurred During the Picturebook Read-alouds

Above, I described the data on the conversations that ensued during the Grade 1 students read-aloud sessions of five Anthony Browne picturebooks. I analyzed 20 transcripts from the read-aloud sessions and found that the students spoke about the picturebooks using six types of statements: labeling; character description; character feeling; autobiographical; intertextual, and; other statements which were not pertaining to my central research questions. I presented these six types of talk in tables that detailed the types and percentages of statements that were spoken during each group read-aloud. To conclude this chapter, I present a summary of the major findings of the study by focussing on the types of conversation that ensued during the read-alouds of each picturebook. An overview of the data from each small group conversation of the picturebooks can be found in Appendix H Tables 15 to 19.

As stated previously, *The Tunnel* was the first picturebook shared with the children during the study. The number of overall conversation turns for each group was approximately equal during the read-aloud sessions. Data analysis revealed that approximately one-third of the overall conversational turns were comprised of labeling talk. Other talk, which was frequent during these first read-aloud sessions, accounted for approximately one-quarter of the students' overall talk. Approximately one-fifth of the students' overall talk involved them describing characters in this picturebook. Less than one-tenth of the students' talk was categorized as character feelings, autobiographical

connections or intertextual connections. The students' behaviours and conversations indicated that they enjoyed this picturebook, but they did not comment as frequently as during some of the other read-alouds.

During the read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp* the students mainly described aspects of the protagonist in the story using character description talk, which accounted for two-fifths of the overall conversation turns. Approximately one-fifth of the students' talk involved them empathizing with the central character (i.e. sharing character feeling comments). The students also delighted in labeling items in the illustrations and this type of talk, as well as other statements, each accounted for approximately one-sixth of the overall conversation turns. Less than one-tenth of the students' comments were autobiographical or intertextual connections to the book. The students delighted in the character Willy featured in *Willy and the Wimp* and were amused throughout the read-alouds.

The students were highly engaged with *Gorilla* and the highest overall amount of conversation turns were generated during this set of interactive read-alouds. During the small group read-alouds the students labelled many items in the illustrations, and the latter accounted for one-third of their overall talk. During the interactive small group read-alouds nearly one-quarter of the students' talk was about describing the protagonists in the book (i.e. character description statements). The students' other statements accounted for one-fifth of their conversation turns. One-tenth of the students' talk was about character feelings. Intertextual talk, which was more frequent during this read-aloud than during the other four books, also accounted for nearly one-tenth of the students' overall statements. Less than one-tenth of the students' statements were

autobiographical in nature. As this read-aloud followed *Willy the Wimp*, the students made several connections to monkeys and gorillas in this story.

During the read-alouds of *Zoo*, approximately two-fifths of the students' overall talk involved them labeling items in the illustrations. The students also generated numerous other comments, which accounted for nearly one-quarter of their conversation turns. The character description talk shared during the read-alouds accounted for one-sixth of all statements. The students also empathized with the protagonists in the story, yet this type of talk was found during less than one-tenth of the conversation turns. A negligible amount of intertextual talk was generated by the students during the read-alouds of *Zoo.*

During the read-alouds of *Piggybook* the students predominantly labeled items in the illustrations. Indeed, labeling statements accounted for over two-fifths of the students' talk. Character description statements accounted for one-fifth of the students' overall conversation turns and other comments accounted for nearly one-sixth of the children's overall statements. Autobiographical connections, intertextual connections and character feeling statements each accounted for less than one-tenth of the students' talk. The students' enjoyment of this picturebook was evident through the high amount of average conversation turns generated for each of the groups during the read-alouds.

Chapter Summary

This chapter detailed the research findings of the children's transactions during the small group interactive read-alouds with five picturebooks by Anthony Browne over a 6-week period. Both qualitative and a quantitative data were presented in this chapter to describe the types of conversational statements that the children generated during the

read-aloud sessions. The data analysis of the children's oral responses to the five picturebooks used in the study revealed that the children spoke about the picturebooks using labeling talk, character description talk, character feeling talk, autobiographical talk, intertextual talk and other talk. The findings also revealed that each group was unique in the overall amount and frequency of the various types of talk that ensued during the read-alouds. Considering the differences among the groups and the picturebooks, each read-aloud session was a unique event.

Chapter 5 describes the findings pertaining to the third and fourth research questions: (a) what does young children's artwork and discussion about their art reveal about their understanding of characters; and (b) do young children make autobiographical connections between their own lives and the characters in selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne, as revealed through visual arts and oral responses, and if so, what is the nature of these responses? Chapter 5 presents three individual case studies that feature the art and conversations of three children who varied in reading ability. I also compare the oral responses the three children articulated during their small group discussions with their conversations during their individual interviews.

CHAPTER 5

THE CHILDREN'S INDIVIDUAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THEIR ARTISTIC RESPONSES

> "It is as if a world opens through the reading of a work of art: readers may see their worlds through it in such a way that horizons broaden and the world seems new, ready to be questioned and explored" (Greene, 1997, p. 391).

To review, the purpose of this research project was to explore Grade 1 children's transactions with five picturebooks by Anthony Browne over a 6-week period to gain insight into: (a) what young children discussed about characters in Anthony Browne's picturebooks; (b) whether young children made intertextual connections between characters, events, or illustrations in Browne's picturebooks and other texts; (c) what young children's artwork and discussion about their artistic responses revealed about their understanding of characters; and (d) whether young children made autobiographical connections between their own lives and characters in Browne's picturebooks as revealed through their visual arts and oral responses, and if so, what were the nature of these responses.

This chapter describes the individual conversations I had with the children about their artwork and provides examples of their artistic responses to the picturebooks. The children's individual interviews provided them with an opportunity to talk about their connections to the picturebooks in greater depth. As described in Chapter 3, I focused on three children of differing reading abilities as defined by the British Columbia Ministry

of Education Performance Standards for Reading (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2009) at the end of Grade 1. The three focus children featured: (a) a reader who was exceeding expectations in reading; (b) a reader who was meeting expectations in reading; and (c) a reader who was minimally meeting expectations in reading. Used in the data analysis were 15 artistic responses and 15 transcriptions of the three children's oral responses about their individual art completed in response to five picturebooks by Anthony Browne. I also used a reflexive journal containing my personal thoughts, questions and observations during the study to reflect on the research process as it progressed. Field notes that documented the children's behaviours during the read-alouds assisted me in adding to the data on the transcriptions. Also, 20 transcriptions from the audio-recordings of the children's small group transactions with each of five books by Anthony Browne were used in determining the amount of talk specific to the three focus children. The three children's oral and drawing responses illustrate patterns of response and the ways in which the children constructed meaning from the five picturebooks. Analysis of the three children's conversations revealed some overlap in categories, similar to the conversations in Chapter 4. Readers are reminded that when there was overlap among categories in a particular conversation, the response was counted in all of the categories in which it fit.

Individual Interviews and Drawing Responses of the Three Children

As described previously, at the completion of each small group read-aloud I directed the children to respond by drawing something that they were wondering or thinking about in relation to the picturebook we had just read together. In each session I said, "Now we're going to do some artwork. Please draw something that you are

wondering or thinking about now that we've read the story. You may put yourselves or someone else you know in the drawing if you want to." To find out what the children's personal drawings might reveal about their responses to the five picturebooks by Anthony Browne, I analyzed the individual conversations about the art of all 21 children in the study. One child was absent for the read-aloud of *The Tunnel*, two children were absent for the read-aloud of *Gorilla*, and two children were absent for the read-aloud of *Willy the Wimp*. I analyzed a total of 100 individual interviews about the children's artwork, and as explained above, focused on three children of varying reading abilities. The children's reading abilities were communicated to me by the classroom teacher.

The three children chosen as focus participants were selected from among the students who had attended all read-aloud sessions. A total of 15 artistic responses and 15 transcriptions of audio-recorded interviews were analyzed. The audio-recordings of the individual interviews about the children's artwork lasted approximately 1 to 2 minutes each. Excerpts from the three children's conversations and examples of their drawings are presented in the following sections.

To aid in the comparative analysis of the three children's small-group conversations with their individual interviews about their artwork, I created tables and used the same categories of analysis that I used to analyze the small group conversations during the read-alouds of the picturebooks (see Chapters 3 and 4). In the tables that report the findings, I used the unit of the conversation turn for my analysis. While the three tables do not reveal the richness of the conversations that the students and I had, they do provide information about the nature of the content of the students' oral comments. While the small group read-aloud sessions lasted between 20 and 26 minutes, the individual

interviews lasted between 1 and 2 minutes each. The tables for each focus child indicate how their types of talk varied between the small group setting and the individual setting.

The children's individual interviews about their artistic responses were as highly varied as the picturebooks themselves. I opened every interview with the phrase, "Tell me about your picture," and while some of the interviews were short with little explanation for the choices the children made about their drawings, other interviews included many details about the children's personal connections to the picturebooks. The interviews were semi-structured, with questions arising from the natural course of the conversation. My questioning was mainly to prompt the students to think about their drawing response and to make connections between their personal drawing and the story we had just read. My comments mainly reiterated what a student had said or maintained the natural flow of the conversation. Looking over the interviews I found the children labeled items in their drawings, they described the characters in Browne's picturebooks, they commented on the feelings of the characters, and they made intertextual and autobiographical connections within their drawings and through their conversations. In the following sections I provide background information about each of the three focus children and provide excerpts of the conversations that ensued during the individual interviews. I also provide examples of the children's artwork as a reference to their conversation. I present the children's artwork and conversations in the order the read-alouds occurred during the study. I also provide data on the types and frequency of the children's statements that occurred during both the individual interviews and during the small group read-alouds.

Abigail

Abigail was seven-years-old at the time of the research. She was a highly articulate student who commented with an above-average frequency during the small-group read-alouds. She was an English-as-a-second-language student in the school, and came from a highly literate family who spent a great deal of time at home teaching her to read as well as speak in three languages. She excelled in all subjects at school and at the time of this study exceeded expectations in reading according the British Columbia Ministry of Education Performance Standards in Reading (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2009) for Grade 1.

Abigail's Artistic and Oral Responses

Abigail found the cover of *The Tunnel* quite interesting and made an intertextual connection in her drawing response from the read-aloud of this picturebook (see Figure 1). In Abigail's drawing, the left frame features a written statement that refers to the cover of the book. Abigail also presented a picture of a girl in the book. In the right frame, Abigail illustrated a maze between eight colorful hearts. She labeled and included a scary tree in her drawing.

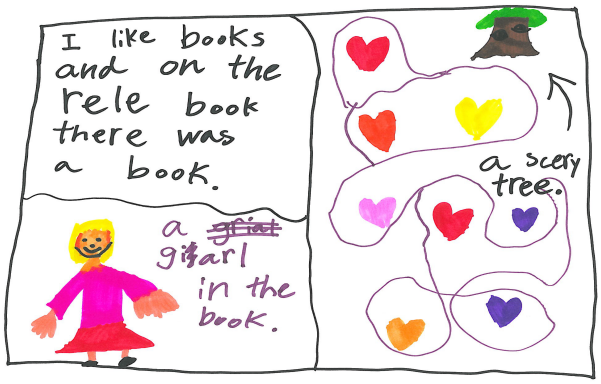

Figure 1: Abigail's artistic response to *The Tunnel.*

Abigail's text on her drawing referred to the book-within-a-book that she observed in Anthony Browne's picturebook. In this way her response was intertextual as it was similar to the depiction of Rose holding the book of fairy tales in the story. It was interesting that Abigail chose to depict this scene on her drawing as we touched briefly on this subject when it came up during the small group read-aloud. An excerpt of my conversation with Abigail is provided below.

A:	What can you tell me about the picture you drew today?
Abigail:	Uhmm … in the book there was a scary tree and so I drew a scary tree.
A:	So you drew a scary tree. What have you written here? You've written some things. Read it for me.
Abigail:	I like books and on the real book there was a book.
A:	Uhmm … so you're making a connection to the book and that you like books. And who is this person here?
Abigail:	The girl in the book.
A:	The girl … and why did you decide to draw her?
Abigail:	Because she was the most important of the story.

Abigail's statement that, "I like books and on the real book there was a book" was an intertextual connection to *The Tunnel.* During the remainder of our conversation Abigail labeled items and made a character statement about the Rose in the picturebook. She also referred to the pathway between the hearts that she drew. An excerpt is featured below.

A: So this is the scary tree. And what are these? (I point to the lines drawn around the hearts).
Abigail: Uhh … where the uhmm the brother became frozen.
A: Oh that's the place where they became frozen (She nods yes), but then the hearts show …?
Abigail: Uhmm … the circle with the stones.
A: Oh the circle with the stones.
Abigail And the flowers became the hearts.
A: The flowers became the hearts. And why did you draw hearts?
Abigail: Because I like hearts. I am good at drawing hearts.

Abigail made connections between her drawing and the picturebook throughout her conversation. Her conversation revealed that she labeled items and provided greater detail than that depicted in solely by her artistic representation.

Abigail's drawing response to *Willy the Wimp* extended the storyline by adding the conversational dialogue and actions of the characters in the story (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Abigail's artistic response to *Willy the Wimp.*

Abigail's drawing and conversation focused on Willy and the bully in the picturebook. During her interview she read the text she had placed in her drawing. She said the brown character (viewed from behind) was Willy and that Willy was stating, "I am strong. Look! I am strong. I am Willy. I am happy veary happy." Abigail also drew

the bully (figure on the right) and created talking bubbles for his dialogue. Abigail stated that the bully was saying, "Ahhh… I am a bully and I am strong. I am going to get you." Abigail's drawing and conversation revealed that she extended the scene of Willy and the bully in the picturebook through her addition of dialogue. Abigail labeled items in the drawing and provided descriptive statements about the characters from *Willy the Wimp.*

In her drawing inspired by Browne's *Gorilla,* Abigail recollected her own father working at his desk typing emails. Abigail stated she was inspired to draw this computer monitor because of the image of the busy father working at his desk in Browne's picturebook.

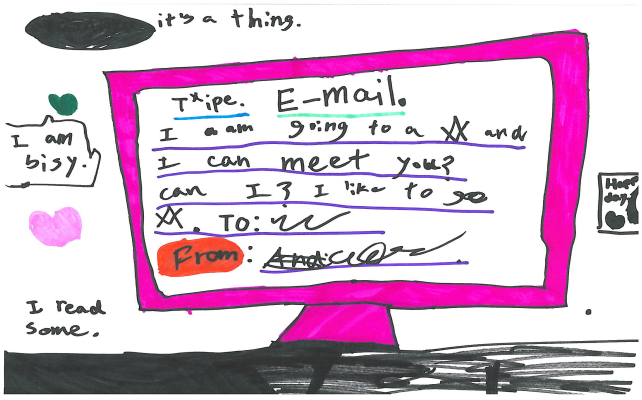

Figure 3. Abigail's artistic response to *Gorilla.*

A: Tell me about your picture.
Abigail: Uhmm … this is one computer because in the book it almost has a computer.
A: Uhmm … hmm.
Abigail: I think it was on the back and my dad has a computer.
A: Uhh hmm … and so what have you written on your picture? Tell me.
Abigail: Type. It says email … I'm going to a meeting and I can meet you … Can I? I can uhh dmm … I like to go meeting … to something … from my Dad.
A: Oh … so this is your dad typing an email about a meeting.
Abigail: Yeah … and this is the TV so close to it.

A: Right … and what does this say here?
Abigail: I am busy.
A: So … is this a connection for you to the book? Tell me about your connection?
Abigail: I think that the dad (in the picturebook) has a computer and my dad has a computer.
A: Uh hmm … so is your dad like the dad in the book, or different?
Abigail: He has curly hair and he doesn't like his curly hair, but his hair is black and it's not bright (the latter reference is to the father in the picturebook).

Abigail made a connection between the father in the book and her own father. She also compared the hair between the character of the father in the picturebook and her own father.

Abigail also extended the storyline of Anthony Browne's *Zoo* by adding her own thoughts as she described an imaginary scene in the zoo and discussed her reasons for putting a killer whale in her picture (see Figure 4).

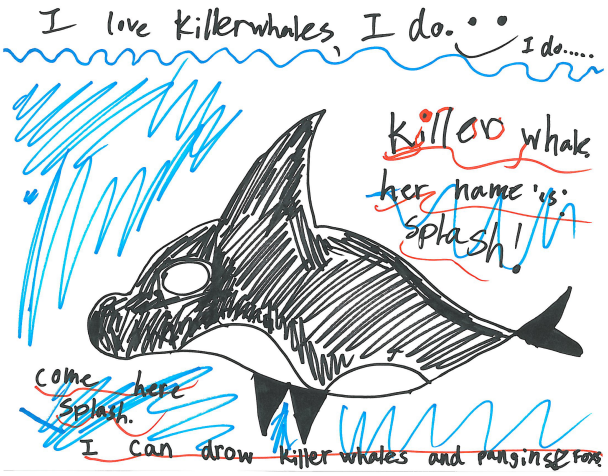

Figure 4. Abigail's artistic response to *Zoo.*

An excerpt of the conversation I had with Abigail follows.

A: Tell me about your picture.
Abigail: Well, I wish there was a killer whale in the zoo.
A: You wish there was…how come?
Abigail: Because I love killer whales.

A: So I notice you've written lots… Do you want to tell me what you've written?
Abigail: Yeah. I love killer whales…I do…I do… Killer whale…her name is Splash…Come here Splash…I can draw killer whales and penguins.
A: Oh wow…So how do you think that killer whale feels? Is it in the zoo or is it free?
Abigail: It's free…and uhmm…and the water is in like a big, big like an ocean big cage and the water is in there and he's swimming free and there's an older guy and he's fishing…
A: So he's not in a cage?
Abigail: No, but he's in a pool…like a big, big, big pool.

Abigail described the scene with the killer whale in detail, offering many descriptive comments about the whale and the zoo it lived in. She also labeled items in the artwork during her discussion, thus enhancing my understanding of her drawing. She extended the storyline of *Zoo* by putting her own desired character in the zoo. This character was not in the original story. During my conversation with Abigail, I asked a question about how she thought the whale felt. I then followed with another type of question that elicited more description of the scene. Later during this interview I repeated the feeling question however, and Abigail responded that, "She's happy because she's playing follow the leader." While the dialogue in this interview was mainly categorized as character description, Abigail responded with other types of comments as well, such as this character feeling conversational turn.

Abigail's conversation and artistic response to *Piggybook* described an incident that took place in her family (see Figure 5). In her artwork, Abigail featured a scene with a table. On the table is pictured a cup of coffee and a sandwich. Abigail included dialogue on her drawing. On the left side of the drawing are featured her father's statements. In the center of the drawing there is a heart with writing inside stating, "Mom does not want to

do this." On the right of the drawing Abigail pictured a cup of coffee and a sandwhich, along with dialogue by her mother, stating, "Okay, Okay!"

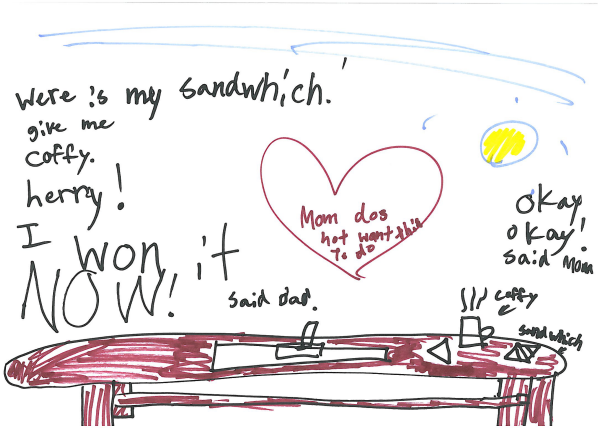

Figure 5. Abigail's artistic response to *Piggybook.*

Below is an excerpt of my conversation with Abigail about her drawing response.

A:	So I'm talking to Abigail today about the picture she finished about Anthony Browne's book *Piggybook.* Tell me about your picture.
Abigail:	This when my Mom is working just like in the book.
A:	So…tell me what is happening in this picture.
Abigail:	My Dad says, "Where's my sandwich…give me coffee…hurry…I want it now," and, "Ok, Ok," my Mom says. And she gave him.
A:	Oh…there's the coffee and the sandwich.
Abigail:	So…Mom does not want this to do.
A:	So Mom does not want this to do…to do this. Oh…so that happens in your family sometimes?
Abigail:	Yeah.
A:	Oh…so how do you feel about that?
Abigail:	Sometimes I help, but sometimes I don't because I have to go to school and come back and then do all the work.
A:	Uh hmm…
Abigail:	So…usually she wants to sleep.
A:	Usually your Mom wants to sleep…she gets really tired?
Abigail:	Yeah…she wants to sleep every time, and…cause the, the…she likes to sleep…she loves to sleep.
A:	Uh hmm…
Abigail:	So…she wants to sleep when she's done.

This excerpt reveals Abigail recalling a personal memory of events that transpired in her family. The scene of the hardworking mother in Anthony Browne's picturebook may have triggered her revealing autobiographical response.

Abigail's artistic responses to the picturebooks were highly varied and her conversation spanned all five categories of talk that I determined to be central to my research questions. Within Table 12 below, I compare her responses during the five interviews with her responses during the five small group read-aloud sessions of the picturebooks.

Table 12

Abigail's Responses During the Individual Interviews and Small-group Read-alouds

	Character Description		*Character Feelings*		*Labeling*		*Intertextual*		*Autobiographical*		*Other*	
	n	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***
Individual	15	19.7	1	1.3	10	13.2	17	22.4	27	35.5	6	7.9
Small Group	54	28.0	27	14.0	61	31.6	2	1.0	17	8.8	32	16.6

Abigail commented more frequently than most students in the study during her participation in the interactive small-group read-aloud sessions. She contributed a total of 193 conversational statements during the 5 small-group read-alouds. She made 76 conversational statements during the 5 individual interviews about her artwork.

Table 12 reveals fewer instances of Abigail speaking about character descriptions and character feelings, and labeling during her individual interviews than during the small group read-aloud sessions. Character description statements during the individual

interviews accounted for nearly one-fifth of her conversational turns, while these type of statements accounted for over one-quarter (28.0%) of conversational turns during the small group read-aloud sessions. Abigail generated few statements about character feelings in her individual interviews, while in the small group discussions 14.0% of her statements were about characters' feelings. Abigail labeled items during her small group read-alouds much more frequently than during her individual interviews (31.6% and 13.2% respectively). The larger percentages of character description, character feeling and labeling statements made by Abigail during the small group read-aloud sessions may have been due to the social context of the group, where a student would join in on the conversation topics begun by other students.

The greatest percentage differences in Abigail's talk occurred within the categories of intertextual and autobiographical statements. Abigail generated a greater percentage of intertextual statements during the individual interviews than during the small group read-aloud sessions (i.e. 22.4% and 1.0% respectively). Abigail also shared autobiographical connections a greater percentage of the time during her individual interviews (35.5%) than during the small group read-alouds (8.8%). Abigail may have spoken more about her autobiographical and intertextual connections in the individual setting because of the very personal nature of creating a work of art and then discussing it with an interested adult.

Matthew.

Matthew was six-years old at the time of the research. He enjoyed sports and outings with his extended family, and often commented on camping or fishing adventures he had gone on with his father and cousins. Matthew attended guided reading classes

with his classroom teacher and received support in reading from his family at home through the home-reading program set up by the classroom teacher. Matthew was meeting expectations in reading in Grade 1, according the British Columbia Performance Standards (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2009).

Matthew's Artistic and Oral Responses

In his response to *The Tunnel* Matthew recalled a time when he was camping with his cousin and they came upon a colorful door in the mountainside (see Figure 6). Matthew also added dialogue to his artwork. Featured in the response is himself (center) saying, "Look over there," and his cousin (on the left) saying, "Lie." He also included another text bubble with the word 'rumbel' inside of it. The conversation I shared with Matthew provided additional information about his picture.

Figure 6. Matthew's artistic response to *The Tunnel.*

Below is an excerpt from my conversation with Matthew about his drawing.

A: Ok, Matthew. Tell me about the picture you have finished today.
Matthew: It's about me.
A: It's about you? Oh…are you one of the characters?
Matthew: Yeah… I'm the one with the red.

A: You're the one with red. What are you doing?
Matthew: I'm talking to my cousin because we were out on a mountain, and we saw a door on the mountain. This is the door. (Michael points to the colorful doorway). It was a door with different colors.
A: Oh the door. So this story reminded you of going up the mountain. And what's your cousin's name?
Matthew: Sam… and he said a lie.
A: Why did he say a lie?
Matthew: Because it was hidden in some rocks and I saw the door and he didn't think it was there and he was like mean completely and he so didn't hear the rumble.
A: And so were the rocks falling down?
Matthew: Yeah, because something moved the door.
A: And how did you feel?
Matthew: Really, I feel kind of afraid. But it was just a little squirrel that touched the door.
A: Really? …Uhmm…so how does your picture relate to Anthony Browne's picturebook?
Matthew: I don't know.
A: Talk to me about that. I bet you do know. It's about why you decided to draw this. Did the story remind you of this?
Matthew: Uhmm… Yeah.
A: Tell me how.
Matthew: Because of the part when they went to the tunnel.
A: So that reminded you of finding this place in the mountain with a door.
Matthew: Uhm hmm…

In his response to *The Tunnel,* Matthew discussed a memory of when he and his cousin were off exploring on a camping trip. He placed himself and his cousin in the picture and then gave an account of his fear at finding the door in the mountainside. He linked his memory to the events in Anthony Browne's picturebook after I prompted him to give his reasons for including the details in his drawing. Matthew's artistic response and conversation was categorized primarily as autobiographical. Several labeling, character description and character feeling statements were also contained within the transcript.

In Figure 7 below, Matthew's drawing about Willy in *Willy the Wimp* focused on Willy's feelings and facial gestures. In the drawing Matthew featured Willy. He drew Willy's chimpanzee fur and clothing, as was depicted in the picturebook. Additionally, his diagram of Willy appeared to show a worried and sad expression on his face.

Figure 7. Matthew's artistic response to *Willy the Wimp.*

Below is an excerpt of my conversation with Matthew in his response to his artwork.

A: Tell me about your picture.
Matthew: It's Willy.
A: And is Willy big there or is he small?
Matthew: He's uhh… the part when he's kind of a wimp.
A: Kind of a wimp. How do you think he feels there?
Matthew: Sad.
A: How come?
Matthew: Because his mouth is uhh down like he's sad.
A: And what about his eyes?
Matthew: They look pretty bad too.
A: So how do you think Willy feels when he's small and he's a wimp?
Matthew: Uhmm… He feels really sad.

In this excerpt Matthew gave a reason for Willy's feelings and supported his reasons with examples from his drawing which showed Willy's mouth and eyes communicating sadness. Matthew's conversation about his artwork greatly aided my understanding of his drawing and how he expressed Willy's feelings in the story.

Matthew represented an autobiographical connection of a personal memory of receiving a toy gorilla in his drawing response to *Gorilla* (see Figure 8). Matthew featured himself receiving a toy gorilla with red eyes for a third birthday present. He featured the moon shining outside of his window. He drew a large red smiling face on himself and appeared content in this scene.

Figure 8. Matthew's artistic response to *Gorilla.*

My conversation with Matthew is featured below.

A: Tell me about your picture.
Matthew: Ahh … that … when the girl was sleeping with the gorilla … reminded me of when I first got my red-eyed toy gorilla.
A: Oh you got a red-eyed toy gorilla?
Matthew: Uh hmm.
A: And which one is you in the picture?
Matthew: The one that's bigger.
A: So you're this guy (I point to the larger human figure). And who is the one with the red eyes?
Matthew: The gorilla.
A: Oh … so this story reminded you of your own experience … and tell me … did you get one for a present?
Matthew: Uh hmm.
A: When did you get it?
Matthew: At my third birthday.
A: So you got it for a birthday present too. Really? Just like Hannah. Wow … so that's a real connection for you. Do you have anything else to tell me about your picture?
Matthew: Well no…
A: Ok … thank you.

During Matthew's conversation he made an autobiographical connection between himself and Hannah in the picturebook. In his discussion Matthew also labeled items and provided character description comments.

Matthew and his cousin were also featured in his drawing response to *Zoo* (see Figure 9). In the picture and conversation Matthew labeled his cousin and himself. Matthew and his cousin are featured inside a room, with the sun streaming in through the window.

Figure 9. Matthew's artistic response to *Zoo.*

During the conversation I had with Matthew he described his autobiographical connection to *Zoo.*

A: So I'm talking to Matthew today about the picture he finished about Anthony Browne's picturebook *Zoo.* Tell me about your picture.
Matthew: In the story *Zoo* the two brothers fight, and me and my cousin always fight at his house and at my house.
A: Oh … do you?
Matthew: Uh hmm.
A: Oh … do you get mad at each other?
Matthew: No we just go … hmm let's fight.
A: Oh … like you tangle and wrestle and stuff.
Michael: Yeah.

A: Oh … is it fun?
Michael: Yeah.

Matthew made a relationship connection between the characters of the two brothers in the picturebook and himself and his cousin. In addition to the drawing, Matthew's conversation provided additional detail about his autobiographical connection to *Zoo*. The relationship of the two brothers in *Zoo* did not include play fighting, yet the picturebook reminded Matthew of his own relationship.

Similar to several of his other drawings, Matthew made an autobiographical connection to *Piggybook* during his conversation about his artistic response (see Figure 10). He told me the orange character on the right was his Granny, the green character was his cousin and the small black character was him. Matthew drew himself and his cousin (featured left and center) demanding something from his Granny (featured on the right). The grandmother is responding with "all right."

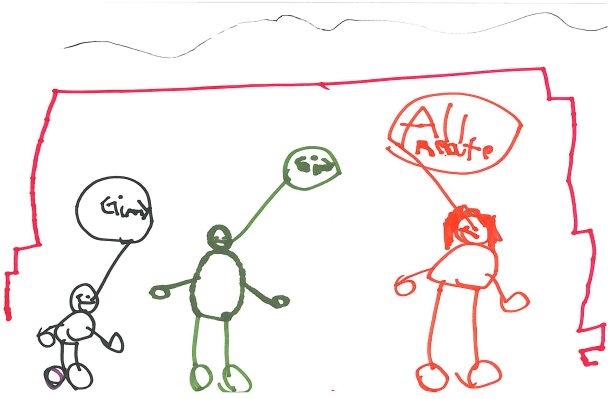

Figure 10. Matthew's artistic response to *Piggybook.*

My conversation with Matthew about his drawing response provided additional clarity about his artistic response.

A: So I'm talking to Matthew today about the picture he finished about Anthony Browne's book *Piggybook.* Tell me about your picture.
Matthew: Uh…me and my cousin always go to my Granny's and she could give us food any time we want it and anything.
A: And how does that remind you of *Piggybook*?
Matthew: Because they get whatever they want.
A: What do you mean they get whatever they want?
Matthew: Uh…the two kids and the Dad got any…everything they wanted.
A: Yeah…and who are the people in your picture? The black person is….
Matthew: Me.
A: And the green person is?
Matthew: My cousin.
A: And the orange person is?
Matthew: That's my Granny
A: And so what are you doing with your Granny?
Matthew: We're saying…I said…I say give and stuff…I say Gimmee.
A: So you were yelling at your Granny to give you stuff like the kids in *Piggybook.*
Matthew: No…we don't yell…just like gimmee…
A: So you ask.
Matthew: Yeah.
A: Hmm…so are you nice, or are you demanding with your Grandma?
Matthew: Uh…Sam was kind of but I wasn't.
A: Oh…ok…well that's a really good connection. Anything else to tell me?
Matthew: No.
A: Thank you.

In this excerpt Matthew recalled in detail how he and his cousin requested things from his Granny. The read-aloud of *Piggybook* reminded him of how similar he and his cousin's behaviour was to that of the two boys and the father in the story. In addition to his autobiographical connection to the picturebook Matthew provided character description comments.

During Matthew's individual sessions his talk about his art was categorized into all six types of conversational statements. Four of his five artistic responses and ensuing conversations focused on his autobiographical and character description connections to the picturebooks. Matthew's second response (see Figure 7)

was primarily categorized as a character feeling response. Table 13 provides detail on the types and frequency of conversational statements made by Matthew during the five individual interviews and the five small group read-aloud sessions.

Table 13

Matthew's Responses During the Individual Interviews and Small-group Read-alouds

	Character Description		*Character Feelings*		*Labeling*		*Intertextual*		*Autobiographical*		*Other*	
	n	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***
Individual	5	6.8	8	10.8	7	9.5	6	8.1	34	45.9	14	18.9
Small Group	28	17.2	18	11.0	55	33.7	14	8.6	12	7.4	36	22.1

During the five small-group read-alouds Matthew made 163 conversational statements and during the individual interviews he made 74. His conversational statements spanned the content of all 6 categories that were identified in the analysis of the transcripts. Table 13 reveals that Matthew's character description statements during individual interviews accounted for slightly more than 5% of his overall conversational statements, whereas during the small group read-alouds this type of statement accounted for nearly 20% of all conversation turns. Matthew made fewer labeling statements during individual interviews than during the small group read-alouds (9.5% and 33.7% respectively). Matthew shared a nearly identical percentage of intertextual statements during the individual and small group settings (8.1 and 8.6 respectively) and a nearly identical percentage of character feeling statements during the individual and small group settings (10.8% and 11.0% respectively). Nearly one-half of Matthew's overall

conversation turns during the individual interviews were autobiographical, compared to less than 10% of statements made during small group read-alouds. Matthew also made a similar amount of conversational statements that were classified as 'other' during both settings (approximately 20%).

As is evident from the conversational excerpts and the data in Table 13, Matthew's conversation spanned all five categories of talk that were identified as being central to my research questions. While he spoke more about his autobiographical connections to the picturebooks during the individual interviews than he did during the small group read-alouds, Matthew also made other types of statements.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth was seven-years old at the time of this research study. She was a quiet student who enjoyed playing magical and make-believe games with her friends. She received additional reading instruction from the Reading Recovery teacher at the school, participated in a home-reading program, and participated daily in her class guided reading group. Elizabeth was often quiet during both the individual interviews and the small group read-alouds. Elizabeth was minimally meeting expectations in reading according to the British Columbia Ministry of Education Performance Standards in Reading (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2009) for Grade 1.

Elizabeth's Artistic and Oral Responses

Elizabeth made intertextual connections through her artwork and in her conversations about her drawings in response to the five picturebooks by Anthony Browne. In her artistic response to *The Tunnel* Elizabeth drew a picture of a fairy in a forest and alluded to a story about a fairy from a magical land during the individual

conversation I had with her about her picture (see Figure 11 below). She also featured trees, a cross, and a grave stone in her picture.

Figure 11. Elizabeth's artistic response to *The Tunnel*.

Below is an excerpt of my conversation with Elizabeth.

A:	Tell me about the picture you have finished today, Elizabeth.
Elizabeth:	Well there's this girl who finds this tunnel and goes through to a magical land. And there's goblins.
A:	There's goblins. Uh hmm…
Elizabeth:	And she turns into a fairy.
A:	Why does she turn into a fairy?
Elizabeth:	Because she's in fairy land…
A:	Uh hmm… and tell me about your trees.
Elizabeth:	They're magical trees that the fairies live in.
A:	What are these things? (I point to the two grey objects between the trees).
Elizabeth:	Well there's a grave back here and the fairies are really scared of it.
A:	Really? So that's the grave and they're scared of it. Why did you draw a round mouth around her?
Elizabeth:	Because she's really surprised.

Elizabeth's response was not only intertextual in her bridging another story of a fairy and goblins with the illustrations and events in *The Tunnel*, but she also referred to the character's feelings and made an accurate depiction of the double-page spread from

the picturebook. This excerpt of Elizabeth's conversation reveals how the talk often spanned more than one conversational category.

In some cases Elizabeth's narratives about her drawings described an accurate reflection of story facts and departed little from the storyline. Some of her drawings also appeared to bear close likeness with the actual picturebook illustrations and were constructed from her memories of the read-alouds. Such was the content of Elizabeth's artistic response to *Willy the Wimp* (see Figure 12 below).

Figure 12. Elizabeth's artistic response to *Willy the Wimp.*

Elizabeth described her drawing: "Well…this is Willy walking into the pole. He's saying sorry." I asked Elizabeth whose thinking the thought bubbles represented and she pointed to herself. Elizabeth was reluctant to say more in this response but she did make motions of strong arms when I asked her what she thought about Willy in this picturebook. Her drawing represented an accurate depiction of Willy walking into a pole and saying he was sorry, which was featured at the end of the picturebook.

Elizabeth depicted the cat from the front cover of *Gorilla* in her artistic response to the picturebook and also extended the storyline in her character description of the cat and the snake by commenting on a scene from the story (see Figure 13).

Figure 13. Elizabeth's artistic response to *Gorilla.*

Elizabeth described the scene from the cover of *Gorilla* by stating, "This is the cat on the cover of the book. It was jumping up in the story and a poisonous snake came out of the bushes and the cat jumped up and it had venom." Elizabeth enriched my awareness of her understanding of the events on the cover of *Gorilla* by conversing with me about her extensions to the picturebook. During my conversation with Elizabeth, she labeled items and made a direct connection to the picturebook.

In her artistic response to *Zoo* (see Figure 14 below) Elizabeth also labeled many accessories that she imagined her character was enjoying. Within the drawing Elizabeth placed a hamster and a playground that included many cage accessories that the hamster was enjoying. Elizabeth's artistic response was triggered by her memory of the hamster in a cage as depicted on the cover of the picturebook.

Figure 14. Elizabeth's artistic response to *Zoo.*

During her individual interview about her artwork Elizabeth described her character's cage and accessories in vivid detail saying, "This is the hamster on the front page. And it's and he's…and she's in her cage and that's her house and that's her hot tub. That's her wheel and that's her water. That's her food and that's her other food if she wants to go out for like dinner." Elizabeth was unusually talkative during this interview and discussed her drawing response in detail. Her conversation enhanced my awareness of the many items she labeled in her drawing.

Elizabeth spoke infrequently during both the individual interviews and the small group read-alouds. She usually made gestures rather than using words to describe her images. Such was the case in her interview about her response to *Piggybook.* In the drawing (see Figure 15) Elizabeth featured the mother from the picturebook. Her figure was standing outside on a partly cloudy day. Contained in the artistic image were a butterfly and a flower.

Figure 15. Elizabeth's artistic response to *Piggybook.*

An excerpt of my conversation with Elizabeth about her response to *Piggybook*, is featured below.

A:	Tell me about your picture.
Elizabeth:	Uhmm … well this is the girl that had done all the work.
A:	That's the girl at the end that did all the work?
Elizabeth:	Uhmm hmm.
A:	And how is she feeling in your picture?
Elizabeth:	Uhmm… sad.
A:	How come?
Elizabeth:	Because … She's the one that has to do all the work.

Elizabeth was reluctant to talk about her picture, yet my gentle probing questions elicited both a character description comment followed by a character feeling comment and a reason for this character's feeling. The opportunity Elizabeth was given to talk about her art provided me with a greater understanding of her responses to the picturebooks. Her conversation about her drawing response was categorized as character description, character feeling and labeling.Table 14 below shows the number and frequency of conversational statements Elizabeth generated during the individual interviews and the small group read-alouds.

Table 14

Elizabeth's Responses During the Individual Interviews and Small-group Read-alouds

	Character Description		*Character Feelings*		*Labeling*		*Intertextual*		*Autobiographical*		*Other*	
	n	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***	***n***	***%***
Individual	12	20.7	6	10.3	6	10.3	16	27.6	7	12.1	11	19.0
Small Group	18	30.0	5	8.3	13	21.7	7	11.7	1	1.7	16	26.7

During the small-group read-alouds Elizabeth contributed 60 conversational statements. During the five individual interviews about her artwork she made 58 conversational statements. As Elizabeth was a shy student and did not speak as frequently as most students during the small-group read-alouds, the individual setting provided her with a context to open up on a more personal level, as evidenced by the data in Table 14.

Data analysis revealed that approximately one-fifth (20.7%) of Elizabeth's comments during the individual interviews and nearly one-third (30.0%) of her overall conversational turns during the small group read-alouds were character description statements. Elizabeth generated a similar percentage of character feeling comments during the small group read-alouds as she did in the individual interviews (8.3% and 10.3% respectively). Elizabeth contributed twice as many labeling statements during the small group read-alouds as she did during the individual interviews (21.7% and 10.3% respectively). More than one-quarter (27.6%) of Elizabeth's overall conversational turns during the individual interviews were intertextual statements and more than one-tenth (11.7%) of her statements during the small group read-alouds were of this type. Overall,

approximately one-tenth (12.1%) of Elizabeth's statements were autobiographical during her individual interviews. She shared very few (1.7%) of these type of statements during her small group read-aloud sessions. Nearly one-fifth (19.0%) of Elizabeth's comments during the individual interviews were other statements, while more than one-quarter (26.7%) of her conversational turns were other statements during the small group read-alouds.

As evidenced by the data in Table 14, Elizabeth generated many more autobiographical and intertextual connections during the individual interviews about her art than she did during the small group setting. Elizabeth's conversation spanned all five categories of talk that I identified as being central to my research questions.

A Synopsis of the Three Readers

The children's drawing responses to the picturebooks were as varied as the picturebooks themselves and none of the three children consistently drew pictures of one particular type. The children's drawing choices were unique, often reflecting the child's impression of the books, and perhaps reflecting the child's particular mood that day or closer connection with one picturebook than another. The analysis of the children's conversations about their drawings revealed the extent their interviews included character description statements, character feeling statements, labeling statements, intertextual connections, and autobiographical connections.

All three children made varied responses during the individual interviews about their artwork. Abigail, who was exceeding expectations in reading, generated a higher percentage of intertextual and autobiographical comments during her individual interviews than during her small group read-alouds. Alternatively, Matthew, who was

meeting expectations in reading, generated fewer intertextual responses during his individual interviews than during his small group read-alouds but shared significantly more autobiographical responses during the individual interviews than during the small group read-alouds. Elizabeth, who was minimally meeting expectations in reading, shared more intertexual and autobiographical responses during her individual interviews than during her small group read-alouds. I believe Elizabeth felt more comfortable speaking in the individual setting more than within the group as she made almost the same amount of conversational statements in both settings. This comparision of the conversations in both settings was important as the individual interviews lasted 1 to 2 minutes while the small group read-alouds lasted 20 to 26 minutes. I believe that all three children felt more comfortable speaking during the individual interviews about their autobiographical connections to the picturebooks we read than they did during the small group setting, even though my directions included a prompt that the children could place themselves or someone they knew in their drawings if they wished.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings of three children's artwork and conversations generated in response to the read-aloud sessions of five picturebooks by Anthony Browne over a six-week period. The purpose of the study was to explore the types of conversational statements the children made both during small group read-alouds and during individual interviews that featured discussions about the artistic responses that the children created following the small group read-alouds of the picturebooks.

During the data analysis of the children's individual conversations and drawing responses to the five picturebooks used in the study I applied the same categories that I

had identified during analysis of the small group read-alouds (see Chapter 3). The individual conversations I had with the children revealed that they constructed meaning about the texts in five ways: (a) making descriptive comments about characters; (b) making comments about characters' feelings; (c) labeling objects in their artwork and in their readings of the picturebooks; (d) making autobiographical connections to the picturebooks in their drawings and conversations about their art; and (e) making intertextual comments about the characters and events in the picturebooks and their artwork. The children's personal drawing responses and their accompanying conversations about their art greatly aided me in understanding the ways they constructed meaning from Anthony Browne's picturebooks.

Chapter 6 summarizes the key findings from the study, links the findings to relevant literature, discusses implications for instruction and provides recommendations for further research. In this chapter I also discuss my reflections on the research process.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

"The important thing is to not stop questioning" (Albert Einstein, n.d.).

This chapter reviews the research purpose and context, and summarizes the key findings of the study that explored the nature of the Grade 1 students' oral and artistic responses to five Anthony Browne picturebooks. I discuss the findings from the research questions in four sections: (a) young children's conversations about characters; (b) young children's intertextual connections to characters and events in the picturebooks; (c) young children's conversations about their art; and (d) young children's autobiographical connections to characters and events in the picturebooks. I also discuss the findings related to the children's labelling statements. The research findings are discussed with reference to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Further, the findings are examined within the context of Rosenblatt's reader response theory, social constructivism and symbolic interactionism, semiotic theory and visual literacy. Pedagogical suggestions for educators of young children are offered, and areas for further research are proposed. The final conclusions include my reflections on the research process and findings.

Summary of the Research

The purpose of the 6-week qualitative study was to explore young children's individual and small-group transactions with picturebooks by one author, to gain insight into: (a) what young children discussed about characters within selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne; (b) whether young children made intertexual connections between characters, illustrations, or events in Browne's picturebooks, and if so, the nature of these responses; (c) what young children's artwork and their subsequent discussion about their

art revealed about their understanding of characters; and (d) whether young children made autobiographical connections between their own lives and the characters in selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne, and if so, the nature of these responses. As described previously, the children's conversations during the small group read-alouds were audio-recorded and transcribed, and field notes documented student affective responses to the texts. After reading each picturebook, the children also responded to the book in the form of a drawing and participated in an individual interview about their art. The children's conversations about their artwork were also audio-recorded and transcribed. Three children's oral responses to the picturebooks in both a small group and individual setting were explored to identify both the similarities and differences in the content of their conversations between the two contexts. I also examined the three children's artwork to find out if, and how, the act of drawing a personal response aided in their construction of meaning about characters.

In the next four sections I present the findings that answer each of the four guiding research questions and connect these findings to the relevant research literature.

Answering the Research Questions

Young Children's Conversations about Characters

Chapter 4 described how analysis of the transcripts of the small group interactive read-aloud sessions revealed that the children constructed meaning about the characters and events in Browne's books through five types of responses: (a) character description; (b) character feeling; (c) labeling; (d) intertextual; and (e) autobiographical.

My first guiding research question explored what young children discussed about the characters featured within selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne. The children's

character description and character feeling statements were grouped together to indicate how much of the children's conversations were specifically about characters. Data analysis of the children's small group interactive read-alouds and individual interviews revealed that the children discussed characters' physical features (body size, proximity to other characters, color of characters, facial expressions, clothing, anthropomorphic characteristics, movement of characters) and characters' feelings (desires, disappointments, fears, emotions of love, relative power in relationships). Physical features of characters, which were categorized as character description comments in the transcripts, accounted for an average of approximately one-quarter (i.e. 24.5%) of all conversation turns by the four groups during the read-aloud sessions of the five picturebooks. Comments about character feelings accounted for an overall average of approximately one-tenth (i.e. 10.9%) of all conversational turns in the transcripts. Over the read-alouds approximately 35.4% of the children's statements were specific to the protagonists in the stories.

Sipe (2008), who explored young children's conversational responses to picturebooks, categorized his participants' responses into analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, and performative responses. Of these five categories, the analytical category included the children's comments on aspects of setting, characters, plot and theme, as well as the structure and meaning of the verbal text, the illustration sequence and aspects of the books' design, including peritextual features. I adopted several of Sipe's categories in the analysis of my data, however, I chose to further break down Sipe's analytical category to include the categories of character description, character feelings and labelling in order to examine what the children said about characters in the

stories. Thus, my findings on the children's comments about characters and character's feelings extended Sipe's previous research on children's understanding of characters.

An additional finding in my study was that the children primarily adopted a mimetic stance towards characters as the characters developed in the stories. As Nikolajeva (2002, 2005) theorized, a reader can adopt a mimetic view of a character, which refers to the reader viewing the character as a real entity and integrates the use of personal and cultural knowledge in understanding characters, or a semiotic view of a character, which involves the reader analyzing the character as fictitious, and bound within the signs and symbols created within the text. Nikolajeva reasoned that young children frequently adopt a mimetic stance towards a character if that character appears to be of similar age to them and is in a similar subordinate position of power. During both the small group discussions and the individual interviews the children in my study at times viewed the characters as real. This reality-taking perspective was evident through the ways the children spoke about the struggles of the characters and by their numerous autobiographical statements. The children's comments signalled to me that they viewed the characters, including anthropomorphic characters, as real people of similar age to themselves and with similar difficulties to overcome.

Young Children's Intertextual Connections to Characters and Events in the Picturebooks

My second research question explored whether young children made intertextual connections between characters, illustrations, or events in Browne's picturebooks and investigated the nature of these connections. Data analysis of the 20 small group read-alouds revealed that a very small percentage of the overall conversation turns made by

the children (i.e., an average of 4.7%) were intertextual in nature. Looking more closely at the intertextual statements from the transcripts revealed that the children made references to other picturebooks, as well as to video games, movies, cartoons, television series, computer games, and geographical locations and famous structures.

Like Pantaleo's research (2004), I found that the young children in my study accessed their literary histories as they made intertextual connections during small group read-alouds. Allen (2000) stated that every individual brings different interests, expectations, prior reading experiences and viewpoints to the reading event. The intertextual connections made by the children in my study revealed their previous experiences of viewing art, motion pictures, television, computer games and literature during their comments and connections to the picturebooks. While some of the children's intertextual connections were affirmed by their peers, other intertextual connections were contested by their classmates who indeed generated differing ideas, signalling their unique intertextual histories. Sipe's (2008) categorization of intertextual responses during young children's picturebook read-alouds revealed that the children spoke about cultural texts and products, including references to other books, references to other artists and illustrators, TV programs, movies, videos and advertisements, and the writing or art of fellow classmates. My findings on the children's intertextual connections resonated with the findings from Sipe's research. The children's language reflected the vast array of intertextual connections that have been documented in the research literature (Many & Anderson, 1992; Pantaleo, 2004, 2008; Short, 1992; Sipe, 2000, 2008).

Young Children's Conversations About Their Art

My third research question explored what young children's conversations about their artistic responses revealed about their understanding of characters. To review, I analyzed the individual conversations and artistic responses of three children. Similar to the children's small group read-alouds, I found that during the children's individual discussions about their art they made references to characters' physical features, as well as to characters' emotions. The children also labeled many items in their personal art responses, and made intertextual and autobiographical connections to the characters in the picturebooks. Data analysis revealed that the majority of the three students' visual arts responses were autobiographical in nature, with the children making reference to events in their personal lives as they constructed meaning about the characters in the picturebooks. This may have been due to my prompt that the children could place themselves or someone they knew in their drawings if they wished. I also found that at times the children extended the content of the picturebooks by including characters in their visual arts responses that they wished were in the picturebooks. During the individual interviews about their art, the three children elaborated on the features of characters by providing more detail about the characters' physical features and actions than they did during the small group conversations. Additionally, the children spoke more about the characters' feelings during the individual interviews than they did during the small group read-alouds.

The data revealed that as the children discussed their artistic images, they referred to characters and features in the picturebooks that held meaning for them and they integrated these meanings into their own artwork. Thus, the act of creating personal art

seemed to be an enriching experience for the children, as they connected in personal ways with the characters and events within the picturebooks. These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Arizpe and Styles (2003) and Styles and Arizpe (2001) who found that during semi-structured interviews that involved the children talking about their art, the young children explored their feelings and were emotionally engaged in the visual imagery in Browne's *Zoo* (1992). Similar to the results of Whitin's (2002) study, who found that children's sketches enabled the children to move beyond a simple retelling of the story to one that created personal meaning, my findings revealed that using visual arts responses along with conversation provided the children with the opportunity to connect personal meaning to the characters in the picturebooks.

Pantaleo (2004) also studied young children's visual arts responses to literature and she utilized Agosto's (1999) analytical framework to analyze her data. Pantaleo found that a predominant amount of the Grade 1 students' visual responses and dictated sentences reflected interdependent storytelling, with the text extending the information found in the pictures or the pictures extending the information in the text. My findings were consistent with Pantaleo's research, as I also found that the children in my study communicated alternative information between their visual arts responses and their individual interviews when they drew and spoke about the characters, events and accessories in their artistic responses. I believe the children's conversations about their art revealed additional information that the children did not convey through their drawings alone.

The children's drawings, in combination with their individual interviews, served at least two purposes: assisting the children in extending their understandings of the stories and the characters, and; revealing to me additional connections and understandings that the children may not have been able to convey through one sign system alone, either verbally or visually. Gardner (1973) and Kress and van Leeuwan (1996) have stated that visual and verbal means for responding are not simply alternative forms of responses for saying the same thing. These authors believe that young children may often be more adept at using one of these sign systems, and contend that children should become proficient in using both drawing and conversation to express themselves. Noden and Moss (1995) have stated that moving between visual and verbal sign systems can help children explore solutions to conflicts in their personal lives and can provide the children with opportunities to "imagine new possibilities for themselves and others" (p. 502).

Parson's (1987) research on cognitive developmental understanding of art revealed a progression of stages in how humans develop in their understanding of art. My findings on the children's conversations about their art revealed that most of the Grade 1 students were consistent with stage two of this development, and the latter was evident through the ways the students talked about the characters and scenes in the picturebooks during the small group read-alouds and during their individual conversations about their artistic responses. As described by Parsons, during both research settings the Grade 1 children spoke about their appreciation of the beauty and realism in the picturebooks and made evaluative comments about the visuals. The students noticed numerous small

details in the illustrations, and commented on color, size and perspective, as well as aspects of the characters, including descriptions and feelings.

Researchers have described the benefits of providing artistic opportunities for children to respond to picturebooks (Anderson, 1998; Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Rabey, 2003; Pantaleo, 2005; Short et al., 2000; Whitin, 2002). Noden and Moss (1995) utilized the Sketch-to-Stretch strategy first introduced by Harste, Short, and Burke (1988) and noted that using this strategy "helped the children explore solutions to conflicts in their lives" (p. 502), something I also found to be true as I spoke with the three focus children about their personal visual arts responses. The three children talked about their fears and family conflicts, thus signalling to me that using art as a way to respond helped them to explore conflicts in their lives. Similar to Short, Kauffman, and Kahn's (2000) study, I also found that using art as a means to respond to the picturebooks enabled the children to "actively construct understandings as they entered the world of literature to learn about life and to make sense of their experiences and feelings" (p. 160). I believe that providing the opportunity for the children to respond through art was an enriching and enjoyable experience for the children in my study.

Young Children's Autobiographical Connections to Characters and Events in the Picturebooks

The fourth research question explored whether young children made autobiographical connections between their own lives and the characters in the selected picturebooks by Anthony Browne and investigated the nature of these responses. The children's autobiographical connections accounted for a very small percentage of all conversational turns (i.e., an average of 6.6%) over the 20 read-alouds. However, during

the individual interviews with the three focus children in the study I found that the occurrence of autobiographical connections was much more frequent than during the small group read-aloud sessions, which may have been due to the influence of my prompt when providing directions prior to the children's commencement of their artwork. Similar to Sipe's (2008) analysis of children's conversational responses to picturebooks, I found that during both the small group read-alouds and the individual interview settings the children made life-to-text connections where the children "utilized some experience from their own lives to understand or illuminate the text being read aloud" (p. 86). Like the participants in the studies conducted by Anderson et al. (1998), Kiefer (1995), Madura (1998) and Pantaleo (2004), the children in my study also made personal connections to the stories as they constructed understanding of the visuals and text in the picturebooks. The children in my study "searched the illustrations to find details to support the theories they were forming throughout their thinking" (Anderson et al., 1998, p. 148), and in this way made connections between the events in the picturebooks and those events in their own personal lives.

Young Children's Labeling Comments

An additional aspect I found that was adjunct to my central research questions was the preponderance of labeling statements made by the children during the read-aloud sessions of the picturebooks. To review, labeling statements included student comments that made reference to details in the illustrations that were not linked to a central character in the story. During the 20 read-alouds an average of one-third (i.e. 33.9%) of all of the statements made by the children were categorized as labeling. While the children made labeling statements during the read-alouds of all five picturebooks, the

average number of labeling statements was much lower (i.e. 15.5%) during the read-alouds of *Willy the Wimp*. The high occurrence of student labeling statements made during the read-alouds of *The Tunnel, Gorilla, Zoo* and *Piggybook* may be due to the small or hidden details in the artwork featured in these four picturebooks (e.g., in *Piggybook* there were numerous small details with figures of pigs in the illustrations). The high number of labeling statements indicated to me that the children were looking closely at the artwork in the picturebooks. The children's labeling talk at times pre-empted other types of remarks, as the children responded with excitement about each new hidden detail that they found in the illustrations. This labeling behaviour was similar to Sipe's (2008) category of analytical statements. While Sipe included aspects of character descriptions, character feelings, labeling and features of the books' design all within his analytical category, my labeling category focused on the children's labeling of the illustrations and features of the books' designs. As I broke down Sipe's category into the components of labeling, character description and character feelings, I was able to gain insight into the number of statements the children made in each of these three categories. The number of labeling statements extended previous research on young children's verbal responses to picturebooks. While some would say that labeling is a low level cognitive activity, I believe that the children's labeling statements were significant as their statements indicated that they were searching the illustrations intently for details, which is a behaviour that supports and extends their learning about visual literacy.

Theoretical Connections

In the following sections I describe how the research findings are in harmony with Rosenblatt's (1978) reader response theory, social constructivism and symbolic

interactionism, and how these theories inform our knowledge of social interactions, the importance of scaffolding the children's learning, and semiotics. I also discuss the findings from my study with respect to the research literature that describes the importance of developing children's visual literacy knowledge and skills.

Rosenblatt's Reader Response Theory

Rosenblatt's (1978) transactional theory of reader response describes the ways in which readers construct unique personal meanings as they transact with literature. Her theory emphasizes a continuum of stances between efferent and aesthetic that the reader can adopt while he/she transacts with text. Rosenblatt's transactional theory was an important foundation of this study for the following reasons. I attempted to provide an atmosphere where the children were relaxed and felt comfortable to participate in an experience that allowed them to approach the texts both aesthetically and efferently. The children in my study immersed themselves in the picturebooks; they communicated appreciation of the beauty of the illustrations, signalling to me that they had adopted an aesthetic stance as they delighted in the page openings in the picturebooks, and they wondered about and entered into the story worlds. Second, the children also commented on numerous small details in the illustrations and offered insightful comments and predictions about the characters and events in the stories, demonstrating the adoption of an efferent stance as they analyzed the pictures and texts.

Rosenblatt (1978) also wrote about the particularity of the reading event. She described how the reading event is unique for each reader and that each reader brings his/her own background knowledge and set of experiences to a particular reading. Rosenblatt (1994) stated, "a specific reader and a specific text at a specific time and

place: change any of these, and there occurs a different circuit, a different event" (p. 14). This particularity was reflected in the children's comments and how the focus of their comments changed moment-by-moment during the read-alouds, as they alternated their talk from that of analysis of the visuals and text (i.e. labelling statements and character description statements), thus signalling to me that they were adopting an efferent stance towards the picturebooks, to adopting an aesthetic stance (i.e. autobiographical statements, laughter and physical actions to punctuate their statements). The findings of my study confirmed to me Allen's (2000) statement that that there is "never a single or correct way to read a text" (p. 7), but every individual brings different interests, expectations, prior reading experiences and viewpoints to the reading event.

Rosenblatt's (1994) ideas about the particularity of the reading event also include a consideration of other contextual factors including the impact of social interactions among readers, which included the children's impact on each other and my influence as a teacher/researcher on the reading event. I noticed that the conversation among the children changed focus through the introduction of a new idea by a student or myself and that this idea germinated other ideas that subsequently developed. Further, each read-aloud session was unique as each session occurred with a particular group of students at a particular time and place.

Impact of Social Interactions

The children constructed meaning about the characters in the picturebooks through their social interactions with each other (during the small group settings) and with me (during the individual interview settings). The theories of social constructivism and of symbolic interactionism stress that human beings learn best through social

interaction and that human beings have created a social world through their use of language and their ability to think, reason and communicate (Mead, 1969, as cited in Hewitt, 2007; Sandstrom et al., 2006). Consistent with the beliefs of Social Constructivism and Symbolic Interactionism, the children socially negotiated meanings as they made discoveries about the characters and events in the picturebooks during the small group read-aloud sessions.

The students in the study were given opportunities and encouragement to share their opinions and thoughts and to question the texts and one another during their interactions. During the interactive read-aloud sessions involving the four groups, many of the children's responses extended invitations to other children to respond, explore and negotiate meanings in the picturebooks. Similar to Pantaleo's (2008) results, I also found that the young children in my study developed ideas collectively by building on each other's suggestions, thoughts and comments, and arrived at collective meanings of the stories as they "drew inferences, made interpretations [and] generated hypotheses" (p. 67).

Mercer's (1995) term 'interthinking' describes how talk is used to "think collectively" and is a concept that has been tested by other researchers (Pantaleo, 2007, p. 439). The children in the study engaged with each other's ideas during their conversations, and constructed new understandings as they developed richer personal meanings about the picturebooks. I was mindful throughout the study to provide the children with opportunities to try out their thoughts as they developed ideas about the picturebooks meanings. The children's attempts to try out ideas were particularly evident during the passages where the children were engaging in exploratory talk while they

debated their ideas with each other. As research has indicated (Barnes, 1992), children need opportunities to "try out" their thoughts as they negotiate their understandings of literature during conversations. My behaviours as a participant/researcher during the small group read-alouds and when scaffolding the children's learning are discussed in the next section.

Scaffolding the Children's Learning

One aspect of Symbolic Interactionism that was particularly important to my study was how my own contributions as a participant/researcher during the read-alouds affected the outcome of the social talk among the children. Hewitt (2007) noted that Symbolic Interactionists view the self in relation to the social group and therefore view learning as social and complex. As I was part of the social group during the read-alouds I found it challenging to maintain the delicate balance between my two roles, as I always had to be mindful of how my involvement was affecting the children's focus and comments during each opening of the picturebooks. I found my involvement was particularly difficult to negotiate when I was asking the children questions about aspects of the text and illustrations as I knew that my questions and comments were affecting the students' comments. During the read-alouds I anticipated that my questions would arise naturally when a child would notice features in the text or illustrations. While I believe this structure was a strength as I let the children lead the discussions, I wondered if I might have had different results if I had planned specific questions at key junctions in the texts.

In order to facilitate meaningful discussions during the small group conversations about the picturebooks I offered modeling and guidance so that the children would

understand how to effectively participate during a group discussion. Lev Vygotsky (1987) emphasized the need for teachers to scaffold children's understandings through modeling and guided practice, gradually releasing responsibility to the children as they become more capable of independently engaging in a task. I believe my guidance in reading and discussing *The Tunnel,* which was the first picturebook presented during the study, provided the children with an opportunity to grow in their understanding of how picturebooks work and how characters interact within the texts. During this initial set of read-alouds I scaffolded the children's understanding of how to read a picturebook, and defined what "a good group member looks like." I additionally provided scaffolding through my questioning during the read-alouds. Consistent with previous research that has indicated that teacher modeling and guidance during literature discussions can facilitate children's discussions of text (Lindfors, 1999; Mercer & Littleton, 2007), my questioning during both settings guided the development of the children's understanding by encouraging them to make their thoughts explicit, modeled useful ways of using language, and provided opportunities for the children to make longer contributions as they articulated their understandings. I believe my initial guidance, as well as my guidance throughout the study, encouraged the children to respond to the picturebooks in more meaningful ways and helped them to construct sophisticated meanings from the illustrations, characters and events in the books.

Semiotics and Visual Literacy

In order for children to participate in meaningful discussions of picturebooks they require skills in how to 'read' visual texts (Chandler, 2007, p. 161). As children are immersed in a visual world, understanding how visuals work can enable their

understanding of the visual culture we live in (Doonan, 1993; Duncum, 2001) and can provide the children with understanding about visual images in media such as picturebooks. Visual literacy skills become imperative for children in order for them to understand the vast amount of visual information that they encounter in their daily lives. Chandler (2007) referred to the work of Nichols (1981) who commented that, "just as we learn to read an image, we must learn to read the physical world" (as cited in Chandler, p. 152), and although this skill is learned early in life, it is not necessarily acquired without direction and support.

Semiotic theory helps to explain the ways in which viewers of visual texts, such as those written and illustrated by Anthony Browne, construct meaning from the visual signs embedded in the illustrations. Chandler (2007) suggested that signs such as words, images, sounds, acts or objects "have no intrinsic meaning and become signs when we invest them with meaning" (p. 13). Kress and van Leeuwan (1996) also discussed that the semiotic modes of visual and verbal structures are "not simply alternative means of representing 'the same thing'" (p. 76). Researchers (e.g., Chandler, 2007; Nichols, 1981) have suggested that because our understanding of signs is developed through experience, it is important to immerse children in literature, and to teach them strategies for viewing illustrations.

During the study the children used both the verbal and the visual sign system to construct meaning. During both the small group read-alouds and the individual interviews the children used the visual sign system to discuss the art images (including elements of colour, texture, pattern and line), and they used the verbal sign system (where words, phrases, sentences, and sounds communicate meaning) to discuss aspects of the

characters (including descriptions, feelings and labelling comments). They also used movement (where facial expressions and body movement communicate meaning) to construct meaning about the characters in the books. The children often altered their focus between the illustrations and the text in the picturebooks as they made new connections or called attention to previously unnoticed aspects of the illustrations. The children often asked me to turn back to previously viewed pages in order for them to revisit particular images or ideas.

During the small group read-alouds, the children were active meaning-seekers as they studied each new opening in the picturebooks. The research on visual literacy, which connects with semiotic theory, was an important foundation of my study. Researchers Kress and van Leeuwan (2006) have noted that readers must make sense of images as they view them. The children in my study were highly involved with the visuals and actively sought meaning from the pictures as they viewed the composite work of the pictures and text in the picturebooks (Lewis, 2001).

Presenting artistic opportunities for children to respond to picturebooks can also provide opportunities for the children to learn visual literacy skills, which many researchers advocate for (Anderson et al., 1998; Considine, 1994; Galda, 1993; Pantaleo, 2008; Sipe, 2001). Anderson et al. (1998) advocated for visual literacy instruction and reasoned that “while children constantly use and interpret visual images, they often are unable to analyse and think critically about those images” (p. 147). Considine (1994) and Galda and Short (1993) added that to be visually literate, one must be able to not only understand visual messages but must also be able to interpret, produce and critically examine visual messages. Pantaleo (2008) emphasized the need for children to

understand visuals in picturebooks that exhibit Radical Change characteristics and metafictive devices.

In summary, viewed in conjunction with the body of existing research literature, my research findings are consistent with the variety of responses that other researchers have found in studying the conversations of young children as they engage with literature, and the ways in which young children's social interactions enhance their constructions of meaning. My study extended previous research by providing an analysis of the types of conversations the children had when they described characters, discussed characters' feelings and made labeling statements. My findings suggested that there are benefits for children to talk about their artistic responses during individual interview settings. The next section discusses the implications of the research findings and offers pedagogical suggestions for educators of young children.

Implications for Instruction

This research connected with many of the goals in *The Primary Program* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2000) and the prescribed learning outcomes in the current Grade 1 British Columbia Language Arts curriculum relating to oral language, reading, viewing, and representing (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006, pp. 171-209). *The Primary Program* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2000) outlines the core philosophy of learning in a primary classroom environment in British Columbia's schools and guides teachers in developing and presenting learning opportunities that can facilitate young children's development. The three implications for instruction discussed below, which are evident from an examination of the study's findings, connect with the aims of *The Primary Program*.

Provide Contexts that Support a Variety of Responses

First, I suggest that educators must strive to create classroom contexts that value and elicit a variety of responses to literature from young children. Contemporary educational pedagogy stresses the importance of providing opportunities for readers to be active participants in the construction of meaning (Pantaleo, 2003; Rosenblatt, 1978; Serafini, 2005) by drawing upon their personal, cultural and social experiences during the reading event. The importance of creating an environment rich in literature-based experiences, where children have opportunities to interact with authentic literature and construct meaning through peer and teacher interaction, has been well documented in the research literature. It is during such contexts that children's ideas can thrive and where they can process, refine, and extend their thinking. Educators of young children should facilitate interactive discussions in order to make the reading event personally meaningful for each child.

With respect to selecting texts for reading aloud to children, educators must be mindful of the pressures to focus on instructional materials that aid in the decoding of texts, rather than those educational materials that foster deeper and more personal meanings for young children (Lysaker, 2006). Using authentic literature in the classroom can provide enriching experiences for young children and can also fulfill educational objectives within the curriculum. Although it is imperative to use appropriate text to teach children how to read, it is also important to schedule time to read aloud to children. Among numerous benefits, reading aloud to children provides them with opportunities to transact with literature that may be too difficult for them to read independently.

Using picturebooks in the primary years can provide opportunities for children to learn about characters: how they interact and the problems they face, including how they resolve difficulties. Education about characters, and how they develop through a sequence of events, should be emphasized in primary classrooms as this type of instruction can foster critical thinking skills. Sipe and McGuire (2006) proposed that children test reality as they are exposed to characters that may either be similar or different to them. Stories that feature complex characters can also be used in bibilotherapy; numerous researchers have suggested that sensitively constructed picturebooks can offer a starting point for children to talk about their personal difficulties (Berns, 2004; Emery, 1996; Hancock, 2005; Heath et al., 2005; Iaquinta & Hipsky, 2006; Klesius & Griffith, 1996; Manifold, 2007; Pehrsson et al., 2007; Shechtman, 2006; Smith-D'Arezzo & Thompson, 2006). Teachers are cautioned in using a bibliotherapeutic approach when reading picturebooks however, as Rosenblatt (1978) reasoned that "the use of literary works for the purpose of studying personality or for therapeutic purposes presents many methodological hazards" (p. 152). Rosenblatt further recommended that those who used books for therapeutic purposes should be trained in psychological counselling and treatment.

Develop Visual Literacy

A second implication from the study arises from the research on visual literacy and how it can benefit children and can enable them to understand the complex visuals they encounter in texts and other visual media. Visual literacy skills can assist children in interpreting the multimodal nature of picturebooks. Authors and illustrators of picturebooks use their knowledge of artistic media, semiotics and visual literacy in the

creation of their works of art, and because picturebooks are complex in design, it is important for educators to develop visual literacy skills so that they can teach this information to their students.

Several researchers have advocated for visual literacy instruction in order to enhance a reader's experience of a picturebook (Anderson et al., 1998; Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Pantaleo, 2008; Rabey, 2003; Sipe, 2001; Styles & Arizpe, 2001). Teaching young children terminology and applications related to visual literacy (such as color, line, shape, size, texture, framing devices, salience, placement of characters on the page, and perspective), along with the features and conventions of a picturebook (cover, title page, half-title page, endpages) can enhance a young reader's experience with these texts (Sipe, 2001). Additionally, visual literacy instruction can augment children's experiences of picturebooks as they respond to the texts through their own artistic creations (Short et al., 2000; Whitin, 2002). Developing children's knowledge about the visual information in picturebooks can broaden their range of responses and provide them the tools with which to critically examination of the vast amount of visual information that surrounds them.

Provide a Variety of Contexts that Promote Student Engagement with Literature

The third implication from the study is that educators should provide a variety of contexts that promote student engagement with literature. A variety of experiences can assist young children in developing a greater appreciation for all types of literature, including picturebooks. Educators must provide opportunities for whole class read-aloud sessions that are interactive in nature, as well as small group literature circles where students can discuss aspects such as characterization, plot, and visuals in books in a more intimate setting. Pantaleo (2008) also commented on the benefit of varying the types of

small- and whole-class strategies, which can provide opportunities for the students to discuss texts in detail. It is through a variety of opportunities for responding to texts that all children may have an opportunity to share, explore in greater depth and appreciate the texts they read and view.

The next section discusses ideas for further research and exploration, poses questions, and offers possible directions for further research with respect to young children's responses to literature and visual literacy instruction.

Recommendations for Further Research

In light of research that has documented young children's responses to literature, any future research should focus on children in social and individual environments where children are actively constructing their personal identities through conversational and/or artistic responses. Research could further explore young children's responses to literature, including the role bibliotherapy can play in assisting young children through difficulties, and instruction related to the development of young children's visual literacy skills.

There is a paucity of research exploring young children's perceptions of characters in picturebooks. As my study focused on young children's perceptions of characters in one author's picturebooks, additional research could explore children's small group conversations about character relationships in picturebooks by more than one author/illustrator to examine the similarities and differences in how authors present characters in their picturebooks. Research could further explore young children's peer conversations about their perceptions of characters using the Sketch-to-Stretch strategy (Short et al., 2000; Whitin, 2002). In this strategy children compose a drawing response

to literature and then discuss it with their peers. Modifications or extensions for further research in these areas could involve studying children of a different age, or studying across grade levels.

Researchers have reasoned that children between five and seven years of age are able to express themselves through drawing (Gardner, 1980; Klepsch & Logie, 1982; Korzenik, 1972), and that they may be able to better express themselves artistically than through their speech. Further research could explore educators' experiences in teaching visual literacy to young children. Research could also explore children's artistic responses to literature prior to, and after, visual literacy instruction. However, as mentioned previously, teachers need to develop their own understanding about visual literacy in order to present appropriate instruction to students.

Characters in picturebooks "not only help move readers *into* and *through* texts, but affect what those readers *come away with* as well" (Roser & Martinez, 2005). Further research could examine the possible benefits of reading aloud picturebooks that address sensitive topics (Manifold, 2007) to young children who may be experiencing difficult circumstances, such as bullying, separation and divorce, or death of a loved one. This research could also explore young children's artistic responses to characters in picturebooks who also face challenging life circumstances.

Final Conclusions

As I conclude my research, I find myself reflecting on changing aspects of contemporary picturebooks and the demands they place on young readers, as well as the evolution of my thoughts as a Master's student and as a researcher. My study demonstrated the importance of providing young children with opportunities to talk about

literature, and this thesis has created a renewed zeal for me to include literature discussions in my instruction with young children. The learning outcomes in the areas of oral language and meaning-making (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006) reflect the key role that oral language plays in the curriculum for children.

Through my research I was able to observe the children's detailed insights, discoveries and understandings as they transacted with the picturebooks. The mixed methods procedures that I used to analyze the data provided me the opportunity to examine the various types and quantity of statements made by the children, as well as to draw comparisons between three children's small group conversations and their individual interviews. My categorization scheme provided one way to gain greater understanding of how children interpret and talk about characters in picturebooks. The children in my study responded to the picturebooks in ways that were consistent with the research literature: they were highly engaged with the texts and transacted with them in multiple complex ways that revealed their enthusiasm, interest and imaginative extensions. The children's responses about the characters, including their autobiographical and intertextual responses were unique and came from the children's personal, cultural and social experiences.

My underlying purpose for the study was to provide the children with an engaging context through which to discuss picturebooks in enjoyable and purposeful ways. The read-aloud format provided the Grade 1 children with a forum to discuss and negotiate meaning from complex picturebooks. The children's social talk about the characters, events and settings in the picturebooks revealed to me that they were able to negotiate meanings in a shared and non-competitive format. In my opinion, the evidence of the

children's enjoyment of the picturebooks, and their willingness to talk in detail about numerous aspects of the books revealed that the study was indeed a worthwhile endeavour. As the research concludes and I reflect upon the children's engagement with Anthony Browne's picturebooks, the children's numerous and varied responses and the enthusiasm in which they created their visual arts responses, I believe I achieved my goals in researching young children's conversations and artistic responses to picturebooks. My original motive to solely use work by Anthony Browne was because several of his picturebooks feature protagonists who are poised for change and are often in situations that may be similar to those faced by young children. Doonan (1989) wrote that Browne's characters "stimulate reflection upon the nature of society and its complex values … His heroes and heroines build bridges between social differences" (p. 10). While the study focused on characters in picturebooks by Anthony Browne, I believe that the results of my study would have been similar if the children studied contemporary picturebooks of several authors who also featured characters in similar life situations. Dresang (1999) has indicated that contemporary literature for young people is experiencing a transition that involves characters being portrayed with increasing complexity. Nikolajeva (2002) noted that since the 1960's there has been a shift in Western children's fiction toward aspects of psychological and character-oriented elements in children's fiction. These two authors lead me to believe that Browne is but one of several authors who develops psychological aspects within his characters, and thus I believe that using various contemporary picturebooks that feature complex characters could have been used in my study.

As I have journeyed through this process, I realize my growth as a teacher, a writer and a researcher. At times I was frustrated with the overwhelming amount of data, and how my role as a participant/researcher may have influenced the data. However, the analysis of the children's conversations and artistic responses revealed to me the complexity of the children's responses and how valuable their responses were to understanding what children talk about when they participate in interactive small group discussions about picturebooks.

References

Agosto, D. (1999). One and inseparable: Interdependent storytelling in picture storybooks. *Children's Literature in Education, 30*(4), 267-280.

Aibel, J., & Berger, G. (Producers). (2008). *Kung Fu Panda* [Animated motion picture]. Hollywood, CA: Paramount Pictures.

Allen, G. (2000). *Intertextuality.* New York: Routledge.

Anderson, C. (1998). Children's interpretations of illustrations and written language in picture books. *Dissertation Abstracts International, 59*(11), 4085. (UMI No. 9912057)

Anderson, C., Kauffman, G., & Short, K. (1998). Now I think like an artist: Responding to picture books. In J. Evans (Ed.), *What's in the picture? Responding to illustrations in picture books* (pp. 146-165). London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Anfara,V., Brown, K, & Mangione, T. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage: Making the research process more public. *Educational Researcher, 31*(7), 28-38.

Arizpe, E., & Styles, M. (2003). *Children reading pictures: Interpreting visual texts.* New York: Routledge.

Bang, M. (2000). *Picture this: How pictures work.* San Francisco, CA: SeaStar Books.

Barnes, D. (1992). Two aspects of classroom language. *From communication to curriculum* (2nd ed., pp. 10-33). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers.

Barrentine, S. (1996). Engaging with reading through interactive read-alouds. *The Reading Teacher, 50*(1), 36-43.

Barry, J., & de Laurentiis, D. (Producers). (1976). *King Kong* [Motion picture]. Hollywood, CA: Paramount Pictures.

Behrendt, S. (1996). Reader and tests in the eighteenth-century illustrated book: Illustrations as teachers. In W. F. Garrett-Petts & D. Lawrence (Eds.), *Integrating visual and verbal literacies* (pp. 45-68). Winnipeg, MB: Inkshed Publications.

Berns, C. (2004). Bibliotherapy: Using books to help bereaved children. *Omega, 48*(4), 321-336.

Bezemer, J., & Kress, G. (2008). Writing in multimodal texts: A social semiotic account of designs for learning. *Written Communication, 25*(2), 166-195.

Berk, L., & Winsler, A. (1995). *Scaffolding children's learning: Vygotsky and early childhood education.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Bloome, D., & Egan-Robertson, A. (1993). The social construction of intertextuality in classroom reading and writing lessons. *Reading Research Quarterly, 28*(4), 304-333.

Blumer, H. (1969). *Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (2003). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods.* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education Group.

British Columbia Ministry of Education (2000). *The primary program.* Retrieved February 11, 2011. http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/primary_program/welcome.htm

British Columbia Ministry of Education (2006). *English language arts: Grade 1 integrated resource package 2006.* Retrieved February 11, 2011. http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/pdfs/english_language_arts/

British Columbia Ministry of Education (2009). *BC performance standards: Reading*. Retrieved February 8, 2011. http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/perf_stands/reading.htm.

Browne, A., & Evans, J. (1998). The role of the author / artist: An interview with Anthony Browne. In J. Evans (Ed.), *What's in the picture? Responding to illustrations in picture books* (pp. 192-204). London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Bullwinkle Studios, & Studio B Productions. (Producers). (2007). *George of the jungle* [Television series]. Vancouver, BC.

Cairney, T. (1990). Intertextuality: Infectious echoes from the past. *The Reading Teacher, 43*(7), 478-484.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. (Producers). (2008). *The week the women went* [Television series]. Toronto, ON: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Chandler, D. (2007). *Semiotics: The basics* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Considine, D. (1986). Visual literacy and children's books: An integrated approach. *School Library Journal, 33*(1), 38-42.

Cuddon, J. (1991). *A dictionary of literary terms and literary theory* (3rd ed.). Oxford, UK: Blackewell Publishers.

Day, K. (1996). From the eighteenth-century illustrated book to contemporary children's picture books: Teaching the "third text". In W. F. Garrett-Petts & D. Lawrence (Eds.), *Integrating visual and verbal literacies* (pp. 69-75). Winnipeg, MB; Inkshed Publications.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research.* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2008). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials.* Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.

Doonan, J. (1989). Realism and surrealism in wonderland: John Tenniel and Anthony Browne. *Signal, 58*, 9-30.

Doonan, J. (1993) *Looking at pictures in picture books.* Exeter, UK: Thimble Press.

Doonan, J. (1999). Drawing out ideas: A second decade of the work of Anthony Browne, *The Lion and the Unicorn, 23*(1), 30-56.

Dresang, E. (1999). *Radical change: Books for youth in a digital age.* New York: H. W. Wilson Company.

Duncum, P. (2001). Visual culture: Developments, definitions, and directions for art education. *Studies in Art Education, 42*(2), 101-112.

Emery, D. W. (1996). Helping readers comprehend stories from the characters' perspectives. *The Reading Teacher, 49*(7), 534-541.

Fisher, D., Flood, J., Lapp, D., & Frey, N. (2004). Interactive read-alouds: Is there a common set of implementation practices? *The Reading Teacher, 58*(1), 8-17.

Fontana, J., & Frey, A. (2000). The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 645-672). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Fountas, I., & Pinnell, G. (1996). *Guided reading: Good first teaching for all children.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Fried, R. N., Van Horn, K., & Winther, P. (Producers). (1998). *Godzilla* [Motion picture]. Culver City, CA: Sony Pictures.

Galda, L., & Beach, R. (2001). Response to literature as a cultural activity. *Reading Research Quarterly, 36*(1), 64-73.

Galda, L, & Short, K. (1993). Visual literacy: Exploring art and illustration in children's books. *The Reading Teacher, 46*(6), 506-517.

Gall, J., Gall, M., & Borg, W. (2005). *Applying educational research: A practical guide* (5th ed.). Toronto, ON: Pearson Education.

Gardner, H. (1973). *The arts and human development.* New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Gardner, H. (1980). *Artful scribbles: The significance of children's drawings.* New York: Basic Books Inc.

Gibbins, G. R., & Taylor, C. R. (2005). *How and what to code.* Huddersfield, UK: University of Huddersfield. Retrieved April 10, 2009. http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/Intro_QDA/how_what_to_code.php Retrieved March 21, 2009.

Greene, M. (1997). Metaphors and multiples: Representation, the arts, and history. *Phi Delta Kappan, 78*(5), 387-394.

Halliday, M. (1973). *Explorations in the functions of language.* London: Edward Arnold.

Hancock, M. (2005). Students write their understanding of characters - and their understanding soars. In N. Roser and M. Martinez (Eds.), *What a character: Character study as a guide to literary meaning making in grades K-8* (pp. 72-82). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Hartman, D. (1992). Intertextuality and reading: The text, the reader, the author, and the context. *Linguistics and Education 4,* 295-311.

Hartman, D. (1995). Eight readers reading: The intertextual links of proficient readers reading multiple passages. *Reading Research Quarterly, 30*(3), 520-561.

Harst, Short, & Burke (1988). *Creating classrooms for authors.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Heath, M., Sheen, D., Leavy, D., Young, E., & Money, K. (2005). Bibliotherapy: A resource to facilitate emotional healing and growth. *School Psychology International, 26,* 563-580.

Hillenberg, S. (Producer). (1999). *Sponge Bob Squarepants.* [Television series]. New York, NY: MTV Networks.

Hirtle, J. (1996). Coming to terms: Social constructivism. *The English Journal, 85*(1), 91-92.

Iaquinta, A., & Hipsky, S. (2006). Practical bibliotherapy strategies for the inclusive elementary classroom. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 34*(3), 209-213.

Jewitt, C. (2007). A multimodal perspective on textuality and contexts. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society, 15*(3), 275-289.

Jordan, B. (1996). Tricks and treats: Picture books and forms of comedy. In V. Watson & M. Styles (Eds.), *Talking pictures: Pictorial texts* (pp. 48-60). London, UK: Hodder and Stoughton.

Katsuko, H. (1995). Quantitative and qualitative research approaches in education. *Education, 115*(3), 351-355.

Kauffman, G. (2006). Authoring ourselves as readers and writers. *Language Arts, 83*(6), 502-504.

Kiefer, B. (1995). *The potential of picturebooks: From visual literacy to aesthetic understanding.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Klepsch, M., & Logie, L. (1982). *Children draw and tell: An introduction to the projective uses of children's human figure drawings.* Montreal, QC: Book Center.

Klesius, J., & Griffith, P. (1996). Interactive storybook reading for at-risk learners. *The Reading Teacher, 49*(7), 552-560.

Korzenik, D. (1972). *Children's drawings: Changes in representation between the ages of five and seven.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (1996). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design.* New York: Routledge.

Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2006). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Kristeva, J. (1980). Word, dialogue, and novel. In L. Roudiez (Ed.), & T. Gora, A. Jardine, & L. Roudiez (Trans.), *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art,* (pp. 64-91). New York: Columbia University Press.

Kummerling-Meibauer, B. (1999). Metalinguistic awareness and the child's developing concept of irony. *The Lion and the Unicorn, 23,* 168-176.

Lewis, D. (2001). *Reading contemporary picturebooks: Picturing text.* New York: Routledge.

Lindfors, J. W. (1999). *Children's inquiry: Using language to make sense of the world.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Lucas, G. (Producer). (1977). *Star Wars episode IV: A new hope* [Motion picture]. San Francisco, CA: Lucasfilms.

Lysaker, J. (2006). Young children's readings of wordless picture books: What's "self" got to do with it? *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 6*(1), 33-55.

MacDonald, L., Parkes, W., & Van Wyck, J. (Producers). (2004). *Lemony Snicket: A series of unfortunate events* [Motion picture]. Hollywood, CA: Paramount Home Entertainment.

Madura, S. (1998). An artistic element: Four transitional readers and writers respond to the picture books of Patricia Polacco and Gerald McDermott. *National Reading Conference Yearbook, 47,* 366-376.

Manifold, M. (2007). The healing picture book: An aesthetic of sorrow. *Teacher Librarian, 34*(3), 20-26.

Many, J., & Anderson, D. (1992). The effect of grade and stance on readers' intertextual and autobiographical responses to literature. *Reading Research and Instruction, 31*(4), 60-69.

Martinez, M., Keehn, S., Toser, N., Harmon, J., & O'Neal, S. (2002). An exploration of children's understanding of character in grades 1-8. In J.V. Hoffman, D.D. Schallert, C.M. Fairbanks, J. Worthy, & B. Maloch (Eds.), *Fifty-first yearbook of the National Reading Conference* (pp. 310-320). Chicago, IL: National Reading Conference.

Meek, M. (1988). *How texts teach what readers learn.* Stroud, Glos.: Thimble Press.

Mercer, N. (1995). *The guided construction of knowledge.* Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Mercer, N. (2000). *Words and minds: How we use language to think together.* London: Routledge.

Mercer, N., & Littleton, K. (2007). *Dialogue and the development of children's thinking: A sociocultural approach.* London, UK: Routledge.

Merriam, S. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Miyamoto, S. (Producer). (1981). *Donkey Kong* [Video game]. Kyoto, Japan: Nintendo Company Ltd.

Mol, S., Bus, A., & de Jong, M. (2009). Interactive book reading in early education: A tool to stimulate print knowledge as well as oral language. *Review of Educational Research, 79*(2), 979-1007.

Morgan, N., & Saxton, J. (2006). *Asking better questions.* Markham, ON: Pembroke Publishers.

Nikolajeva, M. (2001). The changing aesthetics of character in children's fiction. *Style, 35*(3), 430-453.

Nikolajeva, M. (2002). *The rhetoric of character in children's fiction.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Nikolajeva, M. (2003). Picturebook characterisation: Word/image interaction. In M. Styles & E. Bearne (Eds.), *Art, narrative and childhood* (pp. 37-49). Sterling, VA: Trentham.

Nikolajeva, M. (2005a). *Aesthetic approaches to children's literature: An introduction.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Nikolajeva, M. (2005b). Toward a theory of character in children's fiction. In N. Roser & M. Martinez (Eds.), *What a character! Character study as a guide to literary meaning making in grades K-8* (pp. 182-204). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Nikolajeva, M., & Scott, C. (2000). The dynamics of picturebook communication. *Children's Literature in Education, 31*(4), 225-239.

Nikolajeva, M., & Scott, C. (2006). *How picturebooks work.* New York: Routledge.

Nodelman, P. (2000). *The implied viewer: Some speculations about what children's picture books invite readers to do and to be.* Retrieved January 21, 2011, from http://www.crea.uts.edu.au/publications/crearta.html

Nodelman, P. (1996). *The pleasures of children's literature.* White Plains, NY: Longman.

Noden, H., & Moss, B. (1995). Nurturing artistic images in student reading and writing. *The Reading Teacher, 48*(6), 532-534.

Pantaleo, S. (2002). Grade 1 students meet David Wiesner's Three Pigs. *Journal of Children's Literature, 28*(2), 72-84.

Pantaleo, S. (2003). The art of playful parody: Exploring David Wiesner's *Tuesday, The Dragon Lode, 22*(1), 42-50.

Pantaleo, S. (2004). Exploring grade 1 students' textual connections. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 18*(3), 211-225.

Pantaleo, S. (2005). 'Reading' young children's visual texts. *Early Childhood Research & Practice* [On-line serial], *7*(1). Available http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v7n1/pantaleo.html.

Pantaleo, S. (2006). Readers and writers as intertexts: Exploring the intertextualities in student writing. *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy, 29*(2), 163-181.

Pantaleo, S. (2007). Interthinking: Young children using language to think collectively during interactive read-alouds. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 34*(6), 439-447.

Pantaleo, S. (2008). *Exploring student response to contemporary picturebooks.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Parslow, R., Morgan, A., Allen, N., Jorm, A., O'Donnell, C., & Purcell, R. (2008). Effectiveness of complementary and self-help treatments for anxiety in children and adolescents. *The Medical Journal of Australia, 188*(6), 355-359.

Parsons, M. J. (1987). *How we understand art: A cognitive developmental account of aesthetic experience.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Pehrsson, D., Allen, V., Folger, W., McMillen, P., & Lowe, I. (2007). Bibliotherapy with preadolescents experiencing divorce. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families, 15*(4), 409-414.

Prater, M., Johnstun, M., Dyches, T., & Johnstun, M. (2006). Using children's books as bibliotherapy for at-risk students: A guide for teachers. *Preventing School Failure, 50*(4), 5-10.

Purcell-Gates, V. (2004). Ethnographic research. In N. Duke & M. Mallette (Eds.), *Literacy research methodologies* (pp. 92-113). New York: Guilford Press.

Rabey, K. (2003). Thinking aloud: Looking at children drawing in response to picturebooks. In E. Arizpe & M. Styles (Eds.), *Children reading pictures: Interpreting visual texts* (pp. 117-143). New York: Routledge.

Rice, D. (1989). Museums and visual literacy. *Journal of Aesthetic Education, 23*(4), 95-99.

Richards, J., & Anderson, N. (2003). How do you know? A strategy to help emergent readers make inferences. *The Reading Teacher, 57*(3), 290-293.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1978/1994). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work.* Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Rosenhouse, J., Feitelson, D., Kita, B., & Goldstein, Z. (1997). Interactive reading aloud to Israeli first graders: Its contribution to literacy development. *Reading Research Quarterly, 32*(2), 168-183.

Roser, N., & Martinez, M. (Eds.). (2005). *What a character!: Character study as a guide to literary meaning making in grades K-8.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Roudiez, L. (1980). Introduction. In J. Kristeva's, *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art* (pp. 1-20). New York: Columbia University Press.

Rubin, R., & Rubin, I. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Salkind, I. (Producer). (2006). *Superman: The movie* [Motion picture]. Burbank, CA: Warner Home Videos.

Sandstrom, K, Martin, D, & Fine, G. (2006). *Symbols, selves, and social reality: A symbolic interactionist approach to social psychology and sociology.* Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Publishing.

Saraceni, M. (2001) Seeing beyond language: When words are not alone. *Cauce, 24*(24), 433- 455.

Schwarcz, J., & Schwarcz, C. (1991). *The picture book comes of age: Looking at childhood through the art of illustration.* Chicago, IL: American Library Association.

Serafini, F. (2005). Voices in the park, voices in the classroom: Readers responding to postmodern picture books. *Reading Research & Instruction, 44*(3), 47-64.

Shechtman, Z. (2006). The contribution of bibliotherapy to the counseling of aggressive boys. *Psychotherapy Research, 16*(5), 645-651.

Short, K. (1992). Researching intertextuality within collaborative classroom learning environments. *Linguistics and Education, 4,* 313-333.

Short, K., Harste, J., Burke, C, & Kauffman, G. (1996). *Creating classrooms for authors and inquirers.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Short, K., Kauffman, G., & Kahn, L. (2000). 'I just need to draw': Responding to literature across multiple sign systems. *The Reading Teacher, 54*(2), 160-171.

Silverman, D. (2000). Analyzing talk and text. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 821-834). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Sipe, L. (1998). How picture books work: A semiotically framed theory of text-picture relationships. *Children's Literature in Education, 29*(2), 97-108.

Sipe, L. (2000). "Those two gingerbread boys could be brothers": How children use intertextual connections during story book readalouds. *Children's Literature in Education, 31*(2), 73-90.

Sipe, L. (2001). Using picturebooks to teach art history. *Studies in Art Education, 42*(3), 197-213.

Sipe, L. (2008). *Storytime: Young children's literary understanding in the classroom.* New York: Teacher's College Press.

Sipe, L., & McGuire, C. (2006). Young children's resistance to stories. *The Reading Teacher, 60*(1), 6-13.

Smith-D'Arezzo, W., & Thompson, S. (2006). Topics of stress and abuse in picture books for children. *Children's Literature in Education, 37,* 335-347.

Stake, R. (2000). Case studies. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 435-454). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications

Stewig, J. (2001). First graders talk about paintings. *Journal of Educational Research, 87*(5), 309-316.

Styles, M. (1996). 'Inside the tunnel: A radical kind of reading – Picture books, pupils and post-modernism'. In V. Watson & M. Styles (Eds.), *Talking pictures: Pictorial texts and young readers.* London, UK: Hodder and Stoughton.

Styles, M., & Arizpe, E. (2001). A gorilla with 'Grandpa's Eyes': How children interpret visual texts: A case study of Anthony Browne's *Zoo*. *Children's Literature in Education, 32*(4), 261-281.

Sugarman, S. (1987) *Piaget's construction of the child's reality.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Uslan, M. (Producer). (2007). *Batman* [Motion picture]. Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video.

Vidich, A., & Lyman, S. (2000) Qualitative methods: Their history in sociology and anthropology. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 37-84). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Vincent, A., Brown, K., & Mangione, T. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage: Making the research process more public. *Educational Researcher, 31*(7), 28-38.

Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and language,* A. Kozulin (Ed.). Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Vygotsky, L. (1987). *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky: Vol. 1 – ,*. R. W. Rieber (Ed.). New York: Plenum Press.

Waugh, P. (1984). *Metafiction: The theory and practice of self-conscious fiction.* New York: Methuen.

Whitin, P. (2002). Leading into literature circles through the sketch-to-stretch strategy. *The Reading Teacher, 55*(5), 444-450.

Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Children's Literature References

Brighter Child Editorial (2002). *Keepsake story: Jack in the beanstalk.* Greensborough, NC: Carson Dellosa Publishing.

Brighter Child Editorial (2002). *Keepsake story: Little red riding hood.* Greensborough, NC: Carson Dellosa Publishing.

Browne, A. (1983). *Gorilla.* New York: Julia MacRae Books.

Browne, A. (1984). *Willy the wimp.* New York: Julia MacRae Books.

Browne, A. (1987). *Willy and Hugh.* New York: Julia MacRae Books.

Browne, A. (1986). *Piggybook.* New York: Dragonfly Books.

Browne, A. (2006). *Silly Billy.* Cambridge, MA.: Candlewick Press.

Browne, A. (1989). *The tunnel.* London: Julia MacRae Books.

Browne, A. (1992). *Zoo.* Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre.

Disney, R. H. (1999). *Cinderella: A read-aloud storybook.* New York, NY: Random House Children's Books.

Disney, R. H. (1999) *Snow White and the seven dwarfs: A read-aloud storybook.* New York, NY: Random House Children's Books.

Fine, A. (1985). *Scaredy cat.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Young Books.

Golden Books (2004). *Three little pigs.* New York: Random House Children's Books.

Harry, R. (2007). *Little chimp.* Hauppauga, NY: Barron's Educational Series.

Kelly, A. (2000). *Coco's bell.* Chicago, IL: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Kitamura, S. (1987). *Lily takes a walk.* Boston, MA: Dutton Publishers.

Marshall, J. (1998). *Goldilocks and the three bears.* New York: Penguin Young Readers Group.

Spiegelman, A. (1986). *Maus I: A survivor's tale: My father bleeds history.* New York: Pantheon Books.

Thomson, D. C. (1980). *Nutty Comics.* Dundee, Scotland: D. C. Thomson.

Waller, C. (2008). *Lady sun and the man in the moon.* Frederick, MD: PublishAmerica.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Ethics Review Board Permission Letter

University of Victoria

Human Research Ethics Board

Office of Research Services
University of Victoria
Administrative Services Building - 2nd Floor
Tel (250) 472-4545 Fax (250) 721-8960
Email ethics@uvic.ca Web www.research.uvic.ca

Human Research Ethics Board
Certificate of Approval

Principal Investigator	Department/School	Supervisor
Adrianne Stacey **Master's Student**	**EDCD/THEA**	**Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo**

Co-Investigator(s):

Project Title: **Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne**

Protocol No.	Approval Date	Start Date	Expiry Date
09-151	23-Apr-09	23-Apr-09	22-Apr-10

Certification

This certifies that the UVic Human Research Ethics Board has examined this research protocol and concluded that, in all respects, the proposed research meets the appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria Research Regulations Involving Human Participants.

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol. Extensions and/or amendments may be approved with the submission of a "Request for Annual Renewal or Modification" form.

Dr. Richard Keeler
Associate Vice-President, Research

09-151 Stacey, Adrianne

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form - Superintendent

Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne

[redacted]

April 14th, 2009

Superintendent – [redacted] School District

Dear Sir,

This letter is a formal request to conduct research with Grade 1 students in at [redacted] School. The study is entitled "Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne" that is being conducted by myself - Adrianne Stacey.

As a Graduate Student in the Department of Language and Literacy in Education, at the University of Victoria, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree. This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo. Contact information for my supervisor and myself is provided at the end of this consent letter.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of my research project is to promote student literacy learning and comprehension about literature (picturebooks) through discussions and visual arts responses. The objective of my research is to explore young children's responses to contemporary picturebooks that involve dynamic characters that develop through their experiences with difficulties in relationships – experiences that might be similar to those encountered by young children.

Importance of this Research

Some contemporary picturebooks situate young children within a complex world where problems must be solved and where characters face numerous conflicts and challenges. Researchers have suggested that picturebooks can provide a humorous way for children to consider important issues in their lives. Many picturebooks provide children with opportunities to think about and reflect on realistic life situations. While some researchers have acknowledged the need for research that explores difficult themes in children's books, little research has focused on young students' perspectives of picturebook characters that experience difficulties in relationships. This study will add to the growing research in this field.

Participant Selection
I have chosen to conduct research with Grade 1 students of ages 6 to 7 years. I am interested in the perceptions that children of ages 6 to 7 have towards picturebook characters that experience difficulties in relationships – difficulties that may be common to young children of this age.

What is Involved
This research will involve students participating in one small-group read-aloud once per week over a seven-week period. Each read-aloud session will involve the reading and discussing of a specific picturebook. The children will then have the opportunity to respond to the picturebook through various visual arts activities. Each read-aloud session and combined visual arts experience will take approximately 40 minutes/week. The read-aloud sessions will occur in a vacant classroom down the hall from the children's main classroom. The children will also participate in a short individual interview following their visual arts response each week. This interview will last approximately five minutes and will occur in the small classroom where the read-aloud and visual arts sessions occur. During the time I am interviewing individual students, the other students in the small-groups will return to their classroom.

When students participate in the read-aloud sessions, they will not be required to make up any work that they miss. This research supports the BC Ministry of Education (2006) objectives in Language Arts for students in the areas of reading, oracy and critical thinking skills.

Inconvenience
There are no anticipated or known inconveniences to students and the classroom teacher that would result from participating in this research, other than a temporary restructuring of the regular teacher's time schedule to accommodate this study. The classroom teacher and I have discussed these pragmatic issues and she is willing to accommodate her time in support of this study.

Risks
There are no known or anticipated risks for the children to participate in this study, other than the risks associated with the regular activities in their daily lives at school.

Benefits
This study may benefit students directly in providing them with opportunities to think deeply about characters in literature, and consider how these characters solve problems that are relevant to young children. Students will have opportunities to develop inferencing skills about characters through small-group interactive discussions. Additionally, students will learn how visuals in picturebooks can enhance meaning in their reading experiences. Students will also learn vocabulary that will enable them to speak in a more informed manner about visual information in picturebooks and in their own visual artwork.

Voluntary Participation
The children will be invited to participate in this study and will be told that their participation is voluntary, and that they may withdraw at any time without consequence (see attached script that will be read aloud to the children). While all the children in this class will participate in the small-group picturebook read-alouds and visual arts sessions, if the children or their parents choose to withdraw from the study, any individual interview or artwork data that they have contributed will be removed from the data base. Data from group conversations that have already been entered into the data base will remain, as it is logistically impossible to remove this data and still preserve the nature of the group conversations. As all students will participate in the activities, I will not know the identity of the students who are participating in the research until the study is complete.

Researcher's Relationship with Participants
The students know me as a familiar teacher in the school. I work directly with 10 of the students in this classroom, through individual and small group instruction that focuses on reading instruction and oral language support. The time spent working on this research will be voluntary, and this time will be in addition to my instructional time with these students. Decision to participate in the research will have no consequences on the children's assessment in their regular educational program.

On-going Consent
At the conclusion of gathering data, a letter will be sent home to parents that will provide them with the opportunity to withdraw their children from the study. If a parent chooses to withdraw at this time, I will remove the child's individual interview and artwork data from the data base and this material will be destroyed. All comments made by the children in group conversations will remain in the data base, as these are integral to the coherence of the group conversations.

Anonymity
Anonymity of the participants will be protected through the use of pseudonyms for the children, their teacher, and the school. The child's anonymity will be protected in this manner in all documents pertaining to this research, including the preparation of my Master's thesis, and any scholarly publications or presentations regarding this research.

Confidentiality
The confidentially of the children's individual interviews and the confidentiality of the data from the research will be protected by being kept in a locked filing cabinet in my home. Data stored on my computer will be locked and protected with a password. Confidentially of information shared during small-group read-alouds cannot be assured, as it is shared in a group context.

Dissemination of Results
It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others through the preparation of a Master's thesis, published articles, and scholarly meetings.

Disposal of Data
Data from this study will be destroyed after five years. At this time any stored data on my computer will be deleted and paper copies of transcripts will be shredded and burned.

Contacts
Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include myself, Adrianne Stacey on my home phone at [redacted] or at [redacted] School at [redacted]. You may also contact me by email at astacey@uvic.ca.My supervisor, Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo, may be contacted at her office at [redacted].

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concern you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria [redacted].

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of this study and approve the commencement of this research. By signing you are also aware that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by myself, Adrianne Stacey, or my supervisor, Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Superintendent of SD61	*Signature of Superintendent of SD61*	*Date*

Please keep the white copy of this consent form, and return the signed yellow consent form to the researcher. You may send it through the School District mail to [redacted] School to the attention of Adrianne Stacey.

Appendix C

Informed Consent Form - Principal

Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne

Dear Mrs. [redacted] April 1st, 2009
Principal – [redacted] School

This letter is a formal request to conduct research with Grade 1 students in [redacted] at [redacted] School. The study is entitled "Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne" that is being conducted by myself - Adrianne Stacey.

As a Graduate Student in the Department of Language and Literacy in Education, at the University of Victoria, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree. This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo. Contact information for my supervisor and myself is provided at the end of this consent letter.

Purpose and Objectives
The purpose of my research project is to promote student literacy learning and comprehension about literature (picturebooks) through discussions and visual arts responses. The objective of my research is to explore young children's responses to contemporary picturebooks that involve dynamic characters that develop through their experiences with difficulties in relationships – experiences that might be similar to those encountered by young children.

Importance of this Research
Some contemporary picturebooks situate young children within a complex world where problems must be solved and where characters face numerous conflicts and challenges. Researchers suggested that picturebooks provide a humorous way for children to consider important issues in their lives. Many picturebooks provide children with opportunities to think about and reflect on realistic life situations. While some researchers have acknowledged the need for research that explores difficult themes in children's books, little research has focused on young students' perspectives of picturebook characters that experience problems. This study will add to the growing research in this field.

Participant Selection
I have chosen to conduct research with Grade 1 students. I am interested in the perceptions that children of ages 6 to 7 have towards picturebook characters that experience difficulties in relationships – difficulties that may be common to young children of this age.

What is Involved
This research will involve students participating in one small-group read-aloud once per week over a seven-week period. Each read-aloud session will involve the reading and discussing of a specific picturebook. The children will then have the opportunity to respond to the picturebook through various visual arts activities. Each read-aloud session and combined visual arts experience will take approximately 40 minutes/week. The read-aloud sessions will occur in a vacant classroom down the hall from the children's main classroom. The children will also participate in a short individual interview following their visual arts response each week. This interview will last approximately five minutes and will occur in the small classroom where the read-aloud and visual arts sessions occur. During the time I am interviewing individual students, the other students in the small-groups will return to their classroom.

When students participate in the read-aloud sessions, they will not be required to make up any work that they miss. This research supports the BC Ministry of Education (2006) objectives in Language Arts for students in the areas of reading, oracy and critical thinking skills.

Inconvenience
There are no anticipated or known inconveniences to students and the classroom teacher that would result from participating in this research, other than a temporary restructuring of the regular teacher's time schedule to accommodate this study. The classroom teacher and I have discussed these pragmatic issues and she is willing to accommodate her time in support of this study.

Risks
There are no known or anticipated risks for the children to participate in this study, other than the risks associated with the regular activities in their daily lives at school.

Benefits
This study may benefit students directly in providing them with opportunities to think deeply about characters in literature, and consider how these characters solve problems that are relevant to young children. Students will have opportunities to develop inferencing skills about characters through small-group interactive discussions. Additionally, students will learn how visuals in picturebooks can enhance meaning in their reading experiences. Students will also learn vocabulary that will enable them to speak in a more informed manner about visual information in picturebooks and in their own visual artwork.

Voluntary Participation
The children will be invited to participate in this study and will be told that their participation is voluntary, and that they may withdraw at any time without consequence (see attached script that will be read aloud to the children). While all the children in this class will participate in the small-group picturebook read-alouds and visual arts sessions, only those students who participate in the research will have their individual interviews

recorded and artwork photocopied and entered into the data base. If parents decide to have their children participate, they may withdraw their children at any time during the research, without consequences. If the children or their parents choose to withdraw from the study, any individual interview or artwork data that they have contributed will be removed from the data base. Data from group conversations that have already been entered into the data base will remain, as it is logistically impossible to remove this data and still preserve the nature of the group conversation. As all students will participate in the activities, I will not know the identity of the students who are participating in the research until the study is complete.

Researcher's Relationship with Participants

The students know me as a familiar teacher in the school. I work directly with 10 of the students in this classroom, through individual and small group instruction that focuses on reading instruction and oral language support. The time spent working on this research will be voluntary, and this time will be in addition to my instructional time with these students. Decision to participate in the research will have no consequences on the children's assessment in their regular educational program.

On-going Consent

At the conclusion of gathering data, a letter will be sent home to parents that will provide them with the opportunity to withdraw their children from the study. If a parent chooses to withdraw his/her child at this time, I will remove the child's individual interview and artwork data from the data base and this material will be destroyed. All comments made by the children in group conversations will remain in the data base, as these are integral to the coherence of the group conversations.

Anonymity

Anonymity of the participants will be protected through the use of pseudonyms for the child, the classroom teacher, and the school. The child's anonymity will be protected in this manner in all documents pertaining to this research, including the preparation of my Master's thesis, and any scholarly publications or presentations regarding this research.

Confidentiality

The confidentially of the children's individual interviews and the confidentiality of the data from the research will be protected by being kept in a locked filing cabinet in my home. Data stored on my computer will be locked and protected with a password. Confidentially of information shared during small-group read-alouds cannot be assured, as it is shared in a group context.

Dissemination of Results

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others through the preparation of a thesis, published articles, and scholarly meetings.

Disposal of Data
Data from this study will be destroyed after five years. At this time any stored data on my computer will be deleted and paper copies of transcripts will be shredded and burned.

Contacts
Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include myself, Adrianne Stacey on my home phone at [redacted] or at [redacted] School at [redacted]. You may also contact me by email [redacted]. My supervisor, Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo, may be contacted at her office at [redacted] or [redacted].

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concern you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria [redacted].

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of this study and approve the commencement of this research. By signing you are also aware that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by myself, Adrianne Stacey, or my supervisor, Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Principal	*Signature of Principal*	*Date*

[redacted] *School*

Please keep the white copy of this consent form and return the signed yellow consent form to me.

Appendix D

Letter of Information - Teacher

Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne

[redacted]
Teacher of Division [redacted]
[redacted] School

This letter is a formal request to conduct research with Grade 1 students in [redacted] at [redacted] School. The study is entitled "Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne" that is being conducted by myself - Adrianne Stacey.

As a Graduate Student in the Department of Language and Literacy in Education, at the University of Victoria, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree. This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo. Contact information for both my supervisor and myself is provided at the end of this consent letter.

Purpose and Objectives
The purpose of my research project is to promote student literacy learning and comprehension about literature (picturebooks) through discussions and visual arts responses. The objective of my research is to explore young children's responses to contemporary picturebooks that involve dynamic characters that develop through their experiences with difficulties in relationships – experiences that might be similar to those encountered by young children.

Importance of this Research
Some contemporary picturebooks situate young children within a complex world where problems must be solved and where characters face numerous conflicts and challenges. Researchers have suggested that picturebooks can provide a humorous way for children to consider important issues in their lives. Many picturebooks provide children with opportunities to think about and reflect on realistic life situations. While some researchers have acknowledged the need for research that explores difficult themes in children's books, little research has focused on young students' perspectives of picturebook characters that experience difficulties in relationships. This study will add to the growing research in this field.

Participant Selection
I have chosen to conduct research with Grade 1 students of ages 6 to 7 years. I am interested in the perceptions that children of ages 6 to 7 have towards picturebook

characters that experience difficulties in relationships – difficulties that may be common to young children of this age.

What is Involved
This research will involve students participating in one small-group read-aloud once per week over a seven-week period. Each read-aloud session will involve the reading and discussing of a specific picturebook. The children will then have the opportunity to respond to the picturebook through various visual arts activities. Each read-aloud session and combined visual arts experience will take approximately 40 minutes/week. The read-aloud sessions will occur in a vacant classroom down the hall from the children's main classroom. The children will also participate in a short individual interview following their visual arts response each week. This interview will last approximately five minutes and will occur in the small classroom where the read-aloud and visual arts sessions occur. During the time I am interviewing individual students, the other students in the small-groups will return to your classroom.

When students participate in the read-aloud sessions, they will not be required to make up any work that they miss. As we discussed, this research supports the BC Ministry of Education (2006) objectives in Language Arts for students in the areas of reading, oracy and critical thinking skills.

Inconvenience
There are no anticipated or known inconveniences to students or yourself that would result from participating in this research, other than a temporary restructuring of some activities you may schedule during the school day. We have discussed these pragmatic issues and I have assured you that I will do my best to conduct the research during times that are the least disruptive to regularly scheduled activities.

Risks
There are no known or anticipated risks for the children to participate in this study, other than the risks associated with the regular activities in their daily lives at school.

Benefits
This study may benefit students directly in providing them with opportunities to think deeply about characters in literature, and consider how these characters solve problems that are relevant to young children. Students will have opportunities to develop inferencing skills about characters through small-group interactive discussions. Additionally, students will learn how visuals in picturebooks can enhance meaning in their reading experiences. Students will also learn vocabulary that will enable them to speak in a more informed manner about visual information in picturebooks and in their own visual artwork.

Voluntary Participation
The children will be invited to participate in this study and will be told that their participation is voluntary, and that they may withdraw at any time without consequence

(see attached transcript that will be read aloud to the children). While all the children in your class will participate in the small-group picturebook read-alouds and visual arts sessions, only those students who participate in the research will have their individual interviews recorded and artwork photocopied and entered into the data base. If parents decide to have their children participate, they may withdraw their children at any time during the research, without consequences. If the children or their parents choose to withdraw from the study, any individual interview or artwork data that they have contributed will be removed from the data base. Data from the group conversations that have already been entered into the data base will remain, as it is logistically impossible to remove this data and still preserve the nature of the group conversations. As all students will participate in the activities, I will not know the identity of students who are participating in the research until the study is complete.

Researcher's Relationship with Participants

The students know me as a familiar teacher in the school. I work directly with 10 of the students in this classroom, through individual and small group instruction that focuses on reading instruction and oral language support. The time spent working on this research will be voluntary, and this time will be in addition to my instructional time with these students. Decision to participate in the research will have no consequences on the children's assessment in their regular educational program.

On-going Consent

At the conclusion of gathering data, a letter will be sent home to parents that will provide them with the opportunity to withdraw their children from the study. If a parent chooses to withdraw his/her child at this time, I will remove the child's individual interview and artwork data from the data base and this material will be destroyed. All comments made by the children in group conversations will remain in the data base, as these are integral to the coherence of the group conversational interviews.

Anonymity

Anonymity of the participants will be protected through the use of pseudonyms for the child, yourself, and the school. The child's anonymity will be protected in this manner in all documents pertaining to this research, including the preparation of my Master's thesis, and any scholarly publications or presentations regarding this research.

Confidentiality

The confidentially of the children's individual interviews and the confidentiality of the data from the research will be protected by being kept in a locked filing cabinet in my home. Data stored on my computer will be locked and protected with a password. Confidentially of information shared during small-group read-alouds cannot be assured, as it is shared in a group context.

Dissemination of Results

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others through the preparation of a thesis, published articles, and scholarly meetings.

Disposal of Data
Data from this study will be destroyed after five years. At this time any stored data on my computer will be deleted and paper copies of transcripts will be shredded and burned.

Contacts
Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include myself, Adrianne Stacey on my home phone at [redacted] or at [redacted] School at [redacted]. You may also contact me by email [redacted]. My supervisor, Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo, may be contacted at her office at [redacted] or [redacted].

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concern you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria [redacted].

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of this study and approve the commencement of this research. By signing you are also aware that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by myself, Adrianne Stacey, or my supervisor, Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Teacher	*Signature*	*Date*

[redacted] *School*

Please keep the white copy of this consent form and return the signed yellow consent form to me.

Appendix E

Informed Consent Form - For Parents/Guardians and Students

Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne

April 1st, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians of Students in Division [redacted]
[redacted] School

Your child is invited to participate in a study I am conducting entitled "Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne." My name is Adrianne Stacey, and in addition to being a teacher at [redacted] School, I am also a graduate student in the Department of Language and Literacy in the Faculty of Education, at the University of Victoria.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in the Master of Arts program. My research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo. Contact information for my supervisor and myself is provided at the end of this letter.

Purpose and Objectives
The purpose of this research project is to promote student learning and comprehension about literature (picturebooks) through discussions and visual arts responses. Specifically, the children and myself will be discussing aspects about characters in picturebooks by Anthony Browne, focusing specifically on how students make connections between these characters and other characters they have read about, or events in their own lives that may be similar or different. My objectives are to study young children's perceptions of characters that experience difficulties in relationships – experiences that may be common for young children.

Importance of this Research
Some contemporary picturebooks situate young children within a complex world where problems must be solved and where characters face numerous conflicts and challenges. Researchers have suggested that picturebooks can provide a humorous way for children to consider important issues in their lives. Many picturebooks provide children with opportunities to think about and reflect on realistic life situations. While some researchers have acknowledged the need for research that explores difficult themes in children's books, little research has focused on young students' perspectives of picturebook characters that experience difficulties in relationships. This study will add to the growing research in this field.

Participant Selection
You are being asked for permission for your child to participate in this study because I am interested in the perceptions that children of ages 6 to 7 have towards picturebook characters that experience difficulties in relationships – difficulties that may be common to young children of this age.

What is Involved
If you agree to have your child participate in this research, your child's participation will include weekly small-group discussions of a picturebook by Anthony Browne. In total, seven picturebooks will be presented over a period of seven weeks, and each small-group read-aloud and discussion session will be followed by an opportunity for your child to create a visual arts project in response to what we have read together that week. Your child will then be interviewed for approximately five minutes following the completion of their artwork each week.

Each weekly session will take approximately 40 minutes and will occur in a vacant classroom located down the hall from your child's regular classroom. I will audio-record these group discussions and individual interviews, and will make a transcription of these recordings for my analysis of the children's conversations. Additionally, I will photocopy and scan into my computer your child's artwork, which I will also analyze. The activities in this study are designed to support the literature and oral language study that is being carried on in your child's regular language arts program.

Inconvenience
There is no anticipated inconvenience for your child to participate in this research, other than a temporary restructuring of some of their regular classroom activities. The children will not be required to make up any class work they miss while participating in the read-aloud sessions. I have discussed these pragmatic issues with Mrs. [redacted], and she is supportive of this research.

Risks
There are no known or anticipated risks for your child to participate in this study, other than the risks associated with the regular activities in their daily lives at school.

Benefits
This study may benefit your child directly in providing him/her with opportunities to think about characters in literature, and how these characters solve relationship difficulties that are common and may be relevant to young children. Your child will have opportunities to develop inferencing skills as we talk about the characters during our small-group interactive discussions. Additionally, your child will learn how pictures can enhance meaning in picturebooks and will learn vocabulary that will enable them to speak in a more informed manner about illustrations in picturebooks and in their own visual artwork.

Voluntary Participation
Your child's participation in this research must be completely voluntary. While all the children will participate in the small-group literature discussions and art activities, only those students who participate in the research will have their individual interviews and artwork photocopied and entered into the data base. Since the researcher will not know who the participants are until after the research activities are completed, students being audio-taped may be non-participants, or participants who choose to withdraw from the study. Since group data will be logistically impractical to remove from the database, group data involving non-participants, or participants who choose to withdraw, will be summarized to protect confidentially. If the parents choose not to participate in the study or choose to withdraw from the study, they may withdraw their child at any time during the research, without consequences for their child's assessment in their regular educational program. If you withdraw your child from the study, your child's individual interview data and photocopied artwork will be removed from the data base and will be destroyed. Both you and your child must give consent for your child to participate in this research.

Researcher's Relationship With Participants
The students in your child's class know me as a familiar teacher in the school. I work directly with some of the students in this classroom, through individual and small group instruction that focuses on reading instruction and oral language support. My time spent working on this research will be voluntary, and will be in addition to my work-related instructional time with these students. Your decision to exclude your child from the research will have no consequences for your child's assessment in his/her regular educational program. Mrs. [redacted] and myself will not know the identity of the children who are participating in the research until the study is complete.

On-going Consent
To make sure that you continue to consent to participate in this research, I will send home another letter at the conclusion of this study, providing you an opportunity to withdraw your child from the study at that time.

Anonymity
Your child's anonymity will be protected through the use of a pseudonym for your child, his/her classroom teacher, and the school. Your child's anonymity will be protected in this manner in all documents pertaining to this research, including the preparation of my Master's thesis, and any professional publications or presentations regarding this research.

Confidentiality
The confidentially of the children's individual interviews and the confidentiality of the data from the research will be protected by being kept in a locked filing cabinet in my home. Data stored on my computer will be locked and protected with a password. Confidentially of information shared during small-group read-alouds cannot be assured, as it is shared in a group context.

Dissemination of Results
It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others through the preparation of my Master's thesis, through published articles that I may write, both now and in the future, and through professional conferences and meetings.

Disposal of Data
Data from this study will be destroyed after five years. At this time any stored data on my computer will be deleted and any paper copies of transcripts will be shredded and burned.

Contacts
Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include myself, Adrianne Stacey, on my home phone at [redacted] or at [redacted] School at [redacted]. You may also contact me by email [redacted]. My supervisor, Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo, may be contacted at her office [redacted], or by email [redacted].

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concern you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria [redacted].

Your signature, and the signature of your child below, indicates that you both understand the above conditions of this study and approve your child's participation in this research. By signing you are also aware that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by myself, Adrianne Stacey, or my supervisor, Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Child	*Signature of Child*	*Date*
_____	_____	_____
Name of Parent/Guardian	*Signature of Parent/Guardian*	*Date*

Please keep the white copy of this consent form and return the signed yellow copy of the consent form in the envelope provided. Please return the envelope to the school office secretary by May 1, 2009.

Appendix F

Script Read to Students

Dear Students:

You all know me as a teacher in our school. I am also a student at the University of Victoria and am doing a research project with the students in your class during months of April, May and June. I will be looking at and talking about picturebooks by Anthony Browne. Once a week for 6 weeks I will have a small-group read-aloud discussion about one of Anthony Browne's books. Then you will complete an art project where you get to share your ideas and thoughts about the book. I will also want talk to you about your artwork once you have finished it each week.

You need to decide if you want to take part in this project. While all the students in your classroom will be involved in the group discussions about the picturebooks, the art projects and individual talks about your artwork, only the ones who decide to participate in my study will have their individual talk about the picturebooks and their artwork used in my university work. You can withdraw your permission to participate in my study at any time, and then I will not use your individual conversations or artwork in my work. There will be no consequences for your report card if you decide to withdraw.You can tell your parents at any time if you want to withdraw and they can send a letter to the school office secretary.

If you decide to participate in the study, I may use a photocopy of your artwork, or some of your talk about the picturebooks or your artwork to discuss this project with other

teachers and researchers. Your parents must also give their permission for you to participate in this study, so please make sure you bring home the letter for both your parents and you to read and sign.

Please remember not to tell Mrs. [redacted] or myself if you are participating in the study. It is important that we do not know who is participating until after the work is finished Once you and your parents have read the form and signed it, please return it in the envelope to the school secretary directly in the office. She will keep it there for me. I am looking forward to reading and talking about picturebooks by Anthony Browne with you!

Appendix G

Participants Right to Withdraw Letter

RE: *Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne.*

June 15, 2009.

Dear Parents of Division [redacted],

I am now finished my research project called "Young Children's Autobiographical and Intertextual Connections to Picturebooks by Anthony Browne" for my Master's thesis in Language and Literacy in Education at the University of Victoria. This letter is to see if you or your child would like to withdraw from the study.

The April letter to you stated,

Your child's participation in this research must be completely voluntary. While all the children will participate in the small-group literature discussions and art activities, only those who participate in the research will have his/her individual interviews recorded and artwork photocopied and entered into the data. If you do decide to have your child participate, you may withdraw your child at any time during the research, without consequences. If you withdraw your child from the study, your child's individual interview data and artwork photocopies will be removed from the data base and will be destroyed. Your child's small-group conversations will still form part of the data, as these group conversations are logistically impossible to remove from the data base. Both you and your child must give consent for your child to participate in this research.

If you agreed to have your child participate in the study and you now wish to withdraw your child from the study, please return the reply below in the envelope provided. It needs to be returned to the school secretary by June 19th, 2009. Please do not give it to Mrs. [redacted] or Ms. Stacey.

Thank you very much for your time,

Adrianne Stacey

Please WITHDRAW ……..……. (student's name) from Adrianne Stacey's study.

_____ _____

Parent's name Signature

Appendix H

Table 15

***Types and Number of Statements During Small Group Discussions of* The Tunnel**

	Character Description		Character Feelings		Autobiographical		Intertextual		Labeling		Other		Total
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*N*
Red Group	20	18.3	1	0.9	3	2.8	8	7.3	36	33.0	41	37.6	109
Blue Group	26	21.5	6	5.0	10	8.3	5	4.1	40	33.1	34	28.0	121
Yellow Group	32	26.7	20	16.7	6	5.0	5	4.2	37	30.8	20	16.7	120
Green Group	16	15.0	7	6.5	7	6.5	4	3.7	39	36.4	34	31 8	107
Average	23.5	20.6	8.5	7.4	6.5	5.7	5.5	4.8	38	33.2	32 3	28.3	114

Table 16

***Types and Number of Statements During Small Group Discussions of* Willy the Wimp**

	Character Description		Character Feelings		Autobiographical		Intertextual		Labeling		Other		Total
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*N*
Red Group	50	39.4	18	14.2	14	11.0	5	4.0	28	22.0	12	9.4	127
Blue Group	93	53.1	12	6.9	4	2.3	3	1.7	30	17.1	33	18.9	175
Yellow Group	37	41.6	23	25.8	9	10.1	2	2.2	9	10.1	11	12.4	89
Green Group	56	35.9	47	30.1	10	6.4	1	0.7	20	12.8	22	14.1	156
Average	59	43.1	25	18.2	9	6.6	3	2.0	22	16.1	20	14.6	137

Table 17

***Types and Number of Statements During Small Group Discussions of* Gorilla**

	Character Description		Character Feelings		Autobiographical		Intertextual		Labeling		Other		Total
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*N*
Red Group	54	25.6	10	4.7	7	3.3	30	14.2	64	30.3	46	21.8	211
Blue Group	38	21.5	20	11.3	0	0.0	13	7.3	67	37.9	39	22.0	177
Yellow Group	20	15.9	11	8.7	7	5.6	12	9.5	54	42.9	22	17.5	126
Green Group	43	23.8	26	14.4	29	16.0	9	5.0	43	23.8	31	17.1	181
Average	39	22.3	17	9.6	11	6.2	16	9.2	57	32.8	35	19.9	174

Table 18

***Types and Number of Statements During Small Group Discussions of* Zoo**

	Character Description		Character Feelings		Autobiographical		Intertextual		Labeling		Other		Total
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*N*
Red Group	16	16.2	9	9.1	3	3.0	2	2.0	47	47.5	22	22.2	99
Blue Group	32	21.1	15	9.9	10	6.6	0	0.0	53	34.9	42	27.6	152
Yellow Group	7	6.5	13	12.1	4	3.7	0	0.0	56	52.3	27	25.2	107
Green Group	34	17.5	23	11.9	20	10.3	4	2.1	72	37.1	41	21.1	194
Average	22	16.1	15	10.9	9	6.7	1.5	1.1	57	41.3	33	23.9	138

Table 19

***Types and Number of Statements During Small Group Discussions of* Piggybook**

	Character Description		Character Feelings		Autobiographical		Intertextual		Labeling		Other		Total
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*N*
Red Group	54	27.1	11	5.5	23	11.6	16	8.0	72	36.2	23	11.6	199
Blue Group	18	15.5	12	10.3	7	6.0	0	0.0	61	52.6	18	15.5	116
Yellow Group	25	24.0	13	12.5	7	6.7	8	7.7	42	40.4	9	8.7	104
Green Group	31	16.1	10	5.2	12	6.2	8	4.1	90	46.6	42	21.8	93
Average	32	20.9	11.5	7.5	12	8.0	8	5.2	66	43.3	23	15.0	153