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## A second-grade student creates meaning through the composition process

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## A second-grade student creates meaning through the composition process

### Abstract

Language arts programs in the schools traditionally have been subdivided into the categories of reading and language arts. Most language arts textbooks stress the mechanics of the language and provide limited instruction in the processes of speaking, listening, and writing. Fisher and Terry (1982) state that the goal of a language arts program should be to help students become flexible users of all aspects of language (p. 12).

A SECOND-GRADE STUDENT CREATES MEANING  
THROUGH THE COMPOSITION PROCESS

A Research Paper

Submitted to

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction

The University of Northern Iowa

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

by

Allene A. Byroad

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Through the Composition Process

has been approved as meeting the research paper  
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Language arts programs in the schools traditionally have been subdivided into the categories of reading and language arts. Most language arts textbooks stress the mechanics of the language and provide limited instruction in the processes of speaking, listening, and writing. Fisher and Terry (1982) state that the goal of a language arts program should be to help students become flexible users of all aspects of language (p. 12).

In attempts to separate and label various components of language, writing has been slighted. The value of writing has been underestimated by educators and the general public. Graves (1978a) says that the public's attitudes toward writing are based on negative writing experiences they encountered in school. Writing instruction has focused on the mechanics of writing and the end product, and has even been used as a disciplinary measure instead of an enjoyable means of expression (pp. 16-17).

Frank Smith (1983a) relates that writing is a way of creating meaning, as are listening, speaking, and reading. Writing fluency should develop concurrently with fluency in other aspects of language (p. 78). He states:



There is nothing essentially different about writing; it is another way of discovering more about the world, about possible worlds, and about ourselves. Children should find nothing peculiar or exotic about writing; they should come to it as a natural means of expression and exploration like speech, music, play, and art. Children will strive to make sense of writing in the same way they strive to make sense of any activity--through the manner in which it satisfies purposes and achieves intentions. (p. 80)

Donald Graves (1978a) says writing is at the very heart of education because it develops in students the ability to be in charge of their own learning. He challenges educators to "balance the basics" in the language arts and therefore to give writing its due (p. 27). As a result of the recent research projects in the area of writing, teachers are more informed about teaching writing through the process approach. More and more teachers are providing opportunities for their students to engage in the process of writing. By incorporating writing into the existing language arts program and extending it to other areas of the curriculum,

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students' language experiences are being enriched. Smith (1983a) states "writing then is inevitably integrated in the learner's mind with every other productive aspect of language and every other worthwhile activity as well" (p. 80).

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to document the writing process of a second-grade student. This case-study research project is based on recent research findings on the composition process. The student will engage in a writing workshop and begin to see herself as an author while she gains ownership of her writing. As she experiences the writing process, she will develop an awareness of writing as a natural means for communication.

#### Importance of the Study

Donald Murray (1982) believes every person has a need to write. "We all have a primitive need to experience experience by articulating it" (p. 22). Children of all ages want to write. Evidence of their early interest in writing is seen in young children's scribbles (Graves, 1983, p. 3). Calkins (1983) quotes Harold Rosen's statement that "every child has a story to tell. The question is, will they tell it to us?"

(p. vii). Calkins further reveals children are not being provided opportunities to tell their stories even though research has shown that ninety percent of all children entering school believe they can write. Her question is "Why won't we let them write?" (p. 11).

Frank Smith (1983b) says schools are not always good places for children to see themselves as writers. He further relates that "the way in which schools are organized does not encourage collaboration; it favors instruction over demonstration, and evaluation over purpose" (p. 566). This approach leaves little time for children to experience the joy of writing.

The results from the 1979-80 National Assessment of Educational Progress would support Smith's observations of writing instruction. Langer (1982) reports the conclusions reveal that schools are doing a fairly good job at teaching the mechanics of writing, but students' written products frequently lack depth and support of the ideas (p. 337).

In his report to the Ford Foundation, Graves (1978a) concluded that writing has been sorely neglected in our schools (p. 27). With national attention on the basics, writing has focused on the mechanics and the finished product (p. 10). Evidence of such emphasis

can be seen in the language arts textbooks. In 1976 Graves analyzed second- and fifth-grade textbooks to determine how many activities were devoted to children's own writing. Only fourteen percent of the activities allowed students to engage in their own writing. More recent language arts textbooks have not provided any more opportunities for students to compose (Graves, 1984, p. 52). He further reveals that approximately ninety-five percent of classroom instruction can be attributed to classroom materials, as reported by the Educational Products Information Exchange Institute (p. 53). It is clear children are not engaging in the process of writing.

Graves (1978a) argues that poor instruction in writing is due to the fact teacher education programs have not trained teachers in the methodology in writing. Most of our nation's colleges and universities have not offered courses on writing instruction based on a process approach. As a result, many teachers teach writing the way they were taught in school (p. 15). Fisher and Terry (1982) discuss the situation in many classrooms. "Children in today's classrooms spend little time writing. They fill in blanks, circle multiple-choice items, complete workbook pages that

require one- or two-word answers, and finish one dittoed worksheet after another" (p. 12).

Graves (1984) is optimistic as he sees teachers beginning to have inservice experiences with their writing and bringing a new vitality to writing instruction (p. 185). Programs such as the Iowa State Writing Project are emerging across the country to help teachers experience the process of writing and apply their knowledge to the classroom. Smith (1983b) says teachers must be members of the club of writers before they can admit students in to the same club (p. 566). Then teachers will be prepared to allow students to experience the process of writing.

#### Procedures of the Study

The writer will observe one second-grade student's growth in writing throughout the school year. This descriptive study will incorporate the writing process approach in a writing workshop setting. The student will write daily and a log will be kept to document her writing experiences and involvement in the writing process.

The student will keep a writing folder to store her collection of stories. Some of the topics will come from the student's personal experiences, while others will be suggested by literature pieces shared by

the teacher. She will gain support for beginning compositions from rehearsing with peers in her assigned workshop group. Peer workshop sessions and teacher conferences will help this student gain ownership of her writing and receive feedback from her audience. She will have opportunities to read aloud her compositions, publish stories, and add them to the classroom library.

This student is from a rural school district with an enrollment of approximately 675, K-12. The elementary is a one-unit facility, grades K-6. Since many families are not involved in writing experiences in the home, parents of all the students in the class will be encouraged to participate in their children's writing experiences at home and at school. Volunteer parents will construct books and type children's stories. The administrators will be invited to participate in the writing workshop periodically so they may see firsthand the students' involvement in writing.

#### Summary

In Chapter One the importance of this study and the procedures have been discussed. Chapter Two will review the literature in areas related to this study. These areas include: the nature of the learner, the importance for children to write, and foundations of an

effective composition program. Chapter Three will present an account of a second-grade child's involvement in the writing process. In Chapter Four a summary and conclusions will be provided.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will present recent research and professional literature related to the writing process approach and its implementation in a writing workshop for primary children. The review is organized into three areas: nature of the learner, the importance of writing, and foundations of an effective composition program.

#### Nature of the Learner

In developing an effective composition program, it is essential that the teacher gains an understanding of how children think. Jean Piaget's theories regarding children's intellectual development have given educators a much clearer picture of how children learn. This section will discuss characteristics of seven- and eight-year-olds in terms of Piaget's stages of intellectual development. Particular attention will be given to how these characteristics relate to the development of children's writing abilities.

#### Intellectual Development

According to Piaget's theoretical formulations, intellectual development is seen as the product of the interaction of the child and the environment (Wadsworth,

1978, p. 10). The child is an active initiator of his own learning and constructs his own knowledge through "modification of ideas he has already created for himself" (Long and Bulgarella, 1985, p. 166). Key factors of intellectual development are maturation, a variety of physical experiences, and social interaction (Wadsworth, 1971, pp. 30-31). Many concepts, labeled constructs in Piagetian terms, must be acquired through experiences with others. Wadsworth relates that children develop the construct of honesty, for example, by experiencing situations where others have and have not been honest with them (p. 31). Interactions with others must include peers, parents, and teachers.

Piaget maintains that many seven-year-olds begin to develop concrete operational thought. Children in this stage are free of the characteristics that dominated preoperational thought. Egocentricity diminishes and children develop a social awareness not seen in the previous stage. This liberation from egocentrism comes through social interaction with peers (Wadsworth, 1971, p. 72). As children become aware that others can come to different conclusions, they then begin to seek validation of their thoughts (p. 89).

Language also becomes less egocentric and children are now able to engage in meaningful conversations (p. 89).

The ability to reason more logically and organize thoughts becomes more apparent in the concrete operations stage. Raven and Salzer (1971) relate that children are able to reverse a thought backward or carry it forward in time. They begin to develop structured methods for organizing material, defined as seriation. Other characteristics are the ability to focus on more than one aspect of a stimulus (decentration), the ability to solve conservation problems, and the ability to attend to all aspects of transformation (pp. 631-632).

Despite the tremendous intellectual growth attained during this stage of development, concrete operational children still have difficulty understanding abstract situations. Wadsworth (1978) says the quality of thinking is still related to the concrete aspects of the particular situation and suggests to the classroom teacher that a wide variety of "hands-on" materials should be provided for the children in order to engage in direct experiences with stimuli in their environment (pp. 20, 167).

### The Concrete Operational Child and Composition

Applebee (1978) suggests a child's sense of story parallels Piaget's stages of intellectual development. Many seven- and eight-year-old children are in transition from preoperational to concrete operational thought processes. They tell stories in a very concrete manner, including every detail in their retelling. Their stories begin with "Once upon a time" and end with "happily ever after" (p. 38). Graves (1983) has shown that children do the same when they compose their own stories. He refers to this as the "bed to bed story." He states it is a "necessary, stylized way of starting and ending the personal narrative" (p. 156).

During this transition into concrete operational thought, Calkins (1983) says writing becomes less of play and more of a craft. As children become less egocentric, they begin to see writing as a way to communicate to others. She says "no longer do the children write for the sheer play of it. They write to communicate; they write to perform" (p. 211). Suddenly there is another audience to consider. Children begin choosing topics they think others will be interested in. The conventions of writing such as punctuation, spelling, and capitalization become more important as

the concrete operational child is now concerned with the "correct way" of doing things (Calkins, 1980b, p. 210).

Graves (1984) and Calkins (1979) observe that as children mature and gain distance in their writing, there is a transition from speech to print. They make fewer vocalizations and now work to put the sound in their text. Calkins points out "words don't have to be first drawn, then spoken, then sounded out, before they can be written. When writing is easier, it connects more directly with inner language" (p. 750). With this distance in composing comes the ability to plan ahead. Graves says children now are able to operate in a much broader space-time frame on the text. He notes "now when the child is asked 'And then what will happen?', the child is able to answer several sentences ahead, whereas before the child was unable to think beyond the next word" (p. 227). New challenges also meet the young writers. They begin to develop a critical eye, becoming aware of a discrepancy between their intentions and what they have on paper. They begin to look to an understanding teacher and a supportive audience to help improve their selection (p. 227).

As children gain experience in their own writing, their perceptions change about what makes good writing.

Graves (1983) notes a typical first grader might say a good writer has to be a good speller, be neat, and write slowly (p. 152). From his studies, Graves observes children's concepts of what is important in the writing process develop in the following sequence: spelling, motor-aesthetic issues, conventions such as punctuation and capitalization, topic and information, and major revisions such as adding, excluding, and reorganizing information (p. 152).

#### Importance of Writing

Writing is fundamental to a literate society. Recent research has revealed that when children are provided frequent opportunities to write expressively, a feeling of mastery will develop, and they will continue to want to write. This section will discuss the importance of writing for young children. Topics discussed will be: writing to create meaning, writing to promote literacy development, and intellectual and personal growth through writing.

#### Creating Meaning

Children want to write, even need to write, according to Chomsky (1971, p. 296). Clay (1977) contends children first discover the purpose of written language in an attempt to represent meaning to themselves

and others (p. 334). Birnbaum (1980) says "we learn to use written language because it enlarges our capacity to shape our experiences into meaning, to represent meaning to ourselves and others in our environment" (p. 202). King (1980) notes children in a literate culture such as ours acquire considerable knowledge about written language and how it is used from their everyday experiences. Before they even come to school, young children have become aware of letters and words around them, and most have experienced personal enjoyment from being read to. Many have developed a sense of story, realizing written language is different than spoken language. Children's variations in intonation and style of their dictated stories reveal their knowledge that writing is not just talk written down. King also says "having the desire to write, children draw upon all their existing knowledge to accomplish it and in doing so, they learn more about how to do it" (p. 164).

Smith (1983a) believes fluency in writing should develop simultaneously with fluency in other aspects of language. He relates that "they have the same roots-- the urge to make sense of the world and of oneself" (p. 78). Smith points out most young children enjoy

writing, and find it as natural as singing and dancing (p. 79). It is for this reason Clay (1977) emphasizes meaningful uses of written language should be used to represent young children's own ideas (p. 335).

Leading authorities view writing as a process of discovery. Britton (1982) states "we write, often, in anticipation and in hope, and when we have written discover what it was we meant to say" (p. 20). Donald Murray (1982) says writing is the process of discovery through language.

It is the process of exploration of what we know and what we feel about what we know through language. It is the process of using language to learn about our world, to evaluate what we learn about our world, to communicate what we learn about our world. (p. 15)

Smith (1983a) suggests that writing should be viewed as another way of discovering more about the world and about ourselves. As long as writing remains a natural and purposeful activity, children will practice it and see it as worthwhile (p. 80).



### Literacy Development

Current research is showing a strong connection between reading and writing processes. Graves (1978a) says writing can contribute to reading from the first day a child enters school (p. 8). He states "auditory, visual, and kinesthetic systems are all at work when the child writes, and all contribute to greater skill in reading" (p. 8). Calkins (1983) contributes to the emerging body of knowledge regarding the reading-writing connection. She notes in her research project there was no way to observe writing without observing reading. She states:

While composing, children read continually.

They read to savor the sounds of their language, they read to see what they have written, they read to regain momentum, they read to reorient themselves, they read to avoid writing. They read to find gaps in their work, they read to evaluate whether the piece was working, they read to edit. And they read to share the work of their hands. (p. 153)

Donald Murray (1985) says most teachers are unaware of the continual, sophisticated reading that occurs

during writing. "Every writer is a reader. When you write one word--or phrase or sentence or paragraph--you have to read what you have written and read ahead to what you have not quite yet written" (p. 149). Haas Dyson (1982a) maintains that when children read their own writing, they may discover the connection between reading and writing (p. 830).

Clay (1975) and Hoskisson (1979) believe the visual details of print provide a valuable complement to early reading. Hoskisson says children need to use all the possibilities for developing language abilities. In the past writing has not been used effectively to promote language development. In teaching children to write in the traditional mode "we expect them to learn the written form of the language from the bits and pieces of language we introduce them to in our phonics programs" (p. 893). When children write from their own experiences and imagination, they will write what they can understand. The vocabulary used is close to the child, and this minimizes the conceptual difficulty, according to Hoskisson. Vocabulary in children's writing is richer because children have far more words in their speaking vocabulary than what is used in controlled basal readers (p. 892).

Chomsky (1971, 1972) and Graves (1979) have discussed the value of writing and invented spellings to help gain mastery in the spellings of our English language. Children will learn to spell words that are meaningful to them and that they have a use for. According to Graves (1983) spelling will develop appropriately if children are allowed to write and spell freely, and develop a proficiency in reading (p. 194).

Current literature suggests writing enhances reading comprehension. Graves (1978a) says as children grow older, such things as combining sentences in writing and revising one's writing contributes to comprehension in reading (p. 8). Calkins (1983) points out that in writing children use and develop skills associated with reading, such as selecting main ideas, sequencing of events, organizing and supporting details, and discovering cause and effect (p. 153). She believes when children see themselves as authors, their writing gives them new reasons to connect with reading (p. 157).

Frank Smith (1983b) discusses the reading-writing connection when he says children must read like writers. He states:

To become writers, children must read like writers. To read like writers they must see

themselves as writers. Children will read stories, poems, and letters differently when they see these texts as things they themselves could produce; they will write vicariously with the authors. (p. 565)

#### Intellectual and Personal Growth

Various authorities, such as Murray (1985), Graves (1978a), and Emig (1969), have discussed the effect that writing has on one's intellectual growth. Graves maintains many levels of thinking are required in the highly complex act of writing (p. 6). Jack Hailey (1978) lists some of the thought processes involved when writing: informative, reflective, perceptive, appreciative, imaginative, and assimilative (p. 107). Emig (cited in Tate and Corbett, 1981) sees writing as a necessary mode of learning. She states "a unique form of feedback, as well as reinforcement, exists with writing, because information from the process is immediately and visibly available as that portion of the product already written" (p. 74).

Haley-James (1982) contends writing focuses thought. She believes when children have frequent opportunities to write, they will grow in their abilities to decide what they want to say and how to say it effectively.

She maintains learning is most likely to take place when children talk with others during the writing process, when writing is viewed as a process, when children have their own reasons for writing, and when they write frequently (pp. 727-728).

Smith (1982) and Murray (1985) support the notion that writing is an act of thought. Smith says writing reveals to the author things that were not known before the writing began (p. 1). Murray states "we write to think--to be surprised by what appears on the page; to explore our world with language; to discover meaning that teaches us and that may be worth sharing with others" (pp. 3-4).

Writing serves a legitimate function in a child's personal and social life. Numerous researchers have studied the psychological value writing has on children. In addition to the tension release and escape value of getting feelings and thoughts on paper, Graves (1978a) maintains writing helps develop self-esteem and courage. He says writing can help children realize they have something worthwhile to say, then develop the courage to say it (p. 7).

Tompkins (1982), Haley-James (1981), and Tway (1980) suggest writing fosters artistic expression and

stimulates imagination. Long and Bulgarella (1985) note in their study with first graders that social interaction from sharing stories encouraged children's development of individuality and creativity as well as critical thinking (p. 171).

Donald Murray (1985) says that through writing people surprise, educate, and entertain themselves. They will see, feel, think, and understand more as a result of their involvement in the writing process (p. 7).

#### Foundations of an Effective Composition Program

Leading authorities on writing instruction agree that children learn to write by writing. Graves (1978b) notes from his observations in classrooms where writing excelled that teachers provided frequent, large blocks of uninterrupted time for students to write (p. 639). Walshe (1982) says writing needs frequent and thoughtful practice if skill is to emerge (p. 20). Murray (1985) stresses the importance for writers and teachers of writing to set aside time and write daily (pp. 66-67). Britton (1982) states:

Children learn to write above all by writing .

. . the world about the child waits to be  
written about, so we haven't the need to go

hunting around for dummy runs. We have to set up a working relationship between his language and his experience, and there is plenty there to write about. (p. 110)

In classrooms where writing flourishes, writing is regarded as a craft. Graves (1983) defines craft as "a process of shaping material toward an end" (p. 6). A process approach is used in writing instruction as children write to create meaning. Students choose many of their own topics and share their writing with teachers and peers as they become effective, independent writers (Graves, 1978a, p. 19).

Graves (1983) maintains a rich, print-filled environment facilitates a successful composition program (p. 66). The teacher helps students experience pleasure in reading by providing a wide range of quality literature for students to read, and by reading aloud to the students (p. 67).

An enthusiasm for writing is found in classrooms where writing is valued. Walshe (1982) says children in such an environment frequently hear the teacher promote the importance of writing. Children learn to write for a variety of purposes that relate to all aspects of the curriculum. Graves (1978b) notes that

effective writing instructors know and respect their students' interests as well as their academic performance.

This section will discuss the characteristics of an effective composition program. Topics discussed will be: the writing process approach, the writing workshop, literature as a model for composition, and the role of the teacher in writing instruction.

#### Writing Process Approach

Children need to experience the process of writing in order to become effective writers. Murray (1982) says the process of writing is a process of discovery, using written language to find out what we have to say (p. 15). Graves (1980) believes teachers need to understand the writing process, experience it themselves, and respond intelligently to what children know so that they will write and write well (p. 54). Teachers who implement the process approach to writing instruction consider all the stages a writer experiences as the writing develops. Graves (1984) defines the writing process as "a series of operations leading to the solution of a problem" (p. 145). The process begins when the writer consciously or nonconsciously chooses a topic and is finished when the written piece is completed. The emphasis is on what occurs during the writing.



The writing process has an underlying, driving force called voice. Murray (1985) describes voice as that which allows the reader to hear the writer speak from the page (p. 21). Graves (1983) says voice is the dynamo of the writing process, and is the reason for writing in the first place (p. 31). He maintains that children begin with a clear, strong voice in their writing. When they are allowed to own their writing experiences, their voice can remain strong throughout their writing development (p. 228).

An underlying principle essential to the writing process is the importance for children to write on self-selected topics. Murray (1985) says in order to be an effective writer, the student must be an authority on the topic. When teachers consistently choose topics, they assume a common experience exists to all students (p. 96). Graves (1984) believes allowing students to choose about eighty percent of their topics helps them with voice, heightens semantic domain, skill of narrowing a topic, and basic decision-making (p. 161). Calkins (1983) notes from her research that ownership of writing experiences help students speak in their own voices about their own concerns (p. 28).

A second principle inherent to the process approach of writing is the need for students to share their writing with teachers and peers. Peter Elbow (1977) says an audience is crucial for writing (p. 52). DeFord (1980) states:

The urge to write and become increasingly more proficient so that others can read it is a continuing force which propels the writer on to greater and greater attempts. Once children know there is an interest in their writing, they will return time and time again to the interested party, producing sample after sample. (p. 160)

Calkins (1983) observes from her studies that audiences not only provided motivation, but the mere presence of an audience helped the writer evaluate the piece of writing (p. 60). In time, children begin to internalize the audience and ask themselves questions the audience would ask. Murray (1982, 1985) refers to this as "the other self". Children become aware of themselves as first audience. He compares the act of writing to a conversation between two people.

The self speaks, the other self listens and responds. The self proposes, the other self

considers. The self makes, the other self evaluates. The two selves collaborate.

(1982, p. 165)

The writing process itself can be divided into three stages: rehearsal, composing, and revision. Within the three stages a variety of activities are involved, such as drawing, talking, reading, spelling, handwriting, organizing, and editing (Graves, 1984, p. 169). Graves (1983) and Murray (1982) point out that the writing process is highly recursive rather than a series of logical steps. Graves (1984) concludes from his study of seven-year-olds involved in writing that the writing process is as variable and unique as the individual's personality (p. 40). Murray (1982) says writers constantly move back and forth between the three stages in the development of a piece of writing (p. 21).

#### Rehearsing

During the rehearsal stage of the writing process, the writer prepares to write. Rehearsing is an important act for all writers. For young children, rehearsal may begin with drawing. Graves (1984) says drawing helps children in the transition from speech to print. Evidence of such can be seen when young children are

asked what they are going to write about before any drawing has begun. Most children do not know (p. 86).

Children gradually engage in rehearsal strategies that are further removed from the actual act of writing. Graves (1983) lists some of them as daydreaming, story-telling, reading, listening, and sharing (p. 221). Rehearsals become more frequent and effective when children write frequently. Graves states "the very act of writing itself, through heightened meaning and perception, prepares us both consciously and unconsciously to see more possibilities for writing subjects" (p. 223).

### Composing

Composing is the act of producing a first draft. In this stage, emphasis is placed totally on the message, temporarily disregarding the conventions of print. Graves (1983) maintains all writers follow a simple composing pattern: select, compose, read, select, compose, read . . . (p. 226). Writers must first select one piece of information from the mass of what is known in order to start writing. Once the words are chosen and written, the writer reads and selects more information to continue the pattern.

### Revising

In revision, the writer considers the writing again. Murray (1985) says in revision the writer stands apart from the writing, and the writer interacts with it. He states "revision allows the writer to resee the text and discover in it what the writer did not expect to find" (p. 60). Revision ranges from simple adjustments in the mechanics of writing to major additions, deletions, and reorganization of information (Graves, 1984, p. 146).

Graves and Calkins have done much research on the revision strategies of children. Graves (1979) says children reveal what is important to them in the writing process through their revisions (p. 313). Young children do not revise. Because of their egocentric thinking, their intentions have been fulfilled as soon as they set down the pencil. Calkins (1983) notes that revision develops when students begin to find incongruities between their writing and the events they are attempting to retell (p. 47). First attempts at revision are usually the addition of information at the beginning or ending of a piece. When students begin to cross out words rather than erase, they indicate a development in revision strategies. Words

are temporary and can be changed until the right meaning emerges (Graves, 1979, p. 319).

Calkins (1980a) differentiates the terms revision and rewriting. She observes from her studies with third graders that rewriting does not necessarily involve the deliberate changes of revision. She has labeled four successive patterns of development in rewriting strategies. These include: random drafting, refining, transition, and interaction which involves reading to see what has been said and what is meant to be said (pp. 333-334).

Murray (1982) refers to two kinds of revision: internal and external. Internal revision occurs when writers try to find out what they have to say. External revision occurs when writers revise or edit their work so it can be understood by others (p. 77).

Graves (1983) says that children will want to revise if they are allowed to write about what is important to them. He states "the force of revision, the energy for revision, is rooted in the child's voice, the urge to express" (p. 160).

### Publishing

Writing is a public act, meant to be shared (Graves, 1983, p. 54). Murray (1985) says publishing

is an essential step in the development of every writer (p. 190). He notes there is a new confidence when beginning writers first publish. "They have made something that was not here before; they have spoken in their own voice and they have been heard. They are writers" (p. 61). One first-grade teacher relates the pride she observed when her students published.

They read their own (books) over and over,  
took them home to share with their families,  
and brought their parents in to look at  
them and read them in the classroom.

Every bit of the effort and time put into  
the process was rewarded by their pride  
and their feelings of achievement.

(Gordon, 1984, p. 15)

Graves (1983) maintains publishing contributes to the writer's development. Skills receive greater attention when a work is to be published. Publishing is a hardcover record of past accomplishments, and stimulates young children to begin anew. Children develop a sense of audience from publishing pieces of writing (pp. 54-55). He suggests several forms of publication for young children. Individual bound books are the most popular for publication of their writing.

Other forms are cumulative books, collections of stories based on a common theme, and class newsletters (pp. 62-63).

### Writing Workshop

The writing workshop is based on the premise that children become writers by writing. Bissex (1981) says "just as children learn to talk by talking in an environment that is full of talk, children learn to write by writing in an environment full of writing and writings" (p. 787).

Murray (1985) defines writing workshop as "a community where writers help each other develop their own meanings and their own voices. It is also a community where apprentices and masters work side by side in the practice of their craft" (p. 187). At a regularly scheduled time, a group of children with the support of the teacher write. Children choose many of their own topics and conference with the teacher and peers during all stages of the writing process. Graves (1983) says students need to write a minimum of three times a week in order to develop strong writing experiences. He states "writing taught once or twice a week is just frequently enough to remind children that they can't write, and teachers that they can't



teach" (p. 90). Calkins (1983) observes from her research project that when children had a regular, scheduled time for writing, they became involved in their writing and wrote "as if there was a tomorrow" (p. 31).

Teachers are collaborators with children in the writing workshop. They write with their students in order to understand their own writing and to learn how to help others (Graves, 1984, p. 140).

#### Teacher-Child Conferences

Teacher-child conferences are an integral part of the writing workshop. The teacher guides the student in all stages of the writing process. At all times, the writer maintains control of the piece (Graves, 1978a, p. 19). Murray (1985) states "conference teaching is the most effective--and the most practical--method of teaching composition" (p. 147). Haley-James (1981) concludes from her compilation of research that teacher and peer conferences are the predominately recommended method of evaluating a student's writing (p. 17). Graves (1983) says conferences stimulate children because they do the writing. Through involvement in the process, they teach, solve problems, answer impossible questions, or "discover new

information hidden in the recesses of experience" (p. 119).

Murray (1985) has established a basic format he uses in conferencing. First, the writer may read or comment on the piece of writing as the teacher listens. Next, the teacher responds to the writer's comments and the draft. The conference ends after the writer has responded to the teacher's comments (p. 148). Murray has compiled a list of questions a teacher may find useful while conferencing. He suggests beginning every conference with the question "How may I help you?" (pp. 166, 194).

Graves (1983) points out that children show with their language where they are in process understanding. When children talk, they themselves learn, and the teacher gains perspective on how to help them (pp. 137-138).

Graves (1983) believes the physical aspect of conferencing should emanate warmth and a sense of helping. He advises teacher and child to sit close together, preferably side by side. Effective writing teachers believe that children have something to teach them and will reveal what they need to know. Teachers must ask questions, wait for responses and be careful

listeners (pp. 97-100). Murray (1985) states "to be good listeners we have to believe that the person speaking may say something worth hearing" (p. 162). The teacher looks for potential in each child through the content of the writing, words used in the conference, and the way the child goes about the craft of writing (Graves, 1983, p. 100).

Sowers (cited in Newkirk and Atwell, 1982) offers three types of responses to children's writing that may help teachers see the writing through a child's eye. These responses are: reflecting, expanding, and selecting. Reflecting occurs when a teacher summarizes, restates, or paraphrases the child's text, or encourages the writer to reflect on the experience itself. A teacher may respond by helping the writer expand on what is written. Selecting occurs when the teacher helps developing writers learn to focus and refine their text (pp. 76-85).

Sowers and Graves note successful writing conferences have structures similar to those of mother-infant interactions regarding language acquisition, which Jerome Bruner has labeled scaffolding (Graves, 1983, p. 271). Conferences follow predictable sequences so children learn what to expect.

Teachers focus on one or two features of the child's piece. Conferences allow for reversible roles between speaker and responder. Teachers demonstrate rather than just tell solutions and alternatives. Children gradually acquire the nomenclature of the writing process. A sense of humor and playfulness exists in the writing conference (Graves, 1984, p. 154).

Graves (1983) recommends frequent and very short conferences for young children. A conference may last a matter of seconds to several minutes (p. 142). Throughout, questions and comments are related to the content of the writing first, and mechanics and finer points second (Bissex, 1982, p. 75).

Murray, Graves, and Calkins concur that grammar, punctuation, spelling, and handwriting are important surface features that need to be taught in the context of a child's writing, but only after the writing has been developed. Graves (1983) says skills are taught in the conference because they last longest when they are taught within the context of the child's paper (p. 147). Calkins (1983) reveals from her study regarding knowledge and use of punctuation marks that students who engaged in meaningful writing experiences were able to explain more than twice as many punctuation

marks and their uses as those whose writing experiences consisted of workbook pages and drills (p. 35). She maintains children want to learn to punctuate when they see a need for it in their own writing. When punctuation assists in giving the writer's voice to the piece, and when an audience will be reading the text, the writer will seek help (Calkins, 1980c, pp. 567-573).

Forester (1980) says meaningful practice over an extended period of time helps children establish their own program for spelling (p. 193). Clay (1975) states "there will always be errors in word detail if the child is motivated to express his ideas, rather than merely stay within the confines of the vocabulary with which he is familiar and the skills he can control" (p. 18). Graves (1983) notes that from a study of a first-grade writing program in which children wrote freely, many students reached the "age of convention" and wanted to conform to the conventions of spelling and punctuation (p. 187). He contends proficiency in reading, continued practice in writing, and the "age of convention" all aid a child in spelling development (p. 188). DeFord (1980) states:

Conventions of spelling, punctuation, and  
form of discourse are constantly being dealt

with in an active, logical manner as well.

Sense of spelling is constantly being revised, moving closer to conventional forms. Their growing sophistication is guided by personal interactions with print in the environment, and through books.

Whatever models are available to young writers will serve to guide their developing concepts of print in use. (p. 162)

Graves (1983) maintains that when children have enough writing time and are in control of their topics, their handwriting improves (p. 178). He points out in a case study of children with handwriting problems their handwriting improved shortly after they began writing daily on self-selected topics and received responses to their writing from teachers and peers (Graves, 1984, p. 155).

#### Peer Conferences

Calkins (1983) notes that when teacher-child conferences in grade three were predictable and ownership of the writing remained in the child's hands, those conferences became models for peer conferences (p. 137). The teacher had used mini-lessons to model a good conference. Class sharing times were also valuable

in establishing a positive environment and modeling the format of a conference (pp. 125-130). Children were observed helping each other with topic selection, writing leads, helping by listening, asking questions, and offering suggestions without taking control away from the author (pp. 117-124).

Piazza and Tomlinson (1985) point out that peer conferencing and group sharing help children learn that what they write can be received and valued by persons other than themselves (p. 156). Hansen (1983) says group conferencing is important because the questions raised by the audience influence the unfinished piece in terms of whether or not the author will revise (pp. 970-971).

Calkins (1983) refers to writing conferences more appropriately as language conferences because children use and develop skills in listening, speaking, and reading in addition to writing (p. 124). Piazza and Tomlinson (1985) support the notion of all aspects of language prevalent in teacher-child and peer conferences. In their examination of peer exchanges as they occurred in a writing workshop, they observed young children discussing how to start, reporting information, assisting with simple mechanics of writing, clarifying

information, reading to elaborate story information, and reading to share a story (pp. 152-157). Piazza and Tomlinson contend "when children serve as resources for one another rather than having to compose in isolation, they learn about the writing process as they help each other generate ideas, spell words or invent spellings, and read and revise their writing" (p. 155).

Murray (1985) says incorporating peer conferences in the writing workshop is the second step after teacher-student conferences in developing a community of writers who are able and willing to help each other (p. 158). Students follow the same basic pattern as in the teacher-student conference: the writer speaks first, the responder listens to the draft, the responder comments on what the writer said, and the writer responds to the responder's comments (p. 158). Murray states "One of my primary goals as a teacher is to make everyone else in the class a teacher, so that ultimately my students will be able to be both writers and teachers of writing with themselves as their student" (p. 159).

#### Literature as a Model for Composition

Writing is an expressive activity that can be fostered through children's literature. John Hershey (1977) says good writing begins with having found pleasure in reading.



The urge to write is the child of the love of reading. There is absolutely no use in trying to push away young people to communicate, to express themselves, to write clear and straight sentences . . . unless, long before, you have helped them discover the pleasure in reading. (p. 1)

Britton (1982) says a young writer must know from experience the satisfaction that can come from a story (p. 64). He maintains the sound of a written text will help children begin to hear the inner voice dictating to them the stories they want to produce (p. 65).

Huck states:

Children's writing will grow out of exciting and rich sensory experiences that bring a depth of feeling about people, places, and things. Exposure to much of fine literature of increasing complexity will provide children with a cafeteria of forms and examples from which they may choose models for their own writing. (p. 670)

A teacher who reads quality pieces of literature provides opportunities for children to hear appropriate models of language. Tiedt (1983) believes writing

instruction must begin with oral language, including discussions of good literature (p. 9). Fisher and Terry (1982) say literature that has rich language and is sensitive to children's interests will facilitate meaningful writing experiences (p. 208).

Applebee (1978) has found that children begin to develop a sense of story from having experiences with literature. King (1980) says children become sensitive to literary language and the structure of often-told tales. She states "they (children) develop a sense of the path stories should follow and a concept about how certain characters should behave" (p. 165).

Graves (1983) believes providing literature experiences helps children develop their concept of authorship. He states:

The mystique of authorship is removed that children may find out the beauty and depth of information contained in literature itself. It is removed that children might learn to think and experience the joys of authorship for themselves. (p. 76)

Smith (1983b) maintains that becoming a writer requires the ability to read like a writer. Teachers who provide access to reading materials and meaningful

experiences with literature will help children gain membership into the "club of writers" (p. 567).

#### Teacher's Role in Writing Instruction

The teacher is responsible for providing a supportive learning environment in which a child will want to write and can learn about writing. Golden (1980) says "the teacher who creates a rich environment with authentic purposes for writing will help to assist the child in developing an awareness of writing as a natural process for communication" (p. 762). Graves (1978b) maintains children need a stimulating, print-filled environment where a sense of community can develop (p. 639). He relates that in his study of the writing processes of seven-year-old children that an informal classroom setting gave greater choices in their writing (Graves, 1985, p. 35). Lickteig (1981) concludes that teacher attitude is the single most important ingredient in a successful writing program (p. 45). A positive approach to writing from an encouraging teacher will help children see the value in writing. Smith (1982) says "writing, like individual human development, requires nourishment and encouragement rather than a restraining regimen" (p. 203).

It is important that the teacher provide extensive language experiences to facilitate writing instruction. Burrows (1966) has noted oral discussion is important to the development of actual writing (pp. 27-28). Graves (1983) says reading literature helps set the tone and climate for writing (p. 30). He believes children will want to write when they have developed a sense of story and have heard the rich voices in quality pieces of literature (p. 29).

The teacher must also provide frequent opportunities for children to write. Leading authorities on children's writing stress that the actual growth and development in writing occur through many experiences of writing (Graves, 1983), (Calkins, 1983), (Murray, 1985).

Smith (1983a) maintains students will learn to write and to enjoy writing only in the presence of teachers who themselves write and enjoy writing (p. 87). A teacher must write with the students if a composition program is to be effective. Smith (1982) believes this is the most direct and relevant way to demonstrate to a child the power of writing (p. 201). "Teachers who are not members of the club of writers cannot admit children to the club" (Smith, 1983b, p. 566).

Murray (1985) and Graves (1984) say teachers should write so they may understand the process of writing from within. Both agree teachers do not have to be great writers, but have frequent and recent experiences of writing. Murray states:

If you experience the despair, the joy, the failure, the success, the work, the fun, the drudgery, the surprise of writing you will be able to understand the composing experiences of your students and therefore help them understand how they are learning to write. (p. 74)

In her studies of young children's writing experiences, Haas Dyson (1982b) suggests young children come to school with a vast amount of knowledge regarding written language. She believes the teacher's role is to support and extend the strategies the children have already begun to use (pp. 674-675). Teachers should observe what children do while writing and provide opportunities for them to show what they already know about the processes and functions of the written language (p. 675). Graves (1983) says children will reveal orally where they are in their understanding of the written language (p. 137). When teachers listen

and observe, Graves maintains children will show how they can be helped in their writing. He states "the teacher's role is to sense the child's intentions, note what aspects of transition stand in the way, and then provide help" (p. 85).

Graves (1983) contends another responsibility of the teacher is to monitor children's growth in writing. Observation and assessment can be used to show the progress students make (p. 293). He says the simplest and most efficient record-keeping system and assessment device is the writing folder (p. 308). The folder houses all of a child's pieces of writing and can help the teacher monitor progress in all aspects of writing development (pp. 297-298). Children show where they are in their development through their choices of topics, statements about writing, the way they use the page and the process of writing, and the ways in which they respond to their own work and the work of others (p. 286).

Britton (1982), Murray (1985), and Calkins (1983) concur the teacher's role in writing instruction is to be a good listener. Britton says a teacher should be a stable, accepting, encouraging, and helpful audience for what students say and write (p. 165). He states:

We must be careful not to sacrifice to our role as error spotters and improvers and correctors that of the teacher as listener and reader . . . . What is important is that children in school should write about what matters to them to someone who matters to them. (p. 110)

Murray (1985) says teachers must read what students have written, listen to their evaluation of the writing, and respond in the student's terms (p. 139). At the 1985 Iowa State Writing Project conference he commented that a skillful writing instructor responds in a manner that will reinforce and stimulate the student's thinking. Graves (1984) states "teachers need to help them (children) maintain control because when they are successful, children see themselves as important learners with something to say" (p. 91).

#### Summary

Research has shown children need to have frequent and meaningful composition experiences in order to become effective writers. The writing process approach to writing instruction has proven to be the most productive in developing children's writing abilities. The writing workshop contributes to a sense of community

where students are encouraged to speak in their own voices and share their writing with others. The implications of this research will be incorporated into a writing workshop to observe one second-grade student's involvement in the writing process. Her writing experiences and development will be discussed in Chapter Three.



## CHAPTER III

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDY

This chapter will describe a second-grade girl's involvement in a writing workshop as she experienced the writing process. The program was initiated at the beginning of the school year. Her responses were studied for seven months. An analysis of her development in written composition will also be presented.

## Goals of the Writer's Workshop

The goals of the writing workshop were (a) students would own their writing experiences, (b) students would consider themselves as authors with something worthwhile to say, (c) the content of their writing would receive primary emphasis, with the mechanics of writing taught in the context of their compositions, (d) literature experiences would enhance students' written compositions.

## Student in the Study

Kari was an out-going, energetic second grader. She lived with her father and younger brother in a small town in the school district. Kari was popular with her peers. She expressed her thoughts openly with others in the classroom. Pets were her major interest, particularly cats, rabbits, and horses. Other hobbies included reading and running. Based on an informal

reading inventory and her score on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests, Kari's instructional reading level was third grade in September of second grade.

#### Preparation for the Study

The teacher prepared for the study by discussing the program with administrative personnel, by developing materials, and by arranging the classroom environment.

#### Administrative Support

The teacher met with the elementary principal and superintendent to discuss the proposed study. The writing process approach was described, and current related literature was discussed. The librarian was also consulted and agreed to help by suggesting quality pieces of literature to facilitate children's writing experiences.

#### Materials Developed

Writing folders were developed according to Graves' (1983) guidelines. Kari's folder had three sections: one to record stories she had written, a second to record topics for future stories, and a third for her teacher to record skills she had mastered as observed in her written compositions (Appendix A - Record of Skills Mastered).

Learning centers were created to allow for Kari and her peers to engage in various expressive language experiences, including composition.

Lists of poetry selections and picture books were collected to read to the entire class. Works of a featured author or poet were displayed weekly to help Kari and her classmates become familiar with children's writers and develop a sense of an author's voice and style. Daily poetry was read along with a picture book and one chapter from a full length book. These selections were made from bibliographies obtained from Dr. Jeanne McLain Harms (Appendix B).

A notebook was obtained by the teacher to keep a log of Kari's conferences and observations of her involvement in the writing process. A list of skills from the second-grade language textbook was copied and used as a reference to monitor Kari's growth in the conventions of language (Appendix C - List of Skills).

Spelling booklets for the students to record unknown words which were needed in their compositions were constructed by the teacher.

#### Classroom Environment

The classroom was arranged to facilitate a workshop atmosphere. Tables and desks in various areas in the

classroom were made available for students to work alone or with one or more peers. A large box contained students' writing folders. Another large box nearby contained hundreds of hand-made books ready for children to publish stories in. An area was established to display written compositions. An author's chair was placed near a corner on the carpet for students to sit in and share their stories while the rest of the class gathered to listen and discuss. The reading corner contained picture books and poetry. Pictionaries and dictionaries were made available on shelves as well as words displayed throughout the classroom to assist in students' spelling development.

#### The Child's Involvement in the Writing Process

Kari's composition activities are reported by time periods within the school year.

#### September - October

Beginning in September, the class wrote for four days of the six-day cycle. Kari's first piece of writing was entitled "My Summer Fun" (Appendix D). The teacher collected Kari's story as well as her classmates', retyped them, and stapled them into a booklet entitled "Our Fun in the Sun - 1985." Kari had no trouble thinking of what she wanted to say and

how to begin. She commented, "We always go to Okoboji. It's a blast up there!"

During the first two weeks of writing workshop the teacher circulated among students, encouraging them to choose their own topics and accepting their work with positive comments. Kari never seemed at a loss for topics. She was thrilled to be able to write about whatever she chose. She said, "I have so many things going on inside me I want to write about." Once she stated, "You know, I think I've been in the hospital for everything a kid could ever be in for. I've had my tonsils out, my appendix out, a hernia operation, and a broken arm!"

Kari chose to write "My Bad Day" (Appendix E) after listening to the story Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day, by Judith Viorst. She wrote about a bad day when she was one and hit her head, then got it stuck between her crib bars. Kari eagerly shared her story from the author's chair, while her classmates listened. The teacher modeled ways of responding to a piece of writing, as suggested by Graves (1983), Calkins (1983), and Murray (1985). "Kari, I like your story because you explained to us how you hurt your head." commented the teacher. Other

students were encouraged to ask questions or respond by saying something such as "I like your story because . . ." or "The part of your story I like the best is . . . ."

In September Kari was asked how she felt about writing. She said, "I think writing is kind of my hobby because it's so fun." She commented that in first grade her teacher had provided opportunities to write about pictures that were shown to the class. Kari had enjoyed that but believed choosing her own topics was much more fun. When she was asked what she found to be the most difficult about writing, Kari said that spelling posed the greatest problem for her. She believed that she needed help with spelling. The teacher assured Kari and her classmates that spelling would not be a problem in writing workshop. Students would simply write the word the way they thought it looked, and corrections would be made later with the teacher during a conference. Kari and her peers gradually learned that spelling did not prevent them from writing any words they chose to use.

Aileen Fisher's "Going Barefoot," in Runny Days, Sunny Days, inspired Kari to write her first poem.

## Going Barefoot

Ladybug,

can you see my toes  
like five small hills  
before your nose?

Ladybug,

does it make you giggle  
when the hills  
begin to wiggle?

Ladybug,

have you heard the news?  
It's June! I'm wearing  
my barefoot-shoes.

Kari's poem, entitled "Toes," (Appendix F) referred to all different shapes and sizes of toes and what toes do. After this poem, Kari wrote a number of short poems. It was not unusual for her to write two or three pieces in one sitting. The day after she wrote "Toes," Kari wrote a poem called "Bugs" (Appendix G). She had heard Karla Kuskin's "A Bug Sat in a Silver Flower" from Dogs and Dragons, Trees and Dreams.

A Bug Sat in a Silver Flower

A bug sat in a silver flower

Thinking silver thoughts.

A bigger bug out for a walk  
Climbed up that silver flower stalk  
And snapped the small bug down his jaws  
Without a pause  
Without a care  
For all the bug's small silver thoughts.  
It isn't right  
It isn't fair  
That big bug ate that little bug  
Because that little bug was there.

He also ate his underwear.

Teacher-student conferences began in the middle of September. The structure of the conference was very consistent, as suggested by Graves (1983, pp. 98-99). The students soon learned what to expect in a conference. Kari came prepared to share one piece of writing. After she read her story aloud, the teacher responded with a positive comment. This was followed with the question "How can I help you with your story?" In one of Kari's first conferences the use of the period was discussed. The teacher explained, then demonstrated in Kari's story how she might know when to use a period. Her reply was "Oh, I think that might help me." Kari showed no interest in revision other



than correcting spelling errors and inserting proper punctuation. Kari's egocentric way of thinking prevented her from seeing any need to improve her stories. Her responses indicated that she believed her first draft was adequate. Then she was ready to move on to a new topic. The teacher observed that Kari began writing as soon as her pencil touched the paper, with little or no thought as to how she would begin. An example of Kari's egocentric thinking was observed the third week in September. She was going to get some fish at home and wanted to write a story about this experience. The teacher gave her two books on fish to look through and help her decide what to write. Kari said, "I want to go to the Ft. Dodge library and check out a whole bunch of books on fish." She specifically wanted to know how fish swim and breathe underwater. The fish story was never written because Kari was not ready to devote time and planning to a story. The following day Kari had read the story Who's a Pest?, by Crosby Bonsall, and decided to write her own definition of a pest (Appendix H). By the end of September, Kari had written twenty stories.

Peer conferences were initiated at the end of September after students had experienced several

teacher-student conferences. Students were familiar with the structure of conferences and ready to incorporate it into their peer conferences. To initiate the peer workshop, the teacher read "Fall Mornings," by Maureen Cannon, in Leland Jacobs' collection Poetry for Autumn.

### Fall Mornings

Mornings are apple-bright  
in fall, I'd say.  
The feel of them is crisp!  
I like the way  
They smell, fall mornings,  
soap-and-water sweet,  
Or fresh as just-made bread,  
a sort of neat  
Perfection to their shape  
as though each was  
Designed to hold a promise.  
And . . . it does!

The teacher then read Aileen Fisher's Where Does Everyone Go? Students were then invited to write about fall in a poem, story, or personal narrative. At the end of fifteen minutes, students were divided into groups of four or five and given time to share what

each had written. The teacher used Kari's group to model responses in a peer conference. Students listened as Kari eagerly shared what she had written. The teacher responded by saying "My favorite part of your story was the sentence 'What a sight to see!' because I liked your choice of words." Another student in her group suggested that Kari write about the pretty shape birds form as they fly south. Kari decided she would add more to her story the next day. She said, "I'm going to put down everything I know about fall, and it's going to be a long story!" Kari was beginning to demonstrate what Calkins (1983) referred to as writing as if there was a tomorrow (p. 31). She was now aware that a story could take several days to write instead of just one. The teacher suggested she make a list of everything she knew about fall to help her decide how to continue. The next morning Kari bounced into the classroom with a list of ideas in her hand. "My dad helped me last night. He can't believe I'm such a good writer!" Kari was becoming aware that thought and planning helped in writing a good story.

A few days later, Kari proudly shared in a teacher-student conference the five pages she had written about fall. She had begun writing about winter

in the fifth page. She liked what she had written and announced she was changing her title to "Different Seasons" (Appendix I) and would write about all four seasons. "Then my story will be really long!" she exclaimed. The teacher helped Kari correct a few spelling errors and insert proper punctuation. Kari was encouraged to go through the upcoming pages of her story and circle words she thought might need to be corrected before she signed up for her next conference. She had begun spelling words the way she thought they looked. Difficult words did not prevent her from attempting to spell them. Kari used her spelling booklet to record words she needed help with, and she referred to it frequently. Her writing was beginning to develop a sense of voice because she focused on her ideas rather than spelling and mechanics.

In another conference concerning this story, Kari shared her completed nine-page story. "I want to publish it so everyone can read my story and learn about seasons." She had circled three words she was not sure about: people, shucks, and clouds. She informed the teacher that Sarah, a friend in her peer workshop, had helped her put in some periods. Kari realized published stories need to be correct. She

was developing an awareness of audience because she believed others would want to read her story and learn about seasons. When Kari shared "Different Seasons" from the author's chair, her classmates were impressed with her nine-page story. One student commented, "Kari, I like your story because I got a picture in my mind when you read about every season." Kari told her classmates the part she liked best. "I like the sentence 'And the animals get ready for winter.' because I think it's a good way to end the part about fall." Kari began listening to the sounds of words and realized certain combinations of words were more effective.

Kari wrote six stories in October. Three of her stories were personal narratives. These included "Sleepwalking" (Appendix J), "My Family" (Appendix K), and "My Filling" (Appendix L). The story "I" (Appendix M) was written shortly after hearing Jack Prelutsky's "Wrinkles" from A Snopp on the Sidewalk.

#### Wrinkles

When the clock strikes five but it's only four,  
there's a wrinkle in your clock.

When your key won't work in your own front door,  
there's a wrinkle in the lock.

When your brand-new shoes refuse to fit,  
there's a wrinkle in each shoe.

When the lights go out and they just were lit,  
that's a wrinkle's doing too.

When you shake and shake but the salt won't pour,  
there's a wrinkle in your salt.

When your cake falls flat on the kitchen floor,  
it's surely a wrinkle's fault.

The way to fix these irksome works  
is obvious and simple.

Just search and find it where it lurks,  
and then . . . remove the wrinkle.

In Kari's version of this poem, "I" was blamed for doing things like moving the pencil when one is writing, making a clock strike thirteen, and preventing new socks from fitting. Kari's solution was to fight the "I."

Kari's story "My Filling" was inspired by a girl in her peer workshop who had just visited the dentist (Appendix L). She said, "I just remembered about that awful day!" There were many misspelled words, but she indicated she was not going to publish this story. It appeared Kari's purpose in writing about her filling

was for her own enjoyment. She now looked back on the experience with humor and wanted to record it in a light-hearted manner. When she shared it with members of her peer workshop and then in the author's chair, the entire class laughed. The teacher responded, "I enjoyed your story because you told us what it felt like to be in the dentist's chair, and I felt like I was there too!" Other students liked the part where the novocaine made her mouth feel "gross." Others liked the part when she said, "I almost bawled my head off," and her brother just laughed at her. She had used words such as "disgusting," "gross," "numb," "bawled," and "laughing."

Kari was becoming a popular author among her classmates, and they looked forward to hearing her stories. She remarked that even her father liked listening to her stories. She said, "I'd much rather read or write a story than watch T.V. My dad can't believe it!" She told the teacher she had been writing stories at home and had asked her father for help with spelling. She had explained to him that at school a student could draw a line when a word was unknown, and the teacher would help fill in the blanks during a conference. "My dad thought that was a neat idea!"

Kari informed the members of her peer workshop that she was going to write a Halloween mystery. She was motivated by Sharmat's Nate the Great series. In a teacher-student conference, she outlined the plot of her future story, which indicated growth in Kari's rehearsal strategies. She was beginning to organize her thoughts before she began writing. With "The Case of the Lost Pumpkin" (Appendix N), Kari knew how she wanted to begin and where she wanted her story to go. "It's going to be about a boy named Tommy who loses his pumpkin off the front porch. That happened to us once. Dad found it smashed in our yard, but that's not going to happen in my story. Someone's going to steal it." Kari worked on her story for several days. She knew she had a good story developing, and she worked diligently. Five days later Kari returned for a conference, ready to share the first five pages of her story. Tommy's pumpkin had been stolen by two little boys down the street. He had sought the help of his friends to find the pumpkin. The teacher asked Kari why Tommy had been sent to bed without supper. Kari said his mother had told him to bring in the pumpkin but he did not listen. She also remarked she had just read Maurice Sendak's Where the Wild Things Are and



thought it was a good idea for Tommy to be sent to his room just as Max had been.

The teacher suggested that Kari could use quotation marks in her story to indicate the speech of the characters. During the conference the purpose of quotation marks and how to place them in the manuscript was discussed. Kari shared what was going to happen next and how her story would end. She was encouraged to go through her story with Sarah, her workshop friend, who was a good editor. Sarah would help Kari insert proper punctuation. Kari finished her story two days later. She was elated to be finished and eager to share it with the class. Kari was tired of the story by then, and showed no interest in publishing her story. This indicated Kari was becoming more selective with her stories. She realized some compositions were not as good as others. This provided an opportunity to discuss that professional authors experience the same feelings and that some compositions are never read by anyone other than the author. Kari knew she could return to "The Case of the Lost Pumpkin" at a later time if she chose to.

November - December - January

Kari wrote four stories in November, six in December, and three in January. Kari and her classmates were introduced to Byrd Baylor's They Put on Masks the second week of November. Students participated in a unit on Indians, then made masks of their own to display in the room. Kari was inspired to write "Indians" (Appendix O).

Kari decided in November to write a story about herself, entitled "All About Me" (Appendix P). She informed the teacher she wanted to have chapters but did not know how to begin. Kari and her teacher formulated four areas she might want to discuss in her story: my family, things I like to do, my wishes and dreams, and foods I like. This helped Kari organize her thoughts. She continued to improve in her use of punctuation and capitalization. In her final draft, Kari had used commas in the listing of her favorite foods.

At parent-teacher conferences, Kari's father was shown her writing folder, and Kari's interest in writing was discussed. Her father was very enthusiastic. He commented on how often Kari wrote at home and had even encouraged her brother to take an interest in writing.

Kari's letter to Santa in December showed real growth in her writing development (Appendix Q). She began her personal letter by asking Santa if he remembered seeing her and by stating she understood how busy he was at this time. She remarked to her teacher that she had seen a colon used in a story she had read recently and wondered if she could use one in her letter to Santa. Kari remembered the form for letter writing. She used commas at the end of the greeting and closing of the letter. The mechanics of writing and spelling no longer bothered Kari. She engaged in the writing process with enjoyment. She knew good ideas and the expression of ideas were what contributed to quality pieces of writing.

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever, by Barbara Robinson, inspired Kari and her classmates to share their thoughts about the nativity. Kari's story, "Little Baby Jesus" (Appendix R), demonstrated growth in her ability to spell words the way she thought they looked. She remembered the word "people" contained an "o" but she was not sure where it appeared in the word. She was no longer relying solely on auditory clues to help her with unfamiliar spellings. Kari also demonstrated understanding of the apostrophe used for possessives.

The class greatly appreciated Clement C. Moore's The Night Before Christmas. The students held a contest to see who could write the most from memory. Kari wrote as far as the father springing from the bed to see what was the matter (Appendix S). She did not win the contest, but all students enjoyed the experience. Kari was having fun with language; she could now write what she could read, say, and had heard, Frank Smith (1983a) states children should approach writing as naturally as the other components of language (p. 80). Kari was doing exactly that.

After Christmas, Kari's written compositions showed continued thinking language growth. She wrote only three stories in January, but the time spent and quality of the pieces reflected more mature thinking. During Christmas vacation, Kari had written a story entitled "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" (Appendix T). Kari had seen the program on television and decided to record what she remembered. Her sequence of events was accurate, and her sentence structures began to show some variety. Kari had used a prepositional phrase to begin the sentence "In Santa's workshop one little elf would not work." She informed the teacher she would not be publishing this story because it was

not her idea. Kari continued to be more selective in choosing which compositions to pursue. She was developing standards of what her good writing was and what her audience might enjoy hearing.

Kari's story "When I Had My Hernia" (Appendix U) was her best composition thus far. She remarked, "I had a stomach ache the other day, and it reminded me of when I had my hernia so I decided to write a story about it." Kari wanted the words "hospital," "surgery," and "embarrassed" spelled for her before she began her story. The words were then recorded in her spelling booklet. Kari wrote the story in four days. When she conferenced with the teacher, several words had been circled, indicating she felt unsure about the spellings. Kari was beginning to show an interest in revision. The teacher corrected the circled words and discussed the overuse of the word "and." Kari understood the problem when the teacher read aloud a portion of the story. Together they crossed out the unnecessary words.

When Kari shared her story "When I Had My Hernia" from the author's chair, the students applauded her story. Kari had read her story with expression and humor. Hands immediately rose in the air to compliment Kari. The teacher praised her for the difficult words

she had used in her story. One listener enjoyed the way Kari had described learning to walk again as "straighter each day." Many students found it hard to believe she did not take her medicine. One suggested she change the part when the nurse came in and asked about her medicine. He thought it would be funny if she stumbled over the word "no" and suddenly blurted out "yes." Kari liked his idea and asked the teacher how she could change it. The teacher showed the class how one could write along the margin and draw an arrow to indicate where the revision should go. Kari's rough draft looked like what Calkins (1980) referred to as making a draft messy to make it clear (p. 43). The teacher brought a rough draft of a piece of her writing to show Kari all writers have messy rough drafts. When the teacher asked Kari what revision meant to her, she said, "It means to look through your story again. I look for misspelled words, periods, and in case I could add a new idea." Kari was then asked if she felt she had improved as a writer since the beginning of the year. She said, "Yes, because I write more words better. I'm a better speller, and I have better ideas. I think more about my story before I start to write." She even felt her handwriting had improved.

In January the P.T.A. made books for Kari and her classmates to publish stories in. Students wrote thank-you letters to explain to P.T.A. members what a writing workshop was and how the books were used. Kari's letter (Appendix V) explained the purpose of the books. She remembered to indent the first word of the paragraph which was the body of the letter.

#### February - March

Kari and her classmates enjoyed Jean Van Leeuwen's The Great Rescue Operation. Kari wrote a version of the story entitled "Raymond, Fats, and Marvin and the Kidnapping" (Appendix W). In a conference, Kari related that she felt frustrated because she could not think of a title. The teacher explained that many times the title is the last part of a story the author writes because the ending may be entirely different than what was originally planned. Kari knew she wanted to write about a kidnapping and that the three mice would save the child, but she needed suggestions on how to get started. The teacher suggested writing several leads to see which one she liked the best. Kari spent the next day writing three leads and sharing them with members of her peer workshop. Ruben, a workshop member, encouraged her to begin by introducing

the three mice to each other. She seemed pleased with this lead. It was the first time the teacher had observed Kari struggling for an idea or a way to begin. Kari found real need to rehearse before writing. No longer did she write as soon as her pencil touched the paper. She began her story with the three mice, strangers to each other, bumping into one another and immediately becoming friends. She decided to name her story "Raymond, Fats, and Marvin Meet." The mice looked for a movie theatre to inhabit. At the end of four pages, which had taken several days to write, Kari was unable to progress with the plot. According to her title, the story might as well be finished. She was not satisfied because there was not enough action. Kari then agreed to forget the title until the end of the composition. She had written three chapters so far. Her chapters did suggest a different scene or change of thought. Kari worked on her story well into February. She had devoted much time and energy to the piece. In a later conference, the teacher asked if she was tired of her story after spending so much time on it. She was not tired, she admitted, but it had been a difficult piece for her to write. The ideas had not come as easily as with



previous compositions. She knew many other classmates were working on Raymond, Fats and Marvin stories, and she wanted hers to be a good one. This provided an opportunity to discuss with Kari that writing is not always easy. She understood the feeling of frustration when composing. It had taken Kari three weeks to write "Raymond, Fats, and Marvin and the Kidnapping." She was not pleased with the finished product, but she wanted the teacher to go through it with her and make the necessary corrections. A volunteer mother typed the story into a book and added it to the collection of mice stories written by Kari's classmates.

Jean Fritz's George Washington's Breakfast and Ruth Gross' If You Grew Up With George Washington motivated Kari to write a letter to George Washington (Appendix X). Her imaginative letter included many creative choices of words. Students enjoyed her sentence "I almost jumped out of my chair when I heard that tobacco was used like money." Kari had used commas, periods, and capital letters correctly in her rough draft.

For seven weeks in January and February a social worker came to Kari's classroom and presented lessons on various topics, such as self acceptance, peer

pressure, coping skills, alcohol and substance abuse. Puppets were used to present the lessons. Kari and her classmates looked forward to each Wednesday when they would see the puppets Buttons, Bows, Myth Mary, and others. At the last session the presenter invited students to write to the puppets at the address written on the chalkboard. Kari listed the names of the puppets and decided which one she would write to. That afternoon she began her letter to Bows. She praised Bows for the way he had learned to handle his problems. She wrote of her favorite episode in which Bows had learned to ask for help from his friends and not to worry about being called dumb or stupid. In a conference the next day, a few spelling errors were corrected so she could rewrite it and send it immediately (Appendix Y - Kari's list of puppets and letter to Bows).

Kari and her classmates celebrated the first day of spring by holding a Spring Festival. The entire day centered around the theme of spring. Karla Kuskin's "Spring Again," in Dogs and Dragons, Trees and Dreams, was memorized by the students.

Spring Again

Spring again.

Spring again.

Spring again. Isn't it?  
Buds on the branches  
A breeze in the blue  
And me without mittens  
My sweater unbuttoned  
A Spring full of things all before  
me to do.

Kari chose to write her thoughts about spring after reciting the poem. She wanted to put her thoughts in poetry form, but she thought she needed help in deciding where to end one line and begin another. The teacher helped her divide the sentences, and Kari rewrote the poem (Appendix Z - Kari's rough draft and finished poem). Her poem along with other students' poems were typed into a collection of spring poetry. It was a very popular selection for students to read and share with others.

Kari bounced into the classroom one morning with a story in her hand. "I wrote a story about Buffy my cat and what he caught last night. It was really gross!" Kari read the story to her classmates immediately (Appendix AA - Kari's story "Buffy and the Rabbit"). She had written of her cat catching a baby rabbit. She wrote of the commotion she heard outside,

which led her father to yell and jump over the fence to find out what the problem was. Kari had used several strong verbs to give her story much action.

Kari had learned to express herself well and communicate effectively with her peers and other readers. She had become regarded as an expert in the classroom and the person to go to when a story needed livening up. Her bubbly personality and fun-filled attitude towards life had contributed to the rich voice evident in Kari's compositions.

#### Analysis of the Child's Writing Development

The analysis of Kari's writing development during the seven-month period was centered on four works. The stories were written in September, November, January, and March.

The criteria used to evaluate Kari's writing were adapted from Graves' (1983) study of variability in children's writing. The criteria used to evaluate were the following: use of information, organization, and language toward meaning.

Characteristics which suggest low ability in the use of information include (a) generalized statements which lack supporting evidence, (b) incomplete cause and effect relationships, (c) lack of logical

connections and gaps in sequencing, and (d) lack of description. High-ability characteristics include (a) specific information to back up generalizations, (b) sound cause and effect relationships, (c) complete sequence of events, and (d) detailed descriptions (Graves, 1983, p. 259).

Low ability in organization in writing is characterized by random statements that appear to have been written as they occurred to the author. Writing that reveals high ability in organization is characterized by (a) logical categories, (b) main idea statements succeeded by supporting statements, (c) chronological order of narratives, unless the meaning requires otherwise, and (d) causes followed by effects, or statements followed by reasons and explanations (Graves, 1983, p. 259).

Attributes of writing that suggest low ability in language toward meaning are (a) no figures of speech, (b) all simple sentences, and (c) poor mechanics and unclear syntax. Characteristics of high ability in language are (a) use of similes, metaphors, analogies, and variety in lengths of sentences for emphasis, (b) use of rhyme, (c) use of simple and complex sentences, and (d) observation of mechanics of writing (Graves, 1983, p. 260).

### Analysis of the Story Written in September

The story selected for analysis was "Different Seasons" (Appendix I) written at the beginning of the period. The following paragraphs describe Kari's ability in terms of information, organization, and language toward meaning.

#### Use of Information

Analysis of the story "Different Seasons" revealed that Kari used some specifics to support her statements about fall and the other seasons. Examples she used to tell why she liked fall include (a) leaves fall, (b) it gets cold, (c) birds fly south, (d) bears hibernate, (e) frogs bury themselves beneath the pond, and (f) squirrels gather nuts. Because her original intentions were to write only about fall, the other seasons do not provide as much detail. Kari wrote about the snow falling and getting deeper. In her section on spring, Kari discussed the birds and the other animals returning; rose, cherry, and apple blossoms blooming; the sun shining brightly; farmers in the fields; and soft new pine needles and cones. In the discussion of summer, Kari described the blue sky, green grass, white clouds, hot weather, and preparation for school.

Kari wrote several sentences expressing her feelings. "Fall is neat. I love it. Fall is very pretty . . . . I like fall it is my favorite time . . . . I love the snow I do I do . . . . Spring brings sweet smelling things to the air . . . . We have a lot of fun (in summer)."

### Organization

The organization of Kari's story "Different Seasons" indicated that she used the organization inherent in the topic, the four seasons, as a means of organization. Many of the statements appeared to be written in random order, apparently as soon as the thought occurred to Kari. She had said to the class she liked the sentence "And the animals get ready for winter." because she thought that was a good way to end the part about animals in fall. The next two pages contained several references to animals hibernating. This response suggested Kari was beginning to think about organizing her thoughts, yet she was not ready to apply it to her writing. Kari was interested in making her fall story long, so she repeated thoughts frequently. The other three seasons were more concise and followed a logical sequence of events. Kari demonstrated a beginning understanding of organization

in her story, yet she was still tied to the egocentric act of writing down the first thing that came to her mind.

#### Language Toward Meaning

The structure of Kari's sentences in "Different Seasons" was similar. She wrote in simple sentences most of the time. Although her descriptions were vivid, Kari used no figures of speech. Many periods were left out because Kari felt unsure of when to use them. She was more concerned with spelling and saw no need to go back and make corrections. Kari did use capital letters following periods that she had used. This demonstrated knowledge of the use of capital letters to begin sentences. Many of the specific words used in the composition had been displayed in the classroom to aid Kari in the spellings of difficult words. Based on seven years of observing the spelling patterns of second-grade students, Kari's spelling development was considered to be excellent. She connected ideas frequently with the word "and" as in the following example. "Now it is summer and it is hot. And the leaves are green. And very prity . . . . The ski is blue and the cluds are whit. And the grass is green. And it is allmost time for school to start again."



### Analysis of the Story Written in November

The selection chosen from Kari's pieces of writing in November was "All About Me" (Appendix P). The following paragraphs describe the analysis of "All About Me" in terms of use of information, organization, and language toward meaning.

#### Use of Information

Kari's story "All About Me" revealed low ability in use of information. She used general statements with little supporting evidence. She did not expand her statements. Kari simply told who the members of her family were, giving no descriptions of them. She did give two examples of what she liked to do. "I like to do things with my hands like sew and make things with clay." It appeared Kari was more concerned about the organization of her story into chapters rather than supplying enough information to develop the piece. Graves (1979) says overcompensation will occur as children progress in their writing development, leaving some areas to suffer temporarily (p. 318).

#### Organization

Kari demonstrated growth in her ability to organize her thoughts in writing. In a conference, she had stated that she wanted to write about herself but

did not know how to begin. She also wanted to write a story with chapters. The teacher had suggested choosing four topics and making lists under each to help her decide what to say. Kari chose these topics: my family, things I like to do, wishes and dreams, and favorite foods. Under each category she had listed two or more things she would say. The topics became chapters, with each title stating the main idea for each chapter.

#### Language Toward Meaning

Most of Kari's sentences in "All About Me" were simple in structure. Kari used the adverb "someday" twice in her story. She used no figures of speech. Her sentence length did not vary with the exception of the sentence telling of her favorite fruits. "One of my favorite fruits are pineapple, oranges, apples, cherries, pears." Kari had begun to use commas when listing ideas in a sentence. She had attempted spellings of more difficult words such as "pineapple," "oranges," "favorite," "brother," and "author." Kari's use of periods had improved from the beginning of the year. She had placed more periods in appropriate places.

### Analysis of the Story Written in January

The story chosen for analysis in January was "When I Had My Hernia" (Appendix U). Kari had put much effort into this story and was eager to publish it. The following paragraphs describe her growth in writing in terms of use of information, organization, and language toward meaning.

#### Use of Information

Analysis of "When I Had My Hernia" indicated much inclusion of specific information in her writing. Kari's statements were supported with additional information.

Here I was being wheeled on a cart into surgery. I felt embarrassed because I had a surgery cap on. I thought I looked stupid . . . . I got to go to the playroom. And to me that was a real treat. I was surprised when I had seen how many toys they had. They had games and puzzles and all sorts of things to play with.

The development of cause and effect relationships in "When I Had My Hernia" was complete. Kari described the effect of recuperating after hernia surgery.

My mom was always there in the playroom to help me go to the bathroom because I could

not walk over there because my stomach muscles were very sore. I had stitches on my waist. I had to try to walk up and down the halls ten times each day. Each day I got a little straighter, but it took a little while.

Kari presented a complete series of events in this composition. She told of going to the doctor and being admitted to the hospital and described the operation. Her postoperative experience was one of pain and tenderness and believing that recuperation was slow and then eventually going home. She included the emotions she experienced during the ordeal--boredom in the hospital, fear of surgery, and embarrassment about her surgery garb. Kari described vividly her experience of taking medicine.

My medicine was gross. It was white and tasted like rotten bananas. So I told my mom I did not want it but she said, "You have to take it." So I started to cry. And she said, "OK, you do not have to take it." She already had it in a cup. So she just dumped it down the sink. "Do not tell the nurse or the doctor." The nurse came

in. "Did you take your medicine?" I said  
"N-n-n-yes!" My mom started to laugh  
because I did not take it.

### Organization

Kari's story "When I Had My Hernia" was chronologically correct and very well organized. She began with the doctor's diagnosis followed by her hospital admittance and preparation for surgery. Kari discussed her recuperation period and eventual discharge from the hospital. Her well organized story complete with supporting details and vivid descriptions indicated real growth in Kari's writing development from her last composition analyzed and all pieces written earlier in the school year.

### Language Toward Meaning

Language variety and correct use of mechanics were apparent in this composition. Kari used phrases frequently heard in conversation, such as "That was a real treat . . . . And before I knew it I was on my feet." Both simple and complex sentences were used in this piece, and the length of sentences varied greatly, from four words to twenty-three words. Many sentences contained ten to fifteen words. Kari had experimented with the order of words and it added variety to her

sentence structure. An example is "It took a while for my stomach to heal. But each day it was better." Kari used prepositional phrases in several sentences. "In a few days I got to go home, and I got to feeling better. Before I knew it, I was on my feet."

Kari continued to improve in her use of mechanics of writing. In her first draft Kari had used periods and capital letters for names and beginning of sentences. Subject and verb agreement had been mastered at the time this piece was written. An example is "I was surprised when I had seen how many toys they had." Kari had asked the teacher to help insert quotation marks, indicating she understood the purpose of that form of punctuation.

Kari demonstrated that spelling was no longer an obstacle for her. She had attempted words like "terrible," "gymnastics," "surprised," and "medicine." Several words had been circled when Kari came for her first conference regarding this piece. Her first draft had become messy, which Calkins (1979) stated revealed growth in revision (p. 747).

#### Analysis of the Story Written in March

The selection chosen from the pieces Kari wrote in March was "Buffy and the Rabbit" (Appendix AA). The

following paragraphs describe her growth in terms of use of information, organization, and language toward meaning.

#### Use of Information

Analysis of the story "Buffy and the Rabbit" indicated a continuation in Kari's ability to include specific information in her writing. Statements were supported with additional information. "Suddenly I heard a noise. I looked over by the field and saw Buffy coming out of the bushes carrying something in his mouth and it was making noise."

Kari continued to demonstrate ability in using sound cause and effect relationships by explaining the effect of the raucous on her father.

My dad heard the commotion and ran outside and yelled at the cat. He asked me what Buffy had in his mouth. I told him I did not know. Then he jumped over the fence and went to see! It was a baby rabbit.

As in the composition analyzed in January, Kari presented a complete series of events in this composition. She described one evening's scene of seeing Buffy with an object in his mouth, and the succeeding events that led to the release of the

unharmed rabbit. No real improvement was observed over the previous composition "When I Had My Hernia," but Kari continued to demonstrate her ability to present a complete series of events.

#### Organization

The organization of "Buffy and the Rabbit" was chronological. Kari had ordered the events in her story in accordance with what had happened shortly before the writing. The events were presented in a logical manner.

#### Language Toward Meaning

Kari used both simple and complex sentences in her story. An example is "I looked over by the field and saw Buffy coming out of the bushes carrying something in his mouth and it was making noise." The length of Kari's sentences varied from four words to twenty-four words. Kari used specific strong verbs such as "yelled" and "jumped" to enhance the story. She used an exclamation mark to emphasize her father's reaction to the situation. "He jumped the fence and went to see!" Kari's use of periods and capital letters was accurate, as well as subject-verb agreement. She commented that her father had helped her with the words "commotion" and "carrying." No syntax errors and very few mechanics errors were present in "Buffy and the Rabbit."



## CHAPTER IV

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Current professional literature and related research indicate writing is beginning to receive the necessary attention it deserves. Teachers and students are benefiting from this growing body of information on the process approach to writing instruction. Teachers are being prepared to teach writing through inservice experiences such as the Iowa State Writing Project. They are becoming aware of the fact that most children will approach writing as a natural means of communication if they are provided frequent opportunities to own their writing experiences. Effective teachers of writing write with their students and convey enthusiasm towards writing as they experience its demands and rewards. They provide opportunities for students to interact with the teacher and peers to facilitate growth in writing abilities. The value of literature as an appropriate model for composition is realized, and literature experiences are incorporated into a successful writing program.

Observations of a second-grade student's involvement in the writing process for seven months indicated growth in her writing abilities. Ownership

of her writing experiences contributed to the development of her writing as she engaged in the rehearsing, composing, and revising stages of the writing process. The student's sense of enjoyment regarding writing was heightened as she gained confidence in her writing and became a respected author among her peers. She had frequent opportunities to share her compositions, both orally and through publication. These experiences contributed to her growing awareness of audience. The student became more selective of which compositions she chose to develop. Her criteria for selection became topics that would represent her best experiences and those that would be of interest to other readers.

Literature experiences provided the child a wealth of topics. She commented that many of the topics she chose to write about had come from stories and poetry read aloud to the class or ones she had read on her own. She became interested in various writers, such as Beverly Cleary, Arnold Lobel, and Aileen Fisher. Reading many of their selections helped the student develop awareness of an author's voice. This, in turn, helped her listen for and maintain her own voice in written compositions.

The student's perceptions of writing changed during the course of the seven-month period. Observations indicated growth in the areas of types of writing, length of compositions, attitude towards revision, spelling, and use of mechanics. The student commented at the beginning of the year that spelling posed the greatest obstacle for her in writing. Gradually she progressed from the problem of spelling to focusing her efforts on the content of her compositions. She learned that spelling and mechanics could be attended to at a later time. The dictionary and other spelling aids helped the student gain confidence to include words from her speaking vocabulary which enhanced her writing. Conferences with the teacher and her peers assisted in correcting spelling errors. Because the student owned her writing experiences, she was eager to learn when and where to use periods, question marks, and quotation marks. During many of her first conferences, she sought the teacher's assistance in revising for proper punctuation. In later compositions the elements of punctuation discussed during the conferences were observed in many of her first drafts.

The types of writing diversified and the length of compositions increased as the student progressed in the

study. At the beginning of the year she wrote mostly personal narratives. Her stories were very short, and it was not unusual for her to write several in one workshop period. Her egocentrism gave way to more mature thinking. She came to realize that a story could be continued for several days. Her compositions began to vary in length from one page to six and seven pages. Experiences with different genres of literature such as picture books, poetry, and modern fantasy stimulated her to write poetry and fanciful stories in addition to personal narratives.

The student demonstrated growth in her attitude toward revision. She gradually progressed from accepting the first draft of her stories as the completed copy to a willingness to look at her compositions again and revise. Her definition of revision became more than correcting spelling and inserting proper punctuation. In January she told the teacher revision also meant looking back in the story to see if the writer could add new ideas. The student listened to suggestions from her classmates on how to improve her selections. This interaction among peers and the teacher helped in developing her revision strategies.

Analysis of the student's written compositions indicated growth in her use of information, organization, and language toward meaning. She improved in her ability to support statements with additional information, develop complete cause and effect relationships, and incorporate feelings into her writing. She learned to plan ahead and organize her thoughts instead of writing the first thing that came to her mind. A variety in sentence structure and effective choices of words added strength to her compositions.

#### Implications of the Study

Observations from the study support findings from current research and professional literature that young children can and should write. When children are provided frequent opportunities to write on topics of their choice, they will develop writing abilities generally considered to exceed those of children who do not own their writing experiences.

It is essential that teachers understand writing and its place in the language arts curriculum if children's writing abilities are to improve. It is for this reason that the teacher will encourage colleagues to participate in workshops such as the Iowa State Writing Project in order to experience firsthand the

process approach in a writing workshop setting. The teacher will encourage colleagues to consider implementing a writing workshop as an alternative to writing instruction. Colleagues, administrators, and parents will be invited to visit the teacher's writing workshop period and observe students' involvement in the writing process.

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## Skills I Have Mastered

- 9-6-85 Capitalizes the word "I" "My Bad Day"
- 9-18-85 Capitalizes at beginning of sentences "Eggs"
- 9-21-85 Put in periods at end of sentences "Plants"
- 9-24-85 Used exclamation point "Different Seasons using adjectives - 'new soft needles'"
- 10-10-85 used abbreviation for Street - St. "My Family"
- 10-18-85 correct use of "too" "I"
- 10-28-85 using questions & question marks "Case of the Lost Pumpkin" & exclamation point
- use of 's for possessive (Scott's mother)
- use of 's for contraction (that's, let's)
- 12-6-85 correct use of commas in a letter "Dear Santa"
- 11-24-85 use of commas in a list of items "All About Me"
- 12-13-85 Capitalizes first word in lines of poem "Christmas"
- 1-10-86 capitalizes name of friend "When I Had My Hernia"
- 1-20-86 uses correct abbreviation - P.T.A. "Dear P.T.A."
- correct use of commas in letter
- 3-5-86 capitalizes names of characters "Dear Bows"
- 3-10-86 correct use of Jill and I in story "Jill and I"
- 3-86 use of adverbs - suddenly "Buffy and the Rabbit"

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## Summary of Language Skills in Language Roundup 2

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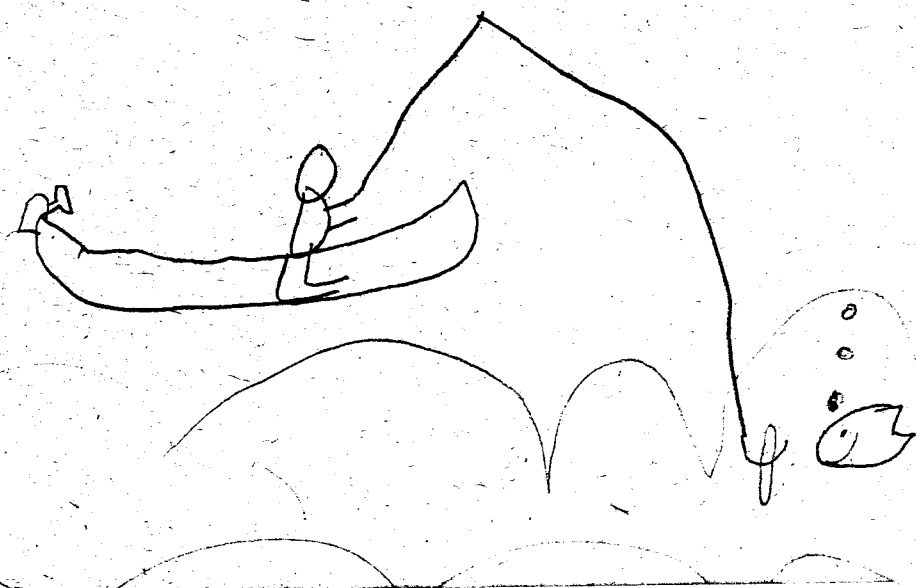
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9-3-85



MY SUMMER FUN

We went to Okoboji and we had fun too. We went fishing. That was fun too.  
And we really had fun.

My summer fun  
We went to Okaboge  
and we had fun too.  
We went fishing that  
was fun too.  
And we really had fun.

my bad Day  
When I was 1.

I was laernen how  
to walk I trid  
to stand up and I  
bamted my haed  
on the conter and  
I had a big lump  
on my haed and  
went to my room  
I got my haed stuck  
betwn the my crib  
bars

9-11-85

toes

Toes toes very  
little toes wigly  
toes and very  
stil toes big  
feetsy toes and big  
lumpe toes no mater-  
what cand of you  
have there. all the  
same little toes

9-12-85

bugs


bugs are bugs and  
bugs are small  
bugs are funny  
insect they  
are I shid say  
very funny I shad  
say. very very funny  
yes it is

9-20-85

120

Whos A pest  
You are a pest.  
A pest is a prson  
who bugs you when  
you do not like.  
And they think  
it is funny to but  
it is not. funny  
at all.

The  
End





9-23-85

121

## ~~Fall~~ Different Seasons

Fall is a time when the leaves fall off the trees. What a sight to see! The leaves are brown.

It is a very <sup>pretty</sup> pritty thing to see.

Fall-is a time when it starts to get cold.

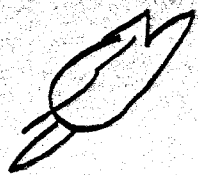
Fall is neat I love it. → ~~Fall is very pritty.~~

The Birds fly  
 south and the Bears  
 hibernate and the  
 frogs <sup>bury</sup> ~~bury~~ <sup>themselves</sup> ~~themselves~~  
~~sets~~ in the mud  
 at the <sup>bottom</sup> ~~battum~~ of the  
 pond. ~~Todes~~ <sup>Toads</sup> do the  
 same thing too.  
~~Sqrrels~~ <sup>Squirrels</sup> gather nuts  
 and store them in  
 the trees. And the  
 animals get <sup>ready</sup> ~~ready~~  
 for winter.

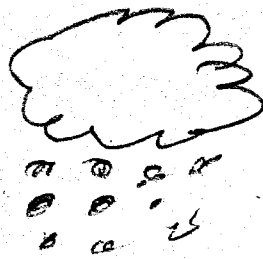
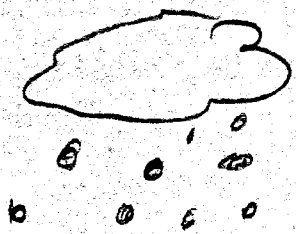
I Love fall.

The animals hibernate and the air smells sweet. Fall is a beautiful time.

The Birds do not sing the beautiful songs they did in the spring. And it is getting very cold. Winter is coming.



I like fall. It is  
my favorite time.  
I love fall, I do so.  
And where did every-  
thing go? They are  
hibernating. So now  
I know. That is  
too bad that they  
can't stay. I do  
say. I wish they  
could stay out for  
the winter.

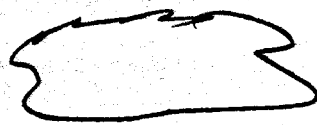


The snow is starting  
to fall. The snow  
has <sup>stopped</sup> ~~stop~~ falling.

Now we can go out  
to play now. <sup>Great!</sup> Grate

winter is here. -

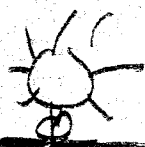
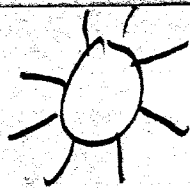
The white snow  
is still falling  
and is getting deeper  
and deeper. I love  
the snow I do  
I do.



The snow has  
<sup>stopped</sup>  
stoped falling.

Great, some people  
say but that is not  
what I say.

Shucks,  
Shux I say. I  
wish the snow would  
fall. Too bad the  
snow could not  
<sup>stay</sup>  
staey. Too bad, too  
bad that it could  
not <sup>stay</sup>  
staey,

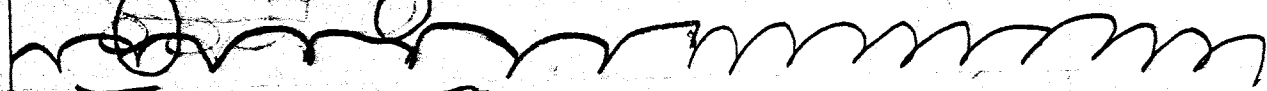
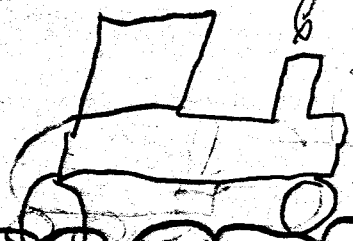


The Birds start  
coming back.

And it is spring now.  
And the sun starts  
coming out and it is  
beautiful now.

The <sup>Animals</sup> Animals start  
coming back.

The Roses start  
to bloom and look  
nice too.

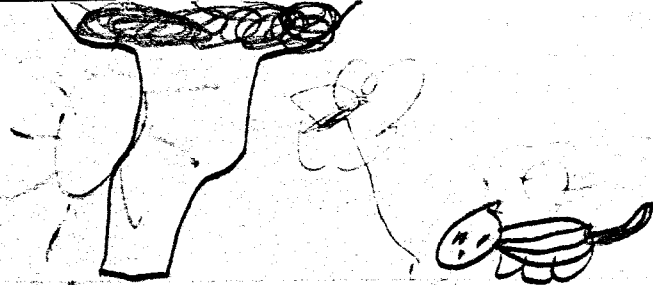


The farmers  
are getting <sup>ready</sup> ready  
to plant things.

And spring brings  
sweet smelling things  
to the air.

And cherry and  
apple blossoms start  
to bloom. Pinetrees  
grow new soft needles.  
and new pine cones.





Now it is summer  
and it is hot.  
And the leaves  
are green. And very  
<sup>pretty.</sup>  
prily. We have  
a lot of fun.

The sky is blue and  
the- <sup>clouds</sup> cluds are white.

And the grass is green.  
And it is all <sup>almost</sup> most time  
for school to start

<sup>again</sup>  
agin.

The End!

10-8-85

Sleep walking  
I halloween I was sleeping in  
my bed and I woke up and went  
sleepwalking down the steps and  
in to the entryway and I opened  
the door and my mom caught me  
and I went back to sleep.

Method

10-10-85

Appendix K

131

My Family  
I have 4. people in my family  
Plus a cat his name is Buffy  
he is 1. year old. My brother  
is Casey and my dad's name is  
Doug my mom's name is Stphine.  
And I am going to move in 2  
weeks to a very small house  
and my new adress will be 1304  
Pleasant st. and I am not to happy  
abot moving. But we cannot pay for it all.

The End

## My Filing.

I went to the dentist and had to get a filing and it hurt very bad. And I had to get 5 shots to get my teeth num. And it was very <sup>disastrous</sup> ~~describing~~ <sup>distressing</sup>. It felt like half of my t<sup>h</sup>ing was going. I could not talk and that was bad. When I drink when it gets in my mouth it turns hot and gets gross. And it felt like my mouth was asleep. I almost boled my head off just sitting there. And my brother just sat there laughing. The noise of the air tool was driving me up the wall. When I got done I almost poned my brother head in I was ~~mad~~ <sup>because</sup> ~~because~~ he was laughing at me.

The End

10-18-85

I  
If your perisel moves when  
you are writing there is an I  
doing that. If your clock strikes  
Bo-clock there is an I doing  
that too. If your new sox donot  
fit there is an I in your sox.  
The way to stop these things is  
go and fade the I. The end

The Case Of The Lost Pumpkin  
ONCE there was a pumpkin it belonged  
to a boy his name was Tommy. He liked  
it very much. It was his favorite pumpkin.  
It was very very big he could play  
on it. It was a very beautiful pumpkin.  
But one night when Tommy was in bed  
someone stole the beautiful pumpkin.  
In the morning Tommy was sad because  
the pumpkin was gone. He told his  
friends to help him look for the lost  
pumpkin. So everyone helped to look  
for the lost pumpkin. They  
looked for the pumpkin day and night  
and they did not find the pumpkin  
at all. Tommy was very sad. Very  
sad. Sitting very happy was a  
little boy his name was Scott.  
He lived a few blocks away from  
Tommy's house. Scott and his brother  
were very happy just staring at the  
big pumpkin and thinking of the great  
Halloween they would have.

It was a week from halloween! Tommy was very sad his friends Dan, Kory, Jim, where sad. Halloween was soon for if they did not find the pumpkin they would be late for halloween. They did not know that Scott & his brother had that pumpkin. Tommy's mother told him that it would get stolen. He felt bad that he did not bring it in the house. That night Tommy went to bed crying he did not like to be sad so he did not go to sleep he just sat there crying all night long. The next morning Tommy & his friends looked for the lost pumpkin. "It is not so long till halloween," said Jim "that's right," said Kory. "If we do not find the pumpkin we will be late for halloween." "What if we do not find the pumpkin?" said Jim "Tommy will have to get a new pumpkin," said Kory.

Again they searched the area but did not find the pumpkin. That night Tommy went to bed crying. His mother got mad and sent him to bed with no supper. Tommy got hungry. The next morning he got Dan, Kory, Jim to look again. But did not find it. Tommy got a new pumpkin he was happy. He sat it outside. That night Scott & his brother came and stole it now they had two pumpkins. And again they just stared at it and ~~being~~<sup>thought</sup> of the great halloween they would have. Tommy got his friends Dan, Kory, Jim to look for the next last pumpkin. They looked & looked but they did not find it. "Halloween is soon," said Dan. "What if we do not find the pumpkin?" said Jim. "Tommy will get a new one." "No," said Tommy "it's find it or don't find it. I will not get one more pumpkin," Tommy said with a mad look on his face. "I will not."



And with that he ran into the house. Tommy must be mad, said Kory. I am, said Tommy half crying. His friends went home too. In the morning Tommy went to find it himself. He was mad, very mad. Just going by himself did not help at all. He was still very mad. One morning when Kory awoke he called his friend Jim. "Hay Jim let's go to Tommy house." "Ok," said Jim. "I will go to your house and get you." "Ok," said Jim. "I will be there soon." "Ok."

So they, Jim & Kory, went to Tommy's house. They hurried down the road. They rang the doorbell. Tommy's mother answered the door. "Is Tommy there?" said Jim. "Yes," said his mother. "Hi," Tommy said to Jim. "Did you find the pumpkin?" "No," said Tommy. "Oh," said Jim. "To bad huh?" "Yes," said Tommy.

"Well, halloween is not over yet. So lets go find it." "OK," said Tommy. So again they went to look. They looked down by Scott's house. We have not come by this street yet. They went right into Scott's yard. And Scott's brother Brad, looked out the door and saw ~~Tommy~~ <sup>Tommy</sup> Dan, Jim. Scott told Brad. And they hid in the closet in their room. They did not know that they had the pumpkins. So they just kept on walking down the street, not looking back. SO they did not find it the last pumpkin. SO they just gave up on looking for a while. In the morning all woke up at the same time. To look for the pumpkins. The night had finally come to town & time to go to bed. And no pumpkins have been found yet.

They decided to go from door to door. Asking if they had the pumpkin. So they did. They started at the block that Tommy lived on. When they got to the end of the block. They stopped at Scott's house. And knocked on the door. Hello little boys and what do you want. This scared them so bad they ran away. And told their mothers. In frightening words. W! W! We weee nt to ask to see if they had the pumpkin. Do not be silly boys but it's true they said. Oh just go and play. So they went one more time to go ask around. But did not go to the house that Scott lived. They came to the next block. And they went down the road. And asked if they had the pumpkin. But no one had the pumpkin.

But one more time. They tride  
to go to ask if they had the  
pumpkin. Knock- knock. Hello said  
scoot's mother hello said the  
boys. DO you have two pumpkins=  
Yes we do she said. Here  
she said take them home with  
you. Think you said Tommy.  
Good-bye said the woman.  
O-boy said Tommy that's  
what I say too. Said Dan.  
Mommy mommy I found the  
pumpkin good said. Let's  
carve the pumpkin halloween  
is tonight oh goodya. Let's  
go.

The End

11-21-25

Indians.

Indians make you think  
of Thanksgiving. They  
were fathers in there  
hats. And put makeup  
on there faces.

The End

11-22-83

# All About Me

I have <sup>my family</sup> one brother and a cat  
his name is Buffy and my dad  
and me. <sup>things I like to do</sup> chapter 2 I like to run.  
And I like to do things with my hands.  
Like sew and make things with clay.  
chapter 3 <sup>my wish & dreams</sup> I wish to be a good  
reader. And be an author someday.  
Some day I wish to have long  
hair. chapter 4 <sup>foods I like</sup> One of my  
favorite fruits are pineapple, oranges,  
apples, cherries, pears. MY favorite meats  
steak, ham steak, hamburger, ham.

## The End

Dear Santa  
Remember me? I came to see you  
Wednesday, December 4th. You must be busy  
now these days getting ready for Christmas.  
Your elves are busy too getting ready for  
Christmas night. For Christmas I would  
like: some new a tani cartridges,  
a new cabbage patch black girl with glasses,  
and a cabbage patch kid Hoosa.

Love,  
Karl  
Bloomquist

# Little Baby Jesus

Once long long ago there lived  
two people named Mary and <sup>Joseph</sup> Joseph.

They traveled a long way around the  
world. And got very hungry. One night  
they came to a town called Bethlehem.  
And they found a manger. And gave  
birth to a very fine boy they named  
him Jesus. God's son Jesus.

The End



## The Night Before Christmas

It was the night before  
Christmas when all in  
through the house Not  
a creature was stirring  
not even a mouse. The  
stockings were hung-  
by the chimney with  
care- And hopes that  
sant Nickoless would  
soon be there The  
children were nestled  
all snug in their beds

White visions of  
sugar plums danced  
in their heads. Mom  
in her cerchief And  
I in my cap Had  
just settled down  
for a long winters nap  
When out on the lawn  
I heard such a clatter  
I sprang from my bed  
to see what was the matter

# Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer

Once there was a reindeer. His name was Rudolph. All the other reindeer made fun of him. Because his nose flashed. And because he had a red nose. Ha-ha-ha they said.

Rudolph's mother and father were amazed of what they were doing to Rudolph.

Mr. reindeer the recess teacher for reindeer school. Said from now on we will not let Rudolph join in any reindeer games. OK. Reindeer. OK. Rudolph felt sad.

Yet. One little reindeer girl walked up to him. My name is Sharling. She said.

My name is Rudolph. She said. Let's be friends. OK! That Reindeer teacher is not very nice said Sharling.

I think you are right said Rudolph. Well we can have our own fun said Sharling. That's right said Rudolph. In Santa's workshop

one little elf would not work. All he ever dreamed of was being a dentist. He was reading a book about being a dentist. He was tired of making toys and being an elf to. So he stood up and said I am

done being a elf and toy maker.  
Every one dropped everything.

WHAT! But you can not.

YES I can. I want to go out  
into the world and be a dentist.

A dentist? Yes a dentist by to  
you they called. I am leaving for  
ever he said. So of he went to  
seek the world all around him  
he saw snow. And something els.

hospital  
surgery.  
embarrassed

1-8-86

## When I Had My Hernia

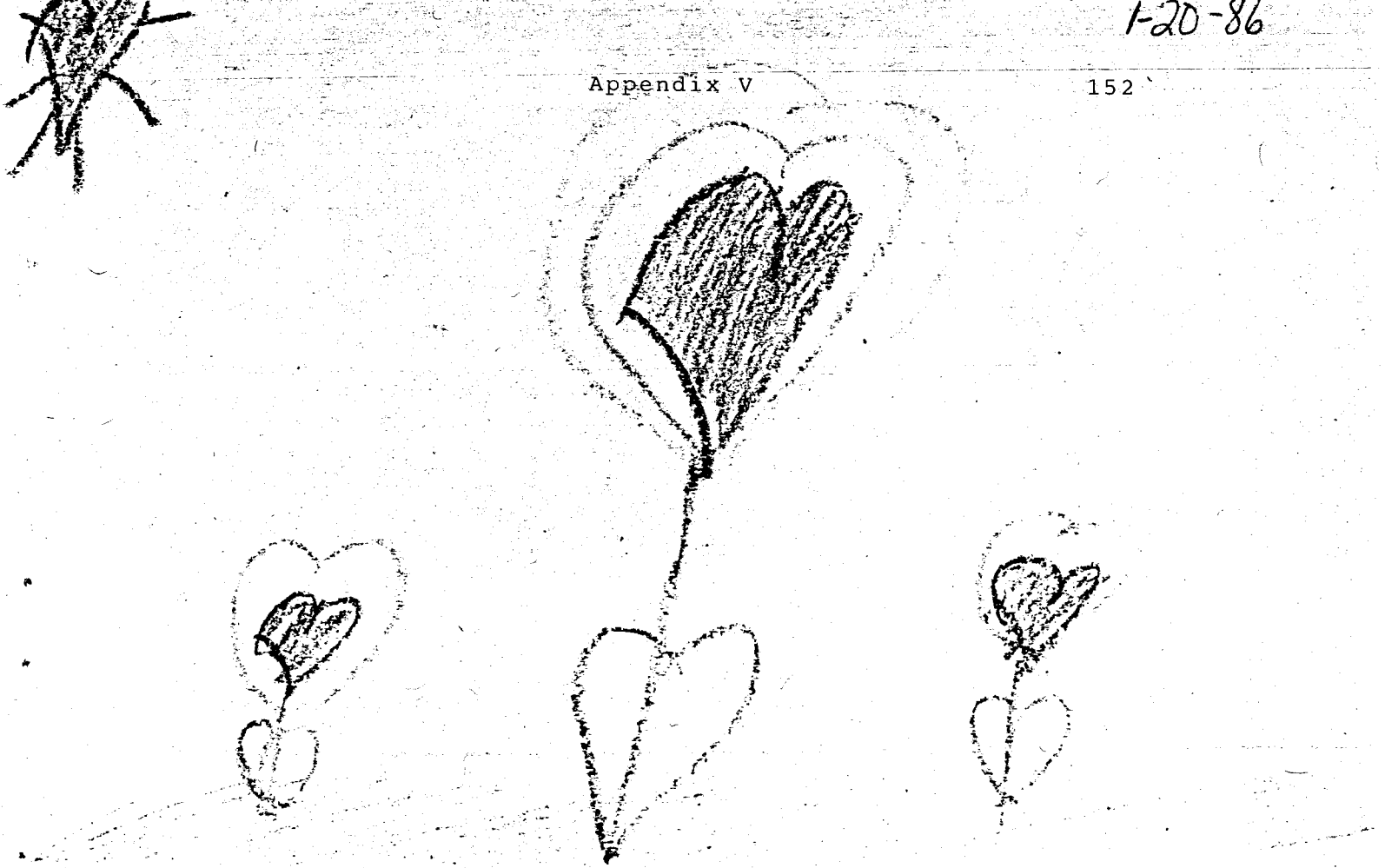
Once when I was four years old, I was in gymnastics. And one day I went to the Dr. And found out that I had a hernia. So I went to the hospital. I was in the hospital for five days. It got boring in the hospital. I was very scared. And finally the day came for me to have surgery. Then I was really scared. And here I was being wheeled on a cart into surgery. I felt embarrassed because I had a surgery cap on I thought I looked stupid. My surgery took three and a half hours. And all I got to eat was ice cream and grape juice. After my surgery was over I felt terrible. I did not like to sit in bed. I did not feel good. ~~at~~ And then I had stomach aches all the time. But in a few more days I felt a little better. And I got to have different foods. It took a while for my stomach to heal. But each day it was better. Finally one day I got to go to the playroom. And to me that was a real treat. And I was surprised when I had seen

①

how many toys they had. They had games and puzzles and all sorts of things to play with. But I always had to have someone carry me because I could not walk. ~~My~~ My mom was always there in the play room to help me go to the bathroom because I could not walk over <sup>there</sup> ~~to the bathroom~~. Because my ~~somach~~ muscles were very sore. ~~And~~ I had stitches on my waist. I had to try to walk up and down the halls ten times each day. Each day I got a little stronger. But it took a little while. Every day the Dr. came in my room to see how I was doing. Every night I watched the tv. at 12:00 mid night I always watched cartoons. ~~And~~ I had a friend across the hall. his name was Jeremy. I went over to his room and play. ~~My~~ my mom would go down to the cafe. ~~And~~ when she came back I to go to bed. But first I had to take my medicine. My medicine was gross. It was white and tasted like rotten bananas. So I told mom I did not want it but she said "you have to take it"

it." So I started to cry. And she said  
"OK you do not have to take it." She  
already had it in a cap. So she just  
dumped it down the sink. Do not  
tell the nurse or the doctor. The  
nurse came in "did you take your  
medication?" I said yes but didn't really. <sup>Arr-n-n-40</sup>  
My mom started to laugh. Because I did  
not take it. In a few days I got to go  
home and I got to feeling better.  
And before I knew it I was on my  
feet.

The End



Dear P.T.A.,  
We are very glad that you made books for us. We really enjoy them. They are used for stories that are ready to be published. We use them in Writing Workshop. You copy your story in the books. And we put them in a rack so everyone in the class can look at them. I wrote a story called The Case of the Lost Pumpkin. It was 6 pages long. And I put it in a book. Thank you very much. Happy Valentines Day!

Your friend,

Kari Bloomquist



# Chapter 1 They meet

Fat-86

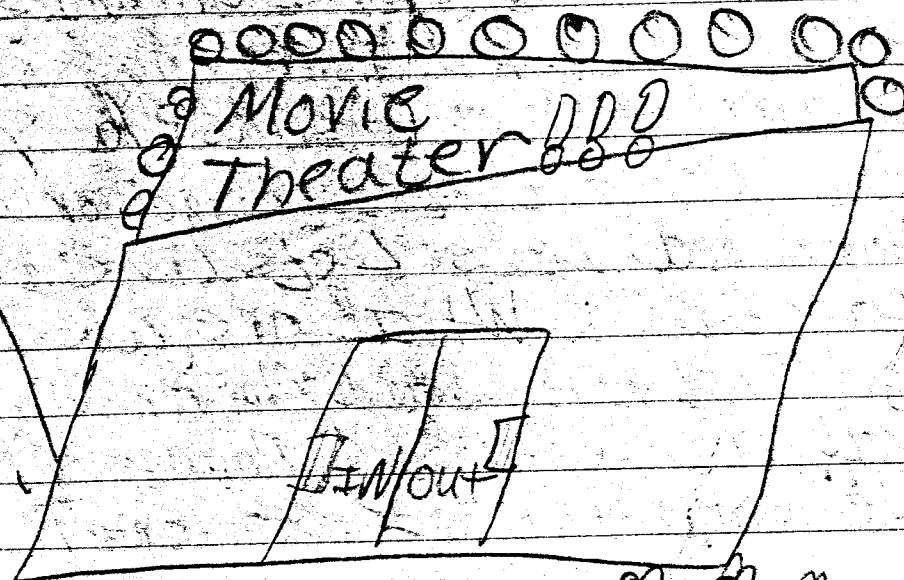
Appendix W

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~~Rammond~~, ~~Fatz~~, and ~~Marven~~ the kidnapping  
Once there was a mouse. His name was  
Rammond. He lived in the home of Dr. Henry Simon.  
Apt. 999 East 5th Ave. In the home of Dr. Henry  
Simon. And there was a mouse his name  
was Fatz. He lived in an old garbage can.  
And there was a mouse his name was  
Marven. He lived in a motel. One day Fatz set  
off to look for some thing to do. And one day  
Rammond went off to look for some  
thing to do. And one day Marven he  
went off to look for thing to do. They  
all went off <sup>whistling</sup> whistling. Until  
kerplop! They all bumped into each other.  
Hey who are you? And who in the  
world are you? What who am I?  
No who are you? I am Fatz. And I am  
Rammond. And I am Marven. Do you  
want to be friends? Yes said Fatz. Do  
you want to live together asked Rammond?  
Yes. Lets live in a movie  
theater. Ok. What are we waiting  
for. That train said Marven. Oh said Fatz.  
Well it's gone said Rammond. I think  
we know that said Marven. Then Lets  
go we want to sneak into a movie theater.  
Don't we. Yes Rammond. They said.

So they all skipe<sup>d</sup> across  
 the train tracks. Come on  
 Fatz said Ramond. I am trying  
 said Fatz but I am just to  
 fat he said. Thats probably  
 how he got his name Marvin  
 whisperd to Ramond. Are we  
 all most there asked Fatz.  
 yes said Ramond. | Chapter 2  
 At The movie theater.

Well here we are Ramond  
 Fatz. This is it. WOW! What  
 are we waiting for said Fatz  
 again. For someone to come  
 and open the door be <sup>patient</sup> ~~patient~~ ~~patient~~



not  
parag

Soon someone came along  
quick hide Oh goody now we  
can go in!!! Shhh! do you  
want to go in or not. Oh Yes!  
Then be quite! It was a  
lady. She came up to the door  
and opened it. Quick! guys  
in. ~~Whe~~ I'm glad that's  
over me to. Now we have  
to go in and find a seat  
to live in. We do. Yes we  
do. Well OK. Lets go. so they  
ran in and got a seat in  
the third row. Chapter 3  
the Ouch! Come on lets jump  
up on this seat but it's  
~~folded~~ up said Fatz. I have  
a good idea Fatz can jump  
up on the seat first + because  
he <sup>weighs</sup> ~~wieghs~~ a lot more then  
us. Well I will try it thats  
my mouse. So Fatz did it Oh  
Ouch!!! I think I broke  
my poor leg. Oh no! Call the  
Dr. Don't try to be funny

going to

you are never learn to  
 get hurt mice back on  
 the track. Oh be quite Raymo  
 what are we going to do  
 asked Marven. Get up or  
 get him out said Raymo.  
 If you say so. So both of  
 them jumped up and got  
 Fatz out of what Fatz called  
 the jumping seat. They  
 both got up and got Fatz  
 down and he was all right  
 except just a little  
 broken tail. Oh Ouch!  
 my poor tail oh oh! Oh  
 quite said Ramond.

Chapter 4 The Action  
 I am ~~the~~ hungry moved  
 Marven I want some  
 cereal Marven go get  
 some milk and we  
 can have cereal said  
 Ramond. So Marven ~~drove~~  
 off in his little mouse  
 car to get some milk.

What a big world it is  
 out here said Marven. cars  
 and people everywhere!  
 suddenly Marven heard a  
 screen Oh no that girl is  
 in trouble I had better  
 tell Ramond, and Fatz!  
 Now this is a <sup>serious</sup> ~~serice~~ matter  
 said Marven to Ramond.  
 If you think it is so  
 serice take Fatz, and I to  
 see it. Ok agreeded lets  
 go. Here we go don't go  
 to fast now & you know  
 that I do not like to  
 riding in cars Marven. We  
 are here I see for your  
 self. you are right help!  
 help! help!!! We have  
 to save that girl said Fatz!!

Chapter 5 / Lets save that Girl!  
 Got Ya good and clear come  
 on theres no time to loose. Park  
 the car behind the Park bench  
 Ok said Marven. So Raymond,



Fatz, and Maren ran over to the man who was trying to catch the girl. They ran up the man's leg with ~~the~~ <sup>their</sup> what they called a magic case that ~~every~~ thing in it. So they took out their hammer and hit him in the head and he fell to the ground with a plunk and the girl ran away. Why thank you I did not know mice could do such a thing! Oh it was nothing said Maren. Oh be quite we have go home now. Oh George

The End

Dear Mr. Washington,  
How was it like  
in the colonial days?  
We read a book  
you. It told us  
about how you lived  
in the colonial days  
but not all about  
it. What did your  
plantation look like?  
I wish I lived in  
colonial days. It

Sounds like fun!  
I all <sup>almost</sup> most jumped  
out of my chair  
when I heard that  
~~tobacco~~ tobacco was used  
like money. You  
were a hero. We  
have a state  
named after you.

Your friend,  
Kari



3-5-86

Names of the puppets

\* Ronda rabbit

Early bird

Myth Mary

Recovering Redgy

Donvine Dignity

✓ Bows

Buttons

Address:

3-5-86

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Dear Bows,

I really liked  
the ways that  
you handled your  
<sup>problems</sup> problems like when  
you needed help  
and you wanted  
to ask Buttons but  
you thought he  
would call you  
dumb, weak, and stupid.  
I think it was a

good <sup>idea</sup> idea to  
go to your friends  
and ask for help.  
Friends can be  
very helpful if  
you need help.  
Your friends told  
you that you  
should ask for  
help so you did.  
I thought that  
was very smart.

And when you  
got home you asked  
Buttons for help and  
he said he would  
be glad to help  
you. That was one  
of my favorite ones.

Talk to you  
soon!

PLEASE  
WRITE BACK!

home Address Gourie  
Iowa Zip. 50543

3-10-86

## Spring

Spring brings sweet smells  
to the air/ Spring brings breezes  
through the sky/ Spring brings  
buds to the bare tree branches/  
Spring always brings flowers/ And  
their wonderful smells/ And spring  
always has birds!

The End

3-10-86

## Spring

Spring brings sweet smells to the air.  
Spring brings breezes through the sky.  
Spring brings buds to the bare tree branches.  
Spring always brings flowers.  
And their wonderful smells.  
And spring always has birds!

## Buffy and the Rabbit

One night Buffy my cat was playing outside. Suddenly I heard a noise. I looked over by the field and saw Buffy coming out of the bushes carrying something in his mouth. It was ~~meow~~ making noise. My Dad heard the commotion and ran outside and yelled at the cat. He asked me what Buffy had in his mouth. I told him I did not know. Then he jumped over the fence and went to see. Once Dad started to chase him he still did not let go of the rabbit. My Dad had to take it out of his mouth. Then the rabbit was ok.