EXPLORING 'LIMITS OF THE LOCAL': A CASE STUDY OF LITERACY-IN-ACTION IN A CONTEMPORARY INTERMEDIATE CLASSROOM

by

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Abstract

This study enters the ongoing theoretical conversation about New Literacy Studies (NLS) and literacy practices. Recent critiques of NLS have highlighted shortcomings related to the difficulty in accounting for the way power plays a role in shaping literacy practices (e.g., Brandt & Clinton, 2002; Collins & Blot, 2003). In their article, "Limits of the Local" Brandt and Clinton (2002) call for literacy studies that include an analysis of both localizing and globalizing activity to find a means for exploring the role of power in local literacy practices. Their call prompted much discussion within the NLS (e.g., Barton & Hamilton, 2005; Reder & Davila, 2005; Street, 2003b) and several studies that followed took up this theoretical challenge (e.g., see Pahl & Rowsell, 2006)

The purpose of this study is to instantiate the "literacy-in-action" model (Brandt and Clinton, 2002), based on the work of Latour (1993; 1996), to account for and further theorize the global in local literacy practices. To date, few published studies that take up this model in all of its depth are in evidence. In this study, the "literacy-in-action" model is explored and elaborated through a qualitative case study of one classroom in order to a) build a more detailed research framework for the model and b) provide a concrete basis for discussing its merits and limitations in sociocultural studies of literacy in classroom settings. In doing so, my goal is to situate the model and move the discussion of the local and global in literacy research beyond the kind of theoretical critique NLS scholars, such as Street (2003a; 2003b) and Street and Lefstein (2007) provide.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acknowledgements

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family. To Martin, Allison, Lindsey and Kelsey: this work really belongs to you. Your support when it felt impossible gave me strength. Your celebration during my moments of triumph and your pride in my work pleases me to no end. Thank you for giving me the time I have needed to closet myself away and write. Thanks for putting up with pasta one too many nights a week. Thanks for sharing the work when you could. Without the four of you, I would not be writing this final piece to my dissertation. I also dedicate this work to my mother, Phyllis Graham Holladay. It has been too long since you left us, but I have thought of you often as I have made this journey. Your desire to educate yourself and engage with the grand complexities of life has been my inspiration. This one's for you. And finally, I dedicate this to my father, Dr. John Scott Holladay, Jr.: your insistence that I never sell myself short, at times my torment, has always pushed me to be my best.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This study enters the ongoing conversation around new literacy theory. Recent critiques of the New Literacy Studies (NLS) have highlighted shortcomings related to their difficulty accounting for the way power plays a role in shaping literacy practices (Brandt & Clinton, 2002; Collins & Blot, 2003; Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007). In their article, *Limits of the Local:* Brandt and Clinton (2002) call for literacy studies that include an analysis of both localizing and globalizing activity to find a means for exploring the role of power in local literacy practices. Their call prompted much discussion within the NLS (e.g., Barton & Hamilton, 2005; Reder & Davila, 2005; Street, 2003b) and several studies that followed took up this theoretical challenge (e.g., see Pahl & Rowsell, 2006).

The *literacy-in-action* model, based on the work of Latour (1993; 1996), was also proposed to conduct studies that account for the global in local literacy practices (Brandt and Clinton, 2002) through the inclusion of an understanding of the agentful role of objects in sociocultural studies of literacy. However, to date, few published studies that take up this model in all of its depth are in evidence. The purpose of this study is to take the proposed *literacy-in-action* model and work with it in order to a) build a more detailed research framework for the model and b) provide a concrete basis for discussing its merits and limitations in sociocultural studies of literacy in classroom settings. In doing so, my goal is to situate the model and move the discussion of the local and global in literacy research beyond the kind of theoretical critique NLS scholars, such as Street (2003a; 2003b) and Street and Lefstein (2007) provide.

Theoretical Framework

This study is situated within a sociocultural perspective of literacy that views literacy as a social practice, an activity associated with social action and mediated by that action. A theory of literacy as a social practice is best articulated in the writings associated with the New Literacy Studies (NLS), which combine sociolinguistic and discourse perspectives (Barton *et al.*, 2000; Gee, 1990; Heath, 1983; New London Group, 1996; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Street, 1993; Willinsky, 1990). The accumulation of ethnographic literacy studies based on this perspective during the 1980s gave birth to the NLS as a means of systematizing "new ways of understanding the development, acquisition, and use of literacy" (Reder & Davila, 2005, p. 172). Three principles traditionally considered fundamental to the NLS, stemming from the ethnographic studies of literacy, are: the importance of situated context; the agency of individuals and

communities in determining their own uses of literacy; and the assertion that oral and written forms of language do not stand in opposition to each other but rather exist along a continuum of literacy. However, in recent years some of these elements have been questioned and this study demonstrates the bases on which these challenges have been made may, indeed, be merited. Additionally, the literacy event, as conceptualized by Heath (1983), has been the traditional unit of analysis for sociocultural studies of literacy. In recent years its ability to adequately account for all that is happening in particular sites of literate practice has been questioned (Brandt & Clinton, 2002; Street, 2003b).

In order to address these issues, this study further theorizes the Brandt and Clinton (2002) literacy-in-action model into a more elaborated research framework by situating it in a study of literacy practices in an intermediate level classroom. The objective of the work was to address an identified gap in NLS approaches to literacy studies. By taking a model, applauded by many, critiqued by others, and yet untried by anyone other than its authors, this study provides a contextualized exploration of a new framework for sociocultural studies of literacy. In doing so, it moves the discussion from the theoretical into the concrete realm.

An important concept in the work is the concept of the activity of objects in sociological studies. The theory draws on the work of Bruno Latour (e.g., 1993, 1994, 1996, 2005), who argues that agency in framed social interactions rests in the activity of human beings *and* non-human objects. That is, objects are viewed as having agency in that they can operate alongside, and sometimes in the place of, humans to mediate and manage the activities of human actors. In this theory, aspects of human agency are delegated to objects. Actors in positions of authority extend their reaches by investing in objects the ability and authority to act on their behalf.

<div align="center">The Research Questions</div>

This study's overarching research question asks: How can a new model of sociocultural literacy theory, *literacy-in-action*, and its unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action* (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), provide us with a new lens for understanding the ways that literacy is practiced in the classroom? To approach this question the following three sub-questions guide the study:

1. How do literacy objects that travel through spaces removed in time and location from a local grade five classroom play a role in shaping literacy instruction as it is enacted in the literature circle and writers' workshop of that classroom?

2. How are the human agents in this study, i.e., the focal students and teachers, using the literacy objects associated with literature circle and writers' workshop in their classroom?

3. How are the literacy objects associated with the literature circle and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom mediating the practice of literacy for the focal students?

The main thesis I have worked with for this study is as follows: When a literacy object becomes institutionalized, it may cease to be useful or productive toward achieving its intended goals; instead, in a climate of accountability, the literacy object serves as an agent for policing student literacy practices in school.

Method

The study is both theoretical and qualitative in design. The theoretical aspect of the study occurs as I consider and elaborate on the *literacy-in-action* model. The qualitative aspect applies the elaborated framework to analyze data collected during a case study of classroom literacy. Thus, one aspect of the study is to take a proposed framework, which seeks to expand the theoretical underpinnings of the NLS, and situate it and elaborate on it for use in literacy research. And the other aspect endeavours to use that framework to examine how two popular pedagogies, literature circles and writers' workshop, are enacted in a contemporary elementary school classroom, allowing for a concrete examination of the theoretical possibility of the *literacy-in-action* model.

Set in a middle-class, urban, fifth-grade classroom, participants in the study are human and non-human in accordance with the literacy-in-action model. Six focal students, their parents, two of their teachers at Howe River Elementary, and a local school board consultant comprise the cohort of human informants for the study; and the role sheet (Daniels, 1994, 2002), the mini-lesson and publication of student work (Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1983), objects conceptualized in distant spaces and utilized in the classroom literature and writers' workshop circle, the main non-human participants.

The Literature Circle and Writers' Workshop

Gold-Standards in Literacy Education or Ailing Orthodoxies?

Literature circles were introduced to classrooms in the 1980s in U.S. schools. Since that time their use has grown exponentially in North America. Daniels (2002) discusses this phenomenon:

> What used to be a quiet, homegrown activity in a few scattered classrooms has become a trend, a boom, almost a fad. Now tens of thousands of teachers are doing something they call "literature circles." And many other teachers are using classroom activities that look very much the same, which they call "book clubs" or "reading groups." This means that now literally millions of students are involved in some kind of small, peer-led reading discussion group.   (p.1)

The sense one gains from this discussion is that literature circles are an educational breakthrough, ubiquitous and uncontested. In this introductory chapter, Daniels highlights numerous positive outcomes he associates with the rise of literature circles within the school system and society in general. He also addresses problems associated with literature circles. What becomes clear in his discussion is that literature circles, no matter how ubiquitous and beneficial they are portrayed to be, are not necessarily a benign pedagogical tool.

One area this observation becomes evident is in the way that literature circles are defined. Consider this definitional contrast in two spaces in which the literature circle appears:

> 'Literature circles' is not just a trendy label for any kind of small-group reading lesson – it stands for a sophisticated fusion of collaborative learning with independent reading, in the framework of reader response theory. (Daniels, 1994, pp.17-18)
>
> Well, it's like you read a novel and then you have to do jobs like illustrator and connection maker and stuff.   (Deanne, grade five student, Howe River Elementary)

How is it that what is characterized as a "sophisticated fusion of collaborative learning with independent reading" in one space becomes reading and doing jobs in another?

In a similar vein, Donald Graves (2003) discusses the manner in which writers' workshop exploded as a pedagogy of choice in elementary school classrooms in the 1980s and 1990s following from his work on children as authors (Graves, 1975, 1983) . He goes on to say,

One of the early problems we faced following the publication of *Writing* was a sudden epidemic of orthodoxies. Artful response, listening, flexibility in decision making, were replaced by attempts to regularize the process. (Graves, 2003, p. x)

Graves laments the epidemic of orthodoxies that arose during this time as educators sought to present the writers' workshop as a formulaic sequence of plan, write, and edit. Similarly, Calkins (1986) relates the following,

Someone once said to me, 'The question will be, can you survive success?' She was worrying that if our teacher-training ideas became too popular, they could end up as another orthodoxy, but her question also holds true for our methods of teaching children. Success breeds orthodoxy. (pp. 143-144)

The findings of the present study suggest that this problem of orthodoxies is not one that was isolated to the early years of the writers' workshop phenomenon but continues to this day.

Pedagogies as Epidemics

The literature circle and writers' workshop, as they are conducted in schools, have their origins in theoretical work conducted many decades before their creation. Rooted in the work of Rosenblatt's Reader Response theory, first advanced in the 1930s and re-awakened decades later (Rosenblatt, 1978), literature circle pedagogy (Eeds & Wells, 1989) emanates from rich theory as it develops a means for applying reader response in the classroom. Similarly, writers' workshop draws on work first conducted in the 1930s. Yancey (2009), quoting Wilber Hatfield, writes,

…in part because of the influence of the 1935 NCTE-developed Experience Curriculum in English, teachers from elementary schools through college had a more progressive view of all language arts, including composition, as expressed in a curriculum centered on the child. Indeed the focus on each unique child was a first principle. Noting that 'experiences in the use of language' are 'always social contacts,' a curriculum much like today's writer's workshop was proposed, with six classroom procedures— including identifying an occasion to write, 'providing assistance to writers as they write,' and helping students understand that success is dependent 'on the effect of their efforts on the audience' [(Hatfield, 1935, cited in Yancey, 2009)]. It was a curriculum rich in everyday genres: letters, recipes, diaries, reports, reviews, summaries, and new stories. (p. 3)

While we tend to connect the children as authors movement (Graves, 1983) that gave birth to the writers' workshop with the whole language movement (e.g., Goodman, 1967, 1994; e.g., Smith,

1988), Yancey illustrates here that its roots go much deeper. When later translated into literacy pedagogy research work, the philosophy of children as authors (Graves, 1983) sought to set up contexts in which young writers could experience the same types of processes utilized by professional writers through the classroom writers' workshop.

Both of these pedagogies, literature circles and writers' workshop, were viewed in an idealized manner as bringing "authentic" experiences with texts to literacy instruction in the elementary and middle school when first conceptualized. This has been shown to be problematic as it seeks to set up pedagogies emanating from middle-class approaches to literacy across the gamut of classrooms and learners. However, as the very researchers who originally promoted their use in the classroom have themselves noted, something seems to happen when these rich pedagogies are enacted in the classroom to turn them into pedagogical tools limited in scope and vision. What accounts for this? Is it the universal application of these pedagogies oriented toward middle-class students? Were their ideals too lofty for the classroom? Or is it simply a matter of success tending to breed orthodoxy?

This study looks at what happens to the pedagogies of literature circles and writers' workshop as they travel from the space of researchers interested in literacy pedagogy to a local classroom. Utilizing the model proposed by Brandt and Clinton (2002), *literacy-in-action*, the study illustrates the challenges of implementing pedagogy in schools and seeks to understand the phenomenon just illustrated where so many rich pedagogies come to be implemented in reduced ways in local classrooms. Through examining the literacy objects connected to literature circles and writers' workshop, it becomes clear that unintended consequences arise when a literacy object is used as a proxy for the kind of human input that has traditionally been associated with these literacy pedagogies. We see the way that the somewhat romanticized notions associated with the pedagogies become ritualized practices and the way that idealistic approaches become highly pragmatic or utilitarian. The understandings brought out by the use of the literacy-in-action model in this study highlights at least one mechanism by which rich pedagogies become victims of their own success: the propensity over time for the pedagogy to become dependent on associated literacy objects.

Layout of the Dissertation

In this chapter I have introduced the study, discussed the problem to be examined by the work and the methods by which it will be addressed. I have introduced the theoretical

framework in which it is situated, along with the literacy pedagogies that provide the context for examining a new model for sociocultural studies in literacy.

In Chapter Two, I provide the expanded theoretical framework in which the study is grounded and addresses the need for such a study in more depth. In Chapter Three, I describe the detailed method by which the data for the study was collected and analyzed. Additionally, and of particular importance to this study, I introduce the main participants in the study and the context in which they lived and participated in school.

In Chapter Four, I address the first of the research sub-questions: How do literacy objects that travel through spaces removed in time and location from a local grade five classroom play a role in shaping literacy instruction as it is enacted in the literature circle and writers' workshop of that classroom? In this chapter, I map out a network of spaces within the educational structure connected to the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary and trace the connections between the spaces in which the two particular pedagogies, literature circles and writers' workshop, are both theorized and actualized. My intention in this chapter is to set out a plausible pathway by which the literacy objects travel and, thereby, provide a context for understanding the way that certain literacy objects exert their influence in the literacy instruction taking place in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. This mapping is an important part of developing the *literacy-in-action* model into an actual analytical framework.

In Chapters Five and Six, I address the last two research sub-questions: How are the human agents in this study, i.e., the focal students and teachers, using the literacy objects associated with literature circles and writers' workshop in their classroom?; and How are the literacy objects associated with literature circles and writers' workshop mediating the in-school practice of literacy for the focal students? These questions are addressed by employing the unit of analysis that is central to the *literacy-in-action* model, *literacy-objects-in-action*, I look at how the human actors, that is, the teachers and students in the study, engage with the literacy objects associated with literature circles (Chapter Five) and writers' workshop (Chapter Six). I then look at the way that these literacy objects themselves take on agentive roles in the literature circles and writers' workshop of the grade five class at Howe River Elementary. It is at this juncture that I introduce one move, *folding in* (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), that the literacy object makes in this classroom. A concept borrowed from Latour (1996), *folding in* accounts for the way that an actor in a position of authority extends their reach by investing in objects the ability and authority to act on their behalf.

Finally, in Chapter Seven I step back to discuss the findings of the study through the wider lens of the overarching research question: How can a new model of sociocultural literacy theory, *literacy-in-action*, and its unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action* (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), provide us with a new lens for understanding the ways that literacy is enacted in the classroom? This chapter reminds us of the classroom and educational context in which the study was conducted. I then look at the *literacy-in-action* model and the types of theoretical issues it addresses along with some concerns arising from the use of the model in this study. I then review understandings the model has facilitated in this study by focusing primarily on the agentive activities of literacy objects associated with literature circles and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. Finally, I examine some of the theoretical gaps in the NLS approach to literacy research and suggest ways in which the literacy-in-action model has addressed these issues.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERACY-IN-ACTION

A New Model for Sociocultural Studies in Literacy

In 'Limits of the Local' we recognized that all reading and writing are local events but not necessarily localizing events. We called for analysis of both localizing and globalizing activity involving literacy and for systematic comparison of literacy events in terms of the proportions of both. Such an analysis becomes especially crucial in these times, especially for uncovering new structures of inequality and the role of literacy in them and for remembering that the forms of literacy individuals or communities practice may not be the forms they would prefer to practice.

- Brandt and Clinton, 2006, p. 257

Limits of the Local (Brandt & Clinton, 2002) signalled a turning point of sorts for literacy research within the New Literacy Studies (NLS): with the publication of this work, Appadurai's (1996) research on globalized cultural practices seem to gain entrance into the realm of sociocultural studies in literacy. Everyone, it appeared, was suddenly talking about the need to take the global into consideration when investigating local literacy practices. This chapter traces events within the NLS that led to the authoring of *Limits of the Local* and looks at the potential this new direction for the NLS may have for facilitating sociocultural studies of literacy in classroom settings.

The NLS are a part of the 'social turn' from focusing literacy research on individual behaviours and individual minds to a focus on the social and cultural interactions associated with literacy (Gee, 2000). Gee states, "The NLS are based on the view that reading and writing only make sense when studied in the context of social and cultural (and we can add historical, political and economic) practices of which they are a part" (p.180). The NLS recognize the important contributions to understanding language and literacy made by the ethnographic approach utilized in sociolinguistics. In the early days of its inception, NLS contributors contended that these detailed accounts of literacy as a social practice in different cultural settings, and the richness and variety that they provide, must be complemented by a view of the central role of power in language and literacy practices (Gee, 1990; Street, 1993). That is to say, literacy needed to be viewed as a complex set of social practices within the larger framework of discourse and power (Gee, 1990). However, recent critiques have focused on the failure of the NLS to adequately deal with the central role of power in investigations of literacy as a social practice. What accounts for the disjuncture between theory and practice in sociocultural studies

of literacy? In their seminal article, *Limits of the Local: Expanding Perspectives on Literacy as a Social Practice* (2002), Deborah Brandt and Katie Clinton propose an explanation for this disjuncture and a model for addressing the role of power in sociocultural studies of literacy. Their proposal is not without controversy, however – some aspects have been readily taken up, some criticized, and others seemingly ignored. This dissertation seeks to situate and further elaborate the model proposed by Brandt and Clinton in a study of literacy learning in an intermediate level classroom.

<div align="center">Rationale for this Study of Literacy</div>

We need to know more about the way students are affected by the demands placed on literacy instruction by larger institutions such as schools, school boards, Ministries of education, teacher education programs, "research-based best practices," and the media. We need to know more about how these demands intersect with the cultural uses of literacy within students' families and cultural communities. This kind of information is particularly important in an era in which schools in general, and literacy in particular, have been assigned the role of agents for social change (Cook-Gumperz, 1986). Furthermore, as Cook-Gumperz contends, "If we want literacy to be seen as an identifiable, popular and fair goal of schooling, we need to understand much more about the social process by which literacy is acquired" (p.7).

The urgency to study these phenomena is intensified when we consider the fact that the onset of adolescence is often associated with a marked drop in motivation to engage with print text (Ivey, 2001; Oldfather & McLaughlin, 1993; Reeves, 2004). For students who may not have developed out-of-school literacies (e.g., reading and writing online texts; reading graphic novels) that position them to interact with print texts, negative attitudes toward reading formed in these intermediate school years often results in decreased interaction with print text. These negative attitudes, often connected to school-based literacy instruction practices (Guthrie, 2003; Ivey, 2001; Oldfather, 1994; Reeves, 2004; Worthy, 1999), may seriously impede students' ability to successfully take on the demands of secondary school (Allington, 1994; Guthie, 2004; Ivey, 2001). Furthermore, the demands of the information age are such that all individuals living in western nations must have facility with print literacy in order to participate in the new economy (Gee, Hull, & Lankshear, 1996; Luke, 2003).

This study addresses the aforementioned issues by examining the literacy practices of a group of grade five students and their teachers in a Canadian urban school subject to the dictates of a provincial policy of interjecting accountability measures into the educational system. By

utilizing a sociocultural lens to examine the language and literacy instruction students receive it should be possible to approach the subject in all of the complexity that it deserves. However, because of its "here and now" emphasis, research that draws upon sociocultural perspectives, as conventionally articulated in the New Literacy Studies (NLS), has difficulty answering such issues. There are relatively few precedents for sociocultural studies of literacy in the classroom using a NLS framework of literacy events and literacy practices; it may be that limitations in the NLS framework, coupled with its failure to adequately address issues of power that account for this phenomenon. We need new, and more powerful, theoretical frameworks to address issues related to classroom literacy instruction in an age of accountability. This study addresses these issues by situating and further elaborating a new framework for sociocultural literacy studies based on the model, *literacy-in-action,* proposed by Brandt and Clinton in *Limits of the Local* (2002).

Review of the Literature

Sociocultural Perspectives and the Present Study

A sociocultural approach to language and literacy has its roots in several theoretical traditions. The work of 20th century Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky (1978) and his contemporaries, and linguists, Mikail Bakhtin (1986/94), and Valentin Volosinov (1973, 1994), explored human learning, and in particular the interdependence of language and culture. Utilizing a historical and political lens, their work resulted in theories that view language as "dynamic, contested and a site of ideological struggle" (Maybin, 1994, p. x). A sociocultural perspective on language and literacy also draws on the field of sociolinguistics (Heath, 1983; Hymes, 1964, 1977/1994; Malinowski, 1923/1994), which brings together linguistics and anthropology. Bronislaw Malinowski's anthropological work contributed an understanding of the social functions of language and the significance of *context of situation* when endeavouring to understand cultures other than ones own. Del Hymes picked up on this work to propose a new branch of linguistics, ethnography of communication, to examine everyday uses of verbal and non-verbal language. His work examined *communicative events* by accounting for the values and beliefs embedded in the social and cultural, which shape the function and meaning of particular 'speech acts'. In her ethnographic studies of literacy Shirley Brice Heath utilized Hymes' ethnography of communication and, in particular, his notion of the communicative competence of all linguistic groups, to demonstrate the variety of uses of literacy in the lives of three geographically proximal but culturally different communities. Her creation of the *literacy*

11

event as a means for studying literacy was predicated on Hymes' concept of *speech events*. By combining perspectives from psychology, anthropology, sociology, linguistics, education and other related disciplines, a sociocultural approach to educational research in general provides a lens for understanding situated human action. When applied to literacy research, this body of work examines language and literacy as communicative activity, situated in particular contexts that influence the way it is viewed and utilized.

The work of Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole (1981) utilized these understandings of literacy as a situated communicative activity to challenge the notion that literacy has cognitive consequences (Goody & Watt, 1963). Their research among the Vai people of Liberia demonstrated that it was the schooling rather than literacy that accounted for cognitive differences. In this research, Scribner and Cole introduced the concept of *practice* to literacy theory. They defined literacy as a practice as "tasks that humans engage in … when they are directed to socially recognizable goals and make use of a shared technology and knowledge system" (p. 236). Their insistence that literacy involves knowing how to use technologies, such as writing systems, for specific purposes, in specific contexts, set the stage for future understandings of literacy as plural; that is, literacies as social practices. A sociocultural approach to literacy thus contends that literacy must be viewed as more than a set of skills required for decoding and encoding print. This expanded and contextualized understanding views literacy as a social practice; that is, an activity associated with social action and mediated by that action.

The New Literacy Studies

A theory of literacy as a social practice is well-articulated in the writings associated with the New Literacy Studies (NLS), which combine sociolinguistic and discourse perspectives (Barton *et al.*, 2000; Gee, 1990; New London Group, 1996; Street, 1993; Willinsky, 1990). It was the accumulation of ethnographic literacy studies during the 1980s which gave birth to the NLS as a means of systematizing "new ways of understanding the development, acquisition, and use of literacy" (Reder & Davila, 2005, p. 172). Three principles fundamental to the NLS, stemming from the ethnographic studies of literacy previously surveyed, are: the importance of situated context; the agency of individuals and communities in determining their own uses of literacy; and the assertion that oral and written forms of language do not stand in opposition to each other but rather exist along a continuum of literacy.

An important thread linking the different aspects of the NLS is the question of how literacy is defined or conceptualized by different actors, whether individuals, communities or institutions. Street's (1984, 1995) conceptualization of literacy as primarily represented by two models, autonomous and ideological models, is the main approach utilized within the NLS.

Autonomous and Ideological Models of Literacy

The conceptualization of different understandings of literacy as primarily belonging to either an autonomous model or an ideological model has been a central and defining contribution of the NLS. The autonomous model discusses literacy in technical terms, as a set of competencies or skills that are separable from social context and thus uniform in every context. This model tends to define literacy narrowly – as the ability to read and write for the purposes of academic achievement (Street, 1994) or as some have called it, essayist literacy (Gee, 1990; Scollon & Scollon, 1981). In an autonomous model, literacy is seen as having characteristics of its own regardless of the time and place in which it is used. An autonomous model of literacy also views literacy as having consequences for society in general and the cognition of the individual that may be attributed to literacy's perceived focus on written symbolic language (termed, the *literacy thesis*) (Goody & Watt, 1963; Ong, 1986; Street, 1999).

An ideological model of literacy views the technical skills or cognitive aspects of reading as situated within and permeated by cultural values and structures of power (Street, 1993). As it was originally conceived in the NLS, the ideological model stands in direct contrast to an autonomous model of literacy (Street, 1984). An ideological model of literacy "recognizes a multiplicity of literacies; that the meaning and uses of literacy practices are related to specific cultural contexts; and that these practices are always associated with relations of power and ideology, they are not simply neutral technologies" (Street, 1994, p.139). That is, an ideological model of reading involves a broad conception of literacy and views literacy acquisition as a value-laden process; it contends, therefore, that literacy cannot be viewed as a set of neutral skills acquired in linear fashion. As Luke and Freebody (1999) explain, literacy entails the "moral, political and cultural decision[s] about the kind of literate practices that are needed to enhance peoples' agency over their life trajectories and to enhance communities' intellectual, cultural and semiotic resources" (p.1). Finally, in an ideological model of literacy, literacy involves practices situated in particular social and cultural settings (Barton et al., 2000). This matter of exactly what constitutes a situated context is one that is now in question with newer conceptualizations of the NLS and one that is taken up in the present study.

13

A sociocultural approach to language and literacy education makes a fundamental shift from a primary concern with *what* is taught to *who* we are teaching and *how* we approach their instruction. It is important to understand the model of literacy particular individuals and institutions subscribe to if we are to understand the literacy instruction they provide or for which they advocate. Literacy pedagogy informed by an autonomous model (Street, 1984) centres itself on the skills associated with literate practice by focusing on language that is broken into discrete units. Instruction within this model concerns itself with the identification and manipulation of discrete grammatical and syntactic units, followed by comprehension instruction that focuses on finding particular interpretations of the text being read. Literacy instruction informed by a particular ideological model is viewed as teaching the skills of literacy (e.g., contextually-grounded decoding skills and comprehension strategies), while recognizing that literacy also involves the social and cultural worlds of those who engage with it (Freire, 1994; Street, 1984).

Literacy Practices and Literacy Events

An important aspect of understanding the situated nature of literacy is the distinction between a literacy event and a literacy practice (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Street, 1988). The term *literacy event* was first used by Heath (1983) (as an extension of Hymes' (1977/1994) concept of speech events). While a literacy event is considered to be any observable manifestation of the use of reading and writing, the concept of literacy practices addresses the culturally influenced uses of literacy in the life of the individual or community (Scribner & Cole, 1981). Literacy practices are not observable in the same way as a literacy event, given that they involve values, attitudes, feelings, and social relationships (Street, 1993) and are, therefore, inferred by observing literacy events. Literacy research drawing upon sociocultural perspectives frequently utilizes the concept of the literacy event as a unit of analysis for building conceptions of the domains of practice and situated or local literacy practices.

The notion of the literacy event as conceptualized by Heath (1982) is defined as "any occasion in which a piece of writing is integral to the nature of participants' interactions and their interpretive processes" (p. 93). Heath's (1983) seminal study, *Ways with Words*, led to a plethora of ethnographic literacy studies that utilize the literacy event as a unit of analysis to demonstrate the many ways people use literacy in their everyday lives. These rich and powerful studies allowed us to see literacy in a new light: as a socially situated practice (Barton &

Hamilton, 1998; Gregory & Williams, 2000; Street, 1984; D. Taylor, 1983; D. Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988).

Recently, it has been recognized that these studies, though rich and important for the insights they provide, do not always provide the kind of account that enables us to see how distant forces play a role in shaping literacy practices (Collins & Blot, 2003; Lewis *et al.*, 2007). One reason for this may be the nature of the literacy event as a concept: the literacy event conceptualizes particular instantiations of literacy practice as bounded events, a tradition that ignores the fact that most literacy practices are shaped both by the activity of local actors and influences distant to that setting. In *Limits of the Local: Expanding Perspectives on Literacy as a Social Practice*, Brandt and Clinton (2002) propose an alternative to this conceptual impasse.

Expanding Perspectives on Literacy as a Social Practice

Ardent advocates of a sociocultural approach to literacy research and its influence on our understanding of literacy, Brandt and Clinton (2002) raise important questions about the impact of the theory's main effort: the overturning of the autonomous model of literacy. Their critique revolves around the idea that in rejecting the ideologies associated with the autonomous model - i.e., literacy as a decontextualized activity, the passive reader, and the assumption of an oral/literate divide - sociocultural perspectives have marginalized or bracketed-off certain important aspects of literacy. The crux of their critique is summed up in the following:

> Context became associated with ethnographically-visible settings (the here and now), and the technology of literacy was demoted in the relationship to the human agent who held power in assigning meaning to acts of literacy. But can we not recognize and theorize the transcontextual aspects of literacy without calling it decontextualized? Can we not approach literacy as a technology – and even as an agent – without falling back into the autonomous model? Can we not see the ways that literacy arises out of local, particular, situated human interactions while seeing how it also regularly arrives from other places – infiltrating, disjointing, and displacing local life? (p.333)

In their suggestion that literacy practices need to be considered across several contexts, as transcontextual, Brandt and Clinton upset one of the three foundational principles of literacy as a social practice: its situated placement in localized contexts. Barton and Hamilton's assertion that "all uses of written language can be seen as located in particular times and places" (2000, p. 1) a fundamental tenet of sociocultural studies of literacy, is thus challenged. In short, Brandt and Clinton contend that sociocultural approaches to understanding literacy require a means for

15

understanding how decontextualized aspects of literacy emanating from distant spaces impact local literacies. They propose more complex analytic frames to address this shortcoming. A critical idea in this expanded view is that "literacy is not wholly produced or reproduced in local practice but rather is a contributing actor in it and that its meanings live on beyond any immediate stipulations entailed in localizing it" (p. 353).

Their proposal draws on the work of sociologist Bruno Latour (1987, 2005) whose theory argues for an understanding of science and technology as social practice. Latour's Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) uses the concept of networks and nodes and an ethnographic approach to trace material and human resources in order to gain an understanding of social processes. Key to Latour's work is recognition of the role of *objects* in the performance of tasks, a role that is often independent of human agents (Latour, 1996). Latour contends that it is the technical mediation of objects that connect local social interactions with the larger global social structure in which they are embedded; that is objects, as non-human actors, mediate social practices.

Latour labels the types of repeated social interactions in which human beings engage, such as shopping for food, withdrawing cash from a bank machine, or mailing a parcel, *framed social interactions*. He uses the example of the framed social interaction of mailing a parcel at a post office one has never before visited to illustrate the agentive role of objects. This type of interaction is made possible for humans to carry out with relatively little effort by two factors. The first is the social: the long term collective activity of our society associated with transporting items via the post, that is, past interactions remembered, provide a basis for taking up this type of interaction again and again. The second factor is the objects in place in a post office: objects such as the teller's grill, the counter, and the postal boxes provide a frame of reference for the interaction that allows us to take up that localized activity again in other spaces. Another way that objects connect the local post office with the structure of the more globalized national postal system may be seen in the forms generated by the clerk of the local post office at the end of each day. These forms summarizing the kinds of interactions the local clerk was involved with over the course of the day are then submitted to the national postal service where the statistics are used, for example, to influence the type of services that will be provided by the national postal system or in that local outlet. Figure 2-1 depicts my understanding of the relationship Latour ascribes to objects as connectors between framed social interactions at a local level and the more global social structures in which they are embedded.

Taking Latour's notion of the mediation of objects in social interactions, Brandt and Clinton (2002) apply the theory to literacy studies. They conceptualize objects involved with

16

particular literacy interactions/events as technologies of literacy or *literacy objects*. Using the example of a banking transaction, Brandt and Clinton demonstrate that certain literacy objects such as forms, contracts, computers and data bases allow customers to recognize the particular type of banking transaction in which they are engaging, regardless of the particular bank location in which they find themselves.   These literacy objects connect the local instantiation of a literacy practice with a distant or global social structure.

Objects as Agents in the Exercise of Power

Returning to the post office example, Latour demonstrates the way that the counter, glass and grill in a post office not only act to physically separate the customer from the clerk and, thereby, provide protection for the clerk, they also work to symbolically enforce a power dynamic: the superiority and untouchable nature of the clerk. These objects work to construct the nature of the interaction the client has with the postal clerk, to set up and enforce a certain power dynamic.

Latour (2005) conceives of power as "hierarchies, asymmetries and inequalities" (p. 63) that exist within the social world to hamper individual action and collective agency. He maintains that he holds this view in common with the majority of sociologists of the twentieth century. However, he departs from the position of mainstream sociology with his argument that in order to explain the asymmetries in place in the social world, we must view power as a final result of a process, not as reservoir capable of automatically providing an explanation. In order to explain the asymmetries of power and domination, Latour argues that power is "made *of* social stuff" (p.64). That is, the social ties or associations that are part of these asymmetries are reinforced by the work of objects. He contends that social dominance is very hard to maintain through social skills alone; things are always present and connected to human social action. One has only to look at the force of laws created by dominant groups to control others or the brute force of weapons like guns in colonization to understand the activity of objects in the creation and reinforcement of hierarchies. ANT does not look to ascribe causal agency to objects, but it does argue that objects, through the roles and responsibilities delegated to them by humans, play an agentive role in creating or maintaining power relationships.

Latour contends that the way objects have been theorized as non-players within sociology as a discipline, has resulted in voiding significance from discussions of power relations and social inequalities within the discipline. His argument for understanding the role of objects as mediators in social activity is compelling. Utilizing an understanding of the nature of objects

and the agentive role they may play in social interactions, Latour's theory is well suited for the analysis of power dynamics in framed social interactions.

Literacy Objects

Expanding on Latour's theory, Brandt and Clinton summarize their conceptualization of the agentive action of objects as follows:

> Objects are animated with human histories, vision, ingenuity, and will, yet they also have durable status and are resilient to our will. Our objects are us but more than us, bigger than we are; as they accumulate human investments in them over time, they can and do push back at us as "social facts" independent and to be reckoned with. (p.345)

Applying the concept of the agentive role of objects to literacy, Brandt and Clinton give the example of literacy objects in banking transactions. They demonstrate the way a loan request form, for example, plays an agentive role as a literacy object in a loan applicant's life. Whether the applicant will receive the requested mortgage and be able to purchase the home s/he is interested in depends on what happens to that literacy object as it moves through the echelons of the banking system. At any point in its journey through the approval process, the loan application may be accepted or denied, ultimately affecting the future of the prospective home buyer. The literacy object, the loan application form, with the information it contains, will play a role in the future of the individual who interacts with it. That literacy object, as it travels intact between local and global spaces, works to set up and enforce a particular power dynamic.

In the preceding example, Brandt and Clinton effectively demonstrate the way that a literacy practice (applying for a bank loan) is enacted in several contexts. By using the literacy object (loan form) as the unit of analysis, they are able to connect the local act of applying for a loan with the global social structures that will decide on the success or failure of the application. Through this model, not only have they demonstrated a particular scenario where the global impacts the local, they have conceptualized a means by which global power dynamics related to local literacy practices may be analyzed. These two contributions, I argue, may have the potential to move sociocultural literacy studies forward on the important work of accounting for the role of power in the literacy practices of individuals and communities, as the NLS set out to do two decades ago.

Just as sociocultural perspectives have debunked the oral-literate divide, Brandt and Clinton contend that we need to open the channel "between people and things in the accomplishment of literacy practices in order to understand their formal and functional

interrelationships in various circumstances" (p. 348). This may be accomplished by utilizing the concept of literacy objects as social agents.

Brandt and Clinton (2002) contend that by theorizing the material role of literacy (i.e., looking at the literacy objects in action in literate activities), we can see not only what people are doing with literacy but what literacy is doing with people. For example, we can examine how people are mediating the social activity of applying for a loan and we can simultaneously look at how that literacy practice is playing a mediational role in their lives. All of this is possible by including the loan form as a literacy object with an agentive role as we scrutinize the literate activity. The concept of literacy objects also allows us to bridge macro and micro social structures. By following the travelling literacy objects between the macro and the micro or between the local and the global, we are able to gain a sense of how the global shapes the local. In turn, we are also able to see how the local pushes back on the global.

In order to deal with this transcontextual nature of literacy and the transcontextualizing role literacy objects play, a new model for sociocultural literacy studies is needed, contend Brandt and Clinton (2002). Analytical frames are needed that can trace the relationship between local literacy practices and the global contexts in which they are situated to carry out sociocultural studies in literacy education that go beyond the potentially narrow and misleading focus frequently produced in the depiction of local literacies.

Historical Support for Expanding the Theory of Literacy as a Social Practice

Sociocultural studies in literacy that predate the NLS support the proposal Brandt and Clinton (2002) set out. In particular, Bakhtin's notions of intertextuality and hybridization (Bakhtin, 1986/94) provide a historical and conceptual basis that not only supports the literacy-in-action model but also provides a means for understanding some of the findings engendered by the model in the present study.

Intertextuality

The model proposed by Brandt and Clinton (2002) is supported theoretically by the notion of intertextuality as a social construction. Broadly speaking, intertextuality refers to "the juxtaposition of different texts" (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993, p. 305). In their review of approaches to intertextuality, David Bloome and Ann Egan-Robertson (1993) categorize the construct as traditionally connected to three areas of study: literary studies; social semiotic perspectives; and educational studies of reading and writing. They add the social construction of

intertextuality as a fourth connection. It is the notion of intertextuality as a social construction that relates to Brandt and Clinton's contention that sociocultural approaches to understanding literacy must find a means to look at the transcontextualized and transcontextualizing potential of literacy.

The view of intertextuality as a social construction draws on a broader sociolinguistic view of language (Bakhtin, 1986/94; Hymes, 1964, 1994; Volosinov, 1973, 1994). From a sociolinguistic perspective, "It is through language that social relationships come into being…, social acts are created, conducted, and organized…, and social groups are formed" (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993). Additionally, language is social in that any language act occurs as a response to other acts. This implies that the meanings of language acts are, therefore, not stable. "The meaning of an utterance or other language act derives not from the content of its words, but rather its interplay with what went on before and what will come later" (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993, p. 309). Additionally, this perspective on language acknowledges that all language is part of a dialogue that is ongoing: in Bakhtin's words, language "cannot fail to brush up against thousands of living dialogic threads woven by socio-ideological consciousness around the given object of an utterance" (Bakhtin, 1935/1981, p. 276, cited in Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993).

A social construction of intertextuality assumes a material basis for all language and interactional events. That is language and social interactions have a physical existence: for example, words exist as sound waves and people's actions have a physical existence (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993). This implies that in order to understand language processes, such as reading and writing in their cultural contexts, "the material nature of events and how the material nature of events is changed, transformed, or stabilized over time" (p. 311) must be described and documented.

With its focus on the dialogic nature of the utterance and its contention that intertextuality has a material basis, the view of intertextuality as a social construction supports Brandt and Clinton's (2002) argument that the NLS must find a means to analyze the transcontextual and transcontextualizing potential of literacy objects, in addition to the analytical concepts they propose for doing so. This argument is particularly persuasive in an era of globalization where the lines between the local and the global are impossible to draw. What exactly is the context of situation so important to traditional NLS in a globalized world linked by numerous forms of multi-media? And more specifically, in relation to this study, what is the

context of situation in a classroom where multiple intertextual influences shape students' literacy learning?

Hybridity

As theorized in Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1986/94), a hybrid utterance, may stem from a single speaker but, nonetheless, employs one or more kinds of speech. The juxtaposition of multiple speeches brings with it tensions that reveal contradiction and conflict in belief systems. One of the premises of the NLS is that individuals and communities develop hybrid literacy practices as they engage with different types of texts in their local settings.

Third Space theory (the location between the official and unofficial learning spaces encountered in learning situations that may provide an important zone of proximal development in which to scaffold learning) also incorporates the idea of hybridization, stating that all learning contexts are inherently hybrid contexts: "that is, polycontextual, multivoiced, and multiscripted" (Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, & Tejeda, 1999, p. 287).

Both of these sociocultural uses of hybridity view the phenomenon from a positive stance. From a traditional NLS understanding of literacy practices as situated hybridized forms of literacy, the result of the hybridization is one of empowerment for the local actors, even if the hybridized forms they employ result in power struggles. For Gutierrez et al., because of this hybridity, conflict, tension, and diversity are also inherent to learning contexts but these points of tension represent "potential sites of rupture, innovation, and change that lead to learning" (p.287).

However, as this study will show, teachers' hybrid literacy practices in the classroom space also have the potential to impede literacy learning for students. This aspect of hybridity is one that the literacy-in-action model may be better suited to handle than the traditional literacy events/literacy practices model. For Brandt and Clinton (2002), because local literacies are not inherently local, they are not always forms of literacy hybridized by local actors; at times, they are shaped in distant spaces before they are taken up in local, situated literacy practices. Thus, Brandt and Clinton contest fundamental notions of the traditional NLS in their contention that, at times, literacies from distant places arrive in local settings, intact and not everyone has the prerogative to form their own hybridized literacy practices from these distant literacies. Rowsell's (2006) study of the corporate production of textbooks and the way they make their way into local classrooms is an example of this. In her study, textbook publishers are shown to have their own purposes and methods for determining what should be included in particular

texts. When schools are required to use particular textbooks, students are not only required to understand the information therein through one particular worldview, they are also directed in the way they should understand texts in general. In Rowsell's study, students, as a captive audience, are not allowed the opportunity to develop the hybrid literacy practices understood to be inherent to the NLS conceptualization of literacy practices.

A New Unit of Analysis for Sociocultural Studies

The model, *literacy-in-action*, introduces several concepts to develop more complicated analytical frames "at sites of reading, writing, and print that can follow the threads of networks both into and out of local context and other contexts" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 348). Elaborated below, the model proposes a new unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action* to replace the literacy event as the main unit of analysis for sociocultural studies in literacy. The need for this new unit of analysis, as explained earlier, revolves around the recognition that the literacy event conceptualizes particular instantiations of literacy practice as bounded events, ignoring the fact that so many literacy practices are shaped both by the activity of local actors and influences distant to that setting. Brandt and Clinton add that the literacy event is problematic in that it "privileges human actors over non-human" (p. 349), ignoring the mediating role literacy objects play. They suggest several moves these literacy objects might undertake. In this study, literacy-objects-in-action is used as the unit of analysis for the case study of literacy in a grade five classroom and one of the proposed moves, *folding in,* (again, borrowed from Latour (1996)) is applied. Brandt and Clinton also propose several other moves that literacy-objects-in-action may make; these are not included in this dissertation, but a summary may be found in Appendix one.

Literacy-in-Action

The literacy-in-action model posits that by theorizing the material role of literacy we can see not only what people are doing with literacy but what literacy is doing with people. By tracing the travel spaces of literacy objects between the macro and the micro or between the local and the global, we are able to gain a sense of how the global shapes the local. In turn, we are also able to see how the local pushes back on the global. Inherent to this model are three capacities of literacy objects: "a capacity to travel, a capacity to stay intact, and a capacity to be visible and animate outside the interactions of immediate literacy events" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 344).

Literacy-Objects-in-Action

A fundamental concept in the model of literacy-in-action, the unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action*, is proposed to replace the literacy event as the main unit of analysis in the social practice perspective. This new unit of analysis allows for an examination in literacy studies that can follow "objective trace[s] of literacy in a setting (print, instruments, paper, other technologies) whether they are being taken up by local actors or not" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 349). These objective traces, or literacy objects, with their potential to play an agentive role, may be constructed in distant places and yet have an impact on local literacy practices.

According to Brandt and Clinton (2002), the construct of literacy-objects-in-action intentionally carries a double-meaning, focusing attention on the way in which literacy itself acts as a social agent, in addition to examining literacy's role in human activity. As they state, "The construct orients us to ask: What part does literacy play in the action and what does it look like in action" (p. 349)? Or more simply, this new unit of analysis allows us to look at what people are doing with literacy and what is literacy doing with people. It is through the examination of the agentive role of literacy objects that this unit of analysis may gain a theoretical means necessary for addressing the problematic role of power in sociocultural studies of literacy.

Folding In

The concept of *folding in*, proposed by Brandt and Clinton (2002) for use in literacy studies, is also borrowed from Latour (1996). Latour's contention that humans invest in objects certain symbolic meanings that carry with them an aura of authority, such as the counter, grill and glass in the post office, holds the notion that this investment helps the patron recognize the post office as the place where the social interaction of mailing a parcel will take place. Moreover, these objects are deliberately used in place of a human actor to guide the activity of other human actors.

The concept of folding in recognizes the way that objects extend the activity of human beings: in other words, social interactions are extended in time and space through the action of non-human agents. The term is borrowed from sheep herding. The shepherd constructs a fold, a wooden enclosure, in which the sheep are contained at night. By building the sheep fold, the shepherd is able to protect the sheep without physically being present. Furthermore, by delegating activity to an object, humans change the social world of those who interact with that object.

Applying this concept to literacy, words written on a page not only encode the thoughts of the writer, they also allow those thoughts to be processed by other individuals in another time and place without requiring the writer to continue to be present or involved; in other words, the writer's thoughts are extended temporally and spatially by the text in which s/he has encoded them. The writer is able to influence the social world of the reader without being physically present.

In the elementary school classroom, an example of folding in may be seen in the use of signs. Teachers construct signs to remind students of classroom rules, ideas for how to use their free time, strategies for reading texts, strategies for editing their written work. Each of these signs extends the reach of the teacher by telling the students what to do without the teacher having to be physically present at the child's side to provide the reminder.

Brandt and Clinton contend that "through the concept of folding in we can restore attention to what is abstract and displaced in literate interactions without falling into autonomous myths" (2002, p. 353). That is, we can look at the way that literacy objects are used to replace human agents without imbuing literacy with imagined attributes and consequences as autonomous models of literacy are prone to do. With regard to literacy research then, "what is folded in, how, and with what consequences become important analytical questions" (p. 353).

In this study, the concept of folding in allows me to look at the way literacy objects have been given a "folding in" role in a local classroom; that is, the way literacy objects have been used by teachers to replace themselves in aspects of students' literacy instruction. Folding in also helps me to analyze the ways that literacy objects inherent to literature circles and writers' workshop, framed pedagogical interactions developed in distant spaces, have mediated the social practice of literacy of the students who are subject to them. Through the activity of folding in, I will be able to account for one aspect of the power dynamics associated with classroom literacy practices.

Using an Expanded Conceptualization of the NLS in Literacy Research

Support for 'Limits of the Local'

Just prior to the publication of *Limits of the Local* (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), Mary Hamilton (2001) conducted a study on the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) using Latour's Actor Network Theory (ANT). Looking at the IALS as a *social object* with agency that is "stabilised and distributed through the social world via policy, media, and advocacy documents" (p. 184), Hamilton sets out the international network within which the IALS was

created, and continues to be modified and sustained. She concludes that the use of ANT was able to show how the discourses of literacy "accumulate power and thereby marginalise other, more local, discourses of literacy…of how institutional truths about literacy are generated, how they become naturalised as commonsense within educational policy and practice, pushing aside those other truths about literacy known through everyday lived experience of adults and practitioners who work alongside them" (p. 193). The study offers an example of the way Latour's theory has been successfully applied for the purposes of taking into account power dynamics in institutionalized literacy practices.

The call to expand the conceptual framework of the NLS has been taken up by several researchers in the field of language and literacy education since the publication of *Limits of the Local*. It has been endorsed by Collins and Blot (2003), Street (2003b), Barton and Hamilton (2005), Leander and Lovvol (2006), as well as Pahl and Rowsell (2006), and Lewis, Enciso, and Moje (2007) in their edited volumes.

Collins and Blot (2003) contend that research undertaken through a NLS perspective has made tremendous strides in challenging the autonomous model of literacy and the myths regarding the consequences of literacy that emanate from that model. However, they argue this work has mainly resulted in the accumulation of ethnographies documenting local literacies and has not provided "an account of power-in-literacy which captures the intricate ways in which power, knowledge and forms of subjectivity are interconnected with 'uses of literacy' in modern national, colonial, and postcolonial settings" (p. 68). The theoretical tools offered by Brandt and Clinton are seen as new and useful tools for understanding these complexities (Barton & Hamilton, 2005) and avoiding the romanticization of local literacies that ignores the connections those literacies have to distant, but present institutions connected to the local (Street, 2003b).

Nichols (2006) employs ANT to demonstrate the way a globalized discourse of thinking skills is seen in a local primary classroom. While she does not cite Brandt and Clinton's model, her use of ANT, with its inclusion of objects as actors in social networks, resembles the kind of theoretical framework Brandt and Clinton propose. Nichols' conclusions demonstrate the dual focus on the agency of human and non-human actors in the same way that the literacy-in-action model proposes. Using 'discourses' as her unit-of-analysis, Nichols does not engage with the ANT in the way that Latour perhaps envisioned but instead opens up the understanding of objects-as-actors to include that which is more conceptual in nature.

Two recent edited volumes of work (Lewis, et al., 2007; Pahl and Rowsell, 2006) base their theoretical framework, in part, on the local-global argument, as set out by Brandt and

Clinton. Lewis, Moje, and Enciso (2007) base their edited volume on the need for literacy studies to address issues of power. While they cite the work of Brandt and Clinton regarding the need to consider the global when looking at local literacies as an underlying principle in their model, they do not take up the suggested model but instead layer lenses of cultural studies, activity theory and discourse analysis to address the same issues Brandt and Clinton highlight.

Pahl and Rowsell (2006), as editors of *Travel Notes from the New Literacy Studies*, frame a whole set of research studies as being motivated by the work of Brandt and Clinton. All of the individual studies in this volume, which looks at the interface of the local and global to account for a literacy practices in a variety of settings, acknowledge the importance of understanding local-global crossings. Several acknowledge the work of Brandt and Clinton as important in furthering their own thinking. However, with the exception of the Nichols (2006) study discussed earlier, none of the studies engage with the literacy-in-action model or ANT theory (Latour, 1993; 1996).

Thus, while many make reference to the call to heed the global while examining local literacy practices in order to provide an accounting for the role of power in sociocultural literacy studies, I have been unable to locate studies that fully engage with Brandt and Clinton's model for doing so, the model of literacy-in-action. The one close exception to this observation is Leander and Lovvorn (2006). Leander and Lovvorn apply Latour's ANT to look at the relationship between literacy practices and space-time in the schooling and online gaming of a youth named Bryan. In their examination, they incorporate Brandt and Clinton's literacy-in-action as a concept that views literacy as embedded in multiple activities that cross space-time boundaries. The findings of the study demonstrate that looking at texts, bodies and objects in circulation within networks enables an understanding of literacy that erases the in-school/out-of-school binary too often created or reinforced through traditional situated studies of literacy.

Studies such as Hamilton's (2002), Nichols' (2006) and Leander and Lovvorn's (2006) demonstrate the depth that may be added to literacy studies when the role of objects is brought under the theoretical lens of the NLS. These kinds of studies lend support to Brandt and Clinton's proposal that sociocultural studies of literacy may want to rethink the erasure of the role of the non-human agents in literate practice.

Critique of 'Limits of the Local'

While agreeing with the suggestion that literacy studies need to address the relationship of the local to the global, Street (2003a; Street, 2003b) also critiques underlying aspects of

Brandt and Clinton's *Limits of the Local* (2002). He raises two concerns: the first relating their use of the term 'autonomous' and the second relating to their replacement of the literacy event as a unit of analysis with literacy-objects-in-action.

His first point of critique is that Brandt and Clinton's notion of "distant" literacies may come close to reinstating autonomous views of literacy. Addressing this concern, Brandt and Clinton (2006) respond,

> We wanted to emphasize that the technologies of literacy enter a dialogue on their own terms, sometimes in conflict with those who take them up but always worthy of analysis for what they contribute in their own right. We did not mean to suggest that literacy technologies are ideologically neutral. It was wrong on our part to use the word 'autonomous', as that term, since Street (1984), has had a particular history and meaning in literacy theory. In hindsight, we would have framed our call as a need to bring the 'thingness' of literacy into an ideological model. (p. 256)

Street (Street, 2003a; Street & Lefstein, 2007) also takes issue with Brandt and Clinton's proposal of a new unit of analysis. He concedes that the concept of the literacy event is problematic for addressing the relationship between the local and global, but contends that the concept of literacy practices is enough to address the concern. For Street, the construct of literacy practices acknowledges the hybridized forms of literacy that individuals practice as a result of the many influences associated with their literate lives: thus, literacy practices take into account global influences. Following on this, Street (2003a) suggests that literacy practices as a unit of analysis is an area that requires further conceptualization in the NLS, and that it may be a suitable replacement for the literacy event as a unit of analysis. Present theorization of literacy practices, as articulated in Barton, Hamilton, and Ivanic's (2000) six propositions about the nature of literacy begins to address this, particularly their third proposition: "Literacy practices are patterned by social institutions and power relationships, and some are more dominant, visible and influential than others (p. 8)". However, because sociocultural studies of literacy have traditionally determined literacy practices through the analysis of literacy events, a unit of analysis that is not conceptually able to look beyond bounded instances of literacy usage; it may be that further theorizing literacy practices as a unit of analysis proves to be an impossible task.

Commenting on the Brandt and Clinton proposal and Street's contention that the NLS framework of literacy events paired with literacy practices provide an adequate framework for addressing the local and the global, Reder and Davila (2005) note,

…it seems that these concepts provide an analytical *space* for understanding the relationship between the local and the distant, but without further development these concepts do not yet constitute a coherent framework for understanding this relationship. What exactly are the 'distant' forces? If we concede that literacy is not an autonomous entity, then what is the nature of literacy within the broader sociocultural context? Likewise, how do these 'distant' forces impact individual literacy events? The concepts of literacy events and literacy practices provide an answer to *where* the local and the distant collide (in many everyday literacy events), but they fail to provide an answer as to *how* this interaction occurs. (p. 176)

Reder and Davila raise important questions here, questions I argue support Brandt and Clinton's proposal of a new model for sociocultural studies in literacy (literacy-in-action) and a new unit of analysis (literacy-objects-in-action), while raising important questions about the issues such a model or framework should address. Precisely what are the distant forces that shape literacy in local settings? How do these forces impact on local literacy events? I add to these questions related to issues of power: How might these forces work to shape the larger literacy practices of individuals and communities? Further conceptualizing literacy practices as a unit of analysis may not be adequate to handle such questions, particularly in light of the discussion raised earlier regarding the difficulties in a globalized world of determining context and who has the power to actually hybridize their own literacy practices and who does not. As such, it may be unlikely that the concept of literacy practices can actually be further theorized to address the role of power in literacy studies. A unit of analysis such as literacy-objects-in-action may have greater theoretical power to address these concerns.

While the discussion of terminology regarding the use of the term 'autonomous' may simply indicate a turf war and, thus, may be inconsequential, the matter of the need for a new unit of analysis remains as one worthy of exploration if we are to move past the kind of impasse Reder and Davila (2005) raise in their discussion of Street's (2003a; Street, 2003b) critique. Similarly, the call to develop a coherent framework for analyzing how distant forces impact local literacies invites exploration.

Elaborating and further theorizing the model proposed by Brandt and Clinton may provide an important way to address the longstanding problem of sociocultural studies in literacy: the need to find a way to address the central role of power. With the overarching research question, "How can a new model of sociocultural literacy theory, *literacy-in-action*, and its unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action* (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), provide us with a new

lens for understanding the ways that literacy is practiced in the classroom?", I endeavour to address these matters in this study. The sub-questions: "How do literacy objects that travel through spaces removed in time and location from a local grade five classroom play a role in shaping literacy instruction as it is enacted in the literature circle and writers' workshop of that classroom?"; "How are the human agents in this study, i.e., the focal students and teachers, using the literacy objects associated with literature circle and writers' workshop in their classroom?"; "How are the literacy objects associated with the literature circle and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom mediating the in-school practice of literacy for the focal students?" provide direction for the inquiry.

<center>The Present Study</center>

Classrooms typically are the sites of power-imbalances, though the degree of this imbalance obviously differs according to the educational philosophy in place in a particular institution. Sociocultural studies in literacy have not, in the past, easily examined issues of power through the typical unit of analysis, the literacy event. In this study, I look at literacy learning in a grade five classroom of an urban elementary school. Because of its large size and the local requirement that teachers and schools follow the increasing accountability requirements of the provincial ministry of education, the site for this study was marked by a power differential whereby the teachers encouraged productive work habits from students by consistently reminding students that their work was being graded and their effort would be evident on their report cards.

My goal for the study is to form a more in-depth analysis of the way in which in-school literacy pedagogy, viewed in a historical sense as tried and true, is enacted in modern times in hybridized forms. With this goal, aspects of traditional sociocultural studies in literacy are challenged; these aspects include hybridity as a means for opening up the practice of literacy; the situated nature of literacy practices; and the aforementioned need to address issues of power more effectively. In the present study, aspects of the tension associated with teachers' stated understandings of literacy and literacy pedagogy and the way these are actually enacted become visible. Aspects of hybridity creating "places of tension" (Gutierrez et al., 1999) also become apparent; but rather than hybridity opening up spaces for literacy learning, it also becomes apparent that hybrid literacy practices, these "places of tension", may also be "sites of rupture" (p. 287) that threaten to stifle learning. In its focus on the way that individuals assert their own agency to build hybrid literacy practices, practices that frequently blend school literacy with

community literacy practices (Street, 2003b), the current framework for the NLS does not take into account this more negative aspect of hybrid literacy practices. While hybridity may open learning horizons for students; it can also cause it to narrow. Finally, the context of situation, so important to understanding the way local literacies are enacted, is very difficult to ascertain in a classroom context where multiple forces, local and more distant, are at work to shape students' learning context. This study challenges the notion of context of situation by viewing literacy in the classroom as transcontextual in nature.   Utilizing Brandt and Clinton's (2002) model of literacy-in-action allows this study of classroom literacy practices to address these important theoretical and pedagogical issues and, in turn, yields new insights into them.

Expanding the lens of the NLS to view literacy as an object potentially provides a powerful framework for looking at the transcontextual and transcontextualizing nature of literacy. Brandt and Clinton (2002) propose a plethora of ideas for accomplishing this in their seminal article, ideas with apparent potential to enable literacy researchers to examine literacy in new ways and account for issues of power in literacy studies. Each of their ideas needs to be explored in detail to determine their utility for literacy research. Three of those ideas proposed by Brandt and Clinton, connecting the local with the global, utilizing the unit of analysis, literacy-objects-in-action, and applying the concept of folding in, provide me with useful analytical tools to carry out a sociocultural studies in literacy education that goes beyond depicting the local literacies of individual students. As I work with these proposed ideas, a central notion that under girds my study are the three tenets regarding literacy objects as stated by Brandt and Clinton (2002): literacy objects have "a capacity to travel, a capacity to stay intact, and a capacity to be visible and animate outside the interactions of immediate literacy events" (p. 344). Such an exploration will allow me to expand upon and refine concepts that to date are still highly theoretical in nature.

In the present study, an understanding of two framed pedagogical interactions around literacy that have become social facts in British Columbia, literature circles and writers' workshop, is facilitated by determining the literacy objects at work within the framed pedagogical interactions. Through an examination of how these human agents work with certain literacy objects and how those non-human agents work to construct student experiences with literacy, new understandings of in-school literacy instruction emerge.

In the chapters that follow, I illustrate the travelling of literacy objects as a process that disempowers human agents while empowering those very objects. Returning to this chapter's opening quote (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 257), what ensues from the analysis, I argue, is an

uncovering of the role of literacy in promoting structures of inequality in the classroom and an understanding that the forms of literacy students practice in class, forms they may not prefer to practice, have implications. I also illustrate the way the human actors who interact with those objects "push back" against the agentive activity of those objects. It becomes apparent in this examination that hybridized literacy objects, shaped in distant spaces and reshaped in local settings for particular purposes, carry with them the ability to shape student literacy practices in their formative years.

Figure 2-1: Framed Social Interactions Connected to a Larger Social Structure
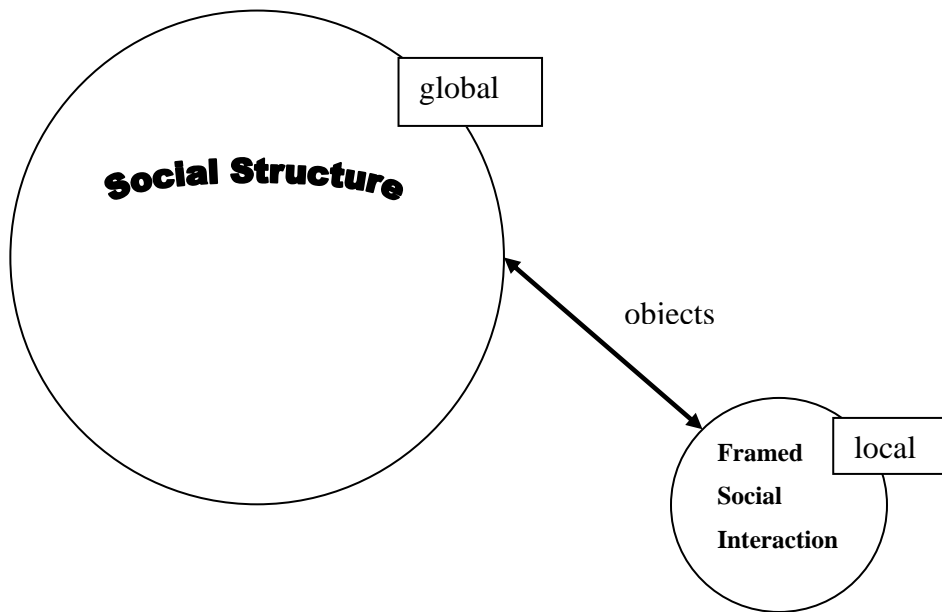
CHAPTER THREE: UTILIZING THE LITERACY-IN-ACTION MODEL

A Case Study of Literacy Practices in a Contemporary Classroom

In their article, *Limits of the Local*, Brandt and Clinton (2002) call for literacy studies that include an analysis of both localizing and globalizing activity. This call prompted much discussion amongst those who work within the New Literacy Studies framework and several studies that followed took up this theoretical challenge (e.g., Pahl & Rowsell, 2006). Brandt and Clinton also propose a model, based on the work of Latour (1993; Latour, 1996), for conducting such studies; however, to date published studies that take up this model are not in evidence. The purpose of this study was to take the proposed Brandt and Clinton model and work with it in order to a) build a more detailed framework for the model, and b) provide a concrete basis for discussing its merits and limitations. In doing so, my goal is to move the discussion beyond the kind of theoretical critique NLS scholars, such as Street (2003a; Street, 2003b) provide.

This study's overarching research question asks: How can a new model of sociocultural literacy theory, *literacy-in-action*, and its unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action* (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), provide us with a new lens for understanding the ways that literacy is practiced in the classroom? To approach this question the following three sub-questions guide the study:

1. How do literacy objects that travel through spaces removed in time and location from a local grade five classroom play a role in shaping literacy instruction as it is enacted in the literature circle and writers' workshop of that classroom?

2. How are the human agents in this study, i.e., the focal students and teachers, using the literacy objects associated with literature circle and writers' workshop in their classroom?

3. How are the literacy objects associated with the literature circle and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom mediating the in-school practice of literacy for the focal students?

In order to address these questions, a case study approach is employed. I define case study as: a research strategy used to investigate a specific phenomenon in its context. I conduct the case study from the viewpoint of the interpretivist paradigm and use ethnographic methods.

Research Design

Design

This study is both theoretical and qualitative in design. The theoretical aspect of the study occurs as I consider and elaborate on the model of literacy-in-action, proposed by Brandt and Clinton (2002) in *Limits of the Local*. The qualitative aspect applies the elaborated framework to analyze data collected for a research study of contemporary classroom literacy instruction. Thus, one aspect of the study is to take a proposed framework, which seeks to expand the theoretical underpinnings of the New Literacy Studies, situate it and further theorize it for use in literacy research. And the other aspect of the study endeavours to use that framework to bring new understandings of the way literacy is instructed in a contemporary elementary school classroom, allowing for a concrete examination of the theoretical possibilities of the literacy-in-action framework.

The model I examine and elaborate upon for the theoretical aspect of the study is Brandt and Clinton's *literacy-in-action* model. This model theorizes that local adoption of literacy practices is often the result of or a response to literate schemes designed in more global contexts. A key concept in the model is the agentive action of literacy objects. I analyze the use of literacy objects in a grade five classroom by applying three concepts in the model conceptualized by Brandt and Clinton (2002): linking local literacy practices with distant forces through the unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action*; examining the way human participants are utilizing the literacy objects; and applying the concept of *folding in*, a move frequently made by literacy objects.

What Is Case Study?

For many years case study research was predominantly informed by the work of three researchers: Sharan Merriam, Robert Stake and Robert Yin. Indeed, their expertise in case study continues to be cited in the preponderance of research utilizing case study. Merriam (1988) defines case study as "an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group" (p.9). Stake (1995) defines it as: "The study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (p.xi). Yin (1994) defines case study "as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p.13). Merriam and Stake's definitions of case study reflect their qualitative (interpretivist) backgrounds. Yin is

credited with defining and operationalizing case study in a manner that makes it accessible to researchers from post-positivist, naturalist and interpretivist traditions.

In the proposed case study case study I will work with a short, very general definition, which I then operationalize by identifying elements of prototypical case study identified in a body of literature that extends beyond Merriam, Stake and Yin.

Case study is a research strategy used to investigate a specific phenomenon in its context.

In order to operationalize this definition, elements of the prototypical case study may be employed. These are drawn from a host of researchers engaged in case study research and for the most part represent elements of consensual agreement. Case study is most often used to produce theory (Yin, 1994) but may also be used to test theory (Eckstein, 2000; Flyvbjerg, 2001; Merriam, 1988; Mitchell, 2000; Yin, 1994). Yin (1994) contends that it is the prominent role of theory in case study that sets case study apart from ethnography and grounded theory, though this is not to say that ethnography is atheoretical. Cross-case analyses, where two or more cases are analyzed comparatively, are also useful in the development of theory (Eisenhardt, 1989; Lijphart, 1975; Ragin, 1997, 2002). Case studies are intensive, holistic descriptions of specific "bounded" phenomena, where context is of crucial importance (Patton, 1990; Snow & Anderson, 1991; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994), along with a sense of the temporal and a focus on the specific (Merriam, 1988; Orum *et al.*, 1991; Stake, 1995). Case studies employ multiple sources of data (Patton, 1990; Yin, 1994) and are multiperspectival (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Snow & Anderson, 1991). The case study may have a descriptive purpose, an interpretive or analytical purpose, an evaluative purpose, or it may be a combination of these (Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1990; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). Qualified generalizations (Bassey, 1999) that take into account fittingness (Lincoln & Guba, 2000a) or comparability and translatability (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Lincoln & Guba, 2000) may be drawn from case studies undertaken for interpretive or evaluative purposes (Becker, 1991; Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Eckstein, 2000; Mitchell, 2000); however, for some the incorporation of theory is crucial to generalizing from case studies (Mitchell, 2000; Yin, 1994).

From this discussion I use the following expanded definition of case study:

The case study research strategy falls within the qualitative paradigm and is used to carry out methodologies from a range of qualitative research traditions. It is a non-experimental form of research that is often used to produce theory but does not set out to

test theory. From my positioning in the post-modernist paradigm I see case study as a research strategy that enables us to look at and interpret the ways in which knowledge is constructed and understood within a particular context. Case studies are intensive, holistic descriptions of specific "bounded" phenomena, where context is important along with a sense of the temporal and a focus on the specific. They employ multiple sources of data and are multiperspectival. The case study may have a descriptive purpose, an interpretive or analytical purpose, an evaluative purpose or be a combination of these, depending on that purpose. Qualified generalizations that take into account comparability and translatability may be drawn from case studies undertaken for interpretive or evaluative purposes.

Case Study and Literacy Research

Why is case study an important strategy for conducting literacy research? Barone (2004) states: "Perhaps most important is [that case study research] is applicable to real life as it relates directly to the reader's experiences and facilitates understanding of complex situations, understandings that cannot be made explicit in most other research designs" (p.25). From a sociocultural perspective, gaining an understanding of the real life experiences of readers and their literacy practices is of paramount importance. Utilizing the expanded lens as conceptualized by Brandt and Clinton (2002) will allow me to analyze those real life experiences in relation to the complex factors that shape young readers' literate practice.

The Present Literacy Case Study

This study employs a case study approach, specifically utilizing a single-case design (Yin, 1994) and is both interpretive (Merriam, 1988) and instrumental in nature (Stake, 1995). The study is *interpretive* (Merriam, 1988) in that it gathers data to illustrate, support and challenge theoretical assumptions of the literacy-in-action model. The data from this interpretive case study forms a thick description from which conceptual categories were developed. The study is *instrumental* (Stake, 1995) in that its overall purpose is improving the educational system by examining and troubling pedagogies that have long been considered the gold-standard in literacy education. The design also employs ethnographic methods. Case study utilizing ethnographic methods, frequently used in sociocultural studies of literacy, is more than an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a social unit or phenomenon: it is a sociocultural analysis of the unit of study and concerns itself with the cultural context (Merriam, 1988). Thus,

in this study, anecdotal data are collected on the history of the school board and neighbourhood in which the school is situated, historical data are examined to bring an understanding of the distant contexts in which the pedagogical interactions were developed and finally data was collected on the relationship of the human participants (focal students and teachers) to literacy. The interaction of six intermediate-level, students and their teachers with two framed pedagogical interactions, literature circles and writers' workshop, comprise the case boundaries. Because these framed pedagogical interactions were designed and modified in distant spaces from the local classroom, those connected spaces are also included in the case boundaries.

Participants and Context

Selecting the Research Site and Participants

In order to conduct the study, I sought an intermediate level classroom. A primary consideration for choosing the research site was finding a teacher who would be comfortable having a researcher in her/his classroom for the several months required to conduct a case study employing ethnographic methods. To this end, a list of teachers who had previously been involved with research associated with a large scale literacy study in conjunction with the Department of Language and Literacy Education at the University of British Columbia was drawn up.

From this list, teachers were contacted and invited to participate in the study. A second consideration for selecting the participants was that the school be located in an urban setting and that it should serve students from a range of socioeconomic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This criterion was considered important in that this type of population is quite typical of many Canadian elementary schools and, therefore, would later provide greater possibility for generalizing some of the findings of the study. Finally, the school selected also needed to be located in a school district that had been subject to accountability measures intended to improve student literacy outcomes. This final criterion for selecting the setting was also included to facilitate the comparability of this study to other case studies and relatability for those reading this case study with an interest to relating its implications to other classroom situations

The first teacher, Ms. Wynn, who responded to the inquiry taught in an intermediate level classroom in a school with a population of students from a range of socio-economic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. She had been involved with literacy research as a study participant and had just completed her masters of education. Because she, her classroom, and her school, Howe River Elementary, fit all of the criteria for selecting participants, her classroom was

selected as the site for the research. This selection took place at the end of the school year and the study was then slated to begin just after the new school year began the following September. Subsequent to this selection of the upcoming grade five class at Howe River Elementary a change occurred at the school. Ms. Wynn was reassigned to team-teach a grade 4/5 class at Howe River with another teacher, in order to make use of an existing open area classroom that in the past had been used as a resource centre (see Context section below for more on this change). Because school district and school administrator permission had already been obtained and because the teacher who would be co-teaching the class was interested in participating, I decided to continue with this now very large classroom. Knowing that the second phase of the study would involve selecting a group of focal students, the number of which would be remain the same, made it possible to stay with this site and continue with the proposed research design.

In September of the following school year, letters were sent to the families of all of the students in the combined grade 4/5 classroom informing them that a study of literacy practices would be taking place in the class. Parents/guardians were asked to give permission for their child to be part of the first phase of the study in which I would be observing in the classroom with the goal of gaining an overview of the classroom literacy practices. I was given permission from the parents of 22% of the students to record my observations of their children (25% of the parents who returned the forms did not give consent for their children to be observed; the return rate for this preliminary permission was 45%). Most of these permissions (70%) came from families whose children were in the grade five portion of the class, the division of the combined class for which Ms. Wynn was responsible. Thus, after two weeks of general observation, a second letter was sent to the grade five students who had participated with permission in the first phase, inviting them to become focal students. Several students expressed interest in participating as focal students and a meeting was held with these parents. Following this meeting, five students received permission from their parents to participate in the study. I had intended to have four focal students but decided that given the social difficulty that not being included in the study would have presented for the one excluded student, I went forward with five. This group was comprised of four girls and one boy. To help provide a little more gender balance in the numbers I approached the mother of a boy, Nigel, who had expressed interest in participating. She said she had not given permission originally because she knew grade five was going to be a year where Nigel would have to begin working harder and she worried about the time commitment associated with being involved in the study. Nigel convinced her that he could handle it all and so she gave her permission for him to participate. These six students became

the focal students who, along with their classroom teacher, were the primary human participants in the study.

<div style="text-align:center;">The Non-human Participants (Literacy Objects)</div>

The literacy-in-action model draws on the sociocultural theories of Bruno Latour (e.g., Latour, 1994, 1996). Latour posits that *framed social interactions* at a local level may be linked to more global spaces through the agentive action of non-human actors, *objects*. These objects, as social agents, become participants in sociological studies utilizing Latour's theory. Applying this foundational aspect of Latour's sociological theory to researching literacy instruction with the *literacy-in-action* model (see Data Analysis below for an elaboration), literacy objects as agentive actors are viewed as participants. I have termed the various pedagogies used in the literacy instruction in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary, *framed pedagogical interactions*. Determining which of the many framed pedagogical interactions specifically aimed at literacy instruction to analyze was an important task in the first three months of the study and was a necessary precursor to determining what the literacy objects were.

Numerous framed pedagogical interactions aimed at developing students' literacy learning take place in a given week at Howe River Elementary. The pedagogical interactions I observed during the early weeks of the study in which literacy objects are embedded were: Literature Circles; Sustained Silent Reading and Reading Passport; Red Cedar Club; Friday Journal; Writers' Workshop; Social Studies group projects; Daily Planners; the RAD (Reading Assessment District 36), a bi-yearly reading assessment administered to the whole school district; and the School Wide Write, a bi-yearly writing assessment administered to the whole school district. A full description of these framed pedagogical interactions is located in Table 3-1. From these, I have selected literature circles and writers' workshop as the pedagogical interactions I will examine in this study for the following reasons.

Literature circles and writers' workshop are framed literacy pedagogical interactions used widely in elementary school classrooms in North America and in classrooms in the particular district in which the study was situated. They have been used in the public school system in many areas of North America for almost three decades and, thus, have become social facts across the continent in many intermediate level classrooms. In the time I have interacted with this school district (six years), I have observed that teachers who use them tend to think of them as the gold-standard of literacy instruction and, as such, they see them as pedagogical interactions they are proud to be utilizing. Literature circles and writers' workshop are also

promoted at the district level by the present literacy coordinator, Ms. Kramer, who runs workshops for teachers interested in using them in their various forms. Additionally, they are specifically mentioned in the provincial Ministry of Education curriculum as recommended tools for literacy instruction in the intermediate grades. These two framed pedagogical interactions clearly have teacher approbation at the local level and systemic support at a more global level. When this is taken into consideration, along with the amount of time each week that students in the grade five class at Howe River Elementary engage with these pedagogical interactions and their widespread use in more global contexts, literature circles and writers' workshop are excellent candidates for analysis using the literacy-in-action model. The ubiquity of literature circles and writer's workshop in North American classrooms also makes these pedagogical interactions useful for providing a degree of relatability for those reading this case study with an interest to relating its implications to other classroom situations.

In the framed pedagogical interactions, literature circles and writers' workshop, my analysis (found in Chapter Four) identified five literacy objects that take on agentive roles in the literacy instruction in the grade five classroom, that is five non-human participants. Because of the abundance of data and the limited space available in this dissertation, the agentive action of four literacy objects is analyzed. These literacy objects are: role sheets in the literature circle; and mini-lessons, conferences, and student publications.

In determining these literacy objects, I have taken a very broad view of objects – a decision that may be contentious. While role sheets are relatively easy to understand as literacy objects for they are clearly tangible objects, recognizable from one space to another as either facsimiles or reproductions of an original; publication of student work, mini-lessons and conferences may be more problematic. Chapter Four explores this issue in more depth and Chapter Seven discusses my conclusions regarding these decisions.

The Human Participants

The primary participants in the study were six focal students, Ally, Deanne, Isaac, Nigel, Riley, and Sara, and their classroom teacher, Ms. Wynn. (All of the participants' names are self-selected pseudonyms.) [1] The following profiles for the students are intended to give a sense of

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[1] Ms. Wynn's teaching partner, Ms. Little, taught the grade four section of the class. Because of this and the fact that only one of the large group teaching scenarios I describe and analyze in the study involve Ms. Little, I have not included a background section on her. For similar reasons, Ms. Crawford, the teacher-librarian who assisted Ms.

who they are as situated within their family and in their classroom, in addition to some of their literacy practices both in and out of school. The profile for Ms. Wynn provides a brief portrait of her relationship to literacy, schooling and teaching. The intent of these profiles is to provide background information that will inform our understanding of the kinds of decisions Ms. Wynn made with regard to the literacy objects that are the main focus of this study and the way the focal students interacted with those literacy objects.

Focal Students

All of the focal students were in grade five and ten years old at the time of the study and living at home with their families. All of the students had attended Howe River Elementary since grade one and a few had also attended Kindergarten there. All of the students, except Nigel, worked as library monitors helping with book sign out during class time using the school's bar code scanner and shelving books during lunch and recess. While I sought a diverse group of students for the study, the only students whose parents agreed to have them participate as focal students came from homes I would characterize as middle-class. All of the students came from homes where English was the mother tongue. Below I present the students in alphabetical order according their first names.

Ally Random. Ally lived in the housing co-op next door to the school where her parents were highly involved in the governance of the co-op. Her mother was a server in a bar who was out of work at the time of the study (due to a staff layoff while the bar was being renovated) and enjoying her time at home with her two children, Ally and her younger brother. Ally's father was a self-employed contractor in the construction industry whose office was located in the family's living room. In a "Who am I?" portrait most of the students completed at the beginning of the school year, Ally stated that she was proud of her flexibility and her creativity and drawings. Outside of school, Ally took dance lessons, enjoyed doing handcrafts with her friends, played with her new dog and liked to draw. Ally took her schoolwork very seriously and was eager to please her teachers with her work and compliance with classroom protocol. She reported to me that she really did not like reading as it was set up at school because she felt much

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Wynn with the grade five portion of the literature circles is not profiled here, either. Ms. Crawford worked with the focal students only during literature circles and not during writers' workshop. Additionally, in the literature circles, she was applying a model of instruction that was supplied for her by Ms. Wynn. Pertinent information regarding Ms. Crawford's experience with literature circles is included, however.

of what she was asked to read was boring or too difficult. She also commented that she felt that over the years with her experiences in levelled reading groups, reading in school was too competitive. Ally loved to write and in her journals and reports, and some of her stories, often employed a conversational voice and personal details. On her report cards for the two reporting periods in which I observed in her classroom, Ally was graded as Meeting and Fully meeting grade level expectations in Language Arts, her one Exceeds expectations being in the area of active listening and ignoring distractions. According to her report, Ally exceeded expectations in drama, and indeed, demonstrated a "dramatic flair", an ability to project her assigned character, on the occasions I observed her participating in dramatic productions.

Deanne Bubble. Deanne also lived in the housing co-op next door to the school, her townhouse very close to Ally's. Deanne was the eldest of two female children in her family, her mother was a teacher in an adult English as a second language program and her father worked as the music director for a national radio station. Deanne declared herself to be proud of her swimming medals and her friends. Outside of school Deanne's interests included gymnastics, swimming, playing with her dog, and reading novels. Deanne was a student who seemed to fit very well with the demands made of her in the grade five classroom: she generally played by the classroom rules but at times engaged in rule-bending activities, such as chatting during work time. The year the study was conducted was Deanne's second year having Ms. Wynn as a teacher (Ms. Wynn taught grade four the previous year). Deanne was quite proud of her status as someone Ms. Wynn knew and trusted. At times, this was a source of conflict, as other students, particularly Riley and Ally, felt that Deanne was too often given responsibilities or prestigious roles, such as the lead in the class play, honours they would have liked to have had. An avid reader of novels, both in-school and out of school, Deanne frequently told me about the novels, particularly fantasy novels, she was reading and her plans for future reading. She also reported that she loved to write and felt she knew a lot about writing because she had been in Ms. Wynn's class the year before. Deanne's grades on her report card for both reporting periods to which I had access reported her language arts work as "Exceeding expectations" in all areas. For this reason, her mother reported that she did not involve herself to any great extent in Deanne's homework or school projects, trusting that Deanne and Ms. Wynn had everything under control.

Isaac Harris. Isaac lived in a townhouse complex a ten minute walk from the school where his family took pleasure in the view from their home of the harbour in which they moored their sailboat. Isaac was the eldest of two children, his sister being two years younger. Isaac's

father was the editor of a local sailing magazine and worked from home. His mother was an environmental scientist. Isaac said he was proud to be athletic and a good builder and described himself as a fanatic for playing soccer both at school and outside of school. Other interests outside of school included guitar and singing lessons, building Lego models, playing video games, particularly *Lego Star Wars* and *Mario Kart*, and reading novels. Isaac called himself a voracious reader and once proudly declared that he read the latest Harry Potter instalment in one week-end. Isaac was viewed by his teachers, fellow students and their parents as a model student, although both Ms. Wynn and Ms. Crawford conceded that at times they tired of what they perceived to be a "know-it-all" attitude. Isaac was the only other focal student who had been in Ms. Wynn's class the year before for grade four. My observations were that Isaac thought very carefully about much of what he was asked to do in school and while he excelled in all aspects of school, according to his almost straight A report cards, he was often critical when talking with me over the way school was done. For example, when projects with set procedures were given to the students, Isaac found the instructions regarding the procedures frustrating because he had his own preferred way of approaching the work. Isaac loved to write and professed to have little patience for the way the writers' workshop was set up in his class because he had his own ideas that he preferred to write about.

Nigel Green. Nigel lived approximately fifteen minutes on foot from the school in a condominium overlooking the harbour. Nigel was the eldest of two boys in his family of four although he had a step-sister who was an adult and lived down the hall from Nigel's family with her husband. Nigel's father was a security specialist with his own company who worked from his home office. Nigel's mother also worked from home running her small business which designed and manufactured baby blankets for use in strollers. Outside of school, Nigel loved to watch "freaky" movies and play video games, particularly Monkey Ball, build with Lego, skateboard in the neighbourhood's walking paths and "luge" race on the parking ramp of his building's underground parking garage. He also loved to play video games on the internet when allowed to by his parents. On different occasions, Nigel announced that when he grew up he wanted to be a stand up comedian, a bungy jumping guide, or a ski resort worker. Nigel was very proud of his sense of humour and the fact that his friends were appreciative of it. He told me that one of his favourite articles of clothing was a t-shirt that read, "Homework hurts the environment". Nigel's mother told me that ensuring Nigel be exposed to literature even though he preferred to spend his free time with the above activities, was important to her and her husband. For these reasons, as a family they read young adult novels aloud together and each

night when they went to bed, Nigel and his brother listened to recorded novels on DVD. In the classroom, I observed Nigel to be a bright and curious youth when talking about places he had been or movies and games he played or when involved in group projects, but highly unengaged during group instruction and the majority of independent work times. At the beginning of independent work times, he invariably signed himself out with different friends to use the washroom (the school had a policy that students were not allowed to use the washrooms without a buddy accompanying them for security purposes) at the beginning of the work time and often spent ten to fifteen minutes there before returning to the classroom and spending the remaining time either chatting, watching his classmates, making humorous drawings in his planner, or reading. These activities frequently earned Nigel a spot on the "Warnings" board in the classroom, though he rarely got to the three warnings in one day critical stage where he would have to stay in for recess. Nigel said that he didn't particularly enjoying reading at school and felt that literature circles and silent reading would be much more interesting if the class had books such as novels by Tom Clancy to choose from but said he enjoys writing stories and doing social studies projects. Nigel frequently commented that he had a lot of homework. This observation is supported by his mother who told me that after his first report card when she realized he was not completing assigned work she began requiring him to bring all of his books home and often had him doing homework for up to three hours a day, completing the work he had not done in class and assigned homework. On his report card, Nigel's grades improved significantly from term 1 to term 2 resulting in an overall mark of B, up from a C the previous term.

Riley Vashon. Riley had lived close to the school for several years in an apartment. The year before the study, her family had moved to a home in a neighbourhood about a half hour drive away from Howe River Elementary. Riley's mother was heavily involved with the Parent Advisory Council, the School Planning Council, and some of the sports teams at the school. Because of this involvement and her work at a marina close to the school, the family decided to keep Riley and her older brother at the school until Riley's brother started high school the next year. Riley's mother was a business and accounting manager and her father a business development and marketing manager for a construction testing company. Riley's parents were one of two amongst the families of the focal students who spoke an additional language, Afrikaans, although they were not actively working to teach Afrikaans to Riley and her brother. Riley loved to play soccer outside of school, attending practices and clinics two days a week after school and playing league games on week-ends. Riley also loved running and said that she

was proud of herself for being a great friend. Riley was also very involved at her family's church and played leading roles in some of the productions they church put on. Riley told me that she loved to read in school and out of school, though she was sometimes frustrated by her book choices because she felt they were too difficult for her to read. Riley also reported that she loved to write and showed me with pride some of the diaries and scrapbooks she had kept in the past three years during school holidays. I observed Riley to be quiet at school, and like Ally, Deanne, and Isaac, she rarely attempted to subvert school rules, with the exception of occasionally chatting with friends during independent work times when the students were supposed to be working.

Sara North. Sara lived with her mother and older brother in a townhouse complex that was a fifteen minute walk from the school. Sara's mother described herself as an administrative professional and worked at a nearby university. Sara's mother was from a German speaking background and her father a French speaking background, although her mother reported English as their first language. Sara reported that she knew lots of vocabulary from these two languages. Sara described herself as a loving, caring person and was proud of herself for her activeness and her respect for people and animals. She said she enjoyed swimming and soccer outside of school. Sara was the only one of the focal students to say that she spent time in MSN chat rooms, an activity she engaged in daily with her friends from the grade four portion of the class. Sara enjoyed playing videogames on her handheld gaming device or with her brother, when he would allow her to play on his larger gaming system. She also loved to watch television and named the adult sitcom, *Friends*, as her favourite show. Sara was passionate about horses; she took riding lessons once a week and went to the stables on Sundays to help with the horses in exchange for her riding lessons. Sara had an adult mentor from the Big Sisters organization with whom she spent time for about two hours each week and also had a tutor who came to her house once a week to help her with homework associated with language arts. Sara's mother was concerned about Sara's lack of significant friendships at school. In my discussions with her, I often noted how mature and confident Sara seemed in the way she related to me, speaking with me as though she were a fellow adult. Sara's mother told me that Sara had experienced difficulty with reading and writing from her earliest years but that it had been a frustrating and difficult endeavour to get her tested for a learning disability and even more difficult to secure extra support for Sara at school. After some effort on her mother's part, Sara was tested in the third grade and designated as having a form of dyslexia that makes remembering and reproducing spelling patterns very difficult. In grade five, Sara continued to receive in-class

45

support from the resource teacher for approximately one hour per week. She was trying to challenge herself to read more difficult books than the picture books she had previously read and said she enjoyed reading short novels that incorporated graphics and activities. One of the things I observed with Sara was that it was very important to her to be able to report that she had read many books. She particularly enjoyed a reading program, the Red Cedar club, sponsored by the school library that was part of a larger program in schools and libraries to promote Canadian fiction for youth. In talking about the program, Sara hinted that she may not have actually read all of the books from cover to cover that she claimed to have read in the program, even though she had put stars on the progress chart for more books than most of the other students in the class. Sara said that she deliberately chose the non-fiction books because she thought it wasn't necessary to read them in their entirety. I frequently noted that Sara, unlike the rest of the focal students, spent only a portion of the daily silent reading time actually reading. Generally, she spent about half of the twenty minute period looking for a new book or organizing the books in the classroom library. Sara's report cards reflected her struggles with language arts with minimally meeting expectations in reading and writing and fully meeting expectations in the area of listening and speaking.

In the analysis, Nigel and Sara figure a little more prominently than the other students. These were the two students who had the most to say about the pedagogical interactions I examine in this study. Additionally, they were the two who wrestled the most with the pedagogical interactions (in unique ways) and thus they provide important perspectives for understanding the activity of the literacy objects under scrutiny.

Teacher

Ms. Wynn. Ms. Wynn was in her sixth year of teaching and her third year at Howe River Elementary the year the study was conducted. Her original training was as a middle-school teacher but her first teaching position was team-teaching in an intermediate level classroom. She acknowledged that she felt unprepared for this change but enjoyed working with younger students. Ms. Wynn continued on in the elementary stream, teaching intermediate level students when that first contract finished a year and a half later. She described her first two years as follows: "It was really trial-by-error and really having to be a sponge those first couple of years to figure it out. And I don't think I did most of my learning on literacy until I did my masters in literacy." Ms. Wynn started and finished her masters in education degree in her fifth year of

teaching, the year before this study took place. She gave her personal definition of literacy and an example as,

> Really it just all the ways that we interact with text in any way that builds stories into our imagination or builds stories about real life as well. So to me literacy is being able to follow what global news is. … So I'm constantly building my own literacy. Like I had no idea, I'm often quite negative about American politics but now I'm more concerned with what they're doing down there with their economy, so I want to know. So I'm more motivated to find out. So I think you have to find what's motivating people to further their literacy and I see that with some of the kids in this class.

Here Ms. Wynn espouses a broad conception of literacy that approximates an understanding of literacy as an ideological activity; however, her definition that at times appeared to be at odds with the way she approached literacy instruction in her classroom.

As a child, Ms. Wynn was an avid reader. She said that she spent a lot of time with books as a child because they afforded her a form of escape from a "strained relationship" with her mother but that escape later turned into a love of books. She was a high achiever at school; however, she felt that her teachers in high school often gave her high grades on her work, whether she deserved it or not. In our first interview, Ms. Wynn lamented, "I went from being a straight A student in high school to losing my scholarship my first year at [a local university] because I couldn't keep up". She felt her high school teachers should not have so easily given her high grades when she didn't deserve them and that if they had taught her some of the underlying aspects of "how to do school", such as how to write a five-part essay and how to handle multiple-choice tests, her transition to university would have been much smoother.

Ms. Wynn said that these experiences had a deep impact on the way she currently taught. She maintained a love of "creative writing" into her adult life and indeed, the year I was observing in her class, wrote a play that her students subsequently performed for the whole school. As an adult, she continued to read youth fiction in an effort to stay current and to have recommendations of reading material to make to her students.   She expected that her grade five students would display a high degree of independence during independent work periods and with assignment deadlines. Adamant that in the fifth grade students must begin to earn their A's, she said it was often a shock to parents and students alike when they saw the first report card in grade five and realized the student was going to have to work harder than s/he had been used to doing in previous years. To help take the mystery out of the marking process, she supplied her

students with the marking rubric she would be using to grade their assignments when she first gave the assignments.

Ms. Wynn gave much thought to many of the decisions she made in her classroom. As an illustration of this, at one point I asked her why she was using fixed, teacher formed grouping in literature circles rather than the student chosen groupings promoted by the literacy pedagogy community. She explained that in her experience, many students form cliques and exclude less popular students in these situations. She felt that although these groups were meant to be constantly reconstituting themselves, in real classrooms that doesn't take place: students form groups with their friends and stay with those groups the whole year if given the opportunity to do so. After this explanation, Ms. Wynn commented: "those airy fairy theoretical days are long gone."

Throughout my observation period, Ms. Wynn handled my presence as a researcher with a welcoming smile each time I arrived, access to the focal students whenever I needed to conduct short interviews with them, ready answers to my questions, in both formal and informal conversations, and an honest appraisal of whatever I was asking about. At no time did I feel unwelcome in her classroom.

Context

Ministry of Education

In Canada, responsibility for education falls under the auspices of the provincial government. The province in which this study was situated had in recent years made the decision to focus strongly on improving literacy rates in the province. Standards (benchmarks) for the subject areas were written and curriculum documents were rewritten, using educators from the province as primary authors. These documents were made available to teachers online. A slogan utilized during the time of the study in a plethora of government materials stated the goal of making the province the "most literate on earth". Several literacy initiatives for literacy across the lifespan, but particularly preschool literacy, were either underway or being launched at the time the study was conducted. Additionally, the year of the study, the Ministry of Education were in the midst of launching an initiative that required the school boards to co-ordinate their literacy initiatives with those of other community-based organizations.

About five years prior to the study, the Ministry of Education instituted a province-wide standardized testing system, whereby all students in grades four, seven, and ten would be tested in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. The results of these tests were made public

each year. A nationally based, politically conservative think tank took these statistics and yearly produced a report card on schools in the province, which they then published in a local newspaper. Over the years of this phenomenon, a growing group (mostly teachers, some parents) objected loudly to this testing and ranking activity, and the year that I was conducting the study a bitter campaign played out in the local media over the merits/problems of the standardized tests.

Another aspect of the overhaul to education in general was the requirement the province instituted that schools must draw up school development plans and sign accountability contracts. Because these accountability contracts were tied into the standardized testing, they were a frequent source of contention between teachers and the Ministry of Education.

Additionally, the funding schemes for local school boards were drastically changed three years prior to the study, resulting in large cuts to resource teachers and classroom supplies. As part of these funding cuts, class sizes were increased to a level that many teachers considered far too large for efficacious teaching, particularly because their classes included many students with special needs and they now had fewer resource teachers to assist with the required specialized instruction. In exchange for these cuts, the provincial government gave large, targeted grants to the school boards, such as sums of money for the purchase of textbooks. However, these grants were frequently viewed by teachers, with cynicism, as ineffective, placating measures. It was in this climate of distrust between many teachers, Ms. Wynn included, and the Ministry of Education that the study took place.

School Board

The school board connected to the school in which the study took place was one of the largest in the province. It prided itself on its recognition of the need to provide specialized instruction to the numerous students in the city whose mother tongue was not English. In order to facilitate teacher professional development in the area of literacy instruction, the school board seconded classroom teachers to serve as the district literacy consultants. Three consultants were employed: one for the primary grades, one for the intermediate grades, and one for aboriginal students. Five years prior to the study, the school board launched projects to improve literacy at the primary and intermediate levels. Ms. Kramer, the intermediate level literacy consultant gave the history of this move as follows:

Well I think basically what—how the way to literacy project started from is—there'd been a swing from—traditional reading instruction you know you know had your three reading groups—you did the du—a duck is a duck. I mean whatever you know—the top reading group maybe got comprehension questions. The bottom group didn't even get questions and so on. And then there was a big—year 2000 curriculum which expected teachers to move into whole language. And a lot of these teachers weren't really that adequately prepared for the change. Some of them embraced it openly and teacher—people being trained in the teacher's college who were getting the whole language sort of route didn't know about other things and so—instruction in the primary level was getting a little kind of crazy. So there was a group of teachers in Vancouver who felt that things needed to be more systematic or more—what did they call it? Balanced, right? So that you knew which kids could read or could not read and you addressed it. And this came out of research. So that was how the early literacy project started. And then it was deemed as quite successful and people wanted to keep going. So that was the impetus for the later literacy project. And then around that time there's work by Pearson and then—about reading strategies and-and so that kind of thing came in and of course they worked with [a university professor] and that was sort of the impetus for the later literacy project.

The focus of the intermediate level project was to promote strategic reading practices, particularly in the content areas. Schools were given funds through this initiative to build their literacy programs. Part of this initiative involved informally assessing students for their use of reading strategies twice a year and testing students' writing twice a year, using common tests across the school board (the RAD and the School Wide Write). Approximately 45% of the district's seventy-five elementary schools participated in the project.

Neighbourhood

Howe River elementary is located in a neighbourhood that has been called one of North America's largest brownfields redevelopment projects. Once the home to First Nations peoples, the land was "bought" by the railroad in the mid 1800s and soon turned into an industrial enclave, the area became a blight on the city with its industrial waste, massive log booms, raw sewage, and railway train yards. Long an issue of debate, in the early 1970s the area was purchased by the city and redeveloped to accommodate mixed-density housing, small businesses and parklands. All of the focal students lived in this neighbourhood; Ms. Wynn lived on the edge of it. Thought of as a grand social experiment, the new neighbourhood also contained medium

density co-operative housing developments which then led to the need for a neighbourhood school. In these housing co-operatives, built on land leased from the city, residents pay for their housing according to their income and a board of directors work to maintain a balance between high and low income earners and types of families (e.g., young families, families with adolescents, and senior citizens without children) and also seek to include individuals with physical limitations. Many of the children who attend Howe River Elementary live in these housing co-operatives, among them, two of the focal students from the study, Ally and Deanne.

When I asked parents how they would characterize the culture of the neighbourhood surrounding Howe River Elementary, I received the following replies.

> It's very community. I mean it's maybe not as much up here but closer to [a commercial area in the neighbourhood] it's certainly very community and everybody kind of knows everybody and even the merchants in the area tend to know you and say 'Hi'. And you know it's a very much of a more—people don't move around as -it's not a transient neighbourhood as much, I don't find. (Sara's mother)

Riley's mother also felt that the neighbourhood was noteworthy because it seemed to experience less transience than other areas of the city. Nigel's mother described it as having a "family atmosphere" and talked about the huge influx of young families she has noticed over the last ten years as people discover the community and want to move back to the city from the suburbs. Ally's mother said, "This is a community with a great social conscience". Isaac's father and Deanne's mother echoed this description of many people who live in the neighbourhood but said they felt the culture of the neighbourhood was changing rapidly in the last few years due to the rising price of housing fuelled by the popularity of the area.

School

Situated next to an ocean inlet in a large urban area, Howe River Elementary school faces the water and sits between a large park on one side and two of the area's co-operative housing developments on the other. It was built in 1978 with an open area architectural design. The classrooms and offices are built around a large, central library which has books on two levels, a computer lab, a teacher resource area, and quiet reading areas with sofas, chairs and a tent, in addition to a central work area with tables and chairs. Recently, a family literacy initiative was started by the school librarian, Ms. Crawford, in which she encouraged parents with preschool aged children to come into the library and read with their children at any time of the day. Not

only was the library central in location, it was also a hub of activity for the school, with individuals from the school and community coming and going all day long. This library is spatially open to many of the classrooms in the school so that it is not only visible from several points in those classrooms but it is also possible to talk someone in the library from those classrooms, an option teachers and students alike frequently exercised, although the classroom teachers discouraged students from engaging in this activity.

The student population of the school is approximately 250 students in grades Kindergarten (half-day) to grade seven. Approximately 30% of this population speaks English as a second language. The school prides itself on parent involvement and provides opportunities for parents to help in classrooms, serve on the parent advisory council and school planning council, and run the school's safe arrival program. The parent advisory council's primary role was fund raising and many of the funds raised went toward buying books and computers for the library. The year that I observed at the school, the school planning council (select parents and teachers, the school principal, and a community member) had decided to make literacy the primary focus of that year's school development plan. As I spoke with teachers, however, it was not apparent that this proposed area of development was prompting any changes to the way literacy was taught in the intermediate grades (though the primary division made the decision to take part in a district wide early literacy initiative that had been initiated by the school board three years earlier). The intermediate division had been taking part in the district-wide intermediate level literacy project for the past three years. The intermediate level teachers met with each other once per term to discuss results of the district level assessments associated with the initiative and to plan how to improve student performance in specific areas as demonstrated by their test scores. These meetings were also attended by the district literacy consultant, Ms. Kramer.

The open area design of Howe River Elementary had been a source of frustration to both parents and teachers for many years. Several petitions had been made to the school board over the years to close in the classrooms, as both parents and teachers felt that the ambient noise level in the classrooms was unacceptable. Indeed, my observation during the time I was at the school was that the level of constant buzz one experiences in schools was at a much higher level than traditionally built schools and when other classes would walk through the hallway adjacent to the classroom, the noise was such that if the teacher was speaking to the whole class, she had to stop and wait for the travelling class to clear the hallway before she could resume. At the end of the year in which I observed, Ms. Wynn informed me that the school board had approved the latest

request for retrofitting the school with floor to ceiling walls and the work would be completed that summer.

Classroom

The year before the study was conducted, the local school board informed Howe River Elementary that they must use all existing classroom space as actual enrolling classrooms and not continue the practice of using one full classroom for a resource centre. This directive was given because the school had a long list of students who wished to attend but could not due to space limitations. In the past, this space had been used as a resource centre because of its position sandwiched between two other classrooms in an open-area design, which had been found to be impractical for teaching three separate classes.

The year I observed in the classroom, the space housed the grade 4 and 5 classes. This meant that sixty students were now using the space, which, as described earlier, was also open to the rest of the school building. Because the space had no physical divider between the two classrooms, Ms. Wynn (grade five) and Ms. Little (grade four) decided it would best to handle the teaching with a team-teaching approach, rather than constantly trying to talk over each other. Therefore, the sixty students were taught as one group for language arts (about 25% of total instructional time), social studies, science, and personal planning. Ms. Wynn and Ms. Little set the room up so that the grade fours were on one side of the large room and the grade fives on the other, with their desks and a small wash area in between. The grade four area was also the "carpet" space for the classroom where more than half of the large group teaching was done. The grade five area also contained the "office space" of two resource teachers at its far end and a bank of computers used by teachers when they weren't teaching.

Mixing a grade four class with a grade five class presented certain problems. Not all of the grade five students were happy to be taking some of their subjects with the grade four class. (These students may have been echoing their parents sentiments as many parents expressed concern that the older students would not be adequately challenged with the grade fours taking part in their classes.) The teachers worked very hard to try to get the students to view each other as colleagues. To facilitate this, they named the classroom "The Galleon", designating some areas as the galley (wash area), the bow (carpet area for teaching), the stern (computer bank) and formed mixed teams of students that they named with pirate monikers, such as the Buccaneers, the Corsairs, the Filibusters, and the Mutineers For certain periods during the day, students sat in their pirate groups. The teachers used these groupings as the basis of a system for rewarding

cooperative behaviour: whenever a student or a group was observed by the teachers to be working cooperatively with a classmate, the student or group would be given stickers which they affixed to the chart for their pirate group. At the end of each week, the pirate group with the most stickers was able to take prizes from the classroom treasure chest. The teachers also frequently talked with the group about working together and treating each other kindly and with fairness, particularly on the playground.

In order to handle a large group such as this, the teachers also required a certain level of independence on the part of each student. As part of this independence orientation, most of the time students were allowed to independently sign themselves out (on the chalkboard) to use the washroom. A weekly homework schedule was kept on this chalkboard, with homework for grades four and five listed in separate columns. This board also held the "warnings" list for students who were not listening during instructional periods or who were not focussing on their work during independent work times. While one teacher was teaching, frequently the other teacher was monitoring behaviour and silently writing inattentive students' names on this board. Students who received three checkmarks in a day were required to stay in for recess the next day. Adjacent to this board were the daily schedule board and the unfinished homework board. Each morning, during class meeting, the teachers would go over the daily schedule, direct students attention to the unfinished homework board to see if their names were there, and lead the students in filling in their personal planners using the homework board. Finally, another indication of the independence orientation in the classroom were the daily refrains I heard over the five month period I observed in this classroom: phrases to the effect that students must take responsibility for getting their work done and handed in on time and "this is for marks so do your best work" were daily enjoinders to the students to put forth their best academic effort.

In a discussion at the end of the school year, Ms. Wynn said she felt it had been a difficult year for her and Ms. Little. We were talking about the fact that she would have liked the students to be able to orally share their writing with each other but wasn't able to because of the size of the class. She says:

> It's just one small aspect of…there's many reasons why personally that open area concept wasn't very successful this year. That's one of them. The cohesiveness of the group, personalities, the continual behavioural issues that were so grinding…. And it just wore us down. It took the fun out of teaching. And when it takes the fun out of teaching then we're not at our best at teaching, either. We become much more dogmatic in our approach and not so creative.

These classroom contextual factors were an important backdrop to the activity of the literacy objects examined in this study.

Context of Literature Circles

In the grade four/five class at Howe River Elementary, literature circles took place on Monday mornings. Every Monday, at 10:40 when the students returned from recess, they would retrieve their novels and Language Arts duotang folders where they kept their literature circle materials and go to the location in the school where their groups met until 11:20. Four teachers worked with the fifty-eight children, who were divided into groups ranging from six to eight students. The three groups in which the six focal students were members met in the library with the teacher-librarian, Ms. Crawford, in charge. Ms. Wynn supervised the remainder of the grade four students and Ms. Little and a learning support teacher oversaw the grade four students. These groups were formed on the basis of ability by Ms. Wynn and Ms. Little, the classroom teachers, at the beginning of the school year and did not change in the five months that I observed the literature circles. Isaac was in a group of six described by Ms. Crawford as having the highest reading level; Deanne, Riley and Ally were together in a group of six, described as the middle group; and Sara and Nigel were in a group of eight, described as the low group.

Context of the Writers' Workshop

Writers' workshop did not commence in the blended grade four/five classroom until early December, approximately six weeks after I began my observations in the classroom. The students participated in writers' workshop twice a week for forty minutes per session. The first writers' workshop of the week took place on Mondays at 11:40, immediately following the literature circle and ran until the bell rang for lunch at 12:00. The second writers' workshop of the week took place on Tuesdays at the same time. At least one of the two workshops each week began with a ten to fifteen minute mini-lesson, after which the students worked independently on their writing. Most days this writing involved a session where students were to write uninterrupted for ten minutes on a topic of their choice and use the rest of the time as they pleased; on some occasions this writing time involved developing one of the pieces they had started for publication.

Data Collection Methods

In order to obtain an in-depth understanding of literacy instruction in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary, I used three main methods for my data collection: field notes; semi-structured interviews; and document analysis. The observations and interviews were conducted over a five month period. The first two months (nine weeks), I observed in the classroom every day, all day and conducted interviews after school. The third and fourth month (seven weeks), I was present only for classroom instruction that specifically focused on literacy (on average five half-days per week). The fifth month (four weeks) I was present for instruction focused on literature circles and writers' workshop (two-three half-days per week).

Field Notes

I took field notes every time I observed in the classroom, the majority of these notes were observations and some of them direct quotes from the teachers and focal students. Each day I transcribed my handwritten field notes into a word document, adding details I had not had time to write during the actual observation. At this time head notes were also added to the transcribed field notes. In total, these field notes and head notes are 149 single-spaced pages in length.

Interviews

All of the interviews were recorded using a digital recorder and uploaded to my computer. The majority of the interviews were fully transcribed (I had the adult interviews transcribed by a professional transcriptionist and transcribed all student interviews myself). Because I was not conducting a fine-grained discourse analysis on these transcripts, details such as length of pauses or overlapping speech have not been included. When a speaker used pronounced emphasis in their speech, it is noted in the transcript through the use of italics. All of the adult participants had the opportunity to change their transcripts and many used the opportunity to remove the "ums" and "ahs" or repeated words that are typical in spoken dialogue. The only interviews that were not transcribed were the initial walk-about interviews with the students where they were showing me around their class, school and neighbourhood. These were primarily used for getting acquainted with students and I have used some of the information from the audiotapes in this chapter to provide background information on the students. But because they did not have a direct bearing on the framed pedagogical interactions analyzed in this study, I did not transcribe them. A list of these interviews, dates and transcriptions is located in Table 3-2.

Students. The interviews with the focal students were of two main types: longer semi-structured interviews (about one hour in length) where I asked the students a variety of questions about their understanding of literacy and their literacy practices; and short semi-structured interviews (about ten minutes each) that took place directly after a classroom instructional period in which literacy instruction was the main focus. In both of these types of interviews with the students, we looked at their written and illustrated language arts and social studies work; in the short interviews, we always looked at the written work they had just completed in order to get their fresh insights on what they had just done. The students were given digital cameras to carry for three separate weeks each. In their long interviews, these photos were looked at and discussed.

When designing the interview questions, my objective for the first set of interviews with the parents and children was to gain an understanding of their literacy lives as situated socially, culturally and geographically. Many of these questions were very general in nature and do not figure into this present study other than enabling me to provide a rich profile of each of the focal students. These profiles, of course, provide important contextual information in that they provide a clearer portrait of the students in the study, which in turn, helps with the discussion of how the literacy objects may have been acting as mediators in each of their literacy lives. In the subsequent interviews (two long and four to five short) with each student, I guided the discussion to their uses of the various framed literacy pedagogical interactions I observed to be in use in the classroom.

The kinds of questions I asked the focal students about these framed pedagogical interactions were intended to elicit: their ideas about how they understood these interactions (e.g., What are literature circles? Can you tell me about literature circles this week?); what they understood about the pedagogical purpose of these interactions (e.g., Why do you think your teacher wants you to use literature circles?); and how enjoyable these interactions were to the students (e.g., What is the best part of writers' workshop? The worst? If you were a teacher using this in your classroom, how would you use it?).

Teachers. The interviews with the teachers were mainly longer semi-structured interviews. These interviews were spaced over the course of the five-month observational period and one final interview with Ms. Wynn was conducted at the end of the school year, four months after the observational period ended. Informal, impromptu interviews also took place throughout the week when Ms. Wynn was not teaching. My recollections of conversations with the teachers

and some of these informal interviews were used as data sources and are captured in my field notes.

My questions in the first interview were directed toward understanding Ms. Wynn's general views about literacy and classroom literacy instruction, as well as her background as a student and a teacher. The second interview focused on gaining more information about the range of framed pedagogical interactions I had seen her utilize in the classroom for literacy instruction. The third and fourth interviews were more specifically aimed at gaining information about literature circles and writers' workshop. In these last two interviews, I had Ms. Wynn look at the specific texts associated with the two framed pedagogical interactions (Calkins, 1994; Daniels, 2002) in the literacy pedagogy community in order to have her discuss specific aspects of the pedagogical interactions as they are framed in the literacy pedagogy community.

I formally interviewed Ms. Crawford once using a semi-structured interview. Informal, impromptu interviews also took place before and after the literature circles and during the rest of the week. My recollections of these informal interviews are contained in my field notes.

Parents. I interviewed a parent for each of the focal students twice, using semi-structured interviews. My initial questions related to gaining an understanding of the children in their family contexts, parental conceptualizations of literacy and their understanding of their children's participation in literacy practices. In the final interviews, I asked the parents about the various framed literacy pedagogical interactions I had observed in the classroom. Most of this interview data is not used for the analysis in the present study, except for providing background or contextual information about the students because most of the parents had little knowledge of their children's participation in the two selected pedagogical interactions. The exception to this phenomenon is Nigel's mother, whose insight into literature circles and writers' workshop helped inform the study.

Administrators. At the school board, I interviewed the district literacy co-ordinator, Ms. Kramer, as well as a district assistant superintendent. The assistant superintendent's interview data is not used in the actual findings of the study because, again, she did not have any information on the selected pedagogical interactions. However, some of the general background knowledge for the school district that she provided is used in the context section of this chapter. My interviews with the school principal yielded the same results and thus only general background information on the school and neighbourhood are taken from her interviews to inform the context section of this chapter.

Documents for Analysis

In order to decide which documents to analyze for the study, I asked the teachers which government documents they used to shape their teaching in general and which texts they used to shape their pedagogy with regard to literature circles and writers' workshop. As I looked at the range of these texts, they fell into distinct categories: the literacy pedagogy community, publishers of teacher how-to texts, and documents from the province's Ministry of Education. Each of these came to represent a space associated with the classroom literacy instruction in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary in the data analysis. The decisions on which teacher how-to texts and which texts from the literacy pedagogy community to use for this analysis are briefly discussed here but I elaborate upon them more fully in Chapter Four.

Documents from the Ministry of Education. To represent the perspective of Ministry of Education, I drew on a particular document the provincial government of British Columbia (BC) has published, the Integrated Resource Package (IRP) (BC Ministry of Education, 2006). While the teachers did not mention the IRP specifically as a source of their understanding for implementing literature circles and writers' workshop, it is, nonetheless, the primary document the teachers in this study utilize to plan their curriculum in addition to the BC Performance Standards (BC Ministry of Education, 2002a) (although, no mention of literature circles is made in the Performance Standards). Ms. Wynn did refer to these two documents, however, when evaluating her students' participation in literature circles and writers' workshop. I, therefore, use it as the source representative of the Ministry of Education's perspective on literature circles and writers' workshop in the intermediate level classroom.

Texts from the literacy pedagogy community and publishers. I use the work of Harvey Daniels to represent the voice of the literacy pedagogy community. While others have described programs for implementing literature circles in classrooms (e.g., Brownlie, 2005; Gambrell & Almasi, 1996; McMahon & Raphael, 1995; Peterson & Eeds, 1990), I have chosen to use Daniels' (1994; 2002) work because of its influence on the model and teacher how-to text adopted by Ms. Wynn and Ms. Crawford; that is, a model that uses role sheets, an innovation which Daniels (1994) attributes to himself. Ms. Wynn used a teacher how-to text, *Literature circles: The way to go and how to get there (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003)* to exclusively guide her pedagogy on literature circles. This text represents the publisher's voice in this study.

I use the work of Lucy Calkins (1986; Calkins, 1994) to represent the literacy pedagogy community's understanding of writers' workshop. While Ms. Wynn had read the work of Donald Graves, she reported that Lucy Calkins' work most directly influenced her writers'

workshop pedagogy. The teacher how-to text, *Notebook know-how: Strategies for the writer's notebook* (Buckner, 2005), is used to represent the publisher's voice as this is the text on which Ms. Wynn based the majority of her mini-lessons for the writers' workshop.

Student writing samples. For one aspect of the analysis of writers' workshop, I used a story written by focal student, Nigel. While samples of all the focal students writing were taken, these do not form a significant source of data as their inclusion would have made the scope of the study too large. Nigel's story was included in the analysis, however, because it was an excellent illustration of the sorts of agentive actions he was displaying in the writers' workshop

Student report cards. I made copies of the students' report cards generated in the observational period of the study. The information in these reports is not used in the analysis but I have used some of the information for providing background information on the students in this chapter.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was framed within a sociocultural perspective. Specifically, I took the tentatively posed framework proposed by Brandt and Clinton (2002), situated and elaborated on it for use in analyzing classroom literacy practices. The elaboration of the framework and my analysis took place in three phases. First, I connected the literacy practices in a local classroom to the global spaces which play a role in shaping classroom pedagogy, following on Brandt and Clinton's contention that local literacy practices are not isolated but always shaped, to some extent, in distant spaces. Once I had identified these networks, I identified the literacy objects that connected the local framed pedagogical interactions to the more global educational structure. Finally, using the unit of analysis, literacy-objects-in-action, I looked at the way local actors were engaging with the literacy objects and, in turn, how those literacy objects played an agentive role in students' literacy lives.

Phase One of the Analysis

The first phase of data analysis pertains to the main argument in the Brandt and Clinton (2002) proposal: local adoption of literacy practices is often the result of or a response to literate schemes designed in more global contexts. This phase of the analysis addressed the first research sub-question: How do literacy objects that travel through spaces removed in time and location from a local classroom play a role in shaping literacy instruction as it is enacted in a grade five classroom? Thus, once the framed pedagogical interactions (literature circles and

writers' workshop) were chosen, it became necessary to identify the spaces in which these framed pedagogical interactions were shaped that were associated with the classroom. By talking with the teachers (as discussed above and elaborated upon in Chapter Four), I determined that there were several global spaces that influenced the shaping of literature circles and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. While undoubtedly there may be unlimited sources of influence, the spaces I used to draw up the local-global network were spaces to which I could make direct connections to the classroom. These spaces were: the literacy pedagogy community, publishers of teacher how-to texts, teacher education programs, the provincial Ministry of Education, the school district in which the school was situated, the classroom (subdivided into teachers and students) and the home. In order to accomplish this analysis, I first addressed the spaces in which each of the pedagogical interactions was shaped, working backwards from the classroom, through a number of spaces in the educational structure following the threads that connected the classroom to the literacy pedagogy community. An overview of this network, which I collectively term, the educational structure, is found in Figure 3-1. The establishment of this network maps out the local and global contexts in which the framed literacy pedagogical interactions were shaped and allows for a determination of the path by which the literacy objects travel. Findings analyzed with this level of the analysis were a necessary precursor to the second phase of analysis and along with the findings from the second level of analysis are one of the subjects of Chapter Four.

Phase Two of the Analysis

In this phase of the analysis, I sought to build a picture of both of the framed pedagogical interactions across the connected spaces, in order to determine the key literacy objects that travelled through the network. The selected pedagogical interactions were coded for salient characteristics in the identified spaces. Most of these characteristics were drawn from the conceptualization of the framed pedagogical interaction in the literacy pedagogy community space. I made this decision based on the observation that when this segment of the literacy pedagogy community writes about literacy pedagogy its main purpose is to influence classroom literacy pedagogy. Additionally, it is from this space that the literacy objects first travel on their way to the classroom, making it fitting that the characteristics of literature circles and writers' workshop that they set out should frame the present discussion. Choosing the characteristics as set out by this community provided thematic codes in language typically used in materials across most of the spaces associated with the literature circles and writers' workshop in classrooms

across North America and in the focal classroom of this study. Some of the characteristics are common to both literature circles and writers' workshop and some are not (see Table 3-3).

The characteristics definition, purpose, and the role of the teacher were clear categories that cut across both of the framed pedagogical interactions. The other characteristics were more specific to the particular framed pedagogical interaction. These were: discussion and monitoring for literature circles; and underlying principles, classroom activities, launching and understanding of the writing process for writers' workshop. While other characteristics were coded (e.g., book selection and grouping in literature circles, storing the writing for writers' workshop), these are not included here because they do not directly relate to the literacy objects associated with the framed pedagogical interactions. Additionally, characteristics mentioned as important in the literacy pedagogy community that did not appear in the classroom space were not included in the analysis (e.g., sharing in the writers' workshop). Again, multiple characteristics could have been selected as codes but I chose only the characteristics that appeared across the spaces connected to the classroom in the study.

These characteristics provided the detailed organizational structure in which I was able to identify the literacy objects. Matrices containing this analysis are found in Table 4-1 (literature circles) and Table 4-3 (writers' workshop). In order to engage in this analysis, it became necessary to fully understand and define what a literacy object actually is. Brandt and Clinton provide examples of literacy objects using the banking illustration but do not overtly define them. To define a *literacy object*, the term *object* first needs to be defined. At its most basic level an object is a concrete "thing" that we can see and touch; however, this did not help me determine the literacy objects at work in the study. I returned to Bruno Latour for assistance with this. In this sociological theory, Latour (1994; 1996) posits that objects play two key social roles in human lives: they provide a fixed context around which a particular social interaction ensues; and they mediate and aggregate social events into a larger social structure (Latour, 1996). In other words, objects connect framed social interactions with a larger social structure and in this activity take on a mediational role. It is the fact that an object is endowed with responsibility by a human agent that gives it an agentive role (see Chapter Two, Figure 2-1, for the depiction of my understanding of this relationship)

In this study, I use Halliday's (1996, 2007) definition of literacy: this definition refers "specifically to writing as distinct from speech: [that is I define literacy as that which refers] to

reading and writing practices, and to the forms of language, and ways of meaning, that are typically associated with them" (p. 99).[2]

Putting these definitions together, literacy objects are defined here as: material objects involving written forms of language that connect a framed pedagogical interaction involving literacy with a larger social structure, the educational system. Literacy objects are viewed here as playing a mediational role between a framed local pedagogical interaction involving literacy and the larger educational structure in which the interaction takes place. Figure 3-2 depicts this relationship.

Using the matrices of characteristics of the literature circle and writers' workshop, it became apparent that two literacy objects were at work across the spaces of the literature circle as a framed pedagogical interaction and three literacy objects were at work for the writers' workshop. Findings analyzed with this phase of the analysis are the subject of Chapter Four.

Phase Three of the Analysis

For the third phase of the analysis, I analyzed the use of literacy objects in a grade five classroom by applying two concepts in the model conceptualized by Brandt and Clinton (2002): the unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action*; and a move frequently made by literacy objects, *folding in*. This phase of the analysis addresses research sub-questions two and three: How are the human agents in this study, i.e., the focal students and teachers, using the literacy objects associated with literature circles and writers' workshop in their classroom? How are the literacy objects associated with literature circles and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom using the focal students?

Literacy-objects-in-action as a unit of analysis asks: How are readers and writers mediating their social world through their literate practice? How is literacy acting in this situation as a social agent, an independent mediator? Literacy-objects-in-action as a unit of analysis allowed me to look at how the literacy objects were used by local agents while, simultaneously, those literacy objects acted as mediators in the literacy lives of those human actors. Thus, using this

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[2] I take this stance recognizing the importance of multimodal forms of communication but like Halliday and others, I view the move of the last fifteen to twenty years to open up widen the definition of literacy as having come to the point where almost anything counts as literacy, thereby making it very difficult to know what we are referring to when we speak of literacy (Marsh, 2003).

unit of analysis for this third layer of the analysis, I examined the agentive action of the human actors in this study, teachers and students, as well as the agentive role of the literacy objects identified in the second layer of analysis. Following this, I looked at how those literacy objects were, as semi-independent mediators, acting upon the human agents. This analysis is the subject of Chapters Five and Six.

In Chapters Five and Six, I also looked at one move that literacy objects as agentive mediators may make: folding in. Folding in is a concept taken from Latour (1996) that recognizes the way that objects extend the activity of human beings: in other words, social interactions are extended in time and space through the action of non-human agents. Applying the concept to literacy, words written on a page not only encode the thoughts of the writer, they also allow those thoughts to be processed by other individuals in another time and place without requiring the writer to continue to be present or involved. This means that the writer's thoughts are extended temporally and spatially by the text in which s/he has encoded them and by extension when humans delegate activity to an object, humans change the social world of those who interact with that object. I chose the concept of folding in from those suggested by Brandt and Clinton (sponsors of literacy, localizing moves, globalizing connects, folding in) because of its ability to accurately highlight the agentive activity, the mediational role, of the literacy objects in the framed literacy pedagogical interactions I was analyzing.

<center>Issues of Trustworthiness</center>

To assess the trustworthiness of the study, I use Miles and Huberman's (1994) standards of trustworthiness in qualitative research: Confirmability, Dependability, Credibility, and Transferability.

Confirmability

In the process of gathering data, I attempted to continually organize and keep an account of what was collected. The list of audio recorded interviews and transcripts found in Appendix 2 is an example of this. Because I was working with six focal students, at times it became difficult to remember who I had spoken to about particular subjects. I, therefore, kept charts and checklists for tracking these interviews in order to avoid missing out on the information one or another student might have. I used the qualitative research software, Atlas-ti, to help organize and code the data. In this chapter and in the findings chapters that follow, I provide a detailed summation of the procedures used for data collection and data analysis that allows the reader to

follow the sequence of the processes I used and the decisions I made. I provide numerous examples from the transcripts, documents and my field notes that allow the reader to link my conclusions with the actual data.

Dependability

As a former elementary school teacher and a researcher with a personal opinion on how classroom literacy instruction should be shaped for the needs of 21st century learners, I brought certain assumptions to my data collection and analysis. One of my assumptions was that an incorporation of understandings from the New Literacy Studies, such as discourse studies, critical literacy, and the incorporation of web 2.0 information technology constitute best practice. The other assumption I carried into the study was that instruction in the mechanical skills of reading and writing are best embedded in instruction and not approached in an isolated manner. Finally, I brought to the study the assumption that providing students with choice is an important strategy in developing both learning and independence.

My role in this study was as an observer, although I acknowledge the difficulty associated with not becoming a participant observer in a classroom study. Children and youth continually interact with researchers in whatever setting in which research is conducted. At times, as I was wandering about the classroom, observing students at work, my opinion on a topic the students were discussing or researching, or my help with difficulty a student was experiencing, were solicited. Generally, I obliged in these situations. At times I would observe the students participating in behaviour both they and I knew to be outside the classroom code of conduct. Early on, I made the decision not to interfere with what the students were doing (unless the activity involved physical or overt emotional danger) in order to have them view me as a neutral observer to the greatest extent that was possible. Of course, as an adult observing youth, my presence would always have a damping effect on some aspects of what they might naturally do were an adult not present, but I sought to minimize this by situating myself as someone who would not judge their actions or report their behaviour to their teacher. It did not take very long before all of the students (as far as I could tell) mostly ignored my presence as an observer, unless I directly spoke to one of them. It was because of this acceptance of my presence in the classroom as a "fly on the wall" that I feel I was able to witness some of the kinds of activities that teachers often do not get to see. And because of position of neutrality, I feel students were willing to give me what seemed to be honest opinions regarding the literacy interactions under study.

As explained earlier, I spent five months in the classroom and in the focal students' homes collecting data. This length of time allowed for a comprehensive collection of data. The range of participants was wide, thus allowing for multiple perspectives. Member checking was employed. When the adult interviews (parents, teachers, administrators) were transcribed I sent electronic copies to the participant and asked her/him to read, make any changes they wished to make and return the copy to me. These member-checked transcripts were the documents that I later analyzed. I did not conduct member checks with the students as the majority of parents were concerned that this was too much for their children with their homework loads. For the final two interviews with the primary teacher, preliminary data analysis had been done and the purpose of the interviews was to check with her about my emerging understandings.

In this study, my theoretical framework has been laid out in the literature review. I worked to keep the research questions clear and to return continually to those questions in my literature review, data analysis and conclusions. My initial interview protocols were reviewed by my advisor and adjusted according to her recommendations. Throughout the analysis, I spoke with colleagues about my emerging understandings. Two public presentations were also made in the early data analysis phase. In each of these private and public discussions, respondents both affirmed some of my initial thinking and challenged other aspects. These kinds of inputs have influenced the direction of my data analysis and conclusions. Drafts of my chapters were read by colleagues and by my doctoral advisory committee and their suggestions incorporated into the final product.

Credibility

I have provided a substantial description of the participants and the context in which the classroom is embedded in this study in order to provide a "thick" description of the setting in which the study was conducted. The kind of information included in these sections is intended to provide the reader with background information through which to interpret the findings and conclusions of the study. I have employed triangulation of the data sources (interview, field notes, document analysis) in order that the information from one data source may corroborate the information coming from the other sources. At times in my analysis (e.g., Nigel's actions or the teachers' actions), I was unsure how to interpret the findings. At these times I have attempted to present rival explanations.

Transferability

One of the important decisions I with which I grappled was deciding which of the numerous framed literacy pedagogical interactions I would analyze for this study. Two factors that helped me with this decision related to transferability. Literature circles and writers' workshop were selected because of their durable and ubiquitous presence in classrooms across North America over a number of years. Similarly, I sought to study the activity of literacy objects in a classroom setting that could be viewed as similar to numerous classrooms across North America: hence the selection of a classroom with students from a range of socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds and the educational setting where accountability measures were in force. I was also fortunate to have some measure of balance in the experiences of the focal student with literacy: three of them professed to struggling with aspects of literacy and three were quite confident in their experiences with literacy. Fortunately, all of them were well aware of their personal literacy practices and confident with describing them to me.

Limitations of the Study

The sampling technique I used relied upon the permission of parents in order for students to participate. The students whose parents gave them permission to participate as focal students were youth whose background was in the main white, Anglo-Saxon, middle-class and English as a mother tongue. Because of this, the informants of the study, despite my intentions, tended to be relatively monocultural and monolinguistic; although two of the families did have linguistic backgrounds where English was not their only language.

I was very conscious in the interviews with the students of the need to try to remain neutral in my questioning. I did not want to my views on the particular pedagogical interactions to influence their thoughts or feelings about them. At times I felt this prevented me from asking the kinds of pointed questions I would have liked to have asked but felt it was more important that the students not be led by my line of questioning to think negatively of some of the pedagogical interactions I was interested in investigating. Similarly, with the interviews with the teachers, I felt that since I had gone into the study telling the teachers this was not an evaluation of their teaching, that I could not ask questions that might be seen as critical of their teaching decisions. At times I felt this prevented me from perhaps obtaining as much information as I would have liked.

Chapter Summary

In summary, this chapter has given a detailed description of the study's research methodology. I have described the case study approach in which I used observation, interview, and document analysis to explore the proposed Brandt and Clinton model of literacy-in-action. I have described the way I worked with the Brandt and Clinton model in order to build a more detailed framework for the model, which now allows me to use the data collected for the study to provide a concrete basis for discussing its merits and limitations. My intent in this study is move the discussion of this new approach in sociocultural literacy studies beyond the kind of theoretical critique NLS scholars, such as Street (2003a; Street, 2003b; Street & Lefstein, 2007) provide.

Table 3-1: Framed Pedagogical Interactions Directly Associated with Literacy Instruction Observed in the Grade Five Classroom of Howe River Elementary

Pedagogical interaction	Description
Literature Circles	Small, student-led reading groups where students read an agreed upon selection of text, determined the pacing of the reading, and met once a week to discuss what they had read. The literature circle groups meet once a week for forty minutes. Role sheets, which they had completed in advance, were used to facilitate the discussion. The written role work was handed into the teacher at the end of each week in order to ensure it was being completed and at the end of each reporting period for grading.
Sustained Silent Reading and Reading Passport	Students read novels of their own choosing for 20 minutes daily and then write reviews of the novels in their reading passports. They are given 20 minutes daily for the review writing SSR or they may continue with SSR for rest of the 40 minute period. Students were encouraged to choose texts from a variety of genres and each review had to cover a new genre. When students finished a review they were to orally share it with the teacher and read a page aloud from the book to the teacher.
Red Cedar Club	Books chosen by British Columbia Red Cedar Book Award nominating group were purchased each year for the school library. Students in grades four to seven read the books, wrote book reports on the books and received a star on a public tracking chart for each book they had read. Students choose to read just the fiction or the non-fiction titles or they both. Pizza party held at the end of each school year for students who read five or more books in one category. Small group chosen by lottery from this larger group to attend the Red Cedar Award ceremony wherever it is being held in British Columbia accompanied by the school librarian.
Friday Journal	Each week students wrote letter home to their parents in journal telling them what they did at school that week. Writing period is approximately 40 minutes and starts with group brainstorming about the week's events, which the teacher records on an overhead transparency. Students were encouraged to use a conversational tone in these journals. Parents were invited to respond in writing to their children's letters. A letter explaining the purpose of the journals (home-school communication) was glued into the front of each student's Friday journal. The journal was graded for student completion but not for parent participation.

Pedagogical interactions	Description
Writers' Workshop	Introduced in the fourth month of school, writers' workshop was a forty minute long writing period students engaged in twice a week. The first ten to twenty minutes of the period was typically used for a mini-lesson in which the teachers provided students with ideas for improving their writing or gave guidelines for peer editing and publishing. When sent to their desks students were asked to complete a SWAT for ten minutes – that is, ten minutes of Sustained Writing All the Time. After several SWATs were written they were asked to take one piece and develop it into a published piece.
Social Studies Project	The students were assigned a social studies research project to be completed in teacher assigned groups of two or three students, over the course of five weeks, culminating in a poster and oral presentation to the entire class. The project had students become "Tourism Experts" and they were to research a given province or city in Canada and prepare a presentation to be given to a fictitious group of teachers considering sites for their annual convention. The students were given a package containing a description of the project a rubric for the final project evaluation, and reproduced pages from a text entitled, Group Project Student Role Sheets: Everything You Need for Successful Group Research Projects (Moen, 1999). This package was intended to lead students through the various stages of conducting research in a group. Ms. Wynn covered the individual pages in the book in whole class lessons over the course of three weeks.
Planners	Each day, during class meeting (half an hour), students were instructed to write down the day's homework and important dates for events, as well as project assignment due dates and test dates. Students were told that if they had already completed all of the homework in class they were to write, "Read for fifteen minutes" rather than leaving the space empty. Parents were required to sign these planners daily to show that they had checked their child's homework. Each week planners were handed in. Students received a grade for how well they used the planner, i.e., homework and dates entered, parent's signature completed daily.

Pedagogical interactions	Description
RAD	The RAD (Reading Assessment District 36) is administered bi-annually to all students in the school district in which Howe River Elementary is located. It is given in the month of October to assess students' use of reading comprehension strategies. The RAD also has the students read the passage found in the test aloud to the teacher to test their oral reading fluency. An assessment rubric is filled out to record students' performance in relation to the benchmark indicators set for their grade. The purpose of the assessment is formative in that it is intended to help teachers individualize reading instruction and summative in that individual student's performance is noted on their report card and group performance is aggregated and sent to the school district office to be included in the district's yearly performance statistics.
School Wide Write (Also called the Three-step Write)	Twice a year students in grades 4 -8 across the district are assigned a common writing topic. On the first day, they brainstorm as a group with their teacher for ideas related to the given topic and then work individually on a "Thinking Page" where they set a goal for their writing and construct web organizers to set out the position they will take and the details they will use. On the second day they are to add more details to this web. On the third day, they write the full text of the assessment. Students are graded on this assessment using the writing assessment rubric contained in the British Columbia Ministry of Education Performance Standards for Writing (BC Ministry of Education, 2002, p.181). The purpose of the assessment is also dual: it is formative in that it is intended to help teachers individualize writing instruction and summative in that student's performance is noted on their report card and group performance is aggregated and sent to the school district office to be included in the district's yearly performance statistics.

Table 3-2: Interview Recordings and Transcriptions

Name	Date	Recorded	Transcribed	Member checked
Ms. Wynn	October 15, 2007	yes	Yes	yes
Ally Random – walk about	October 22, 2007	yes	no	
Riley Vashon – walk about	October 23, 2007	yes	no	
Sara North – walk about	October 25, 2007	yes	no	
Deanne Bubble – walk about	October 29, 2007	lost	no	
Ian – walk about	November 1, 2007	yes	no	
Nigel Green – walk about	not conducted	n/a	n/a	
Ally Random's short interviews	October - December, 2007	most	Yes	
Riley Vashon's short interviews	October - December, 2007	yes	Yes	
Isaac Harris' short interviews	October 25, 2007	yes	Yes	
Dessa's short interviews	October - December, 2007	yes	Yes	
Sara North's short interviews	October - December, 2007	yes	Yes	
Niglel Green's short interviews	October - December, 2007	yes	Yes	
Ms. North	October 31, 2007	yes	Yes (notes also)	yes
Ms. Random	November 7, 2007	yes	Yes	yes

Name	Date	Recorded	Transcribed	Member checked
School Principal	November 14, 2007	yes	Yes	yes
Ms. Vashon	November 14, 2007	Yes	Yes	yes
Mr. Harris	November 15	yes	Yes	yes
Ms. Green	November 21	yes	Yes	yes
Ms. Bubble	November 22	yes	Yes	yes
Ally Random – 1st formal + pics	November 5, 2007	yes		
Riley Vashon – 1st formal + pics	November 14, 2007	yes		
Isaac Harris – 1st formal + pics	November 15	yes		
Deanne Bubble – 1st formal + pics	November 22	yes		
Nigel Green – 1st formal + pics	November 20	yes		
Ally Random – 2nd formal + pics	December 6	yes	Yes	
Sara North – 1st formal + pics	December 11	yes	Yes	
Isaac Harris – 2nd formal + pics	December 12	no	n/a (tape recorder malfunction)	
Riley Vashon – 2nd formal + pics	December 13	yes	Yes	
Sara North – 2nd formal + pics	January 8, 2008	yes	Yes	
Sara North – 3rd formal + pics	January 21	yes	Yes	
Ally Random – 3rd formal + pics	January 24	yes	Yes	

Name	Date	Recorded	Transcribed	Member checked
Deanne Bubble – 3rd formal + pics	February 4	yes	Yes	
Nigel Green – 3rd formal + pics	February 5	yes	Yes	
Riley Vashon – 3rd formal + pics	February 12	yes	Yes	
Isaac Harris– 3rd formal + pics	February 14	yes	Yes	
Ms. North – final	January 21	yes	Yes (plus e-mail)	yes
Ms. Random – final	January 24	yes	Yes	yes
Ms. Wynn – final (two parts)	January 17	yes	Yes	yes
Ms. Wynn – extra Q's	January 28	no	n/a (see field notes)	yes
Ms. Vashon – final	February 12	yes	Yes	yes
Mr. Harris - final	February 14	yes	Yes	
Ms. Bubble – final	February 4	yes	Yes	yes
Ms. Green - final	February 5	yes	Yes	
Ms. Kramer	February 21	yes	Yes	
District superintendent	February 21	yes	Yes (plus notes)	yes
Ms. Crawford	February 13	yes	Yes	yes
Ms. Little	March 31			

Figure 3-1: Interconnected Spaces of the Framed Literacy Pedagogical Interactions
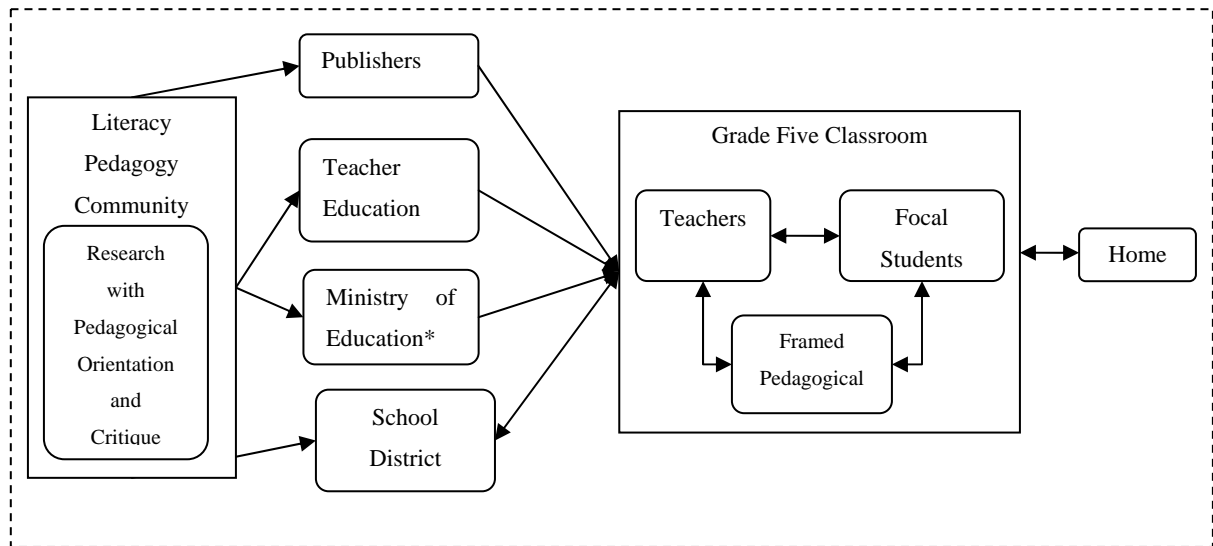
* The Ministry of Education is a provincial level government department that corresponds to the state government in the United States.

Table 3-3: Data coding

Pedagogical Interaction	Characteristics	
	Pedagogical Interaction Specific	Common to both Pedagogical Interactions
Literature Circle	Discussion	Definition Purpose Role of the teacher
	Monitoring	
Writers' Workshop	Underlying principles	
	Classroom routines	
	Launching	
	Writing process	

Figure 3-2:   Literacy Objects as Social Connectors

global

Educational System

literacy

objects

Framed
Pedagogial
Interaction

local
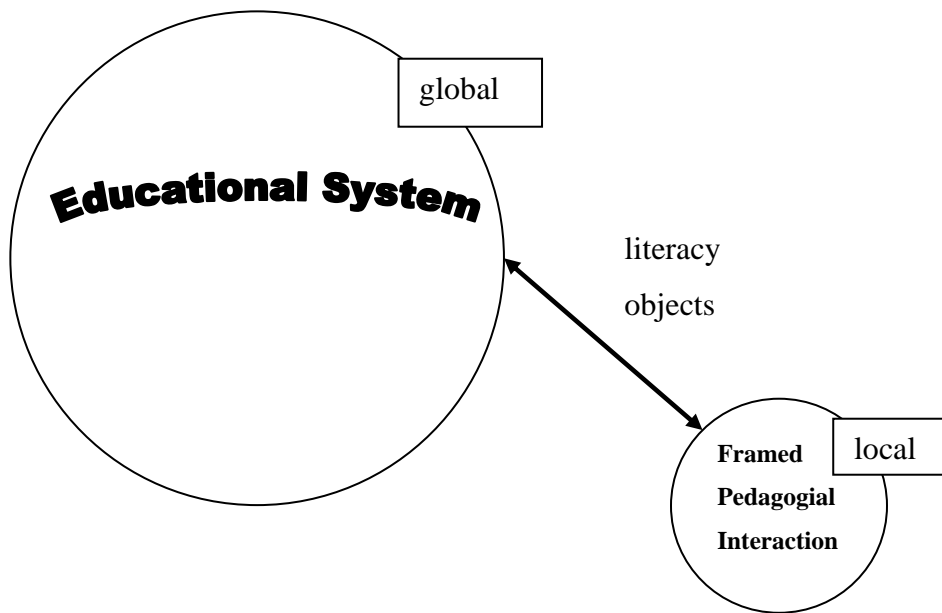
CHAPTER FOUR: THEORIZING LITERACY OBJECTS

Connectors of Literacy Instruction across Time and Location

This study asks how a new model in sociocultural literacy research, literacy-in-action (Brandt & Clinton, 2002) can provide us with a new lens for understanding the ways that literacy is taught in the classroom. Literacy-in-action requires that we look not only at what people are doing with literacy but also what literacy is doing with people. Inherent to this model is the activity of literacy objects – that is, the physical objects related to the framed pedagogical literacy interaction that connect the local space of the classroom to the more global contexts in which the classroom is embedded. The three findings chapters, of which this is the first, are organized around Brandt and Clinton's claims regarding literacy objects: they have "a capacity to travel, a capacity to stay intact, and a capacity to be visible and animate outside the interactions of immediate literacy events" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 344). The first two of these claims are particularly relevant to this chapter. In this chapter, I address the study's first research sub-question: How do literacy objects that travel through spaces removed in time and location from a local classroom play a role in shaping literacy instruction as it is enacted in the literature circle and writers' workshop of that grade five classroom?

My purpose in this chapter is to provide a context for understanding the way that certain literacy objects exert their influence in the literacy instruction taking place in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. By first tracing the connections between the linked spaces in which two particular framed pedagogical interactions, literature circles and writers' workshop, are both theorized and actualized, my intention is to identify a network of connected spaces that will map out a plausible pathway by which the literacy objects travel. As I trace these connections, I present the conceptualization of these framed pedagogical interactions in each of the spaces.

The identification of this network or conceptual map, based on the Brandt and Clinton model, provides one means by which it may be demonstrated that distant forces shape local literacy practices. Through this tracing it becomes apparent that certain literacy objects connected to the literature circles and writers' workshop link the classroom through time and space to the larger educational structure in which they are situated. But of greater importance, the analysis shows that the literacy objects travel largely intact, according to Brandt and Clinton's criteria for literacy objects, but notably, a process of institutionalization takes place in which each literacy object becomes a hybridized object. While each literacy object is highly

similar in physical form to that conceived in distant spaces, through the way it is used, it hybridizes to become an object reduced in nature but imbued with greater power than originally envisioned in the research space.

In order to accomplish this analysis, I first address the spaces in which each of the pedagogical interactions are shaped, working backwards from the classroom, through a number of spaces in the educational structure following the threads that connect the classroom to the literacy pedagogy community. The connections I make are based primarily on information provided to me by Ms. Wynn, the grade five classroom teacher and primary participating teacher, and to a lesser extent, information provided by Ms. Crawford, the school's teacher-librarian, and Ms. Little, Ms. Wynn's teaching partner. For each of the pedagogical interactions, after mapping the pathway I make the case that there are particular literacy objects that travel across the connected spaces, hybridizing as they travel, to ultimately take their place as active agents in the literacy instruction enacted in the grade five classroom of Howe River Elementary. I start the analysis first with the literature circle and then move to look at writers' workshop.

Mapping the Literature Circle across Connected Spaces

In this section, I present the nested spaces within the larger educational structure connected to the grade five class at Howe River Elementary in detail to construct a pathway for the literacy object most prominently connected to the literature circle in this study. My aim is to establish both the interconnectedness of the spaces through which the literacy object moves as it travels from the conceptual spaces of the global literacy pedagogy community to its enactment in the local classroom and the traces that flow from one space to the next. In order to do this, I start by describing the presence of literature circles in the local classroom space and follow the traces of this framed pedagogical interaction into global contexts.

Classroom

When I asked the focal students what a literature circle is, five of the six focal students defined it as consisting of two components: reading the novel and completing the role work. Riley's description, is typical of the descriptions of the five students: "What literature circles are is you read a book and then you have three jobs…or more, don't know. You've got Read-Aloud Master, Discussion Leader, Problem Solver, Connection Maker, Sequencer and Illustrator." One student, Isaac, defined the literature circle somewhat more broadly. He says:

So there's a couple tasks. You read the book, which usually most of the people seem not to like, and … you kind of talk about the book. You read a couple chapters then you do a role on it. And then kind of during the sess- period you talk about it with the rest of your group, even though it's not that exciting.

When I asked the focal students why they thought their teachers wanted them to participate in literature circles, they gave me a variety of responses. Deanne understood its purpose to be the improvement of comprehension skills: "It just helps you get better at reading 'cause you have to take in stuff and like for sequencer you have to write what happens in the couple chapters that you read." Sara and Ally understood its purpose to be the improvement of their writing skills. Sara elaborates here:

Lit circles - even the Kindergartners do it - it's like - it's spelling and it's COPs [a personal proofreading system employed in the classroom] and it's reading. It's very important of our school. So, I think that's why they mostly do it. And it's to get the kids thinking about what they're writing, not just putting their pen on the paper and writing. Thinking.

For Sara literature circles incorporates reading and writing. It is interesting to note the way that she views literature circles as an important component of literacy instruction at her school, an echo of the sense I have that throughout the school district, literature circles are considered the gold-standard of reading instruction.

And finally, Nigel understands the literature circle to be a training device for future literary pursuits: "I think it's like - some people take book club - like my mum. And I think it's just getting you ready for book club." Nigel's understanding echoes the logic his mother used to encourage him to complete his work for literature circle. She told him literature circles were very much like the book club she is a member of and later told me that she thought the roles the students were asked to play each week were "interesting little roles".

Ms. Wynn, who had each been teaching six years at the time of the study, was not able to say where she had come across the idea to use literature circles in her classroom. She told me that she had conducted them for the first time the previous year and that the text, *Literature circles: The way to go and how to get there* (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003), was her guidebook for conducting them. Ms. Wynn saw herself as a resource to other teachers in the school who were just beginning to implement literature circles in their classrooms. She spoke of several reasons she conducts literature circles. "Probably my main purpose for literature circles is to [get students to] take a critical eye to a novel." Following this statement, Ms. Wynn spoke at length

about her observation that some students at this age have never read a whole novel and the literature circle is one device she uses for encouraging these students to read a novel from cover to cover. Later, Ms. Wynn indicated that she felt the literature circles gave the students opportunities to discuss what they liked and didn't like about a novel in the context of a small group they could independently run with the help of the role sheets they were required to complete each week.

For Ms. Crawford, the main purpose of literature circles was to introduce students to novels they might not have otherwise read on their own. Ms. Crawford, who had been teaching many more years, was able to pinpoint the time she had started using literature circles as beginning approximately ten years earlier, after she had learned about them in a course she took for the masters in education degree she was completing in order to become a teacher-librarian. Ms. Crawford identified the work of Harvey Daniels in his text, *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Student Centered Classrooms* (1994), as the instructional text used in her course. Neither of these two teachers referenced the Ministry of Education's Integrated Resource Package (IRP) when discussing their use of literature circles in the classroom.

School District

When I asked the literacy consultant, Ms. Kramer, about literature circles, she was able to speak knowledgeably about them. Her understanding of them came from wide reading of literacy pedagogy literature produced by literacy pedagogy researchers at the university level and personal experience of using them when she was still teaching in the classroom. During our conversation about how she had previously used literature circles in her classroom, Ms. Kramer introduced the notion that she was aware that role sheets are contested in the literacy pedagogy community, along with her experience of difficulties related to expecting group consensus with book choice. She said that in her previous work as a classroom teacher she had moved to using literature discussion groups[3] instead of literature circles to avoid these issues. She also noted that there were still many teachers in the district using the role sheets. In her role as literacy coordinator for the school district, Ms. Kramer conducts professional development workshops for teachers on the use of literature circles which address the issues of role sheets and book choice. However, her job description is not such that she takes a prescriptive role in determining

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[3] She explained that in these discussion groups, students decide individually what they will read and then give an oral book review in the discussion group meetings.

how particular framed pedagogical interactions for literacy instruction are used in the classroom. Neither Ms. Wynn nor Ms. Crawford had attended the workshops offered by Ms. Kramer where they would have been exposed to critiques related to literature circles, such as the difficulties associated with role sheets and book choice that she discussed with me.

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education advocates the use of literature circles in intermediate level classrooms but does not prescribe how teachers should use them. In the Integrated Resource Package (IRP), which teachers are expected to reference when planning instruction, they are simply mentioned as an important element of the philosophy of "voice and choice" the Ministry promotes in regard to literacy instruction (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p.160). The use of "voice and choice" here is notable given that it is borrowed from the title of Daniels' (1994; Daniels, 2002) literature circles texts.

Publisher/Teacher How-To Text

Ms. Wynn used a teacher resource book entitled, *Literature Circles: The Way to Go and How to Get There* (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003) to guide the implementation of literature circles in her classroom. The cover of this text features photos and captions for three of the roles the book introduces, Memory Maker, Illustrator, and Read-Aloud Master, as part of a network diagram. Included in this network is a photo of students conversing. This book is typical of the kinds of teacher guides that publishers, such as Scholastic and Teacher Created Materials, put out to offer simplified versions of pedagogical innovations coming from the literacy pedagogy community. It comes complete with reproducible materials, including fifty-one pages of role sheets, ready-made for classroom use. The authors of this text view the purpose of literature circles as helping students develop "ownership and responsibility for their learning" (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003, p.4). In the analysis of literature circles, all references to "Teacher how-to text" are referring to this text.

In her first year using literature circles at Howe River Elementary (the year immediately preceding the year in which this study was conducted), Ms. Wynn reproduced pages from this text (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003) to form a student guide to literature circles. In her second year of using literature circles (the year of this study), Ms. Wynn took a selection of role sheets from this text and re-wrote the task descriptions for the roles to construct a simplified package of role

sheets, which she then reproduced for a seven page student guide containing six role sheets (see Appendix two).

<p align="center">*Literacy Pedagogy Community*</p>

In order to understand the literature circle as it is used in this local classroom, I provide a brief historical look at literature circles as constructed by the literacy pedagogy community. It is important to establish this more global context in order discuss how literature circles are enacted in one school, an enactment that is nested within the larger social structure of the literacy pedagogy community that seeks to set the terms for how the pedagogical interaction should be used. I focus in depth on the work of Harvey Daniels in this section, as his texts on literature circles (Daniels, 1994, 2002) were a primary influence on the teacher how-to text (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003) that Ms. Wynn used to construct her literature circle package.

Literature circles: Grand Conversations about Literature

The birth of literature circles in elementary school classrooms is thought to have taken place in Chicago area schools where teachers familiar with Rosenblatt's reader response theory (Rosenblatt, 1978) wanted students to experience the natural conversations about literature in which many adults engage in their informal book clubs (Daniels, 1994). Daniels credits Ralph Peterson and Maryann Eeds (1990) with first bringing the phenomenon to the attention of the literacy pedagogy community in their book, *Grand Conversations: Literature Groups in Action*, although this text was preceded by an article written by Maryann Eeds and Donald Wells (1989). Literature circles are defined as small, student-led reading groups where students read an agreed upon selection of text, determine the pacing of the reading, and meet on a regular basis to discuss what they have read (Daniels, 1994). Daniels (2002) cites the main purpose of literature circles as threefold: to promote independent reading, help students learn an aesthetic approach to literature in the reader-response framework (Rosenblatt, 1978), and provide opportunity for students to engage in collaborative learning.

Numerous articles have been written in the past fifteen years outlining modifications teachers and researchers have made to the basic structure of the literature circle format outlined by these early proponents. These include modifications such as: new methods for pre-teaching the formation of questions and activities for fast-finishing groups in intermediate level classes (Moen, 2005); introducing and teaching conversational strategies (Clarke & Holwadel, 2007; Maloch, 2004); incorporating art with book discussions in bilingual primary level classes

(Carger, 2004); and adding drama-based engagement strategies to the typical literature circle format to encourage critical response (Long & Gove, 2003).

Literature circles using fiction have also been used for a variety of purposes. In addition to using literature circles to promote vocabulary growth (Harmon, 1998) and critical response (Long & Gove, 2003), they have also been used to explore social justice issues (Moller, 2002). Different kinds of texts have also been used in these innovations. Some explore the use of non-fiction texts in literature circles to teach science vocabulary (Miller *et al.*, 2007) and content area learning (Johnson & Freedman, 2005; Stien & Beed, 2004). Some use new media, having students conduct their discussions using online platforms (e.g., Walters, 2006)

These are but a few examples of the kinds of studies that have been conducted on the use of literature circles in elementary school classrooms. The volume of research carried out on this framed pedagogical interaction speaks to the widespread use of literature circles in elementary schools and the potential teachers and researchers alike see for the literature circle to enrich literacy instruction.

Critiquing the Literature Circle

Most of the examples given here portray literature circles in a positive manner as they explore the potential of this literacy object. For example, student discussion associated with the literature circle is portrayed in these studies as animated and extensive. However, not all literature circles engender the natural (Daniels, 1994, 2002) or grand conversations (Eeds & Wells, 1989; Peterson & Eeds, 1990) envisioned by the early spokespersons for literature circles. While Eeds work is often cited as evidence of efficacy of literature circles, the study participants were university students. Furthermore, the Chicago area schools in which early literature circles with younger students were implemented were schools found in middle class neighbourhoods, where language and approach to literature were quite homogenous. That which started as a teacher education study came to be applied as a model for using literature circles with students of all ages and social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds.

Two main areas of difficulty that frequently appear in the research literature on literature circles are connected to social relations amongst group members and the use of defined student roles (Brownlie, 2005; Clarke & Holwadel, 2007; Lewis, 1997; Lloyd, 2004; Stien & Beed, 2004). Two studies exemplify these issues. Clarke and Holwadel (2007) and Lewis (1997) focus specifically on social impediments to the kinds of book discussions literature circles are supposed to foster. In both of these studies, students' social relationships in and out of school

83

are seen to have played a negative role in the literature circle, leading to discussions that were neither educationally productive nor socially constructive. The classroom in Lewis' study employed a more loosely formatted structure in the literature discussion groups, while the classroom in Clarke and Holwadel's study utilized the role sheets as set out by Daniels (1994; Daniels, 2002). While it is clear that negative social relationships led students in Clarke and Holwadel study to carry out conversations that bordered on being hostile in nature and that the kind of intervention undertaken to ameliorate the situation was helpful toward "fixing" the problem, it is noteworthy that the use of role sheets and the influence they may have had on the book conversation does not appear to have been questioned.

Daniels (1994) created the literature circle roles as a means of assisting teachers with the implementation of literature circles in their classrooms. With the roles, students are given photocopied role sheets (black line masters are found in Daniels' book) to guide them in taking on roles such as: "Discussion Director" (writes questions designed to lead to group discussion); "Artful Artist" (uses artwork to represent a significant scene or idea in the text); "Literary Luminary" (highlights interesting or important passages in the text); "Word wizard" (discusses words in the text that s/he finds unusual, interesting, or difficult); or "Capable Connector" (finds connections between the text and something outside the text, such as a personal experience, another piece of literature, or something taking place in world at large).

Recent research literature identifies difficulty with the use of defined student roles as a problematic aspect of literature circles.   Lloyd, for example, (2004) cites "flat, oral recitation" (p.15) when her students used the role sheets to guide their discussion. Stien and Beed's (2004) work starts with the role sheets for its first phase and then for its second phase replaces the roles with tabbing. They found that when students used tabs to mark places in the text they found interesting and wanted to later discuss with their group, discussion was more natural than the talk used in the first phase where role sheets were employed. In the Canadian context, Faye Brownlie (2005) has written, *Grand Conversations, Thoughtful Responses: A Unique Approach to Literature Circles*. Brownlie cites the main reason for developing this approach as stemming from problems related to the "contrived conversations" she felt the role sheets originally developed by Daniels (1994) engendered.

Looking back retrospectively on the history of the literature circle in classroom literacy instruction and some of the classroom implementation problems he has observed , Daniels (2006) notes the difficulties associated with role sheets and asserts the following,

I recommended [role sheets] as a way of showing kids how smart readers think [connecting, visualizing, inferring, and so forth), as well as to help students capture their reading responses in writing and to supply small-group discussions with plenty of material to talk about. I warned in the book that the role sheets were for temporary use only, but I soon saw them becoming predominant in too many classrooms. As a result, I wrote articles, developed a Web site, gave speeches, and ultimately wrote a new edition of the book with much stronger cautions about the mechanical discussions that can stem form over-dependence on these roles." (p.11)

Here Daniels is keenly aware of the large-scale nature of the problem with the role sheets and states that "smart teachers" (p.12) are replacing role sheets with reading response logs, sticky notes, and book marks; coding the text; graphic responses; and written conversations. However, he does not renounce their use and appears to stand by the position he adopted in the revised volume of *Literature Circles* (Daniels, 2002) that the role sheets should be used as temporary scaffolds to help students learn how to conduct book discussions. What may not have been recognized by Daniels, however, is that it may be much harder to give role sheets a temporary status in some classrooms.

This section has examined the way in which the literature circle, a framed pedagogical interaction in use in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary, is actually shaped in spaces removed by time and location. By looking at the interconnected spaces within the larger educational structure connected to this grade five classroom, I have demonstrated a plausible path by which the literature circle made its way into this particular classroom. Figure 4-1 depicts the network of connected spaces in which the literature circle appears in the educational structure linked to the grade five classroom and illustrates the path by which the literacy object (to be identified in the next section) travels.[4]

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[4] Because the home was not a space that impacted specifically on the majority of the focal students' participation in the literature circle, I have not conducted a significant analysis of it in relation to the home space. However, I have included the home as one of the spaces through which the literature circle moves because for one of the students, Nigel, his mother's work with him at home to complete the reading and role work for literature circle was a significant factor in his participation in the literature circle at school. (I look at this phenomenon in chapter 5.) Only one other parent, Riley's mother, spoke of working with her child on the literature circle work.

Looking at the flow of information related to literature circles, the primary resource for Ms. Wynn was the publisher's teacher how-to text. Neither her teacher education program, nor the school district were resources for Ms. Wynn as she planned and enacted this framed pedagogical interaction, while Ms. Crawford may have been influenced by her teacher education training as she enacted the literature circle as framed by Ms. Wynn. I have to assume the Ministry of Education was a resource for them given their mention of the IRP for their classroom planning, although neither mentioned it specifically in regard to literature circles. There are heavy traces of the teacher how-to text in Ms. Wynn's framing of the pedagogical interaction, particularly the prominent role given to the role sheets. This is an interesting phenomenon, given the tremendous amount that has been written about literature circles and in particular the difficulties associated with role sheets.

Moving through each of the connected spaces certain patterns begin to emerge regarding the way the literature circle, as a framed pedagogical interaction, is envisioned and enacted. Running through each of these spaces are recurring literacy objects that join the global context of the research space to the local context of the classroom: one literacy object - the role sheet - figures as the primary literacy object in each of these spaces.

The Role Sheet as the Primary Literacy Object in the Literature Circle

In this section, I examine the literature circle across the spaces connected to the grade five class at Howe River Elementary to identify the primary literacy objects at work. Table 4-1, Characteristics of the Literature Circle across Connected Spaces, contains this phase of the analysis as it details the characteristics of the literature circle in the spaces of academia, educational administration, publishers, and the classroom[5]. Looking at the literacy objects in the matrix as a whole, what stands out is the recurrent appearance of the texts students read for literature circles and the use of role sheets in each of the spaces. I identify these as the main literacy objects that travel between the connected spaces, joining the local to the global. However, because there is a great deal to say about the role sheet as a literacy object, I have not

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[5] Ms. Kramer, the literacy coordinator for the school district, conducted workshops on literature circles, as mentioned earlier. However, none of the teachers attended the workshops or received instruction in the use of literature circles at the district level. I, therefore, do not include the school district in this section on the identification of the literacy object.

included the analysis of the texts students use for the literature circles in this dissertation.[6] In this matrix, I highlight all references to the roles (roles, role sheets, and role work) to provide a visual representation of the pattern that emerges with regard to direct reference to the role sheet: the role sheet not only appears in all of the spaces as an intact object but take on an increasing presence and dominance as it travels from the research space to the students' use of them.

The Role Sheet Travels Intact from Distant Spaces

The outcome of this analysis, I argue, is that the role sheet presents itself in this study as the primary literacy object connecting the literature circle to the educational structure in which this pedagogical interaction is located. Noting the way the role sheet features across the spaces, Brandt and Clinton's first contention regarding literacy objects, their capacity to travel, most certainly is in evidence. Table 4-2 summarizes the various understandings or conceptualizations of the role sheet across the spaces in the network connected to the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. Because of the many roles in the teacher how-to text, I have only included descriptions of the roles that match those that were selected for use in Ms. Wynn's classroom. The role sheets that correspond to the role sheets used in the classroom from the space of literacy pedagogy research may be found in Daniels, 1994 and the publisher/teacher how-to text in Morris and Perlenfein, 2003, and the classroom in Appendix two.

Two things are evident in table 4-2. First, while there are variations in the numbers of roles put forward in each space, in the roles that appear across all the spaces, there is little variation. The names and the descriptions remain essentially the same. While Ms. Wynn did not use Daniels' work on literature circles (Daniels, 1994, 2002) to develop the pedagogical interaction as she used it in her classroom, nevertheless, four of the six of the roles that she used in her classroom were very close reproductions of the roles Daniels created. Indeed, the teacher

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[6] Briefly, my analysis of the texts found that as the conceptualization of this literacy object moved through the different spaces before actually become objectified in the form of the novels the groups read in their literature circles, it lost flexibility in the way it was conceptualized. For instance, in the literacy pedagogy community's version of the literature circle, any type of text may be used, e.g., novels, poems, informational texts, etc. In the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary, the only text seen as appropriate for literature circles is the novel. Additionally, the notion of student choice of texts, which is seen as a hallmark of literature circles in all of the spaces, receives only token application at Howe River Elementary. The teachers in the study felt that investing in a wider range of novel sets for the literature circles would help to foster deeper conversation and were looking for ideas on which new novels to purchase for the following year.

how-to text acknowledges Daniels work on four the roles Ms. Wynn incorporated into her package (Read-aloud master, Discussion leader, Connection maker, and Illustrator). Noteworthy in this group of four roles that appears across the spaces is Discussion leader.

Daniels provides an explanation of the Discussion leader role that offers a wide range of possibilities for students:

Your job is to develop a list of questions that your group might want to discuss about this part of the hook. Don't worry about the small details: your task is to help people talk over the big ideas in the reading and share their reactions. Usually the best discussion questions come from your own thoughts, feelings, and concerns as you read, which you can list below, during or after your reading. Or you may use some of the general questions below to develop topics for your group. (Daniels, 1994, p. A1)

He then includes a list of sample questions:

What was going through your mind while you read this?

How did you feel while reading this part of the book?

What was discussed in this section of the hook?

Can someone summarize briefly?

Did today's reading remind you of any real-life experiences?

What questions did you have when you finished this section?

Did anything in this section of the book surprise you?

What are the one or two most important ideas?

Predict some things you think will he talked about next.

In the teacher how-to text, the fill in the blank form for Discussion leader takes up three pages. Students are asked to create 12 questions that fall into the categories of literal, inferential, and interpretive and are given question starters on these three pages to assist with the task.

Ms. Wynn's description of Discussion leader in the package of role sheets she produced reads as follows:

Write three fat thoughtful questions (that cannot be answered by yes or no). Use the following as possible question starters: Why did…What happened when…What is the difference between…Predict what would happen if…What will happen when…How did you feel when…Why do you think…Was it fair when…Why or why not? How could the character…

Each of the question starters is taken directly from the longer list containing twenty-six question starters in the teacher how-to text. Two of the nine questions on Ms. Wynn's role sheet are the same as those on Daniels.

As they travel through the spaces from the literacy research pedagogy space to the classroom Literary luminary[7] (Read-aloud master in the how-to text and Group leader/Read-aloud master the classroom), Connector (Connection maker in the how-to text and classroom), and Illustrator see very little change in form. Thus, the majority of the role sheets in use entered the classroom as highly intact objects in the grade five classroom many years after being shaped in global spaces.

In the hybridized form that Ms. Wynn developed, however, the roles she chose to include in her local instantiation of the literature circle are roles that may be seen as simpler for students to independently use and roles that fit the prescribed learning outcomes of the grade five literacy curriculum for the province. For example, with the Connection maker role – The PLO under the heading Comprehend and respond (engagement and personal response) reads: "It is expected that students will: - make explicit connections among central ideas in works that they have read, viewed, or heard; - describe how particular works or literary features evoke personal images, memories, and responses" (BC Ministry of Education, 2002a, p.136). She did not choose roles such as "Travel tracer" or "Investigator" from Daniels' role sheets or "Advice columnist" or "Wanted!" from the teacher how-to text. Also, the roles chosen were very closely tied to the text and to students' experiences with the text in their lives, reminiscent of Rosenblatt's transactional (reader response) theory in *The Reader, the Text, the Poem* (Rosenblatt, 1978). Ms. Wynn explained this move, saying that the other roles were too complicated and confusing for grade five students to independently handle in their groups but did not view it as a means of employing reader response theory.

Second, it is evident that as one moves from the space of the literacy pedagogy community to the students' space within the classroom, that while they do arrive as largely "intact objects" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 344) in the classroom, the scope of the literacy objects' influence grows. The role sheets are conceptualized in the research space as temporary

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[7] In Daniels (1994), there are three roles that ask the students to pick and read aloud their favourite passages : Literary luminary, Passage master, and Passage picker. Literary luminary is meant to be used with intermediate level students, Passage master is for use with non-fiction texts; and Passage picker is a role designed for use with primary age students. It is interesting that the teacher how-to text echoed the name given to this role when it is used with non-fiction texts.

scaffolds to guide discussion when students are first introduced to literature circles. However, in the teacher how-to text they are presented as an integral and fixed part of the literature circle. In the space of the teacher how-to text, the role sheets are also viewed, not only as guides to discussion, but also as one of several tools for assessment. In the classroom space, the purpose of the role sheets becomes even less tractable and varied in the following manner: While the how-to text suggests the role sheets be used as guides to discussion and could be used as one tool among many for assessment; in the classroom, the teachers expected that the students would read from their role sheets to perform their "jobs" (roles). It is also interesting to note that the Passage master/Read-Aloud master role expands in the classroom with the added responsibility of group leader added to it (this will be more fully explored in Chapter Five). Furthermore, the only work the students would be assessed on for the literature circles was their written role work. Finally, for the students, the understanding of the literature circle as a whole takes on a very narrow focus. To five out of the six students the literature circle equates to reading the novel and completing the role work. Only one student recognized that an unscripted discussion should actually take place in addition to the required reading and role work. While it arrives generally intact in form in the classroom, the literacy object changes quite dramatically in function.

The Agentive Activity of the Role Sheet

Tracing the characteristics of the role sheets across connected spaces (see Tables 4-1 and 4-2), the way the literature circle comes to be defined in the focal students' minds by the written and spoken aspects of the role sheets stands in sharp contrast to the expansive manner in which the literature circle is conceptualized in the literacy pedagogy community. Looking vertically at this matrix in the classroom space, it is evident that the focal students' understandings of the literature circle with regard to definition are consistent with their understandings and interactions with other characteristics of the literature circle in their classroom. In other words, when the students unanimously defined the literature circle as the reading of novels in a group and the completion of role sheets, their definition echoed throughout their understanding of features of the literature circle such as: its purpose; discussion in literature circles; the way literature circles are monitored; and the role of the teacher. The reading of the novel is mentioned in their understanding but what most clearly stands out is the way the role sheets so prominently figure.

In much of what is negative about the literature circle, as portrayed in the analysis of these features, the role sheet is implicated. For example, during my observations of the literature circles, "book talk" in the focal students' literature circles always involved verbatim reading of

the role sheets: I observed only two instances of unscripted discussion about the novel. Furthermore, the only "animated" talk in which I observed the focal students and their groups engage during my twelve hours of observation of the literature circle involved criticism regarding the adequacy of others' role work.

These observations are examples of the way the role sheet actually meditates the enactment of the literature circle. It not only functions to narrow the scope of the literature circle but actually takes on a role in this classroom that is far more powerful than its creator intended. In its function as a literacy object in a framed pedagogical interaction, the role sheet functioned to determine how the focal students' actually enacted and experienced the literature circle. This finding relates to Brandt and Clinton's (2002) third criteria for literacy objects: "a capacity to be visible and animate outside the interactions of immediate literacy events" (p. 344). While I have touched upon the agency of the role sheet as a literacy object here, the subject of the agency of human and non-human actors in the literature circle will be explored at length in Chapter Five.

The Flow of Critique Regarding the Role Sheet as a Literacy Object

Figure 4-2 depicts the way in which the flow of critiques on the use of role sheets appears to be interrupted as it makes its way from the literacy pedagogy community to the classroom. I have no evidence as to whether or not the critiques were considered in Ms. Wynn's initial teacher education or her masters in education program and so cannot include those in the analysis. In the Ministry of Education space, although one of the authors of the literacy section of the Integrated Resource Package (IRP) (BC Ministry of Education, 2006) was Faye Brownlie, mentioned earlier with regard to her concern about the use of role sheets (Brownlie, 2005), the critique of this literacy object is not mentioned in the IRP and, thus, also is represented as a break in the flow of information. A discussion on the limited way role sheets should be used is not undertaken in the publisher's teacher how-to text; therefore, it seems safe to say the critiques raised in the literacy pedagogy community were either not heard or went unheeded in the publisher's space. Given that this was the major resource for Ms. Wynn as she constructed the literature circle for use in her classroom, it is not difficult to see how she may have missed the critiques of the literacy pedagogy community. It may also be that Ms. Crawford had utilized Daniels' first version of the *Literature Circles* (Daniels, 1994) text and, therefore, missed the critiques that followed it. Or she may have chosen to ignore them. The workshops offered at the district level were not mandatory and, therefore, were not a source of information for the teachers with regard to the critiques. Here it seems that what did flow between the spaces was

procedural information on how to conduct literature circles using student roles (albeit, information that would be considered dated given the critiques) and nothing more. In this observation, the resilience of the literacy objects is clearly seen: as they become separated from the research space in both time and location, the role sheets take on a life of their own as it were, looking very much like they did when they left the research space but taking on a function much altered.

Why is it that "positive research", as seen in Figure 4-1, is more likely to make its way to the classroom space, while critiques, as depicted in Figure 4-2 , do not seem to impact the way a literacy object is allowed to function in the classroom? In this case, does this relate to the fact that the positive research relates to that which teachers might consider practical and, therefore, useful?

I turn next to look at the writers' workshop – the spaces in the educational sphere connected to the grade five classroom and the literacy objects that run between these spaces.

Mapping the Writers' Workshop across Connected Spaces

As with the literature circle, in order to determine what the literacy objects present in the writers' workshop are, I first establish the path of the writers' workshop as it appears in the more abstractly oriented space of the literacy pedagogy community to the concrete space of the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. This kind of tracing is necessary as a basis for understanding the agentive action the literacy objects take and the activity of the human agents in relation to the literacy objects. Again, I accomplish the determination of this pathway by starting with the enactment of the framed pedagogical interaction in this specific classroom and examining its traces backwards through the connected spaces within the larger educational structure in which it is situated, examining how it is shaped in each of these spaces. As this path is explored, a set of literacy objects present themselves as primary players in the writers' workshop and as with the role sheets, two of the three literacy objects arrive in the classroom as intact objects. All three of the literacy objects hybridize in the classroom space to take on functions quite unlike that envisioned for them in the space of the literacy pedagogy community.

My observation period in the classroom's writers' workshop was shorter than the period of time over which I observed the literature circles because the writers' workshop did not commence until early December, six weeks after I began my classroom observations. The following section, a description of the writers' workshop at Howe River Elementary thus presents a more narrowly focussed portrayal of the first stages of the writers' workshop –

specifically, from the introduction of the writers' workshop to the students to their first publication – than that given for the literature circle.

Classroom

The students in Ms. Wynn and Ms. Little's class participated together in writers' workshop twice a week for forty minutes per session. At least one of the two workshops each week began with a ten to fifteen minute mini-lesson, after which the students worked independently on their writing projects. The topics of the mini-lessons were generally drawn from the text, *Notebook Know-How: Strategies for the Writer's Notebook (Buckner, 2005)* (see below) and in the early sessions, were primarily focused on helping the students generate ideas for writing.

The first six writing sessions the students participated in, which followed the lessons where the lists were generated, were called SWAT sessions. SWAT was a technique Ms. Wynn picked up from another teacher in her writing course (see below); the acronym stood for Sustained Writing All the Time. In this exercise, the students were to write continuously in their writer's notebook for ten minutes without "stopping" their pencils. The aim of SWAT was to encourage writing flow, Ms. Wynn explained to me, particularly among reluctant writers.

After the students had written seven SWATs, they were told it was time to choose one of their pieces to further develop for publication. At the time of this publication announcement, the content of the mini-lessons changed. For example, on the day they were told it was time to develop their first piece for publication they received instruction in a writing strategy, also drawn from the *Notebook Know-How* text, known as "lifting a line" (Buckner, 2005, pp. 30-32). Demonstrating this strategy, Ms. Wynn showed the students how to take a favourite line from a previous SWAT and use it as the starting point for a new SWAT. The students were told on that day that they were free to choose that strategy for the day's SWAT or they could work on an existing piece or, finally, they could start an entirely new piece; but whatever they worked on that day should be the piece they wanted to develop for publication. After they had spent about two sessions developing their pieces for publication, the students received a mini-lesson in how to edit each other's work and then were assigned partners to work with for the peer-editing process that would take the place of the writing session for that day. The students then were to use the feedback they received from their peers to re-write the story, this time on the three-ring binder sized paper that would fit into the Galleon Binder. The pieces, once completed, were

also to have an illustrated cover page and would be placed in the Galleon Binder for the entire class to read.

The writer's notebooks were never handed in to the teachers. The first time Ms. Wynn looked at her students' writing was when they handed in a draft of their first publication, written on foolscap (legal-sized) paper. Her purpose for collecting these drafts was to ensure all of the students had produced something by the due date she had set and to ensure the topics on which they had written were appropriate for general viewing. Her second look at the students' writing took place when she read and graded the published piece. Later, in a follow-up interview, several months after my observation period ended, Ms. Wynn told me this was the pattern she used for the duration of the school year, with students producing four published pieces over the two terms in which writers' workshop was conducted. Ms. Wynn utilized the scoring rubric for writing found in the IRP (BC Ministry of Educations, 2006) for grading the students' published pieces but did not reference use of the IRP as a guide for planning her writing instruction.

Ms. Wynn was introduced to writers' workshop in a teaching placement while working as a teacher-on-call in her first year of teaching[8]. (At the time of the study, she was in her sixth year of teaching.) According to Ms. Wynn, this early experience, along with a course on elementary school writing that she took in conjunction with her masters of education degree during her fifth year of teaching, shaped her understanding of how writers' workshop should be conducted prior to the year I observed in her classroom. In this writing course, the readings on writers' workshop were taken from Calkins', *The Art of Teaching Writing* (1994). The year I observed at Howe River Elementary, Ms. Wynn and her teaching partner, Ms. Little, attended a study group for teachers sponsored by the district school board. The literacy study group was one of several offered that year and was chosen by Ms. Wynn and Ms. Little because of its focus on writers' workshop, a pedagogical interaction they wanted to understand more fully. The book the group was studying was entitled, *Notebook Know-How: Strategies for the Writer's Notebook* (Buckner, 2005).

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[8] While Ms. Little conducted one of the mini-lessons I observed and was always on the sidelines, supporting Ms. Wynn during her mini-lessons and consulting with students during their writing time, Ms. Wynn was by far the dominant teacher in the writers' workshop and the only one I interviewed with regard to it. I, therefore, include only Ms. Wynn's voice in the analysis of the writers' workshop in the grade five class at Howe River Elementary.

Publisher/Teacher How-To Text

The Buckner (2005) text served as the primary guide to the teachers for structuring the writers' workshop. Ms. Wynn told me that one of the frustrations she had the previous year when she first began to use writers' workshop was that students constantly told her they didn't know what to write about. She said that she and Ms. Little had opted to attend the teacher literacy study group because the Buckner text focussed strongly on helping students to independently generate ideas for writing. Buckner states that the "writer's notebook gives students a place to write every day … to practice living like a writer" (p.3). The notebook "philosophy" draws on the practice of famous writers who use notebooks daily to "use the world around them – their own lives and perspectives – as a supply of writing ideas" (p.3). Buckner suggests taking students through the three mini-lessons, *History of a name*, *Writing from a list*, and *Questions* before asking them to actually begin writing in the first section of the notebook in order to provide a supply of ideas before starting to write. Buckner maintains that the notebooks should not be used for re-drafting of pieces students want to develop so that they see the notebooks as a place to freely write without self-censor. Instead, she promotes the idea that students must write out the drafts, developed from pieces in their notebooks, on separate legal sized notepads. It is on these drafts that the teacher provides written feedback, on a frequent basis, to preserve the notebook solely for student writing. Buckner also advises teachers to meet with students individually to help them with revisions.

School District

Like many school districts, the district in which Howe River Elementary was situated promoted the idea of afterschool literacy study groups for teachers[9]. There had been two study groups the previous year and the year in which this study took place there were fifteen. The books to be studied were generally chosen by the district literacy consultant, Ms. Kramer, who was also the representative for the local branch of the International Reading Association (IRA). Ms. Kramer promoted the books for these study groups through book talks when she attended literacy team meetings at individual schools involved in what the district termed, The Later Literacy Project. Additionally, she placed posters advertising the various groups on the staffroom bulletin boards in each of the elementary schools in the school district. Teachers could also

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[9] Perusal of International Reading Association and National College of Teachers of English catalogues demonstrates this phenomenon in their offering of specially priced book sets of teacher how-to texts and discussion guides.

access information about where and when these groups were meeting via the school district's website. In addition to these district-wide book clubs, some book clubs were held at the school level, with teachers at one school choosing a book they would like to read and discuss from the suggestions Ms. Kramer gave them. Ms. Kramer stated that this arrangement was made because some teachers would not "buy in" to attending the district-wide book clubs, feeling they did not have the "literacy skills" necessary to participate in such a group.

Attendance for both district-wide and in-school groups was voluntary, although the only teachers who would be reimbursed for the cost of their book were the teachers that attended all three of the meetings. Each of the groups was coordinated by a volunteer teacher but generally run on the basis of group consensus. The general format for the district-wide groups was that Ms. Kramer would set up three meeting dates for each book club. The groups would agree to read a set amount in preparation for a discussion at the first two meetings and then for the third meeting they would discuss their experiences with trying out the strategies in the classroom.   Ms. Kramer reported in her February interview that the *Notebook Know-How* group that Ms. Wynn and Ms. Little attended had already met three times and had scheduled a fourth meeting. This turn of events was a positive one in her mind because groups she had arranged in the past often experienced a sharp drop in attendance by the third meeting. Ms. Kramer felt the reason for this drop was that the teachers had not tried out the strategies and did not want to return with nothing to report back to the group. Ms. Kramer felt that the *Notebook Know-How* group was successful for the following reasons:

> Well it just discusses—I mean everybody whose done writers' workshop has struggled with how you organize the materials. And so it's her way of organizing materials but as you're reading it you go, "Yeah, that's a good idea, that's what I ended up thinking, too." You know—and-and so it's got strategies and mini-lessons and you can buy into it to the extent you want. It's easy to read. It's practical. People really like it.

Here Ms. Kramer proposes that the success of the teacher how-to text, *Notebook Know-How* rests in first its ability to help teachers set up an organizational structure for student writing, provide strategies for teaching writing, and in the provision of specific mini-lessons, which can be used or not, depending on teacher preference. Equally important seems to be the ease with which teachers can read the text and its practical nature.

Documents from the Ministry of Education (BC Ministry of Education, 2002b, 2006) present student writing as an important part of the curriculum and state that students should be provided with a "significant block of time" (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 22) for writing. They also promote the idea that students should be writing for an audience, primarily their peers and teachers. For this reason, students should be given "opportunities to revise, edit, and proofread their work before creating final copies" (p.207). One-to-one and small group conferences are recommended for this purpose.

Literacy Pedagogy Community

The final space connected to the local classroom's use of writers' workshop is the literacy pedagogy community. It is here that writers' workshop was originally conceptualized and here that it is also critiqued and theoretically reshaped, often in response to feedback from classroom teachers, in addition to research studies.

Writers' Workshop: The Process Writing Movement in the Elementary School Classroom

The writing workshop is first credited to Donald Murray and was popularized by his text, *A Writer Teaches Writing: A Practical Method of Teaching Composition* (Murray, 1968). Reviewing Murray's contribution to writing instruction, Tom Romano (2000) calls Murray "one of the High Priests of Process" (p. 74) for his foundational role in the process writing movement. Murray's work not only led to the use of writing workshops in high schools starting in the 1970s, widening the sphere of the framed pedagogical interaction from the college level to which it had previously been limited, but also gave birth to the teacher as writer movement amongst teachers at the high school level (Murray, 1978).

I now move forward a decade to the work of Donald Graves, Nancie Atwell, and Lucy Calkins (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1983). Their interconnected work is widely recognized as taking the writing workshop, as introduced by Murray for use at the college and high school level, and theorizing it in such a way that it came to be widely adopted in elementary school classrooms across North America. Briefly summarizing their positions, all three of these pioneers of writers' workshop viewed the notion of process as essential. The overarching ethos in writers' workshop, as conceptualized by Graves, Atwell, and Calkins is expressed well in the following: "there is a careful, unhurried approach to working with both the text and the child. The teacher as a craftsperson waits, listens, looks for ways to help the child control the writing"

(Graves, 1983, p.9). Each included drafting, revision, mini-lessons, feedback through conferencing, and student publishing of their own work as important components of the writers' workshop.

Critiquing the Writers' Workshop

Reflecting on the evolution of writers' workshop, Graves (2003) comments on problems associated with writers' workshop as it came to be used in classrooms across North America. One of the issues he discusses relates to the way that procedures he had originally outlined for engaging students in the writing process came to be taken as a set method. He says,

> One of the early problems we faced following the publication of *Writing* was a sudden epidemic of orthodoxies. Artful response, listening, flexibility in decision making, were replaced by attempts to regularize the process….These orthodoxies made my colleagues and me reevaluate the term *writing process*, which wrongly suggests that there must be very identifiable steps from first conception to the end result. We abandoned the term in favour of, simply, *writing*. (pp. x-xi).

Here Graves' comments regarding an "epidemic of orthodoxies" touches on the problems recognized within the literacy pedagogy community regarding the institutionalization of writers' workshop. He maintains, however, that in his understanding "the following fundamentals have remained unchanged in the teaching of writing" (2003, p. xii-xiii) and lists the following: student choice of topic; regular response from teacher and peers; a minimum of three days per week to write; publishing of student work; teacher think-aloud while writing; and maintenance of personal collections of student work.

For some, the unhurried approach to teaching writing came to be interpreted as a laissez-faire attitude toward teaching. Many of these critiques came from classroom teachers according to Graves (2003), Atwell (1998), and Calkins (1994). Responding to this and concerns about the same kinds of orthodoxies that concerned Graves, Calkins, in her second edition of *The Art of Teaching Writing* (1994), underscored the need for teachers to ensure a predictable and simple routine for writers' workshop, along with reinforcing her insistence on the mini-lesson for teaching the skills of writing. Atwell also took the stance in her second edition of *In the Middle* (1998) that she had fallen prey to the kinds of orthodoxies described by Graves and that these rules for conducting writers' workshop had the effect of displacing her as a teacher. In her new edition she promotes a new interventionist pedagogy which includes two aspects: a greater emphasis on student responsibility and greater emphasis on the responsibility of the teacher to

98

provide expert demonstration of the conventions of writing. Calling her new role, a teacher with a capital T, Atwell says,

> As their teacher with a capital T, I also expect students to experiment with specific genres, attempt professional publication, produce minimum pages of draft each week and finished pieces of writing each trimester (Rief, 1992), attend to conventions as they draft, take notes on minilessons (Rief, 1992), be quiet, and work as hard in writing workshop as I do. (p. 25)

Here, Atwell is responding to teachers' critiques of writers' workshop: lack of structure and lack of student accountability. The criticism revolved around the notion that in an accountability oriented era, teachers were uneasy with the kind of responsive teaching advocated by Graves, Calkins, and Atwell. For these teachers, without direct reference to the standards or outcomes prescribed by their district's curriculum, they were uncertain as to whether they could adequately meet the expectations for accountability to which their teaching practice was now subject (see M. M. Taylor, 2000). For both Dudley (1989) and Taylor (2000), the answer to their concerns was the inclusion of more structure to the writers' workshop.

Criticism was not only focussed on the seeming lack of structure associated with early conceptions of writers' workshop, it also related to the transferability of pedagogies conceptualized in heterogeneous middle class classrooms. As writers' workshop became a popular mode of writing instruction, concern that students such as those in Atwell's middle-class demonstration school were not typical of the students many teachers found in their own classrooms was voiced (e.g., Dudley, 1989). Writers' workshop, as promoted by Atwell and Calkins in their first and second edition texts on the subject, assumed a great deal of student knowledge about written genres and, thus, may only have been appropriate for middle class learners who generally came to school already familiar with the discourses of a variety of fiction and non-fiction genres (see Heath, 1983).

Lensmire (1994a; 1994b) provides an important study regarding the practice of taking this pedagogical tool, developed for use with middle class learners, and expecting it to be successful across the spectrum of classrooms found in North America. Lensmire looks at writers' workshop through a sociocultural lens to provide an examination of students' social positioning in the writers' workshop. Using Bakhtin's notion of carnival to analyze writers' workshop in a third grade classroom, his analysis demonstrates "active participation, free and familiar contact among people, and a playful, familiar relation to the world" (p. 14) as aspects of writers' workshop that should continue to be affirmed. However, his analysis also shows that

these positive aspects were threatened by the way writers' workshop was used by some of the students in his study to further entrench existing social divisions and tensions in the classroom. He theorized that when students are either left out of the communal aspects of the workshop or when writing is used to hurt other students or express violent intentions, the romantic notion of "innocent, straightforward children pursuing individual writing projects" (p. 14) is shattered.

Recently, a new wave of books aimed at refining the writers' workshop involves methods for employing writer's notebook in the elementary school classroom, a development already noted here as being seized upon by the teachers at Howe River Elementary.

To summarize, over the last thirty years writers' workshop, the primary framed pedagogical interaction associated with the process writing movement, moved from isolated use in middle-class, English as a first language elementary schools to widespread use throughout North America in schools instructing students from a variety of cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Figure 4-3 depicts the network of spaces in which writers' workshop was shaped before its ultimate enactment in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary[10].

As it came to be widely used, not only were its various features adapted for use by a variety of students but they also came to be institutionalized. In spite of Graves' (2003) concern about the orthodoxies that arose around writers' workshop, he himself came to insist on a number of features as inviolate aspects of writers' workshop as an institution: choice, regular feedback, frequent writing time, publishing, modelling, and personal collections of student writing (Graves, 2003). Through this examination of the spaces of the writers' workshop connected to the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary and the features that came to be considered fundamental, we begin to see the literacy objects that connect this local classroom to global spaces. In particular, the mini-lesson, conferencing, and publication of student work

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[10] Because the home was not a significant factor for the majority of the six focal students in relation to writers' workshop, I have not conducted a significant analysis on the home space in this section. However, I have included the home as one of the spaces through which the writers' workshop moves because for two of the students, Nigel and Isaac, it was a space that impacted on their participation in writers' workshop. For Nigel, his mother's work with him at home to complete a story for publication was the only reason he completed the requirements of writers' workshop as it was set up at in his grade five class Howe River Elementary. Isaac employed his parents as editors in the final stages of his drafting. These phenomena will be explored in chapter six.

emerge as literacy objects, present across the spaces to link the enactment of the framed pedagogical interaction in this classroom to global spaces.

<center>The Primary Literacy Objects in the Writers' Workshop</center>

Table 4-3, Characteristics of the writers' workshop across connected spaces contains the analysis for the writers' workshop and highlights the characteristics of this framed pedagogical interaction as it appears in the network of spaces connected to the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. In this part of the analysis, the work of Lucy Calkins is used to represent the literacy pedagogy community.   I have combined the Publisher and School Board spaces because the teacher how-to text used to guide the classroom instruction was the text promoted by the school board and the one the teachers were studying in their district wide literacy study group.

Three primary literacy objects stand out as I trace the various characteristics of the writers' workshop across connected spaces in this matrix: the mini-lesson, student conferencing, and publishing of student work. Conferencing with students and publishing of student work, as hallmarks of the process writing movement in elementary schools, are literacy objects that may be traced even further back than Calkins' work to the work of Donald Graves (1983), as noted in the background section on writers' workshop. The endorsement of Calkins' mini-lesson as an important addition to the writers' workshop by its early proponents (Atwell, 1987; Graves, 1983) similarly adds some evidentiary weight to the argument that the mini-lesson, along with conferencing and publishing of student work, figure largely as prominent literacy objects across the spaces through which they have travelled.[11]   Finally, these were chosen as the primary literacy objects because they play strong agentive roles across all of the spaces, roles that alter significantly as one moves from the research space to the grade five classroom at Howe River. In table 4-3, I highlight all references to mini-lesson, student conferencing, and publishing of student work to highlight their ubiquitous presence across the connected spaces.However, my decision to qualify these three as objects may be controversial.

The argument for viewing some of these as literacy objects becomes clearer in the next sections as their travels through time and location are mapped. However, as I conclude in the

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[11] The mini-lesson qualifies as an object through the written notes the students were expected to make in their writer's notebook. Conferencing qualifies as an object because written feedback as part of the conference is seen as integral.

final chapter of this dissertation, the inclusion of the conferencing with students may stretch the boundaries of the model too far.

The Objects Travel with Varying Degrees of Intactness

In the next three sections, I look specifically at the three literacy objects associated with the writers' workshop, examining the appearance of each in the connected spaces established in the previous section. First, it has to be said that each of these start out as concepts that later become objects. The mini-lesson and publication of student work travel across the spaces as intact concepts that become objects as they make their way through the connected spaces. The mini-lesson, conceptualized in the literacy pedagogy research spaces becomes an object in the publisher/teacher how-to text space in the form of published lesson plans for the mini-lessons. The form of the object, as it is used in the classroom, is a facsimile of some of the mini-lessons presented in the teacher how-to text. In the classroom, the form of the mini-lesson is much the same as that described in all of the connected spaces: before the writers' workshop the students receive short, targeted lessons, aimed at a specific aspect of writing that a large proportion of the group is presently encountering. Similarly, with publication, this literacy object is conceptualized across the spaces as a way of making student writing public, to provide "authentic" audiences for student writing and therefore, "authentic" purposes for writing. Publication then becomes an object in the classroom as the students publish their stories. For both of these objects, there is also a recognition factor across the spaces: mini-lessons and publication, as objects in use in the classroom, are highly recognizable, in form, as those emanating from the research space and described in the intervening spaces they pass through.

The concept of the conference arrives in this classroom radically altered. While conceptualized in all of the other spaces as one-to-one or small group conferencing, generally between teacher and student(s) where a degree of written feedback is given by the teacher; in this classroom, conferencing takes on a new form. This new form, transforms one type of conference, mentioned in the research and ministry of education spaces, editing conferences, and creates a much altered object, the peer editing conference as the sole form of student conferencing.

As the mini-lesson and publishing objects travel intact into the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary, the first of Brandt and Clinton's tenets regarding literacy objects holds: literacy objects have the capacity to travel. However, since only two of the literacy objects arrive intact in the classroom, does this alter the certitude of the second tenet: literacy objects

have the capacity to travel intact from global to local spaces? A possible explanation for this will be explored in Chapter Six when the agency of the teacher in response to conferencing as a literacy object is examined. Or could this observation be an indication that my identification of the third object in the writers' workshop, conferencing, may not be theoretically or practically sound? Further examination of the way the objects become hybridized objects in the following sections may shed light on this.

In the next three sections, the hybridizations in function each literacy object undergoes as it travels though time and location are examined. I summarize the literacy objects' appearances in each of the spaces to provide an overview of the alterations each literacy object undergoes in tables 4-4 through 4-6.

The Mini-Lesson

Calkins (1986) introduced the mini-lesson to the writers' workshop procedures as originally conceptualized by Graves (1983). The rationale for adding this to the classroom writing routines of the writers' workshop was that in order to grow as writers, students need a high degree of teacher input. The addition was predicated on the observation that the amount of input required to develop students' writing abilities cannot solely be supplied in teacher-student conferences due to time constraints. Therefore, small, focused, lessons that address students' needs as writers are advocated for whole group instruction on a regular basis. Calkins offers ideas for how to determine what a particular class needs and subsequently how to build an appropriately focused mini-lesson. She does not, however, provide specific mini-lesson plans. Mini-lessons are specifically mentioned and advocated in both the Ministry of Education (2002a; BC Ministry of Education, 2006) and teacher how-to text spaces. The teacher how-to text (Buckner, 2005) provides numerous mini-lesson plans teachers may use to encourage writing in the writer's notebook and to help writers turn these pieces into drafts and publishable pieces.

In the classroom space, mini-lessons were used once or twice a week and the ideas for the mini-lessons were generally taken straight from the teacher how-to text. Ms. Wynn felt that the mini-lesson was an essential component of the writers' workshop because it provided a structure that ultimately required students to produce polished pieces of work. Mini-lessons were not used on days when the students had an imminent editing or publishing deadline; on these days students were simply reminded of the deadlines before being sent to their desks to work. The students used the content of the mini-lessons when directed to do so but when given the freedom to follow the strategy presented in the lesson or make their own choice about what

to write that day, none of the focal students attempted the strategy presented in the mini-lesson. Additionally, Ms. Wynn provided quotes about writing from published writers in the mini-lesson, which the students were instructed to write into their notebooks. None of the focal students were able to say who these authors were, why they copied out these quotes, or what they should use them for when I later asked them.

Though the mini-lesson as a literacy object arrived intact in form in the classroom, its function was altered upon arrival. In the grade five classroom, this literacy object primarily intended to teach students the skills of writing in the spaces outside of the classroom, took on a new function. Some writing skills were addressed in the mini-lesson in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary during the time I observed, but primarily the mini-lesson seemed to function to keep students on a writing schedule that would produce published pieces by a prescribed date.

With regard then to whether or not the mini-lesson even qualifies as a literacy object: the way in which a concept introduced by a literacy pedagogy researcher travels through the spaces and actually converts from a concept (literacy pedagogy research space) to an object (publisher's space) adds some weight to the rationale for viewing the mini-lesson as an object. In the form of published mini-lessons, the object enters the classroom where it is implemented as a reproduction of the lesson delineated in the teacher how-to text. Portions of it are written on an overhead projector, which the students then copy into their notebooks. While its travelling distance as an actual object is shorter than that of other objects, the mini-lesson does arrive intact in this classroom from a distant space.

Conferencing

Calkins (1986; 1994) places a high value on conferencing and suggests teachers should aim to conference with most of their students each time writers' workshop is held. By using the term, *conferencing*, she is referring to brief meetings between the teacher and student and amongst students themselves to discuss student writing. Some of these conferences are casual, with the teacher circulating during writing time and talking with students as they work. Some of these conferences are scheduled events, somewhat more formal in nature. These conferences are used to help writers clarify what they are trying to say in their writing and to help them make decisions about the direction of their writing. When a piece has progressed through its various drafts, conferencing is also used to help the student conduct the final editing of the piece. Student-student conferences focus on content and as students become more adept with process

writing, students also help each other make process decisions, for example, where the author will be going next with the piece. This understanding holds through the Ministry of Education's (2002a; 2006) references to conferencing, though they do suggest some conferencing may be held in small groups, presumably to address the enormous amount of time teacher-student conferences require. Teacher-student conferences are mentioned in the teacher how-to text (Buckner, 2005) as a vehicle to help students with revision and editing.

In the classroom space, student conferencing takes a very different role than that seen in the research, Ministry of Education, and teacher how-to text. No conferencing, whether teacher-student, teacher-small group, or student-student was engaged in for story crafting purposes. The only conferences that took place were student-student peer editing conferences. The students received instruction in how to edit their own and their peers' work in mini-lessons that employed notes written on an overhead projector. The content of this mini-lesson was a demonstration of how to edit for punctuation, grammar and meaning at the sentence-level. The students were then verbally "challenged" to find three things they could suggest to their peer for improving the piece. They were not asked to write any of this in their notebooks. When they were paired off by the teachers to conduct the peer-editing, only editing of punctuation, grammar and meaning at the sentence-level was employed by the focal students and their partners in the peer-editing sessions.

Here, conferencing is radically altered in the classroom. In the spaces outside of the classroom, its form generally appears as conferencing to give feedback to students: feedback, sometimes in written form and coming mainly from the teacher. In the grade five classroom, its form is re-shaped: teacher-to-student written feedback becomes student-to-student editorial correction. In function it is also altered. Intended in the spaces outside the classroom as a tool for helping students shape their writing at stages throughout the writing process; in the grade five classroom, it serves to replace the editing help normally given to students by the teacher. Conferencing becomes an object structured in both form and function to meet the demands of a large class and an overloaded curriculum. (This use of conferencing will be explored in greater depth in Chapter Six.)

But can conferencing with students be considered a literacy object? It travels to the classroom as a concept created in distant spaces, as was the case with the publication of student writing. But is there an objective form to it in the classroom that can be examined with regard its mediational role? There is in the sense that what the students receive from their peers in the altered form and function of the student conference is written feedback – editing marks made

105

directly on their personal drafts. At this point in its travels, the conference most certainly becomes an object. But is its late stage of objectification enough to qualify it as a literacy object? I proceed with the analysis here and in Chapter Six as though it does qualify but revisit the subject in Chapter Seven with a discussion of what constitutes a literacy object.

Publishing of Student Work

Looking at publishing in the research space, Calkins (1986; 1994) cites as one of the underlying principles of writers' workshop that children must have opportunities to share their writing with others as adult authors do. This sharing includes both works in progress through oral sharing sessions and finished pieces through producing those pieces in a form meant to be read by peers and others outside of the classroom (although she does not insist on publication of everything students write). This same philosophy is explicitly voiced in the Ministry of Education (2002a; 2006; Buckner, 2005) space as well. The teacher how-to text (Buckner, 2005) briefly mentions publishing as a goal to be encouraged in the writing process. Each of these spaces also addresses the idea that teachers should be highly involved with students in their revision and editing in order to prepare the pieces for publication. Calkins is most vocal about this, insisting that children need to be assisted one-on-one by the teacher to make their work as close to error-free as possible before the work becomes public so that they may take pride in their accomplishment. In each of these spaces, publication takes place at a time determined by the student, although Calkins suggests publication quotas may need to be set.

In the classroom space, the philosophy that children need an audience for writing was in place, though the rationale given by Ms. Wynn was that knowing they are writing for an audience increases the amount of work students produce and the quality of it. A departure from the publishing procedures advocated in the literacy pedagogy community, Ministry of Education (2002a; 2006), and teacher how-to text (Buckner, 2005) is also evident in the classroom space. Here students were given a deadline by which they must have a draft ready for the peer-editing session and a deadline by which their final copy needed to be placed in the Galleon Binder, the binder that held the classroom's stories. All of the focal students produced a piece for the binder by the deadline they were given, although two students, Nigel and Isaac, did not follow the procedures for getting to the deadline as they were set out by Ms. Wynn. The pieces published in the Galleon Binder were the only work on which the students were graded in the writers' workshop.

Publishing, as a concept, arrives in this classroom intact in its form – that is, the practice of publishing students' work for others to read is intact. The concept becomes an object when it is given a tangible nature in the form of the student publication in the Galleon Binder. However, just as the mini-lesson, it takes on a function much revised from the function envisioned in the spaces outside of the classroom. Publishing in the grade five classroom functions to increase the amount of written pieces students actually bring to completion and to increase the quality of that work.

The Agentive Activity of Literacy Objects of the Writers' Workshop

Each of the literacy objects in the writers' workshop, the mini-lesson, conferencing, and publishing of student work, is conceptualized in an expansive manner in the spaces of the literacy pedagogy community and the Ministry of Education. However, in the teacher how-to text, the use of the literacy objects begins to turn more to procedural considerations and set notions about how the literacy objects should be used begin to appear. In the classroom space, this vision of the literacy objects became further reduced, resulting in objects with altered functions, used primarily in a regimented manner by the teacher. While arriving largely intact in form to the classroom, their function is dramatically altered as they are hybridized for use in the grade five classroom of Howe River Elementary. The mini-lesson and conferencing were shaped in this classroom space to serve the larger purposes of publishing as a literacy object. Finally, though diminished in scope, each of the literacy objects, conferencing and publishing of student work, in particular, were given much greater power in the classroom space than in any of the spaces connected to the classroom. Here, as with the role sheets in the literature circle, the literacy objects of the writers' workshop demonstrate their "capacity to be visible and animate outside the interactions of immediate literacy events" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 338).   This agentive activity will be explored in detail in Chapter Six.

The Flow of Critique Regarding the Literacy Objects in the Writers' Workshop

In this section, I trace the flow of critique regarding the literacy objects as it moves from the literacy pedagogy community through the spaces of publishers of teacher how-to texts, teacher education programs, ministry of education and the school district and its ultimate reception at the classroom level. Figure 4-4 depicts this flow.

Recapping from the section that mapped the spaces of the writers' workshop, it appears that the strongest influence on the classroom utilization of the literacy objects comes through

Ms. Wynn's use of the teacher how-to text and the school district because of its endorsement of the text, in addition to aspects of her ongoing education in a master's level program. Because the teacher how-to text does not mention the research critiques on the literacy objects involved with writers' workshop, we can see that the flow of critique from the literacy pedagogy community to the publisher is quite clearly broken and thus does not provide a conduit for critique to the classroom space at all. We do see clear traces of the way the objects are procedurally conceptualized from the teacher how-to text to their deployment in the classroom, such as the content of the mini-lessons and what type of paper students should hand in for the peer-editing conferences, but because no suggestion of the critical debates surrounding them is alluded to in this text, critique does not seem to reach the classroom through this avenue.

It is also clear in the data that the critiques from the literacy pedagogy community were heard and understood at the school district level. Ms. Kramer's articulation of the difficulties associated with teaching the skills and strategies of writing and the organization of student writing and the subsequent promotion of the teacher how-to text to address these matters are evidence of this. That these critiques also appear in Ms. Wynn's thoughts regarding the literacy objects and her use of them, suggests that some functional critiques shape classroom pedagogy. Ms. Kramer's articulation of the teachers' approval of this text because of its practicality and presentation of specific mini-lessons speaks to her understanding of what teachers in her district want from teacher how-to texts. This also suggests a two-way flow of critique with regard to functional aspects of conducting writers' workshop.

I make the assumption that critique from the literacy pedagogy community is heard at the level of teacher education programs (pre-service and graduate) by the instructors, because Ms. Wynn's master's level writing course used the revised work of Calkins, which Calkins states was revised in response to critiques around the need for structure in the writers' workshop. In her master's level writing course, Ms. Wynn was exposed to the revised work of Calkins but because she was given select photocopies from the text, rather than the whole text, it is difficult to comment on how much she may have been privy to critique through the teacher education community. With her only articulation of critique associated with the literacy objects centred on difficulties associated with issues of getting students to produce finished pieces of work, and the manner in which she viewed Calkins' structuring of the workshop through the addition of the mini-lesson as a positive and necessary addition for writers' workshop to be productive, suggests Ms. Wynn was processing aspects of the critique related to the functioning of the literacy objects, while not processing others.

It is noteworthy that little of the Ministry of Education's articulation of the writers' workshop is incorporated at the classroom level. The literacy objects, as named in the Ministry documents are, of course, found in name and form in the classroom, but the functions for which they are used in the classroom bears little resemblance to the articulation of them in the Ministry documents. For this reason, I am unable to say that the Ministry of Education provides any kind of a conduit for the flow of critique to the classroom.

What is evident in this examination of the way critique of the literacy objects flows (or in some cases does not flow) to the classroom from the various spaces connected to it, is the resilience of the literacy objects. They travel through the spaces, as concepts that eventually become objects (the mini-lesson, publication of student work) or as objects largely unaltered in form (role sheets) to take up their position in the classroom as intact objects where they take on agentive roles.

Discussion

In this chapter, I have attempted to set out a framework for mapping the relationship of distant forces to a local classroom by examining the objects that connect two framed literacy pedagogical interactions across time and location. In doing so, I have demonstrated the way in which some literacy objects arrive in local spaces as objects, generally intact in form but much altered in function (role sheets) or as concepts that become literacy objects in an intermediary space (mini-lessons) or as objects created in the classroom from a conceptualization of the object in a distant space (student conferencing, publication of student work).

The literacy objects and the concepts that were to become objects examined in this chapter (with the exception of conferencing in the writers' workshop) endured in form through time and space. As they travelled through these spaces a process of institutionalization took place: the objects became fixed items or social facts (Brandt & Clinton, 2002) in the classroom literature circle and writers' workshop. By the time the literacy objects reached the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary a definite hybridization had taken place: the literacy objects took on a top-down function, intended to ensure coverage of the curriculum and to direct students in what they should be doing on a daily basis rather than the grand conversations or focus on process originally intended for the literacy objects connected to literature circles and writers' workshop. Here we see another instance of Graves' and Atwell's concerns around helpful procedures becoming "orthodoxies"; but this phenomenon also speaks to the tendency for literacy objects, as they become institutionalized, to be reduced, stripped down in function,

109

even if they remain intact in form as they travel through the spaces of the educational structure. The outcome, I argue, are framed pedagogical interactions that co-opt a reductive version of the originally expansive purposes and processes associated with the literacy objects.

As the literacy objects came to be employed in the classroom we can see that critiques related to the social interactions around the literacy object went unheeded, while critiques related to function helped to shape them in certain ways. For example, with writers' workshop, critiques related to teaching writing skills and strategies solely through one-to-one conferencing led to the addition of teaching through mini-lessons used in the writers' workshop at Howe River Elementary. But critiques of social issues associated with publication of student work, such as what is communicated through a strong focus on publication, do not. Similarly, positive research regarding procedure makes its way to the classroom, while critiques related to the social pitfalls of some procedures do not. For example, with the literature circle, research regarding the benefits of student run book clubs makes its way to the classroom but the critiques regarding the way students are socialized for rote participation in the book club through the role sheets do not.

When looking at the influence of different spaces on the use of the literacy objects in the classroom it is important to note that the teacher how-to texts exerted the most influence for both framed pedagogical interactions. The way the role sheets and the mini-lessons are taken almost verbatim from a teacher how-to text suggest that the publisher of how-to texts is a powerful player in shaping the literacy objects as they function in classroom literacy instruction in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. Perhaps it is because neither of these texts addresses the critiques associated with the literacy objects, but instead provide ideas on how to functionally utilize the literacy objects, that critiques on the social uses of the literacy objects do not seem to enter the classroom space, or at least in the teachers' use of those literacy objects.

The next chapter examines the literature circle, narrowed in scope through the activity of the role sheet in the literature circle, in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. What are the consequences of literacy objects, narrowed in scope yet invested with greater power, in children's literacy lives? By looking closely at the activity of the human actors in relation to the literacy objects, as well as the activity of the literacy object as a non-human actor, this question may be addressed. This next part of the analysis rests on the argument just made that there are literacy objects whose traces travel through time and space to actually shape the enactment of the pedagogical interaction and that these literacy objects have the capacity to continue to act outside of the immediate literacy events in which they are used.

Table 4-1: Characteristics of the Literature Circle across Connected Spaces

	Literacy Pedagogy Community (Daniels, 1994, 2002)	Ministry of Education (BC Ministry of Education, 2002, 2006)	Publisher/Teacher How-To Text (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003)	Classroom	
				Teachers	Students
Definition	Small, temporary discussion groups where group members determine what will be read and each member takes on specific, rotating **roles** for each meeting (Daniels, 1994, 2002)	Small-group discussions about text Groups reading the same text meet together for a period of time	"Independent, temporary groups based on students' book choice (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003, p. 22)		Read a novel in a group Complete **role work** by writing out **role work** and reading that work to the literature circle
Purpose	Independent reading Aesthetic appreciation of literature Collaborative learning	Offer motivation to students when they have the opportunity to select books and have "detailed discussions with their peers" (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p.160) To develop students' oral language abilities An element of the "Voice and Choice" of the Ministry's language arts philosophy		Critical literacy Read whole novels Opportunity to discuss books Training for future book talk in school Student independence	When completing the **role sheets** skills in reading and writing are improved Training for adult book club (1 student) Want to enjoy books Social opportunity

	Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	Publisher/Teacher How-To Text	Classroom	
				Teachers	**Students**
Discussion	Natural conversation Grand conversation Facilitated by the **role sheets** when students are first learning how to participate in literature circles	"detailed discussions" (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p.160)	Emanates from the **role sheets** Quality of discussion is facilitated by the use of **role sheets**	Guided by the **role sheets** Immaturity impedes discussion, therefore **role sheets** are necessary "More about getting the assignment [i.e., **role sheets**] done." "Growing conversation"	Verbatim reading of the **role sheets** Resembles a Q & A session, at best Dominated by criticism regarding adequacy of others' role **work** About whether members have completed **role work**
Monitoring	Teacher should use whatever methods s/he would normally employ to deal with students who are "uninterested or unmotivated or who misbehave during literature circles" (Daniels, 2002, p.226) Set up a point system for students who are habitually unprepared Peer pressure "often takes care of the sloth	Teachers should be assessing student oral language by observing their individual participation in literature circles at periodic intervals (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p.124)	Address issues such as inappropriate behaviour, frequent lack of preparedness or absence with "consequences" such as "three strikes you're out" where the "student must independently complete book reports and summaries, in addition to the **role sheets** That student may rejoin a group at the beginning of	Students who have not completed the **role work** are written up on the unfinished homework board Peer pressure an effective means to "shame" students into completing the **role work** **Role sheets** collected at the end of each term and graded according to rubric devised by Ms. Wynn Report cards use	Discussion leader writes names of group members who have not completed the **role work** on a sheet of paper to be given to the teacher Students highly aware that this is the only aspect of the literature circle on which they will be graded

	Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	Publisher/Teacher How-To Text	Classroom	
				Teachers	**Students**
	problem" (Daniels, 2002, p.229) If grading must be done, create performance rubrics with the students that encompasses various aspects of their participation Can assign projects at conclusion of reading that will be graded		the next unit **Role sheets** can be graded for assessment purposes (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003)	two BC performance standards: Term 1: "- is able to use speaking and listening to interact with others during class and small group activities" Term 2: " uses strategies while reading in literature circles to develop an understanding of the text (i.e., make connections, make predictions, ask questions, summarize events)"	
Role of the teacher	Teachers can take a "more natural, enjoyable partner role in the classroom community" through literature circles Teachers can "leave behind the position of taskmaster/teller		Teacher functions as a facilitator and coach	Teach the **roles** to the students in the lowest group and ensure they do the reading Check in with groups at each meeting to see who has done the **role work** Circulate to ensure students	Teacher's role is to enforce the reading of the novels and the completion of the **role work**

113

	and become a fellow reader, a coach, and a colleague" (Daniels, 1994, p.16) Teacher a facilitator, not a group member or instructor			are on task Remind students not to read ahead in the novel so as not to "spoil the prediction element" of the **'Problem Solver' role** Teachers help students with book choices Help settle disputes about which book groups will read	

Figure 4-1: Network of Spaces Connected to the Classroom in which Literature Circles Appear
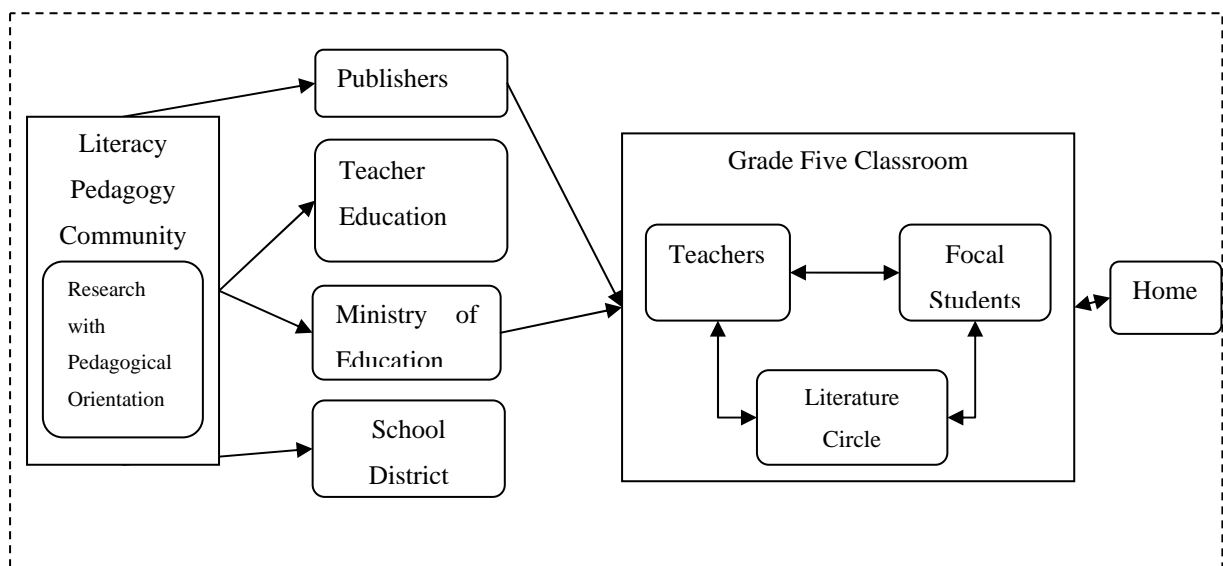
Table 4-2: Characteristics of the Role Sheets across Connected Spaces

| | Literacy Pedagogy Community (Daniels, 1994) | Ministry of Education (BC Ministry of Education, 2002, 2006) | Publisher/Teacher How-To Text (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003) | Classroom | |
				Teachers	Students
The roles	**Discussion director** (asks "fat" questions about the story to help the group have dynamic discussion. "Why...How...If…") **Literary luminary/ Passage picker / Passage master (non-fiction)** (finds passages group would like to hear read aloud); **Connector** (finds 5 connections between the story and the world outside - can be current or past real world events and experiences - can connect to life experiences, school, neighbourhood, other people and problems, other stories or writings on the same topic, similar events at other times and places, and other writings by the same author); **Illustrator** (uses artwork to represent a significant scene or		**Discussion leader** (creates various levels of questions to guide the group in discussion of the passage); **Read-aloud master** (identifies and explains the significance of 6 interesting sections of the text to share with the group); Scene setter; Sensational Sequels; **Connection maker** (shows 6 connections they are making between the text and the same text, other text, the world, themselves); Dream Weaver; Efficient Effector; Emotional Events; Fortune teller; **Illustrator** (draws a picture depicting important character, event, setting, or problem and explains the significance of the	**Discussion leader** (writes 3 "fat" thoughtful questions – questions w/o a yes/no answer); Group leader/**Read-aloud master** (chooses 2 interesting paragraphs, discusses interesting words, why they liked them, connections they have made) **Connection maker** (shows 3 connections: between the text and the same text; between the text and another, the world; their own life); **Illustrator** (draws and colours a main scene from the book and writes a caption to explain); **Problem solver** (identifies a conflict in the story and how it was solved); **Sequencer** (writes 4 sentences that include important events in the	

idea in the text); **Summarizer** (summarizes the section just read) Vocabulary enricher (chooses words that are new, different, strange, funny, interesting, important, or hard. Cites the word and the page on which it is located - gives the meaning - writes the sentence that includes the word - tells why it was chosen - writes a new sentence with the word); Travel tracer (tracks where the action is taking place in the assigned reading. - writes about where the characters have moved to and from); Investigator (searches the web to locate some background information on the book and any topic related to it);		picure); **Problem solver** (identifies conflicts in the story and shows how they were solved); **Sequencer** (writes 8 events that occurred in the reading, cuts them apart and has the group put them back in order – also decides which is most important even); **Summarizer**; Timeliner; Trait Tracker; "Wanted!" poster; Word webs; Word wizard; Action plot-o-graph; Advice columnist; Sense of character; Time of change; Character connections; Character profile; Character web; Circle sequencer; Commentator; Map matters; Meaningful Mottos; Meeting of the minds; Memory maker; New narrator; News reporter; Perfect puzzler;	section read - must include: Who, did what, when, and where)	

	Literacy Pedagogy Community	**Ministry of Education**	**Publisher/Teacher How-To Text**	**Classroom**	
				Teachers	**Students**
			Poetic perceptions; Point/Counterpoint; Power graph		
Role Sheets	An innovation created by Daniels (1994) Temporary scaffolds to foster discussion skills - Teacher surrogate (Daniels, 1994, 2002)	No mention of roles or role sheets	Integral to the literature circle Conversation originates from them Provide a purpose for reading Written role work can be used, along with other projects, for assessing student performance	Roles characterized as "jobs" are integral part of the lit circle View the teacher how-to text's version of the role sheets as too complicated Vigour or productiveness of the literature circles judged by whether or not students are completing their role work and how well they listened to their fellow group members read their role work aloud during the literature circle All grading in relation to lit circles based on completion of the role sheets	Roles understood as "jobs" Dictate all of the book talk Function as oral and written worksheets - Participation in lit circle meetings is judged by their peers on whether or not students completed their role work and whether that completion was done in accordance with specifications of the role sheet

Figure 4-2: The flow of Critique Related to the Role Sheets
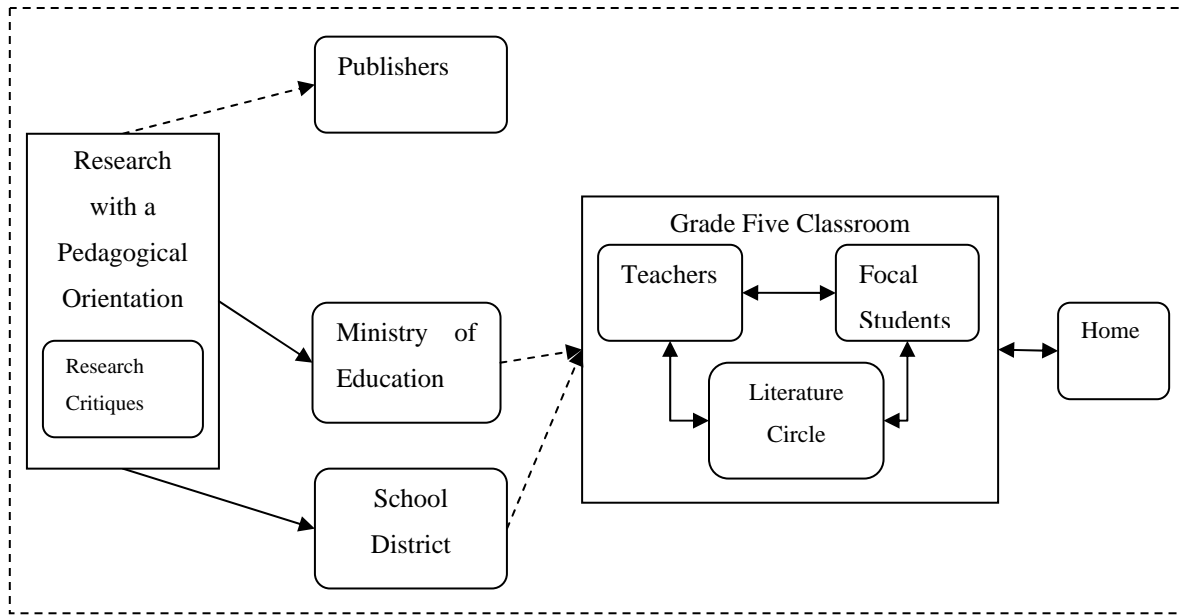
Table 4-3: Characteristics of Writers' Workshop across Connected Spaces

| | Literacy Pedagogy Community (Calkins, 1994) | Ministry of Education (BC Ministry of Education, 2002b, 2006) | School Board /Publisher/ Teacher How-To Text (Buckner, 2005) | Classroom | |
				Teachers	Students
Definition	A form of writing instruction that makes writing a personal project for children by guiding them in their writing rather than telling them how to write.	- Writing spoken of as a "craft" (BC Ministry of Education, 2002a, p.207)	(No definition of writers' workshop given because the text primarily addresses the use of the writer's notebook)	A "place" where students go to learn how to write and to work on their writing. It incorporates both structure and choice – students can "play with the structure and make it [their] own"	
Purpose	Provides the vehicle for teaching writing with an emphasis on process not product. By becoming authors, children are able to look at the writing of others with new insight; they are enabled to look for the meaning behind the text.	To provide students with a significant block of time for writing (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 22) "Students learn to appreciate the power and beauty of language as they create their own literary works, often modelled on those they have read or viewed. As they		To provide a structured environment in which students may become productive writers	

	Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	School Board /Publisher/ Teacher How-To Text	Classroom	
				Teachers	**Students**
Routines	**Mini-lesson** tailored to the particular needs of the class Students draft, revise, confer with each other while teacher circulates, **conferencing** with individuals about their writing – students at a variety of stages at any given time - Five types of **conferences**: Content **conference** (teacher-student, peer), Design **conference** (balancing content with form), Process and Evaluation **conference** (focus on process not on product – get child	**Mini-lesson** prewriting – generating ideas for getting started, often including building criteria and setting goals drafting – writing down ideas revising – meaning-based refining and polishing editing – grammar and style refining and polishing presenting and **publishing** – preparing a presentation or represent-tation and sharing it	Daily **mini-lesson** – teachers are given several lesson plans to follow for **mini-lessons** Students keep notebook on daily basis After several weeks, they are directed to begin drafting a piece for **publication** Teacher helps students individually with editing and	Weekly **mini-lesson**, generally taken directly from teacher how-to text Over period of two months: Write several SWATs (Sustained Writing All the Time – write for ten minutes without stopping your pencil) Choose one SWAT to prepare for **publication** when directed by teacher, write it out on fullscap, hand in to teacher by a deadline. Stories	**Mini-lesson**s used in writing SWATs when teachers tell students to do so. When not told explicitly to do so, students do not use the **mini-lesson**. One student expressed difficulty with the timed nature of the writing, saying she would like to at least have one minute to pick a topic (Riley) and that she seven minutes would be more feasible for writing Most focal

	to teach you about how s/he writes), Editing **conference** – Peer-**conferences** focus on content and to a small extent, process Whole class sharing session or small response groups Students may be given a quota for how much they need to **publish**	with others (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p.7)	revision in **conferences** but students also engage with editing and revision strategies taught in **mini-lesson**, practiced in notebook and then applied to their drafts No discussion of **publishing** procedures in this text	must have a problem and a resolution to the problem If ready by deadline, take part in peer-editing **conferences** – students given written instructions for editing each other's work and verbal challenge to give the peer three suggestions to improve the piece - first peer assigned by teacher, second self-chosen Revise first draft Good copy and cover picture produced for Galleon Binder No **conferences** held between teacher and student	students (except Nigel) engage with SWAT readily Most focal students have piece written out in draft form by the deadline (except Nigel) Two students very unhappy with their teacher-assigned peer-editor (Riley, Ally). One student finds process unhelpful. Students focus only on editing, not on content or process in these peer **conferences** All focal students take part in this revision at the appointed time Most focal students have a piece ready for publication by the deadline (except Nigel)

	Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	School Board /Publisher/ Teacher How-To Text	Classroom	
				Teacher	Students
Launching the writer's workshop	No writing prompts Important to launch writer's workshop with a good understanding of finding the right topic Ask children to think of what authors do when they are going to write Tell them that before an author writes s/he thinks about a topic Teacher models brainstorming for topics by taking several everyday events that were meaningful and saying s/he might write about them Has students brainstorm in pairs for events that have happened to them Children share the stories they have just told with the whole group Instead, could talk about a piece you		Writing prompts should not be used Launch of writer's workshop predicated on launching the writer's notebook successfully Begins with teacher reading picture books aloud to students for several days, eliciting oral stories from students with a similar experience, teacher models taking notes of the connections she has made from those stories; later shares some of the personal writing she has done using those ideas Notebooks are handed out at the end of first week when the children	Stories **published** by Ms. Wynn's students the previous year are available to the students for three months before writer's workshop begins in December Prompts should be used in the first term because when they are given too much freedom of choice, students become insecure In second and third term, students need to use only their own ideas in their writing Introduction of WW began with students exploring the origins of their name with their parents and writing about their findings in	During this period of time I note several of the focal students reading the stories from this binder Prompt from a children's writing book helpful to Nigel for first piece to **publish** in the second term One student makes the first set of lists highly

122

	Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	School Board /Publisher/ Teacher How-To Text	Classroom	
				Teacher	**Students**
	want to revise, how a well-known author composed a piece, or have students bring objects from home and tell stories about them		have all had the experience of storytelling 3-4 **mini-lessons** given before students are asked to actually write in notebook – these generally involve generating lists of ideas	the notebook (a strategy taken from Buckner's text) (actually more of a writing prompt) Following week, students begin generating lists, a strategy straight from Buckner's text, and writing SWATs from these lists Motivational quotes given to students to include in their writer's notebook - students instructed to put quotes on a separate page	personalized with My Best Movies, My Best Songs (Nigel), the rest make general lists as instructed Purpose of motivational quotes not understood for most students the quotes are incorporated in their SWATs or their Idea Book (Ally, Deanne, Nigel) and not given a separate page
The Writing Process	Stages: rehearsal, drafting, revision, editing Non-linear, recursive, overlapping stages (p.19) On any given day, different students will be at various stages of the	Draft, revise, edit, and proofread work before making final copy Work should be **published**	Mentions Calkin's stages Drafts for writing taken from notebook. Students are taught to incorporate different pieces from their notebook by	Teacher refers to pieces written in notebook as SWATs Several SWATs written, Revise one SWAT to prepare for publication,	Call the finished pieces, in addition to the various pieces in their notebook, SWATs Editing – some students rely on their parents for help editing pieces for

	drafting, revising, editing, **publishing** process Rehearsal: by gathering "raw materials" (an image, a connection between ideas, a noteworthy sentence), writers begin to form a vision or a way to begin – rehearsal may also involve mapping out the writing – rehearsal involves talking, observing, reading Drafting: by seeing writing as drafting, the tentative nature of the early stages early stages is recognized – a process that differs between writers – some write a lot in early stages and go back and revise, some take it more slowly, carefully considering all that they write Revision: Drafting quickly turns into revision or overlaps		looking for patterns Drafts are written on a separate tablet of paper, not in the notebook Allows students to cut up pages if necessary in the revision Helps prevent them from copying the story directly from the notebook Revising strategies are taught when the students are drafting – allows them to try them out directly on their stories Editing – important – must be taught and practiced in both exercises and in students' drafts Publication – text does not address publication but assumes it will be the end result for some pieces of writing	peer-editing **conference**, revise, **publish** Students free to choose what they will write during certain periods of time but when a **publishing** deadline has been set they must work on revising a SWAT Drafts for publication must be written on fullscap paper and double-spaced to allow for peer-editors' writing No revision strategies taught Editing taught in **mini-lesson** Each piece is edited by two peers in a peer-editing **conference** **Publishing** deadlines set for	publication Some students upset by corrections given in the peer-editing **conference** (Ally, Riley) or felt they were not helpful (Isaac) All students follow teacher's procedure, except Nigel who makes revisions in his notebook before copying to fullscap Some students (Ally, Sara, Isaac, Nigel) copy story directly from notebook, some add detail as they transfer it from notebook to draft fullscap (Riley, Deanne) Most focal students (except Nigel) participate in this peer-editing **conference** When given **publication** deadline and told

124

heavily with it – revision involves the process of the writer becoming a reader and then turning back into becoming the writer - Writers focus in to write and then pull back to ask questions of their text – child is assisted with this through **conferencing** with a teacher but as children learn the skill they are taught to self-revise and to peer-revise in **peer-conferences** by listening to peer's stories and asking questions to help clarify story and determine future direction story will take Editing – a process of tightening, linking, clarifying – not a process focused on finding errors – done in one-to-one teacher-student **conferences**		Sharing - Text does not address group sharing	just before report cards need to be written Sharing sessions determined not feasible because of the large size of the class – the one sharing session done at end of the year where students presented their favourite piece a positive and empowering experience for students and helpful to teacher as she could hear the piece as the students meant for it to be read	to revise one of their SWATs, some students start a new piece (Isaac, Nigel) For most of the students (except Nigel), the revision consisted of correcting spelling errors and copying the piece onto the paper for the final copy for **publication** Some students very cautious about what they will **publish** (Ally, Sara) Students in general very proud to be sharing their work

	Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	School Board /Publisher/ Teacher How-To Text	Classroom	
				Teacher	Students
Storing the Writing	Writing folders Daily writing folder for writing in progress, editing checklist, notes on future topics Cumulative writing folder for finished work, rough drafts numbered and stapled together with the final draft. Cumulative folder can also have a table of contents with title and date finished.		Notebook Two parts for the notebook – front is for writing, back page, moving toward front is for notes on **mini-lesson** strategies, notes on revision and editing, exercises on revision All drafts done on a separate tablet of paper	Notebook Motivational quotes supplied for notebook SWAT (Sustained Writing All the Time) pieces No order to all of this section – quotes mixed in with SWATs – but supposed to be on separate pages Topics for writing kept in an Idea Book stapled into back of notebook Students not required to keep their drafts A dedicated section of notebook for listing and storing ideas important	Notebook One student used idea book for notes from **mini-lesson** (Isaac) Some students keep drafts (Isaac, Deanne, Riley, Ally) Most students used this for SWATs – three students **published** piece originated with this list (Ally, Sara, Riley)

	Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	School Board /Publisher/ Teacher How-To Text	Classroom	
				Teacher	Students
Role of the teacher	Provide time for writing - daily is ideal – if not possible, writing three days per week for a half year is preferable to one day per week for a whole year Ensure a predictable routine for writer's workshop High amount of teacher input in **mini-lesson**, as well as in **conferencing** **Mini-lessons** – demonstrations to teach the skills and strategies of writing –These must be developed by the teacher to fit the needs of the class - Use literature to help children to learn more about writing from published authors - Important to teach the skills of revision – p.185 for list – Important to teach and re-teach the skills of **peer-**	Use **mini-lessons** to model writing and teach writing strategies within students ZPD **Conferences**- Use one-to-one and small group **conferences** to "monitor students' levels of independence and provide intervention where needed" (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p.23) "co-establish criteria for writing, sit alongside students to encourage and give feedback as they write, celebrate successes, and help students set goals for future writing development"	Provide time in schedule daily for writing all year long and have students write at home three times per week Teach a **mini-lesson** each day – text provides numerous lesson plans for these **mini-lessons** Teach strategies for finding ideas to write about on a daily basis and for incorporating those ideas into drafts leading to **publication** Teach revision strategies, e.g., coming up with good lead sentences, mapping the text, developing style Embed grammar and punctuation skill instruction in the context of	Hold writer's workshop twice per week (three times per week last month of school) – no home writing assigned Provide a predictable routine for writing time and for procedures of process writing **Mini-lessons** taught once per week - Teach strategies for building an idea bank to enable student to self-generate ideas to write about - Teach students editorial notations to note errors, omissions, use of paragraphs, and COPS (capitals, omissions, punctuation, spelling) to use in the peer-editing	**Mini-lessons** on incorporateing senses, choosing a topic from "My Ten Best/My Ten Worst" and "Things That Make Me Go Hmm" lists used in students' writing Lift a line, Character development not used at all during my observation period Editing only done by students – self-editing and peer-editing **conferences**

conferencing: listen to the piece; respond; ask questions of the writer; perhaps make tentative suggestions **Conferences** need to be frequent and focus on listening In **conferences**, teach children to ask questions of themselves when they are writing

Editing – vital for pieces that will be **published** - most teaching of editing done by teacher on a one-to-one basis with individuals - editing checklist employed – child first self-edits and then teacher edits each piece that is going to be **published** more than once - look for patterns in the errors and have the child find all the instances of the error – use editing to help children become learners of the conventions of | (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 22).

Revision and editing - Give students opportunity to "appraise their own and others' work; revise and edit their own and others' work for content and clarity; edit to correct their own and others' use of grammar, spelling, and punctuation using both electronic and manual means" (BC Ministry of Education, 2002a, p.208)

Students edit by rereading and reflecting on their own writing, and **conferencing** with peers and the teacher. Students edit for accuracy in spelling, punctuation, | student's writing

Respect students' wishes for pieces in their notebooks they would like the teacher not to read Teacher keeps own notebook and frequently shares it with students | **conferences** Teach paragraph use through **mini-lesson** in context of writer's workshop as well as through Communicating Skills text Teach spelling, grammar and punctuation through a separate workbook called Communicating Skills Set up peer-editing conference dates Set draft and **publishing** deadlines Promote the skill of meeting deadlines through the peer-editing **conference** and **publication** process Promote student notebooks as something they own and that teacher does not need to see Display teacher's | |

	language (p.209) – purpose of editing is to reinforce risk-taking – final pieces should be as close to perfect as possible	grammar, and usage, and may use a self-editing checklist (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p.77)		notebook to show how to make cover of writer's notebook
	Publication – ensure that students **publish** their work though not every piece will be **published** – can set a target (e.g., one in every four pieces should be **published**) or any work that has gone through several drafts should be **published** – however, emphasis should be on process not product	Sharing – "Students can learn a great deal from sharing their writing. Discussing the writing can be very valuable before writing, during writing, and after writing." (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p.24). Publication - presenting and **publishing** – preparing a presentation or representation and sharing it with others (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p.7) "Students **publish** and present their		

	Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	School Board /Publisher/ Teacher How-To Text	Classroom	
				Teacher	**Students**
			texts for real audiences and learn from example" (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p.77).		
Monitoring	No **publishing** schedule **Conferencing** and group share used to track student progress Teach children to be critical readers of their own writing Editing checklist filled out by teacher at stage of final draft		Teacher reads students' drafts and makes notes on them to help with editing and revision Notebook assessed	Deadlines for drafts and final copies need to be set Teacher only reads the final **published** version Important to preserve student "errors" in final copies of writing – preserves ownership and tells teacher "information that I need to know about their own level of literacy, comfort level with risk taking with new or more complicated vocabulary, or willingness to commit to a creative idea" –	Most focal students attuned to deadlines (5/6) and one not at first (Nigel) Some students worried about "peer" monitoring of their **published** pieces

130

				that is, these pieces are used to assess whether the lessons taught in whole class **mini-lessons** or through the separate "grammar" instruction are being utilized **Published** pieces are graded using rubric provided by Ministry of Education for assessing student writing Feedback on **published** pieces is in the form of highlighting on the rubric the indicators appropriate to the student's writing Report cards use two benchmarks from the BC performance standards for grade five language arts: "- is able to write a personal narrative or creative story	

| | | | | that is complete and easy to follow, with some description and detail"

"-is able to **publish** a final writing piece that contains few errors in sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, and grammar" | |

Figure 4-3: Network of Spaces Connected to the Classroom where Writers' Workshop Appears

Table 4-4: Uses of the Mini-Lesson across Spaces

Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	School Board/ Publisher/ Teacher How-to Text	Classroom	
			Teacher	**Students**
Mini-lesson necessary to teach the skills and strategies of writing and to reduce the time requirements inherent to teaching these through one-to-one conferencing. - Calkins refuses to outline specific mini-lessons citing the need for these to be conducted on a case-by-case basis, responsive to the needs of each particular group of students	Mini-lessons should be used to model writing and teach writing strategies within students Zone of Proximal Development	Daily mini-lessons are necessary to teach students strategies for writing - Specific mini-lessons provided in this text. Teachers are told to choose them as they see fit, although the author advises teachers give the first three mini-lessons in the text before expecting students to do any writing	Mini-lessons taken directly from the teacher how-to text Mini-lessons are an important part of structuring the writers' workshop so that students actually produce work as a result of engaging in it. They give ideas for writing and provide skills for editing writing. - Inspirational quotes given during mini-lesson to show students how famous writers approach writing	Students use the strategies presented in the mini-lesson when directed to do so but not otherwise - Unable to say why the quotes from published authors were in their notebooks

Table 4-5: Uses of Student Conferencing across Spaces

Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	School Board/ Publisher/ Teacher How-to Text	Classroom	
			Teacher	Students
Frequent and used to help students clarify their writing and set future direction for their work. Take place between teacher and student and also on student-student basis. - As students grow in their writing abilities they can take on more of the roles of the teacher in conferencing	One-to-one and small group conferences to follow student progress and provide individualized support - Teachers encouraged to "sit alongside students to encourage and give feedback as they write, celebrate successes, and help students set goals for future writing development" (BC Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 22).	-Teacher-student conferences to help with revision and editing.	Student-student conferences set up on a specific day to edit draft for conventions of writing (punctuation, grammar, meaning) prior to the writing of the final copy - Students verbally challenged to find three things they could suggest to their partner to improve the story	Students edit each other's work for punctuation, grammar, and spelling Limited input regarding meaning is given to the focal students - Input regarding writing style or other factors related to improving their stories not given in peer-editing session

Table 4-6: Uses of the Publication of Student Work across Spaces
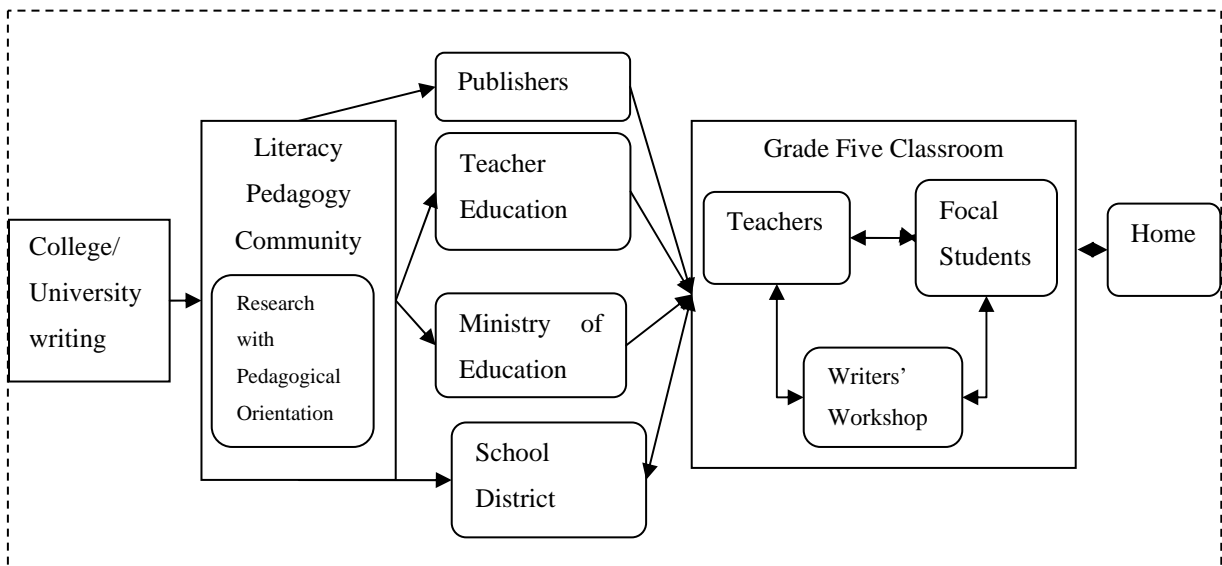
Literacy Pedagogy Community	Ministry of Education	School Board/ Publisher/ Teacher How-to Text	Classroom	
			Teacher	Students
Some pieces should be written up to be read by others. An agreement about how much of student work should be taken to the publication stage may need to be made. - Teachers should be highly involved with students in their revision and editing in order to prepare the pieces for publication	Publication of writing should be encouraged to give students real audiences and, therefore, authentic purposes for their writing. - Teachers should be highly involved with students in their revision and editing in order to prepare the pieces for publication	A goal to be encouraged in the writing process - Teachers should be highly involved with students in their revision and editing in order to prepare the pieces for publication	-Publication for an audience viewed as helpful way to encourage students to do their best work and to produce more work All students publish on the same schedule when directed to do so by the teacher. Published work should reflect student work only (author and peer-input) -Students are only graded on the published piece.	All focal students produce a piece for publication by the assigned due date -One student (Nigel) does not follow the timeline set out by the teacher - Two students (Nigel and Isaac) do not rely on the editing of their peers before submitting their final copy to the classroom publication binder

Figure 4-4: The Flow of Critique Related to the Literacy Objects of the Writers' Workshop
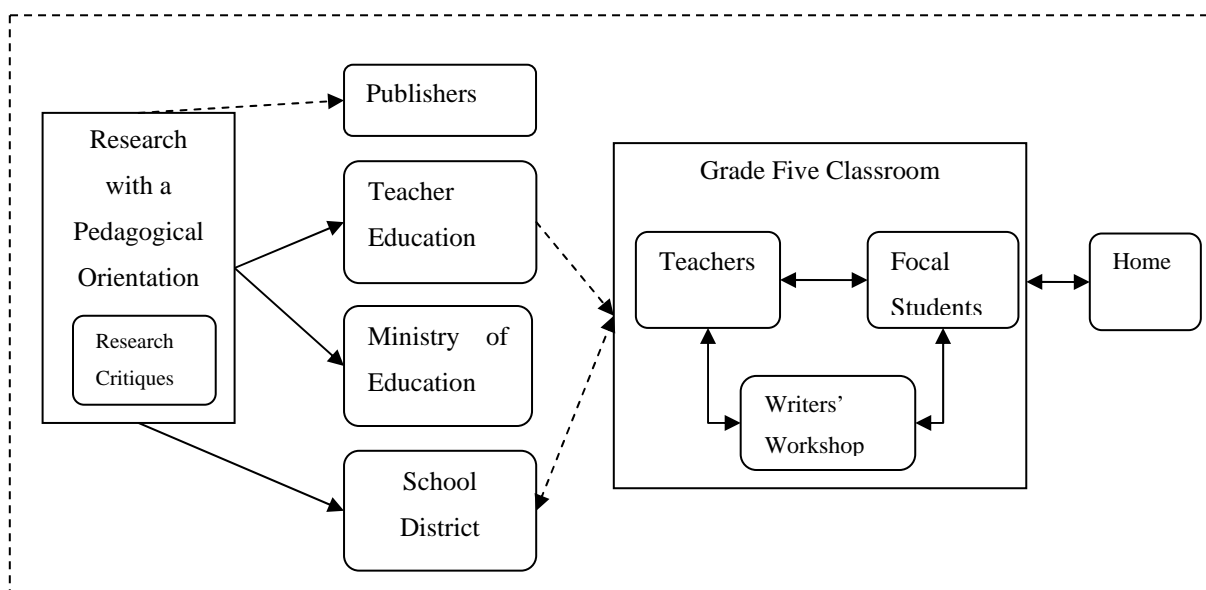
CHAPTER FIVE: LITERACY OBJECTS NARROWING THE VISION

From Grand Conversations to Doing Our Jobs: Role Sheets as Literacy Objects in Action

Well, it's like you read a novel and then you have to do jobs like illustrator and connection maker and stuff.

- Deanne, grade five student, Howe River Elementary, defining the literature circle

In Chapter One, I asked the following question regarding the widely used literature circle: How does the literature circle, conceptualized as "a sophisticated fusion of collaborative learning" (Daniels, 1994, p.17), become reading a novel and doing jobs? Chapter Four addressed the process by which this change took place through an examination of the role sheet, a literacy object that links the literature circle, a framed pedagogical interaction as conceptualized by Latour (1996), across the educational spaces connected to the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. The manner in which the role sheet travelled intact in form across the spaces connected to the classroom, yet hybridized in function to take on greater power, was demonstrated in Chapter Four, but what are the consequences of this hybridization?

How are students, such as Deanne, enacting the practice of literacy in the literature circle? How might the role sheet, a literacy object that travels to Deanne's classroom from distant spaces, be working to construct her in-school experience of literacy and that of others sharing her classroom space? These kinds of issues may be addressed by using the literacy-in-action model to look at the way human and non-human actors play agentful roles in the literature circle.

Agency in Relation to the Literature Circle

In this chapter, I address sub-questions two and three in order to attend to the concerns outlined above: How are the human agents in this study, i.e., the focal students and teachers, using the literacy objects associated with literature circle and writers' workshop in their classroom? How are the literacy objects associated with the literature circle and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom mediating the in-school practice of literacy for the focal students? The analysis is predicated on the central argument of the literacy-in-action model which contends that by ascribing a thing-like status to the literacy objects associated with the literature circle we can trace the way that this framed pedagogical interaction, shaped in distant

spaces, plays a role in the literacy instruction enacted in a local classroom setting (Brandt & Clinton, 2002). Central to the argument in this chapter is the third of Brandt and Clinton's (2002) tenets regarding literacy objects: their "capacity to be visible and animate outside the interactions of immediate literacy events" (p. 344). My aim is to demonstrate that literature circles, and the role sheets in particular, are literacy objects that are powerful in ways researchers promoting them may not have recognized.

The concept of literacy as a social practice as conceptualized in the New Literacy Studies (NLS) led us to understand the agentful role people play in shaping their own uses of literacy. However, as Brandt and Clinton (2002) argue, with this emphasis on human agency, the mediating role of literacy objects in the NLS came to be largely ignored. By reinstating literacy with a thing-like status, as something that is acted upon to accomplish a social practice and as an object that acts as a mediator, this situation may be remedied. The *literacy-in-action* model is proposed by Brandt and Clinton to facilitate inquiry into how readers and writers are mediating their social world through their literate practice and how literacy is acting in the situation as a social agent. In the following section, employing the unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action*, I look at how the human actors, that is, the teachers and students in the study, engage with the role sheets as literacy objects. I then look at the way that this literacy object itself takes on an agentive role in the literature circles of the grade five class at Howe River Elementary and introduce one move, *folding in* (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), that the literacy object makes in this classroom.

Students as Agents in Literacy-in-Action

The focal students in this study exercise agency in particular ways with regard to the role sheet as a literacy object. Each week, most of the focal students carried out the role work as it had been assigned to them; that is, they read the sections of the novel their group had agreed upon, completed the written role work, read the role work aloud during the literature circle, and listened to others read their work. The roles the students in this class used were: Discussion Leader, Read-Aloud Master, Problem Solver, Connection Maker, Sequencer and Illustrator. (See Appendix two for their teacher's description of these roles.)   However, there were indications that the focal students also pushed back" against the use of the literacy object in the grade five class at Howe River Elementary. Their response may be most clearly seen in the way that they interact with the role sheets in their discussions, both during the literature circle and in

their participation with the monitoring system set up to ensure compliance with the role work requirements.

Discussion

    In every literature group session, the students were supposed to spend as much time as they liked performing their roles or as they put it, "doing their jobs" and then whatever time remained in the forty minutes was to be spent reading the chapters in preparation for the next week's discussion. The students were adept at employing the role sheets in such a way that discussion in the literature circle groups of some students took on a whole new aspect.

    Discussions that are about anything but the book. Two of the focal students, Riley and Isaac, told me they enjoyed the Discussion Leader role because it allowed them to pose tricky questions to try to stump their group members. This seems to be the only area identified that resembles the kinds of discussion envisioned in any of the spaces connected to the classroom and they were the only two students to express this point of view.

    The following lengthy excerpt from my field notes provides an example of the way the majority of the forty minute long literature circle sessions involving focal students Deanne, Riley and Ally's group were conducted during the period the students were independently running their groups (nine sessions). At the start of the second cycle of the literature circles, the groups were given the choice of where to locate themselves. This group chose a table in a corner of the library furthest from the entrance and out of Ms.Wynn's sightline from their classroom.

        At 10:40 the grade fives who go to the library for lit circles get their duotang [folders] and novels and head down to the library. They sit at three different tables when they enter the library. I ask a group who is reading *Tuck Everlasting* if I may observe them this time and they readily agree. The members of this group are focal students Ally, Deanne, Riley, two other girls and a boy. This is the first day the groups are running the full lit circle after spending the eight weeks before the holidays learning the different roles. As the groups are organizing themselves, Ms. Crawford circulates, checking that each group knows how to begin.

        At 10:45, Deanne asks who has the Group Leader role today and one of the other girls says that she does. They all show each other the work they have done for their various roles. The boy has not completed his work as Illustrator and the group reacts vocally. Deanne tells the Group Leader to write the boy's name down on the list for Ms. Wynn. Assuming her Group Leader [Read-Aloud Master] role, one of the girls begins

with, "Everyone turn to page three." She reads a paragraph aloud. She then tells the group to turn to chapter three, but Deanne interrupts with, "You have to tell us why you liked that passage." The group murmurs acquiescence with Deanne's demand. The Group Leader begins to explain why she likes the passage and the boy gets up and leaves the table. Deanne says, "Now we have to stop." The boy comes back with Ms. Crawford, who tells the group that the Group Leader must remind people of what their jobs are for the session. The group complains to Ms. Crawford that the boy has not done his work and she tells him he must come prepared for each lit circle session. The boy sits down and the Group Leader tells the group to turn to chapter three. She reads the first paragraph and as she finishes, the boy asks, "What are we doing? Are we taking turns reading aloud?" The group makes noises of exasperation and Deanne tells the boy, "We are doing our jobs." She then asks him if he has even read the book. He turns the book over and reads from the book synopsis. Deanne tells the Group Leader that she should write the boy's name down because he hasn't even read the book.

Ally then explains that her job is to make questions about a paragraph she has chosen. Deanne tells her that she also has to answer the questions. Annoyed, Ally retorts that she did and proceeds to ask her first question. The Group Leader answers the question and Ally consults the paragraph in the book to be sure the answer is correct. Ally then asks her second question and solicits answers from Deanne, Riley, and the Group Leader. Ally checks her book to verify their responses. Ally then asks her third question and Deanne answers.

Continuing around the circle, Deanne announces that she is the Problem Solver. She then poses a question to the group. Various members of the group tell her that this isn't what the Problem Solver is supposed to do. Ms. Crawford is observing the group at this juncture and asks Deanne to read the role description aloud. Deanne does so and adds, "That's kinda what I meant." Ms. Crawford looks at her work and says that she has written questions. Deanne responds with, "It was impossible to find problems. Ms. Little helped me." Ms. Crawford tells her to carry on. Deanne reads her questions and the Discussion Leader tells her again that wasn't what she was should do.

Next, another girl announces that she is the Sequencer and reads her work to the group. Deanne says playfully, "That wasn't very interesting." The Sequencer responds that there wasn't much that was interesting in the section for this week.

Then Riley tells the group that she is the Connection Maker. She reads her connections quickly. Deanne then comments that they can't do Illustrator because the boy hasn't done his work. This "discussion" has taken approximately 15 minutes.

At 10:58, the Group Leader tells everyone what their next job will be. The boy complains to Ms. Crawford, who is observing again, that the group has changed his role. Ms. Crawford tells him that they are supposed to rotate and that next week he will have to do two jobs because he didn't do the work this week. She then tells the group that it is a good idea to write their next role in pencil on the lit circle booklet, as Deanne has done, so that they can remember for the next week. The group then discusses how many pages of the novel they have to read for next week.

At 11:00, the group begins reading the next section. I check around the room and the other groups have also moved into reading mode. Ms. Crawford does not appear to be in the room. The Discussion Leader soon stands up and asks if anyone wants a book mark. Everyone says yes and she quickly returns with blank bookmarks for the group. The group then works on colouring the bookmarks. Riley announces that she may be changing schools next year and Deanne says she might go to French Immersion next year. They talk about the merits of a nearby high school. At one point during the discussion, Ms. Crawford's voice can be heard nearby. The group simultaneously picks up their books and starts to read. About one minute later they go back to colouring their bookmarks.

The colouring of bookmarks lasted for twenty minutes, until the end of the period at 11:20. This kind of scenario repeated itself in Deanne, Riley and Ally's group week after week as I observed the literature circles. In Sara and Nigel's group, similar reading of role sheets, arguing about the performance of roles, criticism of the content of the work read aloud, and verbal reporting of those who had not completed the role work also substituted for unscripted discussion of the novels. Isaac sarcastically characterizes his group's discussions, which also consisted of reading of the role work, as "not that exciting."

Typically, it took the three groups, of which the focal students were members, between ten and fifteen minutes to read their role work, engage in any question and answer the Discussion Leader might have planned, choose the chapters they would read for the upcoming week and decide who would perform which role. This left them with twenty-five to thirty minutes to do their reading and begin preparing their role work for the next meeting.

As noted already, almost no unscripted book talk took place in any of the groups with the exception of the brief answers students supplied when the Discussion Leader had done her/his role work. This is not to say that discussion did not take place, however. In Deanne, Ally and Riley's group - the group that was the most positive in their assessments of literature circles - once the work associated with the role work was completed, the rest of the period was invariably spent conversing about topics as varied as school choice, famous Canadian hockey players, and advertising in the Super Bowl. They devised methods of appearing to be doing the work: colouring bookmarks as they chatted so that they looked like they were writing, always having their books open on the table; quickly picking up their books when Ms. Crawford approached or Ms. Wynn came into the library; and keeping their voices low in their conversation to keep Ms. Crawford from coming over to check on them. When I asked Ally, Deanne and Riley about features of the literature circle, such as book choice or book talk, they were generally negative, suggesting that they may not have enjoyed literature circles. However, as I reflect on my observations of the animated discussions that took place in their group after the role work was completed and note their generally positive attitude towards the literature circle in the transcripts of our one-to-one conversations, my sense is that what they were enjoying was the social time in which they were able to surreptitiously engage during the latter half of the literature circle period. In locating their meeting spot at the far end of the library, it appears that they were actively looking for ways to enable this discussion time that was about anything but the book.

Here we see that these three focal students engaged with the role sheets in a perfunctory manner. Doing their jobs meant reading the role sheets aloud. It did not mean using the role sheets as springboards to unscripted conversation about books. I argue that what the focal students, Deanne, Ally and Riley and their group were doing here represents a savvy attitude toward the expectations that were set out for them regarding discussion in the literature circle, an attitude that may be summed up as: just get the job done and then enjoy the time leftover as an opportunity to socialize with each other. It is difficult to fault the students for this. Not only had they been told to be sure to do their jobs associated with the literature circle meetings (read their written role work aloud, listen to others read theirs), but on the few occasions when the teachers did circulate to see how the literature circle groups were getting along, I did not hear a single instance of the teachers engaging students with an idea connected to the novel. With the exception of the six sessions in the first cycle when I observed Ms. Crawford working with the "low" group to train them on how to use the various roles, virtually all of the "discussions" the

teachers modelled for the students when they were independently conducting the literature circles related to the completion of role work.

The role sheets play a definite role in this process, communicating to students that the only "discussion" that is important to their teachers in the literature circle is the reading of role sheets and occasionally answering questions emanating from role sheets. They learn that by manipulating the system imposed by the role sheets they may easily move to real discussion in their literature group, even if it is discussion about anything but the book.

Engaging with the Monitoring System

The students were told that it was of utmost importance that they come prepared each week to the literature circle. They were to have read the section the group had decided on the previous week and they were to have their role sheets prepared. When this work was not done, a system was devised whereby the classroom teacher, Ms. Wynn, would be informed. Ms. Wynn assigned the Discussion Leader the responsibility for reporting who had not done their work that week. In the earlier excerpt from my field notes, this process is evident in the way that Deanne directed the Discussion Leader to report what she considered to be the errant behaviour of the only boy in their group during literature circle. These notes were then given to Ms. Crawford who, in turn, gave them to Ms. Wynn. Students who did not complete the role work each week were then written up on the unfinished homework board in the classroom and would have to stay in for recess the following day if the work was not completed that night. This surveillance system had social implications for the students as it pitted group members against one another and became a major topic of discussion during the first half of each literature circle period for two of the groups.

Choosing sides. Over the course of my observations of the literature circles, Sara related several stories of many members of her group not completing their role work. On one occasion, I had asked Sara what she thought of her literature circle group. She told me that she liked it but quickly went on to complain that few students do their role work.

> Sara: And me and one boy are always the only ones doing it and when we do our roles, people are like, 'Wow. They're such losers. They do their roles.'
>
> KL: Oh no…
>
> Sara: So, it's like - but I'm not going to stop doing my roles to stop being a loser 'cause I don't want a bad grade. I'm still going to try.

This conversation, while providing an example of resistance on the part of many students in the group when they chose to simply not do the work, speaks to the kind of angst a student like Sara experienced when she found herself in a group that largely refused to engage with the role work. For Sara, the choice came down to whose side she would take in relation to the role work, the teachers' or the majority of her fellow group members. Or perhaps in a much larger sense, a choice between social forces – desire for school success or desire for peer group membership. The possibility of bad grades propelled her to side with the teachers' requirements.

   Becoming double-agents. Students also took an agentful stance as they chose which side they would locate themselves on with regard to the monitoring system that had been put in place. In the following conversation with Sara, I had asked her to tell me about the different roles she had performed to date in her literature circle group. While underscoring the observation that some students simply chose not to complete the role sheets, it also speaks to the way different students responded to the methods that had been instituted to monitor student compliance.

   KL: And discussion leader is sort of …

   Sara: Leads the group. So it's - say that I'm the Discussion Leader, I would say, '[A boy] you show us your work.' If they didn't do it, then I say, 'Okay I have to write on a piece of paper.' '[A girl] you didn't do your work. What were you?' 'Illustrator.' That's the easiest role. You don't even have to read the book for Illustrator, you just take a picture from your head or from the book. But it is important to read the book but still the fact that you got your work done is a big step. And for Illustrator, it doesn't take that long. It takes me fifteen minutes to draw a picture.

   KL: So you're going around and you're getting the kids to talk about the different…

   Sara: And one of the boys says he always does his work. And we're like, 'Okay…' Like the hamster thing today, where his hamster ate his book. The book is bolted into the other book! And then he opens his other page and 'Look it's still there' and nothing's in it. He hasn't done his role three times now.

   KL: So he's not telling the truth, you think?

   Sara: Yeah. Cause the point of lying and then lying to Ms. Crawford is really bad. Ms. Crawford just goes up to Ms. Wynn and Ms. Wynn talks to him. He was crying today because he got in trouble. But if you don't do your role, you're going to get in trouble and you're gonna cry because….

   KL: Why do you think people are not doing it? They say they don't have time or whatever but do you think there are any other reasons?

143

Sara: I think they're not doing it because it's not the fun- it's not the funnest thing and for boys it's all about, you know, playing hockey and stuff like that. But you have to get your role done.

It is very interesting here that my question to Sara related to the role of discussion leader. My expectation was that she would explain the role to me as it had been set out on the role sheet. Based on her response, it appears that the monitoring overlay whereby the Discussion Leader was to make a list of students who had not completed their role work may have come to define the role of discussion leader for her. This is particularly interesting given that Ms. Wynn had given the task of writing up students who hadn't completed their role work to the Group Leader/Read-Aloud Master. Here the role sheet for the Discussion leader goes through another hybridization as it is used by this student.

While this example demonstrates the agency Sara exercises in attempting to keep her group in line, it also points to the sense in which many of Sara's fellow group members saw her as a collaborator with the teacher and, therefore, someone to be opposed. A scenario involving Nigel illustrates this point, in addition to providing another example of student resistance in opposition to the expectations set out for using the literacy object (after reading the novel, do the role sheet work, read the role sheet to the group, and listen to others read their role sheets).

At the beginning of the second cycle, when the groups were to be independently monitoring their own behaviour, Nigel arrived late one day. The following excerpt from my field notes further describes the scene,

As I enter the library shortly after the period has begun, I see that all of the students from Deanne, Riley and Ally's group, as well as all of the students in Isaac's group, are seated at their tables. The table where Sara and Nigel's group meets is almost empty. Sara and [another boy] are seated at this table. Other group members begin to file in. Nigel enters the library and as he approaches the table says in a loud voice expressing mock-horror, "Look! I'm late! Whatcha gonna do about it, 'cause I'm late?" As all of the members of this group settle at the table, Ms. Crawford comes to their table. As she scans the tabletop, it is obvious that not all of the students who have arrived late, Nigel included, have brought their literature circle materials with them. Nigel has come with his novel but not his folder [containing the role sheets and written role work].

The late students were all sent back to the classroom to get their folders. When it came time for each of them to perform their roles, none of them had completed the role work and they had nothing to read. Nigel's behaviour here seems to indicate that he knew he was going to be

144

reported for not getting his role work done and in arriving late and creating a scene when he did arrive he was mocking those who had fallen in line with Ms. Wynn's directions regarding non-compliant students (i.e., Sara and the other boy who routinely completed the role work). It seems he was simply daring Sara and the other boy to write him up one more time for not completing his role work, taunting them with the fact that he wasn't concerned about the consequences.

During the first and second literature circle cycles, I noted that Nigel was disengaged. However, at the end of the observation period, during his group's third cycle and a week after the scenario just related, I began to see him participating in the literature circle as it was structured: that is, doing the required reading, completing his role work and reading his role work aloud. Additionally, I observed him encouraging others to do so. As I talked with him about this change in his behaviour, Nigel told me that his parents had recently issued him with an ultimatum: improve his report card or risk losing his videogame privileges. On my final day of observing the literature circles, I noted that the rest of Nigel and Sara's group were engaging in their typical arguing. Nigel interrupted them in a loud and sarcastic tone saying, "Why don't we all share like we're supposed to? Would that be a good idea?"

I am somewhat at a loss as to how to interpret this turn of events. Nigel's mother had begun enforcing homework completion on a nightly basis and had been working with him to get caught up on his reading and role work for literature circles. It may have been that once Nigel felt he knew how to prepare for the literature group meetings, he was willing to engage in the practice of sharing his role work. Or it may have been that Nigel simply decided that receiving poor grades for resisting work that he did not enjoy was not a strategy he was willing to employ when the prospect of losing his video games would be the consequence of his resistance. Here it would seem that Nigel was being required to make a choice between the literacy objects in his life: give a higher priority to one set of literacy objects (those associated with homework, or risk losing the others, his video games, assuming video games are object but of a different kind).

The examples of Sara's use of the Discussion Leader to exert power within her group and changes to Nigel's approach to participating in the literature circle demonstrate the kinds of choices they must make with regard to literacy objects. Their interactions with the role sheets demonstrate not only the way that the role sheets are shaping their participation with this form of literate activity but also the way in which the role sheet positions them socially. This activity of the role sheet will be taken up later in this chapter.

Replacing literary criticism with peer censorship. Student agency as they interacted with the role sheets may also be seen in the way that they censored each other in the role performances. As portrayed earlier, Deanne and Ally were highly critical of the way that the other performed their role. I observed those kinds of interactions with that group on several occasions. In Sara and Nigel's group a similar type of censoring is seen in the way that they either told each other that they had not correctly done the work or in the private conversations the majority engaged in while the role work was being read aloud by other group members.

Here we see students learning to use literacy objects for diminished purposes. While they had been told in their introduction to literature circles that these would be groups in which they could discuss what they liked and disliked in the novels they were reading, through the way the role sheet was set up they, instead, only engaged in criticizing each other's ability to use this literacy object and no evidence of textual critique or response was apparent.

Isaac, the sixth focal student, was in a third literature circle group that also met in the library under the direction of Ms. Crawford. His group has not yet been heard from in this section but bears mentioning. His group was considered to be the "high group" in reading ability. In Isaac's group, all of the students came prepared each time to their literature circle meetings. On two occasions during my observations Isaac noted a discrepancy in something another group member had said and initiated a discussion about this. However, for the majority of the time they moved efficiently through the role work, reading it aloud as did the other groups. They then proceeded to assign the number of pages to be read and the roles to be performed for the next week and then sat quietly reading for the rest of the period. Isaac is the student who noted that his group's discussions were "not that exciting" suggesting that he alone amongst the focal students was aware of a discrepancy between the way literature circles had been pitched to them and the way they played out.

In this section, I have presented several examples of the way that the focal students and various other group members engaged with the role sheets as a literacy object in their social practice of literacy. Some of these ways involved participating in the literature circle as it was structured for them (reading the group-assigned portion of text; completing the role work; reading the role work aloud); some did not. Of concern here is that many of the students may be learning an unintended lesson: just get the work done even if it is uninspiring and doesn't make sense. Other practices, such as not completing role work, using the literature circle as a social time after quickly running through the role work, and appearing to engage with the reading and

146

role work, while not actually doing so, demonstrate ways that the students have simply done what adolescents so often do in that they represent attempts to resist imposed learning structures and enjoy the sense of social empowerment that flows from that. However, some of the instances of student agency carry with them a more cautionary note. Students having to choose sides regarding doing assigned work, becoming co-opted into a monitoring system attached to role sheet completion, or engaging in personal attacks on fellow students in place of literary criticism, all point to a destructive aspect to the agentive activity in which they engage in response to the literacy object.

<div align="center">Teachers as Agents in Literacy-in-Action</div>

As I considered Ms. Wynn and Ms. Crawford's participation in giving the role sheets such a prominent role in the literature circle for the grade five class at Howe River Elementary, my first impulse was to wonder how they could have missed the volumes of research available to teachers to highlight the problems associated with the role sheets. To a certain degree, this question is answered in the break in the flow of information that ensued through the teacher how-to text's omission of critique regarding the role sheets. However, pursuing this line of inquiry should not negate the kind of agentful action both of these teachers engaged in with regard to the literature circles. To explore this activity, I look directly at the role sheets and the way in which the literature circles were monitored. My aim is to portray the thoughtful steps both Ms. Wynn took to re-shape the literature circle as she saw it portrayed in the literacy pedagogy community and the teacher how-to text. A remark Ms. Wynn made when we were discussing the way she structures literature circles in her classroom, as it compares to the way the recommended by the literacy pedagogy community, provides some context for understanding the kinds of actions she took in shaping the literature circle for her classroom. The statement, "So I don't know. I think teachers can't just - I think those airy fairy theoretical days are long gone" is reflective of remarks she had made at other times, a position that expresses her feeling that the literacy pedagogy community may not be in touch with the realities of classroom life.

The Role Sheets

Reconstructing the role sheets. As described in Chapter Four, Ms. Wynn had shaped her class' use of the literature circle in the previous year around the role sheets she copied directly from the teacher how-to text (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003). Finding these roles to be too complex and confusing for her students and their parents to use without her guidance, she simplified six

147

of the roles and made her own package containing a rubric with the expectations for the written role work on the first page and six separate sheets containing each of the six roles (see Appendix 2). This package was distributed to each of the students in the year I observed her class to be kept in the Language Arts duotang folder. This very deliberate action demonstrates Ms. Wynn's active stance toward the literacy objects she used in her classroom. (It also underscores the point that the role sheets are unequivocally integral to the literature circle in this classroom, as she cites their complexity as the source of student and parent confusion rather than the very use of the role sheets.)

Sticking to the roles. When the students moved into the second cycle of literature circles, in which they were to independently set the pace for reading the novel and assigning the roles, Ms. Crawford often spent time helping the "lowest" group organize these aspects of the literature circle, while the other two groups were largely allowed to complete these tasks on their own. The rest of the time, Ms. Crawford would observe the three groups from a distance and interact with groups who were becoming too loud. However, on one occasion, Ms. Crawford approached Isaac's group, who had quietly been reading their novels for about fifteen minutes, and reminded Isaac that he must not read ahead. This excerpt from my field notes provides an account of the exchange:

> As she circulates, Ms. Crawford notices that Isaac seems to be farther ahead in the book than the rest of his group and speaks to him about reading ahead. She says it is not a good idea because it makes the discussion more difficult. Isaac nods and continues reading. About five minutes later Ms. Crawford again reminds Isaac not to read too far. She tells him, "This is not about trying to prove how fast you can read. If you go beyond what the group has planned, you ruin the prediction." Ms. Crawford then asks Isaac to go to the classroom and get another book to read until the end of the period. Isaac says he hasn't read too far and pulls out his duotang and begins to prepare his role work for next week.
>
> ….When the period ends, Ms. Crawford tells the whole group that they did some good reading today and sends them back to their classroom. On the way out, Isaac comes to the table where Ms. Crawford and I are standing. With a smile, he says that he always intends to stop reading but he gets caught up in the story and then suddenly finds that he is at the end of the book. Ms. Crawford expresses sympathy and says the same thing often happens to her. She adds, "The thing is with literature circles, even though it's

frustrating, you really have to stay in step with your group." Isaac leaves the library without comment.

Ms. Crawford had spoken to me on an earlier occasion about this when we were talking about the fact that she was running a literature circle with a grade two class. She said one of the most difficult things to teach the students was that they needed to read in step with their other group members because when they read ahead the "whole exercise of making predictions doesn't work." Here Ms. Crawford is referring to one of the role sheets – Problem Solver – that instructs students to make predictions for what will happen next in the story. Ms. Crawford appears to have formulated an interpretation of literature circles that dictates students must read in lock-step with their fellow group members in accordance with the dictates of a particular role sheet. Additionally, through her hands-off approach to two of the groups and her guidance in the functional use of the role sheets to the "lowest" group, glimpses of the way the role sheet is employed to replace herself as teacher become visible. This will be taken up in the last section of this chapter.

Monitoring

From the interviews and my observations it was clear that both Ms. Wynn and Ms. Crawford viewed their roles in the literature circle as that of keeping students on task with the requirements of the literature circle as Ms. Wynn had set it up. That is, ensuring the students read the novel, did the written role work, read the role work aloud during the literature circle, and listened to others read their work. Essentially the role I observed them to be taking throughout the time the students were independently running their literature circles was a monitoring role centred on ensuring students complete and share their role sheets.

Teaching in a class with fifty-eight students made it very important for Ms. Wynn to have a system of accountability that allowed her and Ms. Little, her partner-teacher, to monitor student work while fostering independent work habits. Because she could not be with all the groups all the time, Ms. Wynn devised the aforementioned system of having the Discussion Leader report students who had not completed their role sheet work. During one conversation where Ms. Wynn spoke of the difficulties some students were having with completing their role work in advance of the literature circle meetings, I asked her how she handled the situation.

Ms. Wynn: They get in trouble. (laughing) Because we record - the group leader [Discussion Leader] each week records who - who was prepared and who wasn't. So, there's accountability.

KL: Yeah.

Ms. Wynn: And then we find out who - who you know….

KL: They turn that into you each week.

Ms. Wynn: Yeah. And then and then who- whoever is not getting their work done, they get you know - they have to deal with my wrath. (laughing)

KL: Yeah - yeah so it would be interesting to see how that …

Ms. Wynn: To see, yeah … and also there's a bit of shame that comes along with showing up and not having done your part.

KL: Yeah.

Ms. Wynn: Like, 'Why haven't you read your part? What are your excuse - what is your excuse? Is it a really good one? Like, were you just bored or were you like - did you not…' you know?

Ms. Wynn speaks here of the two systems by which she ensures the students complete their roles each week: the notes the Discussion Leader makes and the encouragement of shaming of fellow group members. When talking to the whole class about literature circles Ms. Wynn frequently told the students that they were letting each other down when they did not complete the role work on time for the group meeting. Ms. Crawford also felt that peer pressure was a helpful way to get students who did not complete the role work to do so. She described this as follows,

> I mean there are always group members that don't do their assignments, but it's interesting to see that the rest of the group gets on their case if they haven't done it, as you saw in the example with one of our groups. … So, they kind of brow-beat them into doing it. I don't think there's anything wrong with that. I mean I think if you don't do your work, you need to be made accountable for it and your peers are probably the ones that are going to take the most notice of it. So, I think that things are working pretty well.

Here Ms. Wynn and Ms. Crawford appear to have made deliberate decisions to co-opt the students into assisting with their monitoring role. Encouraging peer pressure to "shame" and "brow-beat" other students into doing their role sheet work is seen as an acceptable method for making students "accountable". Again, this whole system of monitoring revolves around the mediation of the literacy object in that completion of the role sheet before the weekly literature circle is that which is monitored.

In these examples of re-constructing the role sheets and monitoring the groups, in addition to the examples provided earlier, it is evident the teachers did not passively accept the structuring of literature circles (or at least not all aspects of the structure) as it was presented to

150

them in the work of the literacy pedagogy community and the teacher how-to text (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003); but rather they worked to construct a literature circle they felt reflected what they saw as the needs of their classroom situation and actively employed a hybridized use of the literacy object in this endeavour.

Literacy Objects: Visible and Animate Agents outside Immediate Literacy Events

Through the examination of the way in which the focal students and teachers in the grade five class at Howe River Elementary used the role sheets, I have demonstrated the first premise of literacy-in-action: readers and writers mediate their social world through their literacy practices. In my examination of the activity of human actors in relation to the literacy object, I have hinted at agentive activity of the role sheet. In this section, I address the third research sub-question: How are the literacy objects associated with literature circles and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary using the focal students? Here I look directly at the second premise of the literacy-in-action model which holds that the literacy objects those human actors engage with themselves play an agentive role; that is, the literacy objects act as independent mediators and have the capacity to be in evidence and at work outside of situated literacy events.

The Role Sheet as an Agent

In Chapter Four, I identified the role sheet as the primary literacy object in the literature circles in the grade five classroom of Howe River Elementary and demonstrated the path by which it arrived intact in the classroom. In this section, I return to the role sheet and look at it in greater depth by examining its agentive role. I utilize the concept of *Folding In* as one way of looking at the role sheet's activity as an independent agent. This term, defined in the methods chapter, is one of the actions theorized by Brandt and Clinton (2002), following Latour (2005), that speaks to the way that literacy objects may be used to extend the reach of human actors, such as teachers. When literacy objects are invested with a folding in role, human actors are enabled to accomplish certain goals without actually being physically present. There exists an interesting parallel with the concept of folding in and one of the tasks for which Daniels created the role sheets: to carry out the function of "teacher surrogate" (Daniels, 1994, p.61) or "a surrogate mechanism to help groups know what to do" (Daniels, 2002, p.99). Here, Daniels envisions the occupation of the role sheets as one of providing guidance to students to enable them to engage in book talk without the need for the teacher to be present. In this surrogacy

activity, the role sheets are vested with the task of fostering student independence in the literature circle. However, as demonstrated below, the influence of this surrogacy or folding in appears to go beyond the positive role envisioned by Daniels.

In this section, I argue that the role sheets, as they are used in the literature circles of the grade five class at Howe River Elementary work to construct the focal students' experiences with literacy and their understanding of literacy. As agents in literacy-in-action the role sheets serve as surveillance monitors, they direct the reading of the novel, serve as judge and jury of the adequacy of students' engagement with novels in the literature circle and the adequacy of their weekly participation in the literature circle, and finally, they function as training devices.

The role sheets direct the reading of the novel. In the three literature circle groups I observed, the role sheets worked to direct the reading of the novel. In two of the groups, the role sheets accomplished this in the following manner: As they approached the end of *Tuck Everlasting*, Ally, Riley, and Deanne's group suddenly realized that they had not divided their reading in a manner that would allow them to each complete all of the roles. Without being told to do so by either of the teachers, they subsequently re-divided their reading so that they would have one chapter to read in the final week and, thereby, enable each group member to complete the required six roles. A similar scenario took place in Isaac's group. In both cases, the necessity of completing the role work served to interrupt a flow that had been established in the group. (Interestingly, the third group, considered the lowest group in reading ability and the group most resistant to using the role sheets, the same problem occurred. However, this group was not concerned that each member of the group had not completed the requisite number of roles and simply went onto their next novel without hesitation.)

The scenario where Isaac was told he must not read ahead in the novel because he would spoil the prediction element of the literature circle provides another instance of the agentive role of the role sheets. The prediction aspect of the literature circle, of concern to Ms. Crawford, was related to one of the roles, Problem Solver. For the Problem Solver role, students were instructed to highlight two problems and then make two predictions about what will happen or suggest two solutions to the problem. In being told he must not read ahead because he would spoil the Problem Solver role, Isaac's reading pace is being controlled by the dictates of one of the role sheets. In this example, as in the previous case of the students changing their reading schedule, it is clear that the role sheets, as they are being used in this classroom, direct the students' reading in an artificial manner.

The role sheets not only direct the pacing of the reading, they also serve in the teacher's place to tell the students how they are to read the novel. As the students read the novels, they were to actively look for problems or connections to self, text, or the world. Sara's actions provide a clear example of this. On several occasions, I noted that Sara would be reading with a partner or by herself and would suddenly stand up and return to the table where the duotang folder containing her role sheets was sitting and begin to write furiously in the folder. On two occasions, when she had been reading aloud with others, her partners expressed surprise that she was suddenly taking off. Each time she told them she had to write down her role work before she forgot it. Sara then directed the partner to continue reading but Sara would spend the rest of the period working on the written role work, never returning to read with her partner. Later, I asked Sara if she was enjoying the new novel her group was reading. She told me she wasn't and when I asked why, she told me she doesn't like it because she "can't find any interesting questions to ask", a direct reference to the Discussion Leader role she was to prepare on that day. In other words, her enjoyment of the book was influenced by its ability to provide easy avenues for completing her role work.

Here the role sheet as a literacy object is vested with folding in responsibilities by replacing the teacher in the literature circle. By relying on the role sheets to show students how to conduct literature conversations, Ms. Wynn is able to exert her influence in the literature circle without being physically present. These examples of the way the role sheets direct student reading allow us to view the role sheets as a new kind of worksheet, performing the folding in role in the same way the traditional worksheet does, by directing the students' attention away from reading the novel in an aesthetic manner and towards a hunt for an answer to fill in the blank.

The role sheets become judge and jury. The role sheets also became the arbiter of acceptable performance in the literature circle and they accomplished this in two ways. Students who had not completed the role sheets, or whom the group judged not to have adequately completed, were censored by their group members. This censoring is generally in reference to the directions given on the role sheets themselves. Criticism turns from the literary criticism or author-based discussion as it is shaped in the research, teacher how-to text and teacher spaces, to be displaced with students critiquing the degree to which fellow group members perform their roles.

Additionally, whether or not students were living up to their weekly responsibilities in the literature circle was determined by their completion of the role sheets. The role sheets were given the task of serving as surveillance monitors.

The role sheets also take on a responsibility that extends beyond the consequences of peer censorship. In the package containing the rubric for assessment and the role sheets that Ms. Wynn developed, students were told they would also write a book report at the end of each literature circle cycle, which would form a part of their literature circle grade. Before the first cycle of literature circles was completed, however, Ms. Wynn decided not to make this a requirement, saying she felt they had would have done enough work with the written role work. Not only was the written role work now the only element of the literature circle on which the students were graded, it also displaced a marginally richer assignment. Here it takes on a very real power to determine students' future success through its contribution to their grade on their report card.

Here, by folding into the role sheets responsibilities for surveillance, Ms. Wynn is freed up from checking each student's written work to be sure it was completed week-by-week, though as demonstrated, the consequences of this folding in extend beyond keeping track of who is or isn't participating in the literature circle as it is constructed in this classroom, frequently forcing students to make difficult social choices.

The role sheets serve as training devices. Finally, literature circles are viewed in this classroom as training devices and the role sheets are seen as the agents that carry out this training. Mid-way through the school year, Ms. Wynn's spoke of the kind of conversations her students conducted in literature circles. She said she was aware that all they did was read from their role sheets but that was all she expected her grade five students to be able to do. She did not expect her students would be able to engage in in-depth book conversations. For her, this related to maturity: the argument, as she related it to me, being that grade five students, in general, and boys in particular, are not capable of participating in this manner. For Ms. Wynn, the role sheets, therefore, served to train the students for "hitting on the major topics and trying to get the main ideas down", in preparation for a future date when they would reach a level of maturity required for "more depth" in their book discussions.

This understanding of the role sheets as training devices is echoed in Nigel's response to a question I asked him regarding why teachers might want students to participate in literature circles. He says, "I think it's like – some people take book club – like my mum. And I think it's just getting you ready for book club." (What is very interesting in this understanding is that all

154

of the focal students had been participating in literature circles for two and a half years by the time Ms. Wynn and Nigel made these statements. How many years of "training" do students require?)

By folding into the role sheets the responsibility for training students in future business of in-depth book discussions, again Ms. Wynn uses the role sheet to replace herself as a model for this kind of activity. This analysis of the role sheets as training devices leads me to ask, however: What else might they be training students to do? Looking back at the many examples presented in this section on literature circles, I see the role sheets training students to be critical of each other, become socially isolated and to either dislike reading or view it in a reductive manner. I explore these concerns in Chapter Seven.

The Role Sheet's Folding in Role

In this section, I have made the case that the role sheets are an example of a literacy object acting as an agent in the literacy lives of the students participating in the literature circle at Howe River Elementary. Ultimately, the role sheets were given the task of agents for accountability in this classroom. I have also shown what happens when a literacy object, acting as an independent mediator, takes the place of a teacher. The role sheet, in its folding in move, enables the teacher to exert her influence over how the students will read the novel and how their discussion will be conducted without having to be physically present to do so. In requiring the students to write out their role work to be handed in at a later date, the teacher is then able to retrospectively reward or penalize student performance in the literature circle. Long after it has played its part in the weekly literature circle, the role sheet continues to be hard at work determining how students read the novel and what kind of grade they will receive for language arts. The role sheet similarly continues its work by suggesting to students that the kind of reading they are currently engaged in is but a training ground for the real thing they will experience in the upper grades or perhaps as adults.

Discussion

In this chapter, I have looked at the way that the role sheet dominates the literature circle as a framed pedagogical interaction. I accomplished this by examining the way that the role sheet, as a literacy object granted a permanent position in the grade five literature circles, assumed an agentive role in the literacy lives of the focal students. Brandt and Clinton's contention that literacy objects have "a capacity to be visible and animate outside the interactions

of immediate literacy events" (2002, p. 344) holds true with regard to the role sheets in use in this classroom. I argue that what played out as the role sheet was been given this kind of power was a problem greater in scope than the "mini-controversy" Daniels (2006, p. 11) portrays the misuse of role sheets to be.

This chapter has looked at how a particular group of students used literature circles while those literature circles simultaneously worked to construct the book conversations in which the students engaged. Ultimately, this may have worked to construct those students' understandings of what it means to engage with a novel in school. In this study, the teacher had taken a critical eye to the procedures she had been introduced to in the teacher how-to text. She had decided that the content of the role sheets was far too complex and thus problematic. After one year of attempting to use the complex roles from this material, she redesigned the roles to "clarify" them for the present group of students and parents. It is interesting, however, that her understanding of the problem was that the role sheets needed to be clarified, rather than questioning the use of roles altogether. Why, with so much information available on the use of literature circles in general and the problems associated with roles, in particular, would Howe River elementary teachers engage with a diminished form of instruction? By tracing the path of information regarding literature circles available to a particular classroom teacher, the increased agency with which the literature circle was been vested as it travelled has been demonstrated. Perhaps the very fact of its agency explains how it persisted in a form unintended by its creators.

The role sheets as agents of literacy worked to shape the focal students' experiences with texts; rather than the students shaping their own experiences with text through the literature circle as originally envisioned by the literacy pedagogy community, teacher how-to text, school district, and teachers connected to the focal students' literacy lives. They may also have been at work outside of students' immediate experiences with the text to shape their future interactions with literature and their academic track record. By investing in this literacy object responsibilities such as: discussion director, trainer for future literature discussion, surveillance, and assessment the teachers may have unwittingly allowed this outcome to take place.

Following the traces of the literature circle across the spaces connected to the focal students' literacy lives in Chapter Four established that the role sheet, while envisioned as a creative means for facilitating book talk amongst students in the literacy pedagogy community, hybridized in function in this classroom to become a literacy object that accomplishes unintended consequences. In this chapter, I have demonstrated the agentive role students play in this example of literacy in action, but I am left asking if the agentive role played by the role

sheets and the kinds of activities the students engaged in response to the object may simply have worked to produce readers who in some cases became more resistant to reading. Or, who, in other cases, may have become savvy in learning how to engage in coercion. However, I argue that in most cases, they may simply have learned to become acquiescent learners, groomed for compliance rather than the independence as scholars their teacher intended.

CHAPTER SIX: LITERACY OBJECTS SHIFTING PURPOSES

From Process to Production: Mini-Lessons, Conferencing, and Student Publishing as Literacy Objects

...if you give kids an audience, other than teachers, their writing samples go way up. Their expectations on themselves go way up because they know their friends are going to be reading it.

- Ms. Wynn, grade five teacher, Howe River Elementary

In the preceding quote, Ms. Wynn expresses her view of how to teach writing in the elementary school, a view that was enacted in her classroom, in contrast to her purposes, stated at other times, of desiring that her young writers learn that there are "no boundaries with writing – the idea that they can push the envelope." Calkins (1986) states that teaching writing in the elementary school has little to do with "creating a monument"(p. 219); instead, in her view, it must focus on teaching authorship to help students gain consciousness of their world and themselves as authors. As I observed Ms. Wynn leading her students through the authoring process the enacted purpose tended, on the whole, toward that stated in the opening quote: producing volumes of high quality work that will be read by others. In this chapter, the data presented demonstrates the way in which the enacted (and sometimes stated) writers' workshop in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary took on a very different focus from that envisioned by either Ms. Wynn or Calkins, a literacy pedagogy researcher Ms. Wynn felt to be influential in her shaping of writers' workshop.

The overarching research question of this dissertation asks: How can a new model of sociocultural literacy theory, literacy-in-action, and its unit of analysis, literacy-objects-in-action (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), provide us with a new lens for understanding the ways that literacy is practiced in the classroom? Applying this lens to the writers' workshop, as it is enacted in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary provides an opportunity to investigate this time-honoured framed literacy pedagogical interaction in new ways.

Agency in Relation to the Writers' Workshop

Chapter Four mapped the path of the literacy objects associated with the writers' workshop across spaces associated with this local classroom. In this mapping, it became evident that two of the literacy objects, the mini-lesson and publication of student work travelled intact in form across the network of spaces but altered dramatically in function in the classroom space to become hybridized objects; while one of the objects, conferencing, transformed in both form

158

and function upon reaching the classroom. In the present chapter, I explore the way these literacy objects play an integral role in shifting the purpose of writing from process to production in the writers' workshop of a local classroom. As in the previous chapter, the intention of this examination is to ask: what the are the consequences of such a shift for the young writers in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary? I address sub-questions two and three in order to attend to the concerns outlined above: How are the human agents in this study, i.e., the focal students and teachers, using the literacy objects associated with literature circle and writers' workshop in their classroom?; How are the literacy objects associated with the literature circle and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom mediating the in-school practice of literacy for the focal students? The analysis rests on the main argument of the literacy-in-action model, which contends that by attributing an agentful status to the literacy objects associated with the literature circle, we can trace the way that literacy pedagogy, shaped in distant spaces, plays a role in the literacy instruction enacted in a local classroom setting (Brandt & Clinton, 2002). Essential to the examination in this chapter is the third of Brandt and Clinton's tenets regarding literacy objects: their "capacity to be visible and animate outside the interactions of immediate literacy events" (p. 344).

First, I examine the ways that the focal students and their classroom teacher assumed agentful roles in relation to the three literacy objects in their writers' workshop. The data presented here focuses primarily on the first cycle of writers' workshop in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary, from the time writers' workshop was first introduced to the time the students published their first piece of writing. I begin with the teacher's activities as she shaped the writers' workshop and used the literacy objects and then move to look at the focal students' use of the literacy objects. I then address the role the literacy objects play in constructing the students' literacy experiences using the concept of folding in.

Teachers as Agents in Literacy-in-action

In her 6 years as an intermediate level teacher, Ms. Wynn had a number of different experiences with using writers' workshop. These experiences were important in helping her shape the writers' workshop as she did for her grade five class the year I observed in her classroom. Her particular construction of the writers' workshop was also a reflection of the reality of her classroom situation during that particular year. Ms. Wynn had been introduced to the theory behind writers' workshop in a graduate level course on teaching writing in the elementary school the previous year but relied heavily on the teacher how-to text she and her

159

teaching partner, Ms. Little, were studying in the literacy study group. Ms. Wynn saw her role in the writers' workshop as threefold: keep the writers' workshop carefully structured to ensure that students will write; teach students to independently generate their own ideas; and set deadlines for students to ensure that they produce finished pieces of work. She also added a monitoring system to the process that was unique to the writers' workshop in her classroom. In each of these aspects of Ms. Wynn's crafting of the writers' workshop in her classroom, the influence of the literacy objects (mini-lessons, conferencing, student publishing) may be seen.

Structure the Writers' Workshop Carefully

Ms. Wynn designed the writers' workshop in her class based on the belief that students at this age need structure in order to learn to write well. For her, this works best in an environment that starts out early in the year with the teacher telling the students what they will write. She elaborates here on this philosophy:

> I don't personally believe in doing writing [workshop] until after Christmas. They're not emotionally ready. They haven't settled into the class where they can let go of structure yet. They need the structure from September to December. They need the teacher to say, "Today you are going to write about this." You can't say to them, "Today you are going to choose this." They lose it, they need the structure. I've discovered that. There's something that happens over the Christmas break that kind of ramps them up into a higher gear. They come back in January and they realize- Because the beginning of the year they are so unsure; they don't know what the routines are. It takes a couple of months to establish your routines, to get everything going.

The year I observed in her class, her teaching partner, Ms. Little, was anxious to begin writers' workshop earlier than January, and so they introduced it in early December. With the introduction of writers' workshop, the students were given more freedom to choose what they would write about. Ms. Wynn extended the philosophy of structure into the way that she ran the writers' workshop. She attributes her belief in the importance of a structured workshop to her early years in teaching when she spent a half year substituting in a classroom where writers' workshop was a big part of the program.

> I've been part of a writers' workshop before where I've taken over somebody else's program. And that was interesting because that was a total free-for-all. The students could pick anything. They could write about anything and at the time *Lord of the Rings* was really big and there was - I think for about six or seven boys, all they wanted to do

160

was write these Lord of the Rings adventures, but they were never - they were never completed. They were all to be continued. Like they were never - they were just like a little - and they were never really all that great to be honest. And I realized then that that writing was okay, but it'd be better if the students learned the idea of a story has a beginning, middle and end. You have to plan from the beginning. If you're going to write fiction, how the story's going to end and if you look at books, that books do that.

Ms. Wynn spoke of this period in her teaching history in a subsequent interview and reiterated her belief that the writers' workshop at that school was not beneficial to the students because of its lack of structure.

It was very much like … oh, what's the guy's name? See this is my problem! The guy who wrote the book about writer's workshop as like a carnival. So that was very much like a free-for-all. You could do what you want. *Lord of the Rings* was huge at the time so they wrote all these - a lot of the boys got into these group collaboration writing stories that were kind of meaningless, with no end, there's no point, to be continued. You know, little adventure, little adventure, fight, fight, fight. And it was more like that: unstructured, pointless writing. And I walked away from that temporary contract going, "Why did the teacher set it up like that? Where was the structure?" I think the kids needed a little more structure than what they were given.

Here Ms. Wynn alludes to Timothy Lensmire's (1994a;1994b) analysis of writers' workshop, although her interpretation of the use of the word "carnival" reflects a far different understanding of the word than Lensmire intended.[12] While it may be that she did not read the work in its entirety, or even beyond its title, it is interesting to see the way that she has co-opted his use of the word, carnival, to support her argument. Here she expresses her concern that writers' workshop without structure is a free-for-all, a circus, perhaps. Ms. Wynn felt that these students' writing would have been improved by instruction in how to structure a story. Presumably, with this experience in mind, Ms. Wynn told me that she gives her students great freedom in their writing but always insists on the following:

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[12] Lensmire uses Bakhtin's notion of carnival to analyze a writers' workshop in a grade three classroom. His analysis demonstrates "active participation, free and familiar contact among people, and a playful, familiar relation to the world" (Lensmire, 1994b, p. 14) as aspects of writers' workshop that should be affirmed. However, his analysis also shows that these positive aspects are threatened by the way writers' workshop can be used by some students to reinforce existing social divisions and tensions within the classroom.

161

Ms. Wynn: My big thing with writing is wrapping it up. You need to have a point. And it needs to wrap up with the point. None of this to be continued stuff because that's a cop-out.

KL: How do you teach that to them?

Ms. Wynn: Basically, I just tell them that! I just say, this is my issue. You need to pick a problem and have it in your mind. And then think of a way you are going to solve the problem. And then work that out at the end. You may not have all the details until you get there.

From Ms. Wynn's perspective, it appears that she sees intermediate level students as capable of engaging in the planning necessary to structure a story with beginning/middle/end and problem/resolution; it is simply the teacher's responsibility to require them to do so. It appears from her statement (and my observations appear to confirm this) that this is not something she actually teaches, however.

The mini-lesson figured largely in Ms. Wynn's provision of a structured environment for writers' workshop. On the two days each week that they took part in writers' workshop, the students gathered at the front of the classroom for the mini-lesson. These lessons were generally taken straight from the teacher how-to text (Buckner, 2005). When they first introduced writers' workshop to the class, Ms. Wynn and Ms. Little followed the lesson plans suggested for launching the use of a writers' notebook found in the teacher how-to text. In a discussion about the Buckner text, Ms. Wynn described the content of these mini-lessons as follows:

Yeah and (…) it's good in that it really does teach you this whole idea as teachers like don't give a prompt. Have the students come up with their own prompts. Have them come up with their best memories or worst memories. Things that they wonder about. Lifting a line from one story to another to just start a new story. Writing fiction and writing creatively is scary because students don't have an idea of boundaries of how much detail's too much, how much detail's too little. How to cover the basics of the five Ws so that you set a stage and a setting and a place and time, for characters. And how do you make it not just one word dialogue answers. How do you make it interesting? How is your impact? And so we're trying to make some freedom in there without it being too free.

This kind of tension between providing structure for the writers' workshop while encouraging the students to write freely was often expressed in Ms. Wynn's discussion of the writers' workshop. It was also a tension I noted in my observations: students were often free to choose

162

what they would write about and completely free to choose what they would publish; however, the linearity imposed by the kind scheduling of writing her structure imposed often seemed at odds with this freedom. The literacy objects, mini-lessons and publishing, are employed here to impose the structure Ms. Wynn views as necessary to ensure students write the kinds of pieces she views as important and to ensure they actually finish their stories

Teach Independent Writing

Ms. Wynn felt that it was her role to provide students with input on their writing through the mini-lesson, as described above. She also felt her role was to foster student independence. She explained how these two roles work together as follows,

> The writers' - it's just to really gain ownership over their writing. And it's to - helps students transition from a fill in the blank idea that there's always a right answer, and that's the writing that I have to stick to, to there's no boundaries with writing. The idea that they can push the envelope. You can - that they can take an idea that they had - or take an idea from a book and they can transform it and make it their own. That's important in developing a writing style. And so we spend a lot of time in talking about ways to develop your writing styles. So- and so much of it- really the focus on the writers' notebook is on ideas. Because so much of what students are doing is they turn to the teacher and say I don't know what to write. And they wait. You tell me. Because - you tell me, Miss Wynn, what I'm supposed to write, and you tell me if it's good enough and you tell me if it's long enough and you tell me what it is. And I'm just going to sit here and not do anything and not take any ownership over my writing. So, the whole program around writers' notebook is kind of an amalgamation of something I did last year. Which was - and this is just stuff we get from tips - you know other teachers - so, learning from other teachers. Last year I had learned in a workshop something - from the Literacy Project I think - that if you give students an audience, other than teachers, their writing samples go way up. Their expectations on themselves go way up because they know their friends are going to be reading it.

Here Ms. Wynn's philosophy of developing self-reliant writers who take ownership of their writing through writers' workshop is clearly evident. She wants her students to learn that there are no boundaries for their writing, an interesting aspiration in light of the stipulation she had given them regarding the necessity of beginning/middle/end and problem/resolution in their writing. It is also an interesting aspiration given that the students had a total of about one hour

per week for writing. Ms. Wynn also addresses a key component of her writing program here: writing for an audience. To her, it is important to have students write for an audience in order to increase the volume and the quality of their writing. The motivator, similar to that used in the literature circle, peer criticism, is harnessed by Ms. Wynn here as well.

In the early lesson plans, as advocated by the teacher how-to text (Buckner, 2005), teachers were to provide mini-lessons that led students to generate lists that they would keep in the back of their writers' notebook as personal writing prompts, a suggestion Ms. Wynn followed. Ms. Wynn later noted that whenever students would come to her during writers' workshop and tell her they did not know what to write about, she would tell them to choose something from their lists. She felt this was an important part of teaching students to take responsibility for their own writing, rather than looking to the teacher to get them started.

Again, the literacy objects, mini-lessons and publishing, are deliberately employed for the purpose of developing writers who generate their own topics and who will produce an increased number of quality writing samples.

Set Whole-class Deadlines for Editing and Publishing

The notion of building student independence through a teacher-mandated structure was also present in other aspects of the writers' workshop, most notably giving students deadlines by which they needed to have story drafts and final copies completed. Ms. Wynn describes the point in time when the students were told they must take one of their pieces from the writers' notebook and develop it for publication:

Ms. Wynn: At some point I would arbitrarily say, "It's time to publish."

KL: Did you have a publishing schedule in mind?

Ms. Wynn: No, it usually would coincide with report cards. We would look and say, "We've got to mark on something." By this time I still haven't seen any of their personal work. It's in the [note]book and I could collect them in and I could look at them. But what I find is that I don't have the time to be reading through a bunch of bits and pieces. So then it would become important to talk about taking a piece and writing it out. And so I did a whole mini-lesson on that. And then by - a lot of them don't really get it. They don't get the whole editing thing until about the third term. You start in the second term and then you do about two publishings in one term and in the third term I think I did three this year.

As Ms. Wynn alludes to in this discussion, she did not read the students' work in its early stages. She felt that with the myriad expectations placed on her as a teacher, there wasn't time for this. On another occasion, Ms. Wynn told me she doesn't collect the notebooks because it's not the kind of work she can mark. The publishing schedule was determined by the teachers' need for something to mark for report cards. In order to meet the publishing deadline the students were required to turn in a draft for a peer-editing session on a particular day. This peer-editing was the version of conferencing used in the writers' workshop in this class. The literacy objects conferencing and publishing are put to work here to ensure the teachers had work to grade for report cards.

The Writing Process and Monitoring Student Writing

The writing process Ms. Wynn led her students through was one she developed in the three years that followed her work at the school where she was first introduced to writers' workshop. The process the students followed for their personal writing is described in Chapter Four. I pick up the process at its end stage in this chapter. After about seven SWATs had been completed in the students' writer's notebook, Ms. Wynn told them it was time to choose a piece that they would like to develop for publication. The students were to go through their work and ask themselves, "Did I answer the five Ws?" They were then to rewrite the piece on foolscap (legal sized, lined paper) incorporating any new information the question brought to mind and hand it in to her by an appointed date. She then conducted a mini-lesson on how to edit your peer's work and paired students up to work with each other on the peer editing. Once they had finished, she told them they could choose a second partner and go through the editing a second time. Ms. Little added to the end of the set of instructions that she would also like the students to try to suggest three challenges to each other for ways the stories could be improved. Students who missed the editing deadline were told they wouldn't have the opportunity to benefit from the peer-editing session and were sent to the back of the class to work on getting their first drafts completed. Once the students had been through the peer-editing process, they were then to re-draft the story and write it out in good copy. They were given a deadline for this final copy and told to make a cover picture and place the two pieces in the Galleon Binder. The Galleon Binder, filled with stories from Ms. Wynn's class the previous year, had been available to the students in the months leading up to this period. It was now empty and waiting for their new stories. Students who missed the editing deadline were written up on the "unfinished homework" chalkboard.

165

A few days after the deadline had passed Ms. Wynn met with the whole class for the mini-lesson that always kicked off the writers' workshop. The following excerpt from my field notes describes the scene:

The class is slow to settle and after a few minutes, Ms. Wynn begins writing names on the board for people who are getting warnings. Nigel is one of the students who receive a warning. He is sitting at a table in the second row from the back of the Bow. When the class is quiet, Ms. Wynn speaks to them in a quiet voice that conveys concern. She tells the class that she is having a hard time understanding the apparent lack of concern many students seem to have regarding getting the final copies of their stories into the Galleon Binder. Ms. Wynn refers to a list of grade fives on the board who have not finished and says that the list of grade fours is so long it cannot be written on the board. Nigel is one of the grade fives who have not finished. Again, Ms. Wynn tells the group that she doesn't understand how they feel that they can just ignore the deadline. She talks with them about the way that so many students continually waste class time given to them for SWAT. She relates the fact that some students wrote very silly stories thinking that this is what they would put in the binder but when they looked at the high quality of work that had been done by students who had already put their work into the binder, they were embarrassed and decided to write something new. She said this was a good thing because it shows that they are concerned about who they are writing for but they still needed to remember that the deadline has not changed. She says that she and Ms. Little are looking for work that is "thoughtful, interesting, idea-provoking" and that they want to see "thought and care on the title pages and the story." She then says, "I get that writing is hard, but you still need to meet deadlines."

Ms. Little then tells the group that they may have noticed that in term 2, she and Ms. Wynn were no longer "chasing you down to get your work in. It's your job. If you don't get your work done it will be reflected on your report card." Ms. Wynn tells the students that grade four is often a surprise for students. Generally they notice on the first report that they aren't getting the grades they want and many work hard to do better. She says that she is concerned that this grade four group is not concerned and that she and Ms. Little are giving this "lecture because the list on the board is ridiculous. Too many grade fives are on the list and only 40% of the grade fours have put their work in the binder."

The class had been given a firm date by which their first piece had to be ready for publication. Many in the class did not make the deadline. Ms. Wynn notes here that some missed the deadline because they were revising their work. While she applauds them for their mindfulness of their audience and desire to put their best work in the Galleon Binder, she also reminds them of the supremacy of the deadline in this matter. This discussion of the literacy object, publishing, makes mention of the process required to get to the publication stage but squarely emphasizes the importance of the final piece when it comes to the grade the students will receive.

This SWAT, draft, peer-edit, revise, make good copy for publication approach to process writing was one was used throughout the remainder of the year, beyond the time I was observing in the classroom. When I was speaking with Ms. Wynn at the end of the school year, I asked her whether she ever conferenced with the students to help them develop their pieces. Here is her response:

> …the problem with conferencing - because I tried conferencing at [the school where she first encountered writers' workshop]. It's not that I don't do conferencing, I do it differently. I have Graves - because I'm familiar with his work too - he wants you to sit down and talk about the whole piece and talk about how to- "Here are some suggestions to make it better. Here's what you need to do to make it better. This is what I really liked." And then asking back to the kids, "Well, why did you do this? Why did you do that?" And it's like, who has time for all that? Like it's - when you look at the content demand throughout your day, to fit in writing time and to fit it in where everybody has a chance, at the grade four/five level it doesn't work.

Very much aware of the way that conferencing with students in envisioned within Graves version of the writers' workshop, Ms. Wynn does not hesitate to say that the kind of time this requires does not fit with the expectations placed on her to cover the curriculum for her grade level.

I then asked about how she approaches editing with students in the writers' workshop if she doesn't use forms of conferencing as set out by individuals such as Graves. Ms. Wynn responded as follows:

> And I don't edit because it's still grade four/five writing. It's not me fixing all their mistakes. That to me isn't writing. Their writing is allowed to have mistakes. In the end, in the final product, if there is a period missing and a certain percent of words that are misspelled it's because those kids tried on words that they didn't, they didn't know how

167

to spell, they've been introduced to harder words for them. And that's telling me something. It's giving me that information - the information that I need to know about their own level of literacy, comfort level with risk taking with new or more complicated vocabulary, or willingness to commit to a creative idea.

Ms. Wynn appears to be embracing a philosophy of the developmental nature of writing and the understanding that at this age, students make errors. For the teacher to "fix" students' "mistakes" would make the writing less their own. But of greater importance in this rationale is that the final copy was also the only part of the work they did in writers' workshop that Ms. Wynn would read and the piece that she would ultimately grade. Therefore, it should, she felt, reflect student work and not her input.

Here conferencing as a literacy object undergoes a major shift from conferencing as it is shaped in the spaces outlined in Chapter Four. In this translation, it is given over to the students completely once they have been taught editing conventions in a mini-lesson. This kind of hybridization allows the teachers to grade the students published work as indicators of progress in their independent and peer-influenced writing, untainted by teacher feedback.

The net effect of situating the only conferencing (peer-editing) and teacher feedback (grading of the published piece) at the end of the writing cycle is, again, a shifting of emphasis. The focus moves from the process of writing to the end product.

As articulated earlier, Ms. Wynn felt that publishing of student work was an important end point for the writers' workshop. She cited her reasons for this as increasing the volume of their written work but also the quality of it when they knew their peers would be reading it. When this is added to the deadlines set for publishing and the fact that the only student writing Ms. Wynn read and graded were the published pieces, it becomes very clear that the focus of the writers' workshop in this grade five class was very much centred on the finished piece and not as strongly on the writing process.

Ms. Wynn had clearly thought through the many aspects of conducting writers' workshop with grade four/five students and blended ideas she had gathered over her few years as a teacher to produce a hybrid form of writers' workshop. A class size ranging from fifty-eight to sixty children from grades four and five sharing one space and two classroom teachers in an open concept school building contributed to Ms. Wynn's philosophy of how writing could pragmatically be taught to her students. What ensued, as described above, was a hybrid form of writers' workshop that Ms. Wynn felt would encourage the students to become independent and productive writers without involving her with individualized conferencing or reading of story

drafts. She was able to accomplish this through a hybridized use of the literacy objects. Some of the outcomes of this example of folding in will be explored in the section following this next section on student agency in relation to the literacy objects.

Students as Agents in Literacy-in-Action

All of the focal students were enthusiastic about writers' workshop and said they wouldn't change anything about it, with the exception of Riley, who thought ten minute SWATs were too difficult to sustain. During the writing sessions I observed, with the exception of one student, Nigel, all of the students engaged fully with the writing process as it was set out for them, that is completing the SWATs and the development of pieces for publication according to the timeline established by their teachers. Nigel, however, never wrote during this time. Instead, he frequently took long "washroom" breaks, chatted with neighbours when he could get away with it, stared into space, or read a book. Nigel was the only focal student who did not have a piece ready for the peer-editing session but did complete his story in time for the extended publication date by working on it at home. In this section I provide examples of the way that the students interacted with the three literacy objects of the writers' workshop and the types of agentful activity in which they engaged during these interactions.

Mini-Lessons

While Ms. Wynn told me that she tells her students they must have a beginning, middle and end to their stories, as well as a problem and resolution, I did not observe any mini-lessons where these stipulations were given. This is not to say that it didn't occur as I was not in the classroom one hundred percent of the time when writers' workshop was introduced. As illustrated in Chapter Four and in the preceding section, mini-lessons at the onset of writers' workshop were intended to provide the students with lists from which they could self-select topics for their SWATs. Each of the focal students used these idea lists to provide topics for their three SWATs and generally wrote one to two page entries. Some of them (Ally, Sara, Deanne, Riley) used a SWAT from these early mini-lessons for their first published piece. A subsequent lesson, given by Ms. Little, on how to add interest to a written piece was also incorporated into the pieces Riley, Deanne, and Ally published. In this mini-lesson, students were told to draw symbols for the five senses at the top of their SWAT page to remind them that they needed to incorporate the five senses into their story. Sara found the requirement to write non-fiction stories for the first three SWATs to be an unsavoury task. Sara says, "And I hate

169

writing true stories. That just doesn't work for me. Even if it is an untrue story, I kind of put like really real facts into it, like about my life. So then it's not fully false. It's kind of true and kind of false." Sara knew what kind of writing she wanted to do and worked around the teacher's stipulations to ensure she could write in the manner she preferred.

The five focal students who participated in the peer-editing session used the marking conventions provided for them in a mini-lesson the day of the session to edit their peers' work. Mini-lessons such as lift a line and character development for fictional stories were not used by any of the focal students. The focal students told me they had their own ideas and didn't wish to try the ideas presented to them.

When I asked Isaac if the idea lists had been helpful to him, he said, no, because he always had plenty of ideas to write about. Nigel took up the list-making exercise in a manner different to the other focal students. His entries for this section of his idea book contained two lists: *My Best Songs* and *My Best Videos* in addition to a *Things that Make Me Go Hmmm* list. Nigel completed two four line pieces using the incorporation of sense strategy and one longer piece about a sled ride over the seven SWAT sessions. He did not use any of his lists for writing ideas. When it was time to choose a piece to develop for publication Nigel did not use any of his three SWATs but instead, at home, used a children's story starter book. He had hoped to develop the sled ride story but his mother felt it was too "confused" and encouraged him to try another method. She explains here:

> He had - oh he had a little story he had to write and you know he'd done it but he's just so - he just went off into a complete - you know he - that's another thing with his story writing. He has - he has this mind full of all these funny things and bizarre things. But to get them organized and down on paper is so tough for him. So, he'd written a story and - and you know he was getting more and more confused and it was getting more and more bizarre and so somebody gave us this little story starter. So, it's basically three phrases - three parts of a sentence and you just flip through it and you flip it to any combination. And for instance his was, "My teachers are - my new teacher, is a snow man, who lies all the time." So I said, "Okay, now take that …" and -so that gave him ideas. That was a little bit more focused…, so then he wrote his story based on the snowman - his teacher who's a snowman who lied all the time.

For Nigel's mother, the notion of helping students find a topic and telling them to write a story based on the topic, even with the incorporation of senses and the requirement to include a

beginning, middle, end and problem/resolution, did not provide Nigel with the kind of structure he needed to actually bring a story to completion. While she credits the story starter flip book they had at home here with helping Nigel write the story, in the lead up to her explanation she had been telling me that over the last three weeks she had been spending two to three hours a day with Nigel to complete work he was not getting done in class. She felt he actually accomplished little or nothing in class where the teachers were not monitoring him to ensure he was making good use of his time.

When I asked Nigel about his writing process, he seemed unconcerned about the origin of the story but was happy to have so easily written what he felt was a good story that others wanted to read. Through finding an alternate place and time to write his story and using a different means to prompt his writing, Nigel took a route completely different than the structure suggested by his teacher's mini-lessons to complete his story.

As the students interact with the mini-lesson as a literacy object, it seems clear that the way the mini-lesson was used to ensure that students write each day worked for the majority of the focal students, with the exception of Nigel. The intention of the mini-lesson, as it was shaped in this class to provide deadlines for the production of work was one that the focal students all complied with, without complaint; although, it is questionable whether Nigel, without his mother's intervention would have produced a piece for publication by the set time.

Conferencing

As described earlier, the peer-editing session Ms. Wynn set up for the students was the only form of conferencing that took place in the writers' workshop in the grade five class at Howe River Elementary. The students took part in two peer-edits in a forty-minute session on a day determined by Ms. Wynn: the first edit was with a partner assigned by Ms. Wynn and the second was to be with a partner of their own choosing. Each time the partners were to read each other's stories and use the editing conventions Ms. Wynn had given them in that day's mini-lesson to correct writing conventions and tell each other where clarification was needed. These conventions were written on an overhead projector and just before they were set up with their partners, the students received a verbal challenge from Ms. Little to find three things they could suggest to their partner to improve the story.

One of the focal students, Deanne, told me this was a helpful session for her because her first partner, a student assigned by Ms. Wynn, was able to help her with details she had left out

of her story. However, for four of the other focal students this process was either very annoying or, at best, unhelpful.

For both Ally and Riley, the marks their peer-editing partners put on their papers troubled them. Riley told me that her peer-editor did not read her story carefully enough, in her opinion, and marked Riley's dialogue as not making sense when for Riley it made perfect sense. Riley described this as very frustrating. As I watched Ally participate in the peer-editing process, it was obvious that she was very unhappy with the comments she received from a boy in the class. She argued with him for some time about the words he had labelled as incorrectly spelled and then spent considerable time waiting first to talk with Ms. Little about the problem and then talking with Ms. Wynn about it after Ms. Little sent her away. In Ally's recollection of the incident, she felt the boy was deliberately not listening to her and the matter required Ms. Wynn's intervention.

Two of the students used their parents as editors. Nigel did not have his story ready by the date Ms. Wynn had set for the peer-editing session. He spent that time working on his own on the sled story he didn't go on to publish. Later, when I asked him about the writing process, he told me he mostly wrote the story at home and each time he wrote a draft he showed it to his mother who gave him suggestions that he then incorporated into his story. He felt that the drafting and two revisions he had done prior to his final copy were a lot of work but that he was very pleased with the way the story had turned out. When I asked Isaac how the peer-editing session had gone for him he responded as follows:

> Isaac: Yeah, well, I had my parents edit it quickly before - like give any suggestions.
>
> KL: So you'd already been through that by the time you handed in your first draft?
>
> Isaac: Yeah.
>
> KL: And then - so did you have a couple of kids reading it?
>
> Isaac: Yeah.
>
> KL: And were their suggestions helpful or was it already pretty good by then?
>
> Isaac: Pretty good. I didn't really get any suggestions. And so we just wrote another draft and then we did our pictures.

Here Isaac had taken the extra step of having his parents edit the story with him prior to the peer-editing session. Unfortunately, I didn't ask him why he had decided to do this, though it may have had to do with the fact that Isaac's father is an editor of a local magazine and he wanted to utilize his father's expertise to improve his piece.

For both Nigel and Isaac, the one form of conferencing offered in the writers' workshop was not sufficient and they took the extra steps of involving an adult-expert in the editing process. Interestingly, when I asked Riley how the final feedback she had received from Ms. Wynn on her story when it was marked would help her with her next story, she told me: "Well, I'd look at it first at my house and then I'd maybe bring it to school". She seems to have realized, as well, that some assistance from home might help her to achieve the results she was interested in. Her comment is also interesting in that the intent of my question had been to ask how her writing might be influenced by the feedback she got from her teacher. She answered my question, however, with a response regarding the final product she would produce the next time, rather than addressing the process she might use the next time.

Publishing

For the focal students, the publication of their work engendered a mixture of feelings, ranging from anxiety to pride. This literacy object also motivated different actions amongst the focal students. Two students, Ally and Sara, expressed concern about the fact that their stories would be published in the Galleon Binder. Ally and I were talking about the writing process the class had just been through together and she showed me the story and cover page she was just completing. I wanted to know what would happen with everyone's stories, once they were placed in the binder:

> KL: So then what will happen with that binder?
>
> Ally: People can read it.
>
> KL: Oh nice.
>
> Ally: I don't really want people to read it though.
>
> KL: Oh. Because…
>
> Ally: I don't like people reading my - my stuff.
>
> KL: Because you feel shy? Or…
>
> Ally: No, I just don't - like they - 'cause I go to the same school and I'm in the same class and I - yeah. And I don't really like people like looking at my stuff sort of. It's kind of like - sometimes it's kind of private and stuff. And so - yeah.
>
> KL: Do kids - do they comment on things?
>
> Ally: That's what I'm kind of worried about, yeah.
>
> KL: So does that influence what you write about?
>
> Ally: Them?

KL: Like for the binder. Do you try to write something that's not as personal because of that?

Ally: Yeah.

In this conversation, Ally surprised me with her concern about people reading her work. In previous discussions she told me that she loves to write because through writing she could express her imagination. This conversation makes it apparent that what concerns Ally about publishing her writing is the way that it makes that work public. The requirement that her private thoughts be put on display for classmates who are not always sympathetic readers was a source of anxiety for Ally. This literacy object, with its noble intention of giving students an authentic purpose for writing and their work the audience it deserves, goes through two hybridizations in Ally's experience. First, her teacher has hybridized it to be used as an object for assessment and second, her peers' use of the object (or at least her perception of their use of it), hybridizes it into an object capable of producing shame.

Ally was not the only student who saw publication in a less than celebratory manner. Sara, like Ally, was mindful of the audience for her writing and also chose her topic carefully. Sara elaborates in this conversation we had about how the writing process had gone for her:

Oh, it was a long process. Only because you had to write one SWAT and then you had to pick your favourite SWAT. But I didn't use it. I was going to write about the horses and stuff. And I hate writing true stories. That just doesn't work for me. Even if it is an untrue story, I kind of put like really real facts into it, like about my life. So then it's not fully false. It's kind of true and kind of false. Like I wrote about this one called Shapedown and I went to Shapedown. And I said there was this kind of fat girl who grew up and had no friends at all and never played with anybody. That was kind of a lie because I do have friends and I did play with people. And she decided to lose some weight one day. And that I did do. And so with her mother - she told her mother and I did tell my mum. And her mother was up all night looking up on the computer. That's not true [laughs]. But then the mother did find something and rushed down the stairs and told the daughter she found something called Shapedown and ever since that day they went to Shapedown and lost five pounds each. So it worked.

In this discussion, Sara is alluding to the early stipulation (for the first three SWATs) Ms. Wynn had given that the students must write factual stories using their lists. Sara's mode of working around this requirement is evidence here of the agency she exercises in relation to these kinds of teacher requirements as addressed in the mini-lesson sub-section above. As she describes the

174

content of her semi-autobiographical story, it is evident that Sara was quite proud of the piece she had written about her experience with a healthy living program she and her mother had attended. It was her favourite SWAT but she decided not to publish it, opting instead for a piece about horses. She followed this story up with a wish that she could write princess stories like her friends but added that she wasn't interested in this genre because she wasn't "into boys" the way her friends were.   I then asked her the same question I had asked Ally:

> KL: Are you excited to have other people read your work?
>
> Sara: [pause] Hmmm….
>
> KL: No?
>
> Sara: 'Cause I know that people won't think, 'Oh my god, Sara's is just the worst.' Or, 'Oh my god, what's her problem? She's writing about a horse bucking last Sunday, she was saying'. But to some people it would be.
>
> KL: And people are going to choose things that they're interested in, so….
>
> Sara: Yeah... Me and my friends said, we're gonna read all of our drafts together. And I'm like, "Heh heh heh", 'cause they all write about princesses and stuff. [laughs]

Sara had chosen not to publish her piece about Shapedown workshop, presumably because it was too personal to share with her classmates but here she expresses concern that her peers will find the topic of her horse story to somehow be out of step with the collective interests of her peer group. Her last statement expresses her apprehension of the coming day when she and her friends would sit together to read the stories just published in the Galleon Binder. She had earlier told me the princess stories her friends were writing were love stories and she wasn't ready to write about such topics. Her "Heh, heh, heh" above is an embarrassed laugh, expressed with her hand covering her mouth, as she anticipates their judgement that her story is not as mature as theirs. Sara's decision to choose the horse piece to develop for publication indicates her deliberate decision to choose work that was safe for public consumption. Nonetheless, she retains some autonomy by choosing to publish the horse story and not fall in with her friends who all write princess love stories.

For three other focal students, Deanne, Isaac, and Nigel, the experience of publishing their work was somewhat different. In answer to my question of whether she likes having people read her writing, Deanne responded, "Sometimes. Sometimes I don't feel like it because maybe I don't like my work. But most of the time I do". Isaac was nonchalant about the publication of his work but very pleased when I told him I had read his story. For Nigel having his work published was similarly empowering, possibly akin to the sense of accomplishment that comes

from writing a book. Here we were looking at work that was sitting on his desk and I asked about a drawing of a snowman.

> Nigel: That is the front cover of a book I wrote.
>
> KL: Oh yeah. Did you get finished?
>
> Nigel: Yes. It's in the book, but someone has it.
>
> KL: So people can borrow it from the binder to read it?
>
> Nigel: [nods]
>
> KL: Are you happy with the story?
>
> Nigel: Yeah! [smiles]

In our discussions, I did not often see Nigel smile when it came to the completion of assigned work. This was probably connected to the fact that up until this point in time he rarely, if ever, made the set deadlines for handing work in to the teachers. His excitement generally was reserved for telling me about trips he had taken with his family, friends he played with, video games he enjoyed or new movies he had just acquired. This excitement over his published piece took me by surprise, as did the sense of self-efficacy I felt I was seeing for the first time. While I have not done an analysis of each of the students' published pieces, Nigel's bears mentioning here. His story, entitled, *My Teacher Is a Snowman*, has a cover page with a picture of a snowman. Behind the snowman, is a chalkboard with a math equation and a list of names entitled, "Warnings". It tells the story, in first person, of a boy's first day back to school after summer holidays. The day was hot and he "was dragging" himself into school when he saw that his teacher was a snowman. The boy in the story asks the teacher why he is a snowman and the teacher denies that he is. The boy challenges him to a race outside and the snowman melts. The last few sentences of the story read: "When I got home, my mom asked me how was your new teacher? He didn't know how to handle kids. He melted under the pressure." (See Appendix five for the full story.)

Nigel wrote his story at home, using a story starter prompt, and employed his mother as editor. While it may be argued the agency for this act was initiated more by his mother than it was by Nigel, his agency is evident in his authoring of a story that conveys a less than favourable impression of teachers and pokes fun at the Warnings system used in his classroom, a system in which he regularly found himself implicated (see student profiles in Chapter Three).

As they interact with publishing as a literacy object, it is clear here that there is no universal experience for the five focal students I asked about it. For two of the students, anxiety

was part of the experience, for one, the ability to come up with the right story by the publication deadline determined whether it was a positive experience or not. For two students, the experience was highly empowering – although it is interesting that these are the two students who of their own volition employed outside editors (their parents) to help them produce the pieces in which they took pride and were happy to have read by others.

Literacy Objects: Visible and Animate Agents outside Immediate Literacy Events

Through the examination of the teacher and focal students in the grade five class at Howe River Elementary use of writers' workshop, I have looked at the first premise of literacy-in-action: readers and writers mediate their social world through their literate practice. The second premise of this model holds that the literacy objects those human actors engage with themselves play an agentive role; that is, they act as independent mediators. This second premise provides the next layer of analysis for literacy-in-action in the writers' workshop to address the third research sub-question: How are the literacy objects associated with literature circles and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary using the focal students? In this section the capacity of the literacy object to remain at work outside the actual literacy events where they are used is evident.

Mini-Lessons, Conferencing, and Student Publishing as Agents in Literacy-in-Action

In Chapter Four, I established the writers' workshop as a framed pedagogical interaction in the grade five classroom of Howe River elementary that is characterized by three primary literacy objects: the mini-lesson, one-to-one conferencing, and publishing of student work. In the first section of this chapter, I demonstrated the manner in which Ms. Wynn invested in these literacy objects' new functional responsibilities to promote her use of a structured writers' workshop where students produce high quality work she can use for assessment purposes. I then demonstrated how students responded to this use of the literacy objects. Here, I look at what those literacy objects may actually be accomplishing by examining their agentive role. To exemplify this activity, once again, I utilize the concept of *folding in (Latour, 1996),* as reconceptualized by Brandt and Clinton, whereby*,* literacy objects are used by human actors to accomplish certain goals without actually being physically present. I demonstrate the way that the literacy objects of the writers' workshop, conferencing, the mini-lesson, and publishing of student work, through the process of folding in, took on an agentive role in shaping the focal students' in-school literacy practices.

Conferencing

In the grade five class at Howe River Elementary, conferencing took on a form unlike the kind of conferencing described in the other connected spaces. Instead of using teacher-student or teacher-small group conferencing to help students develop their writing, the peer-conference was the only type of conference used.

Conferencing's folding in role: As a primary actor, this literacy object performed a folding in function. In other words, peer-conferencing took the place of the teacher in the writers' workshop. Unable to keep up with reading the drafts of the grade five class, Ms. Wynn replaced herself with the peer-conference, vesting in it the responsibility for helping students to prepare their drafts for publication. It is my contention that giving conferencing this type of mediational role resulted in a reductive process for students who only got spelling and punctuation correction from their peers, correction that was not always correct or welcome.

Additionally, this conferencing was held out to students as a carrot of sorts. When the students were told that those who had not met the extended deadline for handing their work in would not get to benefit from the peer-editing session, conferencing was used as a motivational tool. In one interview, we had been talking about the peer-editing process and she brought up the high number of students who were not ready for the upcoming session.

> And that's just the nature of the beast, is that with the school and with this group, there's a number of students who just never ever meet the deadlines and so those students will, unfortunately, have weaker swats or weaker entries. Because they will not have them edited and will not be part of that process.

Not only was the object used to motivate, it also seemed to predetermine who would produce good stories and whose work would be weaker as this quote from Ms. Wynn suggests.

The Mini-Lesson

Not unlike the peer-conferences, the mini-lesson also performed a folding in role in the grade five classroom. Here the mini-lesson provided all of the input that students would receive to help them develop their writing until they received Ms. Wynn's comments and grade on their published pieces. Students were not always expected to apply what they were taught in the mini-lesson to that day's writing, although in some cases, such as the mini-lesson preceding the peer-editing session, they were expected to use the content of the mini-lesson immediately. For the rest of the mini-lessons, ideas for finding a topic or improving their writing were presented and the students were free to decide whether or not they would apply that information that day or in a

subsequent writers' workshop. In this way, Ms. Wynn was able to communicate topics she thought would be helpful to the students in efficient, one-size-fits all packages.

The mini-lesson's folding in role. Having the assurance that she had supplied the students with tools for writing and revising through the mini-lesson and the peer-editing conferences, Ms. Wynn was then able to step away from individual interactions with the students completely. In this way, the mini-lesson delivered to the whole group, worked to completely replace one-to-one, individualized instruction the teacher would ordinarily provide through conferences.

Publishing

As a literacy object with agentive power in the writers' workshop in the grade five class at Howe River Elementary, the publication of student work mediated the focal students' experiences with writing. It served as an agent with a folding in role that produced anxiety in some students and seemed to empower others. Publishing also worked to determine students' experiences with process writing and it may have led to students not being assessed on their best work.

Publishing's folding in role. The writers' workshop was set up in this classroom so that the students were motivated to produce written pieces for public consumption, not by the one-to-one teacher scaffolding characteristic of the writers' workshop in the other spaces connected to the classroom, but rather by looming deadlines. In this manner, deadlines for publishing perform a folding in role as they take the place of the human motivator, the teacher.

Publishing with anxiety: While considered one of the charter features of the writers' workshop, as noted in the transcripts of the interviews with Ally and Sara presented in the previous section, publishing their work was not always a positive experience for students. When their work became public, the students themselves were put on display. Their work was exposed for all of their classmates to see. Publication was presented to the students in this classroom in much the same way that proponents of publishing student work (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1986, 1994; Graves, 1983, 2003) framed it. That is, Ms. Wynn promoted the Galleon Binder as a celebration of the students' accomplishments as authors. However, it was not perceived this way by all of the students. For students like Ally and Sara, knowing their classmates would be reading what they had written produced a certain amount of angst. Sara clearly made a decision to be careful about what she would publish, while Ally nervously put her work forward and hoped for the best.

Ms. Wynn also told the students in a mini-lesson that it was important to put their best work into the Galleon Binder so that they wouldn't be embarrassed when others read their "silly stories".   In making this statement, Ms. Wynn was commenting on some students who had placed their work in the binder and finding that the stories they had put "no effort" into were not up to par with the other stories in the binder, had decided remove them and start again. She was commending these students for having a sense of audience and realizing that publication in the Galleon Binder was something they should take seriously. But what may have been communicated to others who were unsure about their writing was that their work could be considered "silly" as well. Recalling Ms. Wynn's comment regarding the effect of peer criticism on student writing: "Their expectations on themselves go way up because they know their friends are going to be reading it," it becomes apparent that student concern about peer criticism is intentionally used by Ms. Wynn to motivate students to write well. However, the anxiety produced in some students by publishing as a literacy object became an unanticipated outcome when it was used in this manner.

Anxiety may have been heightened when students were not given the teacher input that would have helped them publish a piece as close to error-free as possible. For students like Isaac and Nigel, who had the one-on-one adult help with revising and editing, any anxiety of making public less than perfect work was mitigated by knowing that a more seasoned eye had gone over it before they wrote their final copy. Students like Ally and Sara, who did not mention using their parents as editors, may have been experiencing apprehension, in part, because they worried over mistakes other students would find in their work. While Ms. Wynn cites the desire for the published piece to be student's own work, she seems to overlook the agency of the published piece - when students make public a piece with obvious errors, it can be embarrassing for them. It can have the opposite of the desired effect - rather than being a piece they are proud of, it can become a public display of the student's lack of understanding of written conventions. Or if the peers who helped edit the piece lack the ability to help the student and they haven't taken it to their parents for editing, it becomes a display of both the student and the peers' lack of understanding of written conventions.

Here we see an important illustration of the kind of power a literacy object takes on in this classroom. It is a power far in excess of that intended, or possibly even imagined, by those who first introduced it to the elementary classroom more than three decades ago. It is a power, I venture to guess, which also exceeds that which the teachers in this grade five class imagined it taking on.

Publishing and the writing process. Publishing, as a literacy object, also took on a mediating role in determining how students experienced the writing process. The whole-class deadlines students were required to meet for the peer-editing sessions that preceded bringing their work to the final copy stage and the publication deadline itself both worked to determine the schedule the young writers would be required to work within. With this approach to publishing, students are not choosing to publish a piece solely because they feel it is something they want to bring to a polished state; they are choosing a piece to develop because they now have to get something ready to meet a deadline. The emphasis changes: with a more flexible deadline, the focus is on the writing process; with fixed, whole-class deadlines, the focus shifts to the finished product.

Publishing and students' grades. The prospect of making their work public through the Galleon Binder worked to determine which ideas some students were willing to carry forward from their writers' notebook into draft and final copy. Because this final published version of their work was all that the students were marked on for the writing portion of their language arts grade, the question needs to be asked as to whether publication of their work might not have been working against some students. If students were choosing pieces for publication that they felt were safe for the classroom audience, they may not have been choosing to develop the pieces they were truly passionate about, as was the case with Sara, and therefore, may not have been putting forward their best writing.

Having not read any of the students' work until it reached its final copy stage and was placed in the Galleon Binder, Ms. Wynn was only able to judge the students' growth as writers by comparing their various published pieces. What she was assessing, however, was not necessarily the piece that resulted from her teaching input in the mini-lessons but work that reflected a much more unevenly distributed input of one-to-one conferencing the students had with their peers and their parents. Had some of the conferencing come from Ms. Wynn, "expert" advice for each of the novice writers could have been more readily ensured.

The Literacy Objects Working Together

Three of the students related the writing process they followed as a process of taking ideas, drafting a story, revising it until you are happy with it and then publishing it. These three students, Deanne, Isaac, and Nigel were the three students who had received feedback from a peer, in Deanne's case, or from their parents, in Isaac and Nigel's cases. The other three described the process much as Ally does here: "You had to choose a SWAT and then write it on

fullscat [sic]. And somebody had to edit it and then you wrote it down on three-hole punch and then you did title page." The emphasis is clearly on the procedural elements of publishing that had been laid out for them by their teacher in a mini-lesson.

In this strong emphasis on procedural aspects of the writing process Ally, Riley, and Sara understood as the important parts of bringing a story to the publication stage, the influence of the literacy objects seems clear. For these students, the way they understood the literacy objects, the mini-lesson, conferencing, and publishing as focused on copying out a first draft of a story, editing it for spelling, ensuring that you write it on the correct paper for the editing session and the final copy, and finally, not neglecting to include a title page, demonstrates the way that the literacy objects may work to take the focus off the process of writing and place it on the actual hard copy of the finished product.

<p style="text-align:center">Discussion</p>

Looking at the writers' workshop as a pedagogical interaction with literacy objects that have travelled from distant spaces, it is evident that two of the literacy objects, the mini-lesson and publication of student work, though alike in form to those envisioned in other spaces, functioned in the grade five class at Howe River Elementary in a manner quite different from the literacy pedagogy community and Ministry of Education spaces and somewhat different than the space of the teacher how-to text. In an overall sense, as we move from the research space to the classroom space, a simplification of the procedures of writers' workshop takes place. What ensues, I argue, is a writers' workshop with a uniformity and predictability of process that aims to simplify the task of teaching writing to a large class. However, the scope of each of the literacy objects is increased in this classroom: responsibility for ensuring that students write is shifted from the teacher to the literacy objects.

A theme of Ms. Wynn's general teaching philosophy, and a theme very much present in her stated philosophy under girding writers' workshop, is independence. For Ms. Wynn, students in the intermediate grades needed to take responsibility for completing their work independently and on time. I argue that out of this orientation and the contextual situation of her grade five classroom, Ms. Wynn was led to develop hybrid uses of the literacy objects. Some of these hybridized uses of the literacy objects achieved her goals for independence and some may actually have worked at cross purposes to some of her intentions. With the accountability or surveillance responsibility given to the three literacy objects, Ms. Wynn was successful in getting each of the focal students to produce work by the determined date. However, while the

literacy objects were all employed to lead the students to on-time completion of pieces for publication, it may be that the literacy objects were actually working against the independence orientation Ms. Wynn sought to foster. The capacity of the literacy objects to remain at work outside the immediate literacy event is evident here. Instead of fostering independence, the manner in which the mini-lesson and student publication, were utilized, likely worked to create dependence in students: they directed students in what to do and when to do it, with little opportunity for the kind of independent decision-making generally considered necessary for building independence. Instead of helping to foster independent learners, the responsibility for doing so that she folded in to these literacy objects may have worked at cross purposes to her intentions. Similarly, with her intention of helping the students to learn to become freer in their writing, the way accountability was folded in to conferencing and publishing may only have served to stifle the kinds of writing students were able or willing to produce.

When form and function are considered, hybridized literacy objects have been created in this classroom. In these hybridized objects only the procedural aspects of the writing process are taught with responsibilities for classroom management and accountability added. What may be lost, however, in the use of these hybrids in the writers' workshop, is the joy of learning to write freely that the teacher originally set out to engender when she introduced the writers' workshop to her classroom. Romantic engagement with the larger ideas about empowerment and freedom to become a writer are nested within an atmosphere of control and the need for efficiency. This may not have left room for the kind of individually paced writing process for which the writers' workshop is traditionally known. With it's trajectory that so often seemed fixed on the published story, the outcome seems to more closely resemble a production line form of writers' workshop. The conferencing and publishing innovations used in the grade five class as literacy objects may also have conspired together to ensure a less than egalitarian form of writing instruction.

The romantic ideals of process writing and the roles originally envisioned for the literacy objects are circumscribed by the need to have student work to assess at specified junctures throughout the year and by the lack of time the teacher has for offering feedback on student drafts before they reach the publication stage because of class size and curriculum demands. What emerges is an assembly line version of writers' workshop with a focus on product over process, the polar opposite of the philosophy behind writers' workshop when it was first introduced in spaces connected to this classroom and the teacher's ideals regarding writing instruction with students of this age group.

CHAPTER SEVEN: LITERACY OBJECTS ON A COLLISION COURSE WITH IDEALIZED NOTIONS OF LITERACY INSTRUCTION

Objects are animated with human histories, vision, ingenuity, and will, yet they also have a durable status and are resilient to our will. Our objects are us but more than us, bigger than we are; as they accumulate human investments in them over time, they can and do push back at us as "social facts" independent and to be reckoned with.

- Brandt and Clinton, 2002, p. 345

This study has examined literacy instruction in a grade five classroom from a new theoretical lens for sociocultural studies of literacy, *literacy-in-action* (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 355). This lens looks not only at what people are doing with literacy, their literacy practices, but also what literacy is doing with people. With the fundamental concept of incorporation of objects as participants in literate activity, the model proposes to address the difficult task of examining the role of distant forces in shaping local literacy practices. A theoretical and qualitative study, this dissertation examines the literacy-in-action model in a specific context, both as a way of situating, elaborating and further theorizing the model and as a means for examining specific aspects of literate practice in a contemporary classroom.

Much has changed in the last decade in the educational climate for schools in the region in which this study is located. Teachers, schools and school boards are under tremendous pressure to demonstrate that the literacy rates of their students are improving; by extension, students are now under pressure to perform literacy in a manner that meets an official standard. The level of intervention from distant authorities in the literacy instruction provided in local schools is purported by teachers and teachers' unions to be an ever-increasing phenomenon. Evidence of the scrutiny may be seen in the way literacy curricula have recently been re-written and in the standards for literacy or grade-level benchmarks that have been set out at the provincial level. Traditionally immune to the kinds of grading practices to which students at the secondary level of education have long been subject, intermediate level students now must be given grades that rank them in relation to their classmates. In turn, this requires material on which teachers may grade students. This introduction of accountability measures is interjected into models of classroom literacy pedagogy that embrace progressive philosophies (i.e., among other attributes, student performance should be judged on an individual basis, an emphasis on the processes of learning, rather than the product).

At times, this phenomenon of intersecting approaches to education, as it played out in this classroom, resulted in a clash of ideologies, a discordant pedagogy as the findings of this study have demonstrated. The main teacher, Ms. Wynn, embraced certain idealized or romanticized notions of what classroom literacy pedagogy should achieve; simultaneously she adhered to the requirements of including an ever-expanding curriculum in the space of a school day that had not changed in length, while also finding the means to grade student performance; all of this with fewer human and material resources at her disposal. In order to accomplish this, she turned to literacy objects.

The study exemplifies Brandt and Clinton's observation that literacy objects have a capacity to "hold together multiple interests" (2002, p. 355). One of Ms. Wynn's statements in an interview at the end of the school year sums up the contextual constraints the teachers faced : "there's many reasons why personally that open area concept wasn't very successful this year. That's one of them - the cohesiveness of the group, personalities, the continual behavioural issues that were so grinding. And it just wore us down. It took the fun out of teaching. And when it takes the fun out of teaching then we're not at our best at teaching, either. We become much more dogmatic in our approach and not so creative". The statement may point toward the issues raised by the study regarding reliance on literacy objects

This study looks at two framed literacy pedagogical interactions, literature circles and writers' workshop, conceived of in times when whole language with its progressive ideals shaped attitudes of what literacy instruction should look like. Two specific ideals that flowed from this era were the notion of grand conversations about literature (Eeds & Wells, 1989) and children as authors engaging in a writing process (Graves, 1983). By following the path of the literacy objects associated with these pedagogical interactions, this study has sought to demonstrate the way these often romantic notions have come to the classroom and the consequences that ensue as the activity of these objects construes the pedagogical interactions in ways unintended by their authors. Brandt and Clinton's claim, "Objects are animated with human histories, vision, ingenuity, and will, yet they also have durable status and are resilient to our will" (2002, p. 345), is clearly evidenced in this overall finding.

Chapters Four through Six examined the research: How do literacy objects that travel through spaces removed in time and location from a local grade five classroom play a role in shaping literacy instruction as it is enacted in the literature circle and writers' workshop of that classroom?; How are the human agents in this study, i.e., the focal students and teachers, using the literacy objects associated with literature circle and writers' workshop in their classroom?;

185

and How are the literacy objects associated with the literature circle and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom mediating the in-school practice of literacy for the focal students? The examination provides a detailed analysis of classroom literacy practices associated with literature circles and writers' workshop as they are shaped in spaces connected to the grade five classroom by utilizing the literacy-in-action model.

In this final chapter, I take a wider focus, stepping back to address the overarching research question of the study: How can a new model of sociocultural literacy theory, *literacy-in-action*, and its unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action* (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), provide us with a new lens for understanding the ways that literacy is practiced in the classroom? To address this question, I first look at the literacy-in-action model and the types of theoretical issues it addresses. Next, I present some concerns arising from my use of the model. I then review the new kinds of understandings the model has facilitated in this study by focusing primarily on the agentive activities of literacy objects associated with literature circles and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. Finally, I turn to some of the theoretical gaps in the New Literacy Studies (NLS) approach to literacy research and suggest ways in which the literacy-in-action model has addressed these issues.

Literacy-in-action: An Alternate Model for Sociocultural Studies of Literacy

A New Unit of Analysis

A fundamental concept in the model of literacy-in-action, the unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action*, is proposed to replace the literacy event as the main unit of analysis in the social practice perspective. This new unit of analysis allows for an examination in literacy studies that can follow "objective trace[s] of literacy in a setting (print, instruments, paper, other technologies) whether they are being taken up by local actors or not" (p. 349). These objective traces, or literacy objects, with their agentive role, may be constructed in distant places and yet have an impact on local literacy practices.

According to Brandt and Clinton (2002), the construct of literacy-objects-in-action intentionally carries a double-meaning, focusing attention on the way in which literacy itself acts as a social agent, in addition to examining literacy's role in human activity. "The construct orients us to ask: What part does literacy play in the action and what does it look like in action" (p.349)? Or more simply, this new unit of analysis allows us to look at what people are doing with literacy and what literacy is doing with people.

Is a New Unit of Analysis Required?

In many senses the overarching research question of this study is predicated on the question of whether a new unit of analysis is even necessary. In Chapter Two, questions regarding the use of the literacy event as the main unit of analysis for sociocultural studies were addressed. The main objection to this traditional unit of analysis centres on its 'here and now' orientation and its failure to recognize that most events involving literacy are shaped not only in that moment in time but also in places and times distant to that situation.

While acknowledging that the literacy event neglects global influences when looking at local literacies, Street (2003b) calls for further theorization of the concept of literacy practices in order to address the issue, although he does not elaborate on what that framework might look like. One of the problems with taking this approach, however, is the very way that literacy practices are determined: they are inferred from observing literacy events (see Barton & Hamilton, 2000). If we have called the literacy event as a unit of analysis into question, then can we continue to utilize a concept based on that which has been shown to be inadequate?

Second, Street's proposal may prove untenable because the concept of literacy practices focuses on individual or community agency with regard to literacy practices. For example, studies of literacy practices in the past have tended to look at the way individuals or communities are using literacy in ways that are aligned with their social, cultural, linguistic, political or economic backgrounds. Or these studies have looked at ways that individuals have taken imposed practices or uses of literacy shaped by others and re-shaped those uses to suit their own social, cultural, linguistic, political or economic backgrounds. While examinations of these acts of resistance begin to explore power dynamics, they still do not address situations where those who are subjected to certain literacy practices are not given the choice of whether or not they will practice literacy in the required manner. That is, they do not address situations where some of the human actors are denied agency of the same proportion others in their situated practice of literacy are given. Schools are primary locations where this kind of power dynamic exists. Teachers are told what they must teach by those above them in the hierarchy of the educational structure – school boards, ministries of education. Teachers tell students what the expectations are for them regarding their participation in framed literacy pedagogical interactions and students make choices regarding the extent to which they will comply, knowing that failure to comply or failure to comply adequately (according to the teacher's or the assessment rubric's terms) will result in poor grades on their report cards. Perhaps it is because of this power imbalance, and the lack of theoretical power in the concept of literacy practices to address it, that relatively few

sociocultural studies in literacy are undertaken in school settings. In these kinds of situations, it may well be that that the concept of literacy practices simply cannot be adequately theorized for use as a unit of analysis.

The concept of literacy practices, when used in conjunction with the literacy event, delineates where the local and the global intersect; that is, together they provide an "analytical space" for discussing these issues but do not, as they are currently conceptualized, provide an adequate framework for studies interested in the way distant forces shape local literacy practices (Reder & Davila, 2005, p. 176). Given the need for a new way to account for the role of power in sociocultural studies of literacy, Reder and Davila (2005) remind us that we need to know precisely *what* the distant forces are that shape literacy in local settings, in order to ask *how* these forces impact on local literacy events. Further conceptualizing literacy practices as a unit of analysis may not provide the means to adequately handle such questions, particularly in light of the preceding discussion regarding the difficulties in a globalized world of determining context of situation for literacy events and the question of who has the power to actually hybridize their own literacy practices and who does not. As such, it may be unlikely that the concept of literacy practices can be adequately theorized to address the role of power in literacy studies. The findings of this study suggest that a unit of analysis such as literacy-objects-in-action is one approach with the theoretical means to address these concerns.

A recent edited volume (Pahl & Rowsell, 2006) that set out look at local-global crossings illustrates the need to seek a new unit of analysis: choices made regarding the units of analysis in this work, I argue, may actually diminish the understandings the studies set out to achieve. Some of the studies in this volume use the literacy/semiotic event as the unit of analysis (Alvermann, 2006; Davies, 2006; Kell, 2006; Marsh, 2006; Stein & Slominsky, 2006). While these studies provide an interesting account of literacy practices, they do so a through unit of analysis that lacks the theoretical potential to demonstrate how local practices are shaped in more global spaces. Some of the other studies (Janks & Comber, 2006; Rowsell, 2006) look at texts as the unit of analysis and thus, provide a consideration of the agentive role of objects for which I have been arguing. However, the studies either examine what human actors are doing with literacy (Janks & Comber, 2006) or what the texts are doing with human actors (Rowsell, 2006), but do not address the two simultaneously. The present study fills this gap. Through the unit of analysis, literacy-objects-in-action, a dual focus that looks at how people mediate their world through literate practice *and* how the literacy objects associated with that practice play a role in mediating people's literate practice is enabled. Such a focus provides a deeper, richer account of

188

literacy practices in local settings as they are influenced or shaped by distant forces. By using the model of literacy-in-action with its unit of analysis, literacy-objects-in-action, this study has been able to achieve in greater depth what many of the studies in the Pahl and Rowsell text that aim to examine local-global crossings were not quite able to achieve.

The findings of this study support Brandt and Clinton's observation that "the forms of literacy individuals or communities practice may not be the forms they would prefer to practice" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 257). Hence the need to develop frameworks that are theoretically capable of looking at what literacy is doing with individuals and communities subject to a literacy environment where substantive choices regarding the practice of literacy are few. Adding a new unit of analysis to the sociocultural repertoire that not only looks at individuals' or communities' literacy practices but also looks at how literacy functions as a social actor to shape that individual's or community's experiences with literacy most certainly enables us to address the very situations in which power imbalances are present.

Theoretical issues regarding the concept of a literacy object arose in the course of the analysis conducted for this study.

Elaborating the Literacy-in-Action Model

By looking at the way people utilize literacy through their interaction with literacy objects and the way that those objects, in turn, impact the literacy practices of people, new understandings of literacy become possible. However, certain theoretical issues have surfaced as I have worked with the model. Most of these issues, not surprisingly, are strongly centred on the concept of literacy objects.

Determining the Literacy Object

A primary concern raised by this study is the determination of what actually constitutes a literacy object. Brandt and Clinton use the bank loan form to exemplify their conceptualization of literacy objects. Their use of this example may leave us with the impression that a literacy object is a single document that gets passed physically or electronically between spaces. This gives a somewhat limited view of what I view literacy objects to be. For instance, the role sheets used in the classroom obviously are not the same ones that Daniels first produced when he wrote *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-centered Classroom* (Daniels, 1994) or when he later revised the text (Daniels, 2002). Some teachers use copies of his work; that is, they use facsimiles of the role sheets. But some use hybridizations that are still highly

189

recognizable as originating with Daniels, as was the case with the role sheets in this study. These I term, reproductions. Because they are so recognizable in the classroom (and the spaces leading up to it) as reproductions of Daniels' role sheets, I argue that the role sheets can be conceptualized as objects that travel between the spaces.

Thus, it is necessary to take a somewhat wider view of literacy objects than that which may be inferred from Brandt and Clinton's example. This contention is very much in keeping with Latour's original conception of objects: the clerk's grill, the counter, and the mailboxes in a post office are all either facsimiles or reproductions of models determined by the national postal authority of a particular country. However, in this study, I may have opened the question of what constitutes an object further than that which is theoretically merited. That is, in viewing writing conferences as literacy objects, perhaps I opened up the conceptualization of literacy objects as "objective traces of literacy in a setting (print, instruments, paper, other technologies)" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 349) too far. There is a concrete tangibility to objects as they are conceptualized by Latour and to literacy objects as they are set out by Brandt and Clinton. Can the use of mini-lessons, conferencing, and student publications be seen as tangible reproductions or facsimiles of the original objects as made by their creators (Calkins, 1986, 1994; Graves, 1983)?

I justify mini-lessons and publication of student writing as literacy objects as follows, recognizing that this, too, may be somewhat contentious. Mini-lessons took on a concrete form as they moved through the spaces - altering from a concept in the literacy research pedagogy space to become an object in the publisher's space in the form of published mini-lessons, which were promoted by the school board and subsequently used for instruction in the classroom and even copied into the students' notebooks. Reproduction of the mini-lesson as conceptualized by Calkins becomes an object in the publisher's space. Facsimiles of the publisher's mini-lesson are then used in the classroom. The concept takes on an objective form as it travels through the spaces to the classroom.

Similarly, with publication of student writing, educators could walk into the classroom at Howe River Elementary and immediately recognize the material form of student publications as objects inspired by the process writing/children as authors movement that informs the writers' workshop. I argue that these student publications may be seen to be objectified reproductions of the concept of student publication, as it was created by Graves and promoted by Calkins.

I have concluded, however, that conferencing as a literacy object is not true to the conceptualization originally intended by Brandt and Clinton (2002). While I demonstrated that

190

in the classroom an objective form of conferencing took shape in the form of the editing marks made by their peers on the student's story draft, I asked the question: But is its late stage of objectification enough to qualify it as a literacy object? Like publication, conferencing did not become an object until the very end point of the local-global continuum. But unlike publication of student work, the concept of conferencing, as its conceptualization endured through each of the spaces leading up to the classroom, did not retain any degree of intactness in the classroom space. The form of conferencing was radically altered before it was put into practice in the classroom. Because it cannot be argued that facsimiles or reproductions of either the concept originating in distant spaces or a material form of conferencing actually made its way into the hands of the students, I conclude that student conferencing cannot be considered a literacy object.

It is interesting to note, however, that conferencing, is a process that is not readily objectified in the way that student roles in literature circles or mini-lessons and publication of student work in writers' workshop are. In this study, conferencing didn't have the capacity to travel intact to the classroom in the way the other objects did. Because it did not travel well, conferencing in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary devolved into the age-old practice of "red-marking", hybridized in this local space to take the marking out of the teacher's hands and make it the students' responsibility.

While I stand by the inclusion of the mini-lesson and publication of student work as literacy objects in writers' workshop and question the inclusion of conferencing, I have left the analysis showing their inclusion complete in Chapter Six. I do so to provide a means for discussing the important issue of what counts as a literacy object and as a point of discussion regarding my exploratory use of the literacy-in-action model. In the sections that follow, however, I discuss only the role sheet, mini-lesson and publication of student writing as literacy objects with mediational abilities.

Further Theorizing a Definition of Literacy Objects

Stemming from the question of the particular literacy objects considered by this study, the issue of literacy objects highlights the need for further theorizing an understanding of literacy objects in the literacy-in-action model. It is apparent in this study that concepts set out in distant spaces took on objective forms as they travelled to the classroom or in the classroom itself and that these objects played mediational roles in the classroom literacy practices of the focal students. It is not always the objective form of the literacy object that travels from the distant

space, as may be inferred from Brandt and Clinton's banking illustration. I, therefore, propose that we may be able to better constitute a literacy object based on the following criteria:

> *A literacy object has a conceptual or material form that travels as a reproduction or facsimile between the spaces connecting the global and the local; but the concept must become an object at some point in its travels and the reproduction or facsimile must be recognizable in form as that which emanated from the distant space.*

Capacities of Literacy Objects

In this study, the observation that literacy objects travel intact needed a certain amount of clarification. Following from the argument in the preceding section, because they became objectified in different spaces as they travelled through the educational structure, I argue that the notion of intactness must be seen broadly. Objects may start out as concepts in distant spaces that then become objects as they travel to local spaces. Additionally, though for the most part they arrived intact in form to the local scene, the functions to which they were put differed. For some of the literacy objects, there was very little that was intact from the literacy pedagogy community with regard to the functions they were given in the local classroom.

Related to this, the tenets regarding the capacities of literacy objects must be understood in light of the proviso that it is human investment in them that allows them to become and remain powerful. By examining the capacities of literacy objects, care must be taken not to ascribe to literacy objects abilities that they do not possess or to under theorize the role of human actors in the literate activity. Thus, Brandt and Clinton's (2002) characterization of a literacy object as an "independent mediator" (p. 349), must be understood as a literacy object seeming to take on a life of its own but in reality acquiring its mediational abilities from the "human investments"(p. 345) made in it. This is not to diminish the importance of literacy objects, for I agree completely with Brandt and Clinton that objects "are endowed with local meaning by local agents but [also] endow meaning to the locales in which they appear" (p. 348). It is to say, however, that in teasing out the role literacy objects, we must be careful not to cross into territory that treats literacy as an autonomous force (Street, 2003b).

The Importance of Context

Applying the literacy-in-action model must always be undertaken with a strong focus on context. Understanding the findings that emerge through the analysis of literacy-objects-in-action can only be accomplished when context, both local and more distant is considered. In

order to understand literacy through this lens, the investigation of literacy objects must never be divorced from the practices of those who engage with the objects. This is nothing new for sociocultural studies of literacy but a consideration that must always be kept at the forefront when looking at the mediational activity of literacy objects.

As I worked with and elaborated the literacy-in-action model, questions of exactly where to set the end point for determining the "distant" forces in the framed pedagogical interaction arose. Care must be taken to ensure that the endpoint when mapping the local-global continuum is consistent with the data at hand. Connections between the spaces must have a sound basis; that is, care must be taken not to stretch the data when using the literacy-in-action model to make connections that may not exist or cannot be argued. For example, in this study, I was also interested in larger school board policies as set out by those currently in administrative roles in this institution. However, my interview with a school board administrator and the school principal quickly determined that they knew little or nothing about the literature circles or writers' workshop and their associated literacy objects and that their own activities played no direct role in influencing the use of these pedagogical interactions in the classroom. I, therefore, decided not to include these individuals and the spaces they represent in the local-global continuum that is the framework for the case study, even though they were logical spaces to consider.

This concern is not unlike an ongoing and primary issue associated with case study research: how does one determine the case boundaries of a case study? Determining the local-global context through the identification of literacy objects that travel between spaces may help in the theorization of literacy research conducted using a case study strategy. By locating the end points of the literacy object's travels, case boundaries may be more readily and logically determined. This represents a promising framework for sociocultural studies of literacy that employ case study.

A Preliminary Proposal

Brandt and Clinton state: "We warn that this is a preliminary presentation, meant at this point to be inclusive if not thoroughly integrated. We mostly want to show what new questions can be asked and perspectives gleaned once the door between people and things is opened up and things are given the status of social actors" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p.348). Using Brandt and Clinton's proposed new unit of analysis, literacy-objects-in-action, this study has looked at literacy instruction in an intermediate level classroom, a classroom, I argue, that is typical of the

193

majority of classrooms for this age level in this region and quite likely most regions throughout western countries, where power imbalances, as described above, are in existence. By looking at the way the literacy objects in the study worked to construct students' experiences with literacy several lines of discussion become possible. We can ask what the study tells us about the literacy objects under scrutiny. We can ask how the activity of the literacy objects mediates students' in-school practice of literacy. We can ask how those literacy objects gained the kind of power that they held in the grade five classroom. We can ask questions of the extent to which activities that invest power in literacy objects in schools provide affordances for teachers and students, as well as the limitations of such practices. I pursue each of these lines of inquiry in the following section.

People and Objects: A New Way to Approach Literacy Studies

The NLS have made great strides in demonstrating that literacy is not an autonomous process. People do not become literate through learning a sequence of discrete skills to decode print texts. Rather, literacy is much better conceptualized as an ideological process that encompasses both the skills of learning to encode and decipher symbolic language and the social, political, cultural and linguistic complexities inherent to individuals and communities that shape their understandings and uses of literacy. However, Brandt and Clinton note, "we wonder if the new paradigm sometimes veers too far in a reactive direction, exaggerating the power of local contexts to set or reveal the forms and meanings that literacy takes. Literate practices are not typically invented by their practitioners. Nor are they independently chosen or sustained by them" (p. 338). One of the outcomes of understanding literacy through an ideological model, they point out, is the tendency to privilege human activity and ignore the fact that human interactions with literacy always involve objects and sometimes those objects play a determining role in the literacy people practice. This certainly describes the situation in the present study. In this section, I examine the literacy objects, the role sheet, the mini-lesson and publication of student work, and the students and teachers' use of them in the grade five classroom with a view to understanding how literacy objects may be shaping students in-school literacy practices. Through an examination of the capacities of the prominent literacy objects in literature circles and writers' workshop in the grade five classroom and the way those capacities influence the in-school literacy practices of the focal students, it becomes clear that the literacy-in-action model provides a highly useful means for understanding the way student literacy is shaped by forces outside their own situated practice.

What Do We Know about the Literacy Objects?

The literacy-in-action model contends that literacy objects have three inherent abilities: "a capacity to travel, a capacity to stay intact, and a capacity to be visible and animate outside the interactions of immediate literacy events" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 344). For the most part, each of these capacities has been observed in the literacy objects featured in this study. A fourth ability has also become evident in the findings of this study: the literacy object's capacity to resist critique.

Literacy Objects Travel

The literacy objects highlighted in this study (the role sheet, the mini-lesson, and publication of student work) were not invented in the grade five classroom: they arrived from somewhere else. As the connected spaces are traced from the classroom outward through the educational structure in which it is located, it becomes obvious that these objects have travelled through considerable time and location to arrive in this classroom. Conceived of more than two decades earlier in a foreign country, these objects are seen in full force in this local classroom (and numerous others in the region). One of the objects (role sheets) travelled all the way from the literacy pedagogy research space, while two of the objects (the mini-lesson and publication of student work) began as concepts that were later turned into objects in the publisher's space (mini-lesson) or the classroom (publication of student work).

The literacy objects in this study were assisted in their travels by a number of players primarily using print sources such as books and the internet, in addition to conference and oral modes of transmission through lecture, workshop, or word of mouth. Universities and colleges assist the travelling through promoting the pedagogical interactions and introducing the objects in teacher education programs. In Ms. Wynn's case, the travelling ability of the literacy objects associated with writers' workshop (the mini-lesson, publication of student work) may have been assisted by the texts used in her graduate level course on writing in the elementary school. In addition to other readings, the course used only photocopies of selected sections of Calkins' (1994) text on writers' workshop. If these selected sections focused primarily on the literacy objects, their travel would be greatly assisted. Publishers move the objects from the research of literacy pedagogy space, where they are promoted as a means of improving classroom literacy instruction, by repackaging it in a manner that teachers may perceive as easily digested and implemented in their classrooms. In the case of the mini-lesson, it was the in the publisher's space that the concept was actually given a concrete form that then travelled to the classroom

space. Publishers gain by promoting the objects and even embellishing them – their gains being book sales promoting "innovative" pedagogical tools. Similarly, school boards assist the travels by promoting certain pedagogical interactions as "best practice" by providing workshops for teachers to enable them to better utilize the pedagogical interactions and in some situations, introducing the literacy objects.[13]

The ability of literacy objects to travel through spaces separated by time and location challenges one of the tenets of sociocultural studies in literacy as conceptualized within the NLS: the situated nature of literacy. As they travel through the spaces, the literacy objects in this study demonstrate the transcontextual nature of literacy in the local classroom: literacy, as conceptualized by someone else, is not simply situated in the classroom space. This idea will be explored further in a subsequent section.

Literacy Objects Travel Intact

While it is interesting that the literacy objects travelled through time and location, through numerous spaces connected to the grade five classroom, more astonishing is the high degree to which role sheets, mini-lessons, and publication of student work travelled *intact* to this location. The literacy objects each presented themselves, in form, as close facsimiles or reproductions of the concepts or objects created in distant spaces when they appeared in the classroom. While passing through numerous spaces, some of them spaces that sought to modify them, the objects, nonetheless, were completely recognizable in the classroom as objects that emanated from a specific and distant source (role sheets) or as concepts that took on a concrete form as they travelled through the spaces (the mini-lesson and student publications). Harvey Daniels' hand in forming the roles for discussion in literature circles is without a doubt seen in the roles that were in use in the grade five class at Howe River Elementary. Lucy Calkins' injunction that mini-lessons are necessary and students' work should be published for others to read is also readily identifiable in the classroom. The very mini-lessons created in the publisher's space were utilized in the classroom and portions copied into students' notebooks. The highly intact nature of the literacy objects, once they reached the classroom space, becomes more incredible in light of efforts to modify the object itself or the use of it in the intermediary spaces

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[13] For example, a perusal of the world wide web using "literature circles" as the search term, yields numerous websites, sponsored by school boards in Canada and the U.S.A., to promote literature circles as one aspect of their "best practices" in literacy instruction. These sites also provide role descriptions and templates for role sheets.

between the literacy research space and the classroom (e.g., articles by Daniels discussing concerns about role sheets).

The literacy objects become social facts. Part of the intactness of the literacy objects may relate to their unquestioned place in the framed pedagogical interactions as they were enacted in the local classroom. In keeping with Brandt and Clinton's contention, the literacy objects associated with the literature circle and the writers' workshop were very much "social facts" in the grade five classroom. For the students, literature circles were unanimously defined as reading a book and "doing jobs" (roles). Additionally, Ms. Wynn's observation that conversation in the literature circles in her classroom amounted to little more than the students reading their role sheets illustrates the way in which role sheets "push back … as 'social facts' independent and to be reckoned with"(Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 345). Ms. Wynn's appraisal of this situation was that the maturity of students, their gender, and the book choices available to the groups were the reason for the lack of deep book conversations amongst her students. That is, it wasn't the role sheet that prevented deep conversation from taking place; in her line of thinking, the phenomenon of little unscripted conversation occurred for reasons located outside of the role sheet's activity. This suggests that she had accepted the role sheet as an inviolable fixture of the literature circle for grade five students – a social fact in grade five literature circles. By viewing the role sheet as a literacy object, an agent that impeded real book conversations, it becomes apparent that here the role sheet is asserting its independence as a would-be integral player in the literature circle.

The literacy objects become synonymous with the pedagogical interaction. The intact nature of the literacy objects may in part in be accounted for with the observation that over time, as framed pedagogical interactions, such as literature circles and writers' workshop, become fixed aspects of classroom literacy instruction, the objects most prominently associated with them become synonymous with the pedagogical interaction itself. This phenomenon may, in fact, speak to the concern regarding the epidemic of orthodoxies (Calkins, 1986; Graves, 2003) that ensue from popularized framed literacy pedagogical interactions – by equating the object with the pedagogical interaction, the focus on the social aspects of engaging with reading and writing and learning about reading and writing through engaging with them as adults do, aspects stressed by the original creators, shifts to the procedural aspects contained in the literacy object. For example, the notion that publishing their work provides students with opportunities to learn in an authentic and individualized way about the intricacies of writing translates to a focus on producing a good piece of writing for public consumption through a series of highly structured

197

group activities. In this way, though the objects in this study travelled more or less intact in form from the research space all the way to the classroom, the functions they were assigned changed dramatically.

The resiliency of the literacy objects. Finally, the premise of travelling intact held true for all three of the objects. It could be argued that this is merely a tautological finding: all one would have to do to make this determination would be to select literacy objects that display this characteristic. However, recall that it was not the literacy objects that were originally chosen for study; it was the framed pedagogical interactions that were chosen and these were chosen because of their ubiquity in intermediate level literacy instruction and, because of their position as accepted and revered practices of literacy in the classroom. They were thus selected for study because of their potential to influence the literacy lives of so many students.

One might think that with the amount of time and geographical distance that separates the space in which these literacy objects were created, and the number of renditions they have put through in the intermediary spaces between the pedagogical research space and the classroom, they would have become much less recognizable in the classroom space. That they did not clearly demonstrates Brandt and Clinton's contention that literacy objects endure with surprising resiliency. This study adds to the contentions that literacy objects travel, and that they do so as intact objects, the finding that literacy objects retain this resiliency in spite of or perhaps because of their seeming immunity to critique. I present this newly recognized ability in a subsequent section, as a fourth capacity of literacy objects, brought out by the findings of this study.

Literacy Objects Remain Visible and Animate outside the Literacy Event

The object's ability to become an accepted and inviolable aspect of the framed literacy pedagogical interaction as it travels intact from distant locations to local situations hints at the power it possesses. This intact travelling illustrates one way in which literacy objects actually grow in power in certain situations – they go from being one aspect of a framed pedagogical interaction, to becoming a fixed feature. Or, in other words, as they travel their visibility grows so that not only do they remain intact as they travel, they grow in influence. For example, the role sheet in the literacy pedagogy community is but one aspect of the literature circle, meant to scaffold students as they first begin to use the framed pedagogical interaction. As it travels through the spaces, it becomes more prominent and its function shifts, such that it becomes a constant and necessary player in every literature circle. Or, for example, the mini-lesson begins

its travels as a concept that gains prominence as it travels to become an object in intermediary spaces, an object that ultimately gets taken up in the classroom.

However, what Brandt and Clinton suggest about the power literacy objects take on is even larger than this finding: the literacy-in-action model claims that literacy objects have the ability "to remain visible and animate outside the literacy event" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 344). The findings of this study very clearly support this argument. Though the literacy objects grew in visibility or prominence as they moved through the spaces, more important, the scope of the literacy objects' influence grew to give them a capacity to be at work beyond immediate literacy events. The mini-lesson, the role sheet and publication of student work were very much at work outside of particular literature circle or writers' workshop sessions in which they were featured. This activity is seen in the way that, through folding in, they extend the reach of the teacher and both enhance and displace particular literacy practices through the surveillance aspect of folding in. (Folding in refers to Latour's notion that objects are used by human actors to accomplish certain goals without actually being physically present.)

The role sheet extends the reach of the teacher. In Chapter Five, the manner in which the role sheet, as a literacy object in the literature circle, exerted its influence outside the immediate literature circle events was clear. The role sheet was given the responsibility of replacing the teacher in the literature circle – once the students learned how to use the role sheets, it was felt that they had all of the tools needed to conduct literature discussions that were appropriate for their age and level of maturity; that is, if they continued to use the role sheets. With the role sheets actively taking their place, the teachers were able to provide small group instruction without having to interact on a pedagogical level with the small groups. Vested with the responsibility of teaching the students how to conduct literature discussions, the role sheet not only worked in the immediate context of the literature circle, it also served as a means of ensuring the students were on task and provided a system for grading the students, without the teacher actually having to observe the students. Students who had not completed the role work as determined by the role sheet were reported to the teacher. Thus, used as a tool for surveillance, the role sheet allowed the teacher to keep tabs on students on a weekly basis. Furthermore, the written role work was turned in for grading purposes from time to time and formed the sole means of assessing the students' overall participation in the literature circle for their report cards.

The role sheet's authority is rarely contested. It is interesting to note that for the majority of the focal students, compliance with the authority folded into the role sheet remained

199

unquestioned throughout my observation period. Recall Sara's statement: "if you don't do your role, you're going to get in trouble and you're gonna cry" followed by "it's not the funnest thing …. But you have to get your role done". The exception to this situation was Nigel. When required by the role sheet to participate in the literature circle, Nigel chose not to participate; in fact, he was often subversive. It was the agency of another human agent, his mother, that seemed to turn Nigel's participation around. While undoubtedly the prospect of losing his videogame privileges would have provided some incentive, very likely the way that Nigel's mother contextualized the literature circle for him as a version of the adult book club and sat with him to read the novel and discuss its contents, worked to provide the kind of human scaffolding he personally seemed to require in order to participate in the manner expected by his teachers.

The role sheet enhances and displaces literacy practices. Addressing the use of objects to extend the reach of human beings through the action of folding in, Brandt and Clinton state, "surveillance of the sheep is both displaced and enhanced" (2002, p. 353). Undoubtedly, there is an enhancement to classroom instruction through the use of literacy objects. Teachers are able to offer potentially rich literacy pedagogies such as literature circles and writers' workshop in their classrooms of increasingly larger groups of diverse students and they are able to hybridize these pedagogies through altering the functions of the literacy objects to fit the requirements of accountability that now must be incorporated into contemporary classrooms. However, the displaced surveillance inherent to the hybridized use of the role sheet in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary has a more worrisome side to it, as well.

Literature circles were originally introduced to the elementary school classroom to allow students to aesthetically appreciate literature and provide them with an opportunity to discuss literature in student-run groups (Eeds & Wells, 1989). Role sheets work to displace these intentions. Literacy pedagogy researchers such as Daniels (1994, 2002) and Peterson and Eeds (1990) promote the notion that from time to time teachers should join in the literature circle as members of the group to model ways of discussing the books. That did not happen in this classroom, nor did the grand conversations all of the researchers promise. For all of the focal students, engaging in literate discussions became synonymous with reading the work they had done for the role sheet, this held true even for Isaac who understood that the conversation should be more than that. Though he lamented the fact that more lively discussions didn't take place, he too read his role work out as his contribution to the discussion and only occasionally (when he had the Discussion Leader role) tried to provoke conversation through tricky questions. Riley

also used this role in the same manner. But again, it was the role sheet that was determining when they could try to provoke conversation in this way.

Presumably an unintended outcome of the use of role sheets, another aspect of the role sheet's independent mediational ability, nevertheless, was the way it directed the reading of the novel for at least two of the students. Isaac's preferred mode of reading a novel as a whole, sometimes in a very short space of time, was treated as somehow disrespectful to his group and at cross-purposes with the way literature circles "should" be conducted. Sara's manner of reading to fulfill the requirements of her weekly role, rather than reading the section for enjoyment and later addressing her role work, may have led her to view literature through a very narrow lens, to see it as an exercise in reading to fill in the blank. For these two students, the role sheets most clearly mediated their reading of the text. The agentive activity of the role sheet as a literacy object indeed reached beyond the immediate literacy event, the weekly literature circle, in which it was used.

The mini-lesson and publication of student work extend the reach of the teacher. In Chapter Six, I examined the way that the literacy object of the writers' workshop, through the process of folding in, took on an agentive role in shaping the focal students' literacy experiences. I illustrated the way several functional responsibilities were folded in to the literacy object. Mini-lessons and publication of student work, as literacy objects, were given the responsibility of maintaining a writing schedule aimed at producing work that could be graded for report cards and serving as the sole assessment of students for their writers' workshop grade.

The mini-lesson, conferencing, and publishing enhance and displace literacy practices. Looking at the affordances of folding in, using the literacy objects to set a writing schedule and provide a means for some sort of feedback on their writing clearly enabled the teachers to employ writers' workshop in a setting that easily could have precluded its use. The chaos of having sixty young students in one noisy space, combined with the pressure to have them produce pieces on which they could be graded, could easily have resulted in the employment of much less rich writing pedagogies. In this respect, folding in to the literacy objects certain agentive powers, or hybridizing them as they did, enhanced the objects' supervisory abilities and allowed the teachers to use the framed pedagogical interaction, writers' workshop, when they otherwise might not have felt they were able to do so.

It could also be said that through the mediational activity of the literacy object, student publication, Nigel was enabled to regain some of the agency the requirements of grade five seemed to have stripped from him. By publishing a piece, in the first person voice, about

201

gaining victory over a teacher he felt to be dishonest, Nigel not only became even more popular amongst his peers when other students actually lined up to read his work. Additionally, I observed excitement and what I interpreted to be a sense of self-efficacy as he spoke to me about this story. This was a posture that starkly contrasted with other conversations about framed literacy pedagogical interactions in which he seemed resigned to the required participation but in which he definitely was not engaged or content. In a backdoor manner then, a literacy object provided Nigel with a means to rhetorically reclaim a previously lost sense of agency.

Like the literature circle, folding in also worked to displace certain literacy practices in the writers' workshop. The literacy object in the writers' workshop was vested with the responsibility of leading the students to publish more often and to publish pieces of higher quality than they might have, had they not been writing for their peers or a grade on their report cards – a phenomenon that might be viewed as an enhancement to the practice of literacy in this classroom. However, this folding in was not without negative consequences. Four examples of displacement of literacy practices typically encouraged by writers' workshop pedagogy are notable in this regard.

First, the process approach to writing (Graves, 1983), ordinarily viewed as inherent to the writers' workshop, is displaced. Very little refinement of their stories took place as students took their original pieces written during the SWAT sessions and developed them for publication. For most of the students, the stories were simply a good copy with spelling, punctuation, and handwriting improved. With the emphasis on producing a story by a mandated deadline, students were not learning the skills of refining their work. The lesson several seemed to have taken away was that revising was about copying work out, on time, to ensure a good grade.

Second, the ethos surrounding publishing as an activity that generally occurs when one has a piece one is pleased with and, is therefore, desirous of sharing with others is displaced. The message students in this grade five class were seemingly given was that publishing takes place when someone else sets a deadline. Thus, the students were not necessarily publishing a piece because they thought it was something they would want to share with their peers; they were publishing because they were told it was time to publish.

Finally, the notion commonly associated with writers' workshop that if students are to be graded on their work, the grading should take into account the entire process they engaged in for the duration of writers' workshop (Calkins, 1994) is displaced by the activity of the literacy object. It became clear as I spoke with some of the students that the required publication of student work within a particular time frame determined what some students were willing to

refine and put forward for publication (and, by extension, public consumption). The situation created by this agentive activity of the literacy object outside of the actual literacy event may have been particularly detrimental to students, such as Sara and Ally, who carefully considered what they were willing to put forward for public viewing and, therefore, may not have published their best pieces out of concern about peer reactions to their work. Choosing to publish safe pieces of writing, rather than writing that revealed too many personal details about themselves, may have led them to submit work for grading that was not their best writing. The requirement of on-time publication, coupled with the fact that the only work for which they received a grade in the writers' workshop each term was the published piece, demonstrates the way that these literacy objects may have conspired together to determine students' marks on their report card.

Thus, as other forms of literate practice were displaced by the mediational activity of the literacy object, i.e., those commonly associated with writers' workshop, writing came to be construed in this classroom in a manner that was actually antithetical to the teacher, Ms. Wynn's, stated purpose: that her young writers learn that there are "no boundaries with writing - the idea that they can push the envelope".   The majority of the focal students came to view writing, not as a process of exploring, developing and refining ideas, but rather as an exercise in re-writing first drafts with the goal of meeting a deadline. The linear "plan, write, edit" decried by the writers' workshop creator, Donald Graves (1975), was firmly in place. Overall, *process* was displaced by the literacy objects and in its place, *product* became the main emphasis. For some of the students, another layer was added to this understanding of writers' workshop: making careful decisions about what to publish was not just about striving for high quality in their writing but also about ensuring the content of such a nature that they would not be subjected to ridicule.

The teachers were physically unable to interact with the students in the literature circles and writers' workshop in the ways recommended by the literacy pedagogy researchers. There were simply too many children for it to be possible for Ms. Wynn or Ms. Crawford to join in the individual literature circle groups, even on a weekly basis, or for Ms. Wynn to individually instruct her grade five students by reading their drafts to give feedback before their work was published. What is interesting, however, is that I observed no attempts to try these types of interaction with the students, even on a limited basis. They wholly relied on the literacy objects to fill their place. It appears that in this situation, the contextual constraints added to the power of all of the literacy objects. In this next section, I present a fourth capacity of literacy objects suggested by the findings of this study: the capacity of literacy objects to resist critique.

Literacy Objects become Immune to Critique

As demonstrated in Chapter Four, the particular findings related to role sheets are not necessarily new. Daniels wrote on numerous occasions about the difficulties of using role sheets as anything more than temporary scaffolds and supported teachers who had decided to do away with them altogether (e.g., Daniels, 2006). Graves (2003) worried about the "epidemic of orthodoxies" (p. x) that seemed to spread with the popularity of the writers' workshop and Calkins (1986) reflected on the issue of the success of writers' workshop breeding orthodoxy. These represent but a few of the critiques made regarding the literacy objects in literature circles and writers' workshop examined in this study. Other examples may be found in Chapter Four. However, the concerns raised by those considered the gurus of literature circles and writers' workshop did not seem to influence particular uses of these framed pedagogical interactions in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. Understanding the resistance to critique that literacy objects develop may help to explain this phenomenon.

Pedagogies become epidemics of orthodoxies through the literacy objects' immunity to critique. Why is it then, that in spite of critique, the role sheets, the mini-lesson, and publication of student work have such prominent places in the literature circles and writers' workshop in this classroom? One explanation may rest in the observation that in the press of time fostered by an ever-expanding curriculum and growing class sizes, combined with the pressure to have students produce work that may be graded for reporting purposes, literacy objects play a role that overrides any concerns about them. The literacy objects assisted in the process of spreading epidemics of orthodoxies in this classroom. By folding into the literacy objects the responsibility for teaching students how to conduct literature discussions (the role sheet), the responsibility for keeping students in production mode (the mini-lesson and publication of student work), the responsibility for assessment (role sheets, publication of student work), the teacher in this classroom is enabled to handle and assess large groups of students in a less than ideal physical classroom set up. But in doing so, she strengthens the literacy objects immunity to critique.

Perceptions of "research" enhance the immunity of the literacy object. Ms. Wynn's, statement, "those airy fairy theoretical days are long gone" may also provide a clue regarding the literacy objects' resistance to critique. From her point of view, some of that which emanates from the literacy pedagogy community regarding pedagogy is viewed with suspicion, as outdated and quixotic. Because much of the critique originates in the educational literacy

204

pedagogy community, is it easy for Ms. Wynn to automatically write off much of what is "out there" in the world of classroom research because it is idealistic beyond practicability? In her context and with the belief that pedagogical researchers are out of touch with classroom realities, it may not be surprising that Ms. Wynn chose to use simplified manuals on literature circles and writers' workshop, such as *Literature Circles: The Way to Go and How to Get There* (Morris & Perlenfein, 2003) and *Notebook Know-How: Strategies for the Writers' Notebook* (Buckner, 2005) to guide her application of these framed pedagogical interactions in her classroom. However, not only did these texts provide simplified and, therefore, more readily applied pedagogy, they were also texts in which no critique of the literacy objects is found. These texts' presentation of the literacy objects (the role sheet, mini-lesson, and publication of student work) as straightforward, uncontested objects may not only have ensured that their form or content would be taken up in the classroom. They also worked to strengthen the immunity to critique that these literacy objects enjoyed in the grade five classroom.

Literacy pedagogy researchers enhance the immunity of the literacy object. Additionally, it may be that the manners in which pedagogical researchers of literacy actually appear to hang onto the literacy objects they create results in their resistance or immunity to critique. While they themselves have critiqued the literacy objects highlighted in this study, the pedagogical researchers associated with the literacy objects in this study do not actually withdraw the literacy objects they have created. For example, Daniels revised his book on literature circles (Daniels, 1994, 2002) but didn't abandon the role sheet. Likewise, Graves lamented the orthodoxies that arose with the popularity of writers' workshop (Graves, 2003) but remained stalwart in his position that there are essential elements to writers' workshop such as student choice of topic, regular response from teacher and peers, a minimum of three days per week to write, publishing of student work, teacher think-aloud while writing, and maintenance of personal collections of student work (pp. xii-xiii) that should be retained. By retaining the literacy objects in the distant spaces of the literacy pedagogy community, the objects are thus enabled to live on and critiques of them tend to fall away as they travel through the spaces to reach the classroom.

It appears that as a part of the institutionalization of the literacy objects, that is, the travelling of the literacy objects through the educational structure attached to the classroom, critiques are benignly absorbed. With the accumulation of human investment in the literacy objects associated with literature circles and writers' workshop that starts with the literacy objects' creators, we can clearly see the push back effect highlighted by Brandt and Clinton in

the opening quote of this chapter – here the literacy objects have become social facts in the literature circle and writers' workshop and, indeed, they seem to take on a life of their own, an independence and an immunity to criticism.

The overarching question of this study asked: How can a new model of sociocultural literacy theory, *literacy-in-action*, and its unit of analysis, *literacy-objects-in-action* (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), provide us with a new lens for understanding the ways that literacy is practiced in the classroom? This study has provided several insights into this question.

Though the role of literacy objects in constructing students' experiences with literacy is clear here, both within and outside of the immediate literacy event, it must be remembered that human agents determine to what use the literacy object will be put. Objects not only gain their form and become fixed in that form through the activity of human beings, but through the human investment accumulated in them, they gain in power. I view this as a process of institutionalization: the objects had become social facts (Brandt & Clinton, 2002) in the classroom literature circle and writers' workshop. Their unquestioned presence as integral parts, of these two framed pedagogical interactions, as social facts, led to an accumulation of power to mediate the practice of literacy in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary.

In this study, the power of the institutionalized literacy objects seemed to work to silence the concerns around social interaction and give primacy to the results the literacy objects require of their users. Social interactions such as learning to engage in dynamic, unscripted conversations around literature, engagement in equitable relationships in group discussions, and engaging deeply with pedagogical interactions rather than on a surface level of compliance, are displaced. Literacy objects in this study were co-opted by the teachers in order to ensure compliance – role sheets must be read and publications had to be completed by fixed dates. While these actions were undoubtedly taken as a means to hybridize tried and true forms of literacy instruction to make them fit with the contextual constraints of their particular classroom, the way these literacy objects were used for compliance squarely put the emphasis on product and not on process; the processes that were engaged in were utilized primarily to ensure a product emerged at the end of the process.

I have argued that in shifting the function of the literacy objects in this manner, the teachers have moved from their stated philosophical position of using the literacy objects associated with the literature circle and writers' workshop to scaffold student development to a place of using the literacy objects to extend their own reach when they are unable to be

physically present for students to the degree that the framed pedagogical interactions require. By relying on and investing surveillance and assessment responsibilities in the literacy objects, the teachers have unwittingly enabled those objects to work at cross-purposes to the kind of educational climate they hoped to foster; that is, one of independence, personal responsibility and love of reading and writing.

<center>Literacy-in-Action and NLS Conceptions of Literacy</center>

Through careful documentation of literacy practices in a variety of social, cultural, and linguistic settings worldwide, sociocultural studies of literacy, as framed within the NLS, have successfully challenged longstanding assumptions regarding literacy, particularly those promoting the cognitive benefits of literacy (the literacy thesis) (Goody & Watt, 1963) and the great divide between the oral and the written (Ong, 1986). r Three of these four defining aspects of the NLS have been challenged in recent times (Brandt & Clinton, 2002; Collins & Blot, 2003; Reder & Davila, 2005). This study has supported the legitimacy of these concerns and, by employing the model of literacy-in-action (Brandt & Clinton, 2002), it has demonstrated a new and arguably highly useful alternative to address these concerns. Here, I present each of the concerns separately and speak to the ways the literacy-in-action model addresses them.

<center>*The Literacy Event*</center>

One of the stunning achievements of Heath's *Ways with Words* was the manner in which it achieved cross-cultural comparisons of literacy, an accomplishment that, to date, had not been achieved in an efficient and effective manner (Collins & Blot, 2003). Heath achieved this through conceptualization of the literacy event as a unit of analysis. This methodological breakthrough set the stage for numerous ethnographic studies of literacy utilizing the concept of the literacy event. Recently, it has been recognized that these studies, though rich and important for the insights they provide, do not take into account an understanding of the way that power plays a role in shaping literacy practices (Collins & Blot, 2003; Hamilton, 2001; Lewis et al., 2007). Collins and Blot point out that for all it achieved in bringing an understanding to the notion that there is no universality to literacy (Collins & Blot, 2003, p. 44), it avoided central questions of power inherent to American society. Almost as an afterthought, at the end of *Ways with Words*, Heath speaks of government efforts to undo institutional reforms that were just beginning to recognize the diversity of literacies highlighted by Heath in her study. She does not, however, address this concern.

In retrospect, it likely would have been difficult for Heath to have addressed this issue given the theoretical capacities of the literacy event: the literacy event conceptualizes particular instantiations of literacy practice as bounded events. The type of analyses studies employing the literacy event are capable of are, therefore, limited to the practice of literacy in situated locales. Use of the literacy event ignores the fact that so many literacy practices are shaped both by the activity of local actors *and* influences distant to that setting, as was the case in Heath's study.

A second issue related to the literacy event is its anthrocentric nature (Brandt & Clinton, 2002). That is, the literacy event emphasizes the activity of human actors over non-human actors; "it suggests that literacy is not happening unless local human actors at the scene are oriented toward writing or reading" (p. 349). Brandt and Clinton point out that in many literacy events, objects play a role in shaping what human actors do with literacy, and that oftentimes, these objects travel from distant places to participate in local literacies.

Literacy-Objects-in-Action

In response to these issues, the literacy-in-action model proposes literacy-objects-in-action as the main unit of analysis, a replacement for the literacy event so frequently used in sociocultural studies of literacy. As a unit of analysis, literacy-objects-in-action looks at how human actors are engaging with literacy and how the objects associated with that literacy are participating in the activity. By conceptualizing the practice of literacy as activity that is shaped by the mediation of both human and non-human actors, with the understanding that the non-human actors have the capacity to travel through time and location, the literacy-in-action model allows for studies of literacy that examine the global influences on local literacy practices. Thus, the introduction of this new unit of analysis holds the prospect of understanding the way in which distant power operates in local practices of literacy.

Utilizing the new unit of analysis, literacy-objects-in-action, this study has looked at the practice of literacy in a local classroom. The unit of analysis was a highly effective tool for understanding the way that the kinds of literacy individuals in one local classroom practice were shaped in distant spaces. The unit of analysis allowed the study to move beyond the difficulty associated with the literacy event to make explicit connections between distant spaces in the educational structure and local literacy practices. While supporting the contention that literacy is not a simple, locally situated event, it also demonstrated the methodological and theoretical ability of the literacy-object-in-action to conduct these types of studies.

When literacy is in use in a particular place and time, it is about more than what happens in the immediate event in which literacy is used. This notion relates to the above but also connects to a second of the central tenets of sociocultural understandings of literacy as articulated in the NLS: the situated nature of literacies.

Situated Literacies

An important aspect of sociocultural views of literacy as conceptualized within the NLS is that local agents utilize literacy in ways that are socially and culturally relevant to their individual and communal purposes. Barton and Hamilton contend that "the notion of [literacy] events stresses the situated nature of literacy, that it always exists in a social context" (2000, p. 8). As Brandt and Clinton's (2002) example of the loan form used in banking demonstrates, the practice of literacy is not always tied to a single situated context. The literacy practice of applying for a bank loan is one that spans a number of contexts – it cannot be viewed as the situated event of filling out the form, it must be understood as a practice of literacy that is enacted in a range of contexts starting with the bank branch or an online application, moving through the echelons of the banking system and then later back to the local bank or the mail where the customer receives the news as to whether or not the loan has been approved. Many practices of literacy may be understood in this way, therefore troubling the notion that literacy always exists in single situated context.

Literacy Situated within a Local-Global Frame

By mapping the travels of literacy objects and documenting the intact form in which they arrive in the local classroom, this study has shown that the context of situation is much larger than the particular classroom in which literacy practices associated with literature circles and writers' workshop are situated. That is, the way teachers and students interacted with literature circles and writers' workshop was in many respects shaped by contexts far removed from the classroom through the literacy objects that entered the classroom from afar. Indeed, as Brandt and Clinton (2002) argue, literacy in this classroom was transcontextual in nature: literacy, as conceptualized by someone else in distant spaces, was hard at work in the local classroom at Howe River Elementary.

This opening up of the context for situated literacies points to a third difficulty associated with traditional NLS approaches: there is more at work than the agency of situated human actors in local literacies.

Accounting for the Role of Power

An important aspect of sociocultural views of literacy as conceptualized within the NLS is that local agents utilize literacy in ways that are socially and culturally relevant to their individual and communal purposes. This proposition does not take into account situations where individuals or communities do not have a choice regarding how they will interact with literacy or what forms they will practice. As discussed earlier in this chapter, students and teachers are excellent examples of this phenomenon: to a large extent, both groups are told what forms of literacy must be practiced in the classroom. In essence, the agency that is such an important part of sociocultural studies in literacy must be re-examined in sociocultural studies in order to account for situations such as the classroom context. There is more at work than the agency of situated human actors in classroom literacy instruction.

Literacy Objects as Agents of Power

Accounting for the pedagogical power of literacy objects is a highly useful means for meeting this challenge. Reder and Davila (2005) point out that what is needed to address such issues in sociocultural studies of literacy is an understanding of what the forces are that shape local literacies and an accounting for how they work. Following the threads left by the travels of the literacy objects in this study enabled a mapping to determine some of the distant forces at work in the local classroom literacy scene and through literacy-objects-in-action as a unit of analysis provide for a means for demonstrating how these forces were at work in the local classroom.

This study has demonstrated the kinds of power invested in literacy objects by both local actors and those who are more distantly located. Methodologically, it has provided a means for tracing the travels of these literacy objects. Theoretically, it has demonstrated the way in which literacy objects not only come to be powerful in the first place because of the investments made in them by their creators, those considered to be experts in the field of literacy pedagogy, but it has also shown that these objects gain power as they move from distant spaces to local settings. Part of this power resides in the fact that they have become social facts as a result of their resilience and immunity to criticism as they travelled from distant spaces and part of this phenomenon resides in the power vested in them by agents at the local scene. This study has also demonstrated some of the outcomes these increased powers have for students subjected to them. In their practice of literacy in the classroom in relation to the demands of certain literacy

objects, students such as Ally, Sara, Nigel, Isaac, Deanne, and Riley, as well as their teachers, very much exemplify Brandt and Clinton's (2002) contention,

> That people manage to absorb or mollify these demands in different ways may be evidence of local ingenuity, diversity, agency, as much recent research emphasizes, but it is just as much evidence of how powerfully literacy as a technology [an object] can insinuate itself into social relations anywhere. (p. 354)

In short, we have seen what Brandt and Clinton originally contended: that the model of literacy-in-action provides the kind of complex analytical frame literacy studies require to practically deal with issues of power.

Drawing on the works of Foucault and de Certeau, and speaking to the need for sociocultural studies in literacy to address issues of power, Collins and Blot (2003) point out: "power has multiple forms. It is not simply coercion or external force, nor even control of organizational standards; rather, it is also manifest in face-to-face exchanges, in intimate judgements, and in procedures of teaching and learning" (p. 46). While this particular study has not revealed coercive plots conceived of in distant spaces to control the literacy learning of elementary school students, it has shown the ways in which elements of literacy pedagogies (the literacy objects) conceived in distant spaces come to play a role in the lives of one group of grade five students. The study has shown that the role those objects play is likely far from that intended by their creators. It demonstrates the fact that what may have been created as benign and uncomplicated pedagogical tools, as they travel through spaces within the educational structure, have the capacity to become actors that mediate the experiences of human actors in the local spaces to which they travel.

The study leaves us asking: What are the students taking away from their experiences with literature circles and writers' workshop? Are the consequences even greater for students whose experiences with novels and creative writing take place only in the classroom? Because of the heavy hand of the literacy objects that skews what are thought of as rich literacy pedagogies, hybridizing them into activities so limited in scope and so capable of giving students negative experiences of in-school literacy, should these pedagogies have been abandoned altogether in this classroom? And finally, how just is it for students that portions of their report cards, reports that unfortunately may factor into determining their educational futures, are so heavily determined by objects? These are all questions of power that have direct bearing on the in-school practice of literacy for teachers and students alike.

Implications for Literacy Research

New Ways to Determine Literacy Practices

If we are to see sociocultural studies of literacy as they are undertaken by the NLS more effectively address issues such as the role of power in the practice of literacy, new understandings of the central tenets of the NLS must be encouraged and new methods of examining literacy and its practice must be developed. Literacy-in-action provides one such means of development. The literacy-in-action model has been applied to the study of classroom literacy practices in this study. The claims Brandt and Clinton make around the capacities of literacy objects have been shown to be sound and capable of shedding new understandings on school literacies.

Brandt and Clinton's proposal of a means for accounting for the transcontextual and transcontextualizing nature of literacy provides a model with strong theoretical capacity for understanding literacy practices, particularly in situations where "the forms of literacy individuals or communities practice may not be the forms they would prefer to practice" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 257). There may continue to be situations in which utilizing the literacy event to determine the literacy practices of individuals and communities and there may be occasions where a focus on literacy objects is not desirable. Thinking of literacy-objects-in-action as a replacement for the literacy event may thus be extravagant. However, including the literacy-in-action model as one of an array of new theoretical approaches to sociocultural literacy theory is highly recommended based on the findings of this study. Because the model offers the flexibility of stressing one or both of the activity of humans and objects, depending on the study at hand, it is a model that, with elaboration, has strong theoretical capability for future sociocultural studies of literacy.

I contend that adding the literacy-in-action model with its new unit of analysis to the suite of tools available to researchers for the conduct of sociocultural studies of literacy is not only appropriate, but theoretically powerful. When we need to understand literacy in a local context, understanding that which influences the literate practices those individuals or communities engage in, no matter what degree of distance that influence travels from, is a necessary element of scrutiny. The literacy-in-action model, with its dual focus on what people are doing with literacy and what literacy is doing with people, has an inherent flexibility that allows researchers to focus on what is really going on in "local" sites of literate activity.

Implications for Literacy Pedagogy Researchers

Literacy researchers may need to assume some responsibility for the way literacy objects have been altered in function to become objects that shape the literacy instruction teachers provide and the literate individuals students may become as a result of that instruction. Looking at the Howe River research site, several unintended outcomes have ensued from the investments made in literacy objects in local and distant spaces. Research conceptualized literacy objects that were then set in motion to ultimately impact classroom use of the literature circle and writers' workshop. The initiation of this travelling ultimately rendered them powerful literacy objects in the grade five classroom at Howe River Elementary. In this classroom, literacy pedagogy researchers may have served to fuel the fire of the perceived research-to-practice gap, perhaps in some ways setting teachers up to reach for variations of literacy pedagogies that they view as useful for the demands of contemporary classrooms. Those involved with developing literacy pedagogy at the university level may need to ask what it is they are doing that promotes the sense that literacy pedagogy research is out of touch with classroom realities.

I don't seek to exonerate teachers in suggesting that researchers assume some responsibility for the objects they set into motion. Teachers, of course, have a responsibility for thoughtfully considering all that they do in their classrooms. However, the kinds of constraints teachers face, with regard to class size and composition and the pressure to find the means to assess students in order to rank their performance in relation to others, means that a teacher's time is limited. Teachers are encouraged to employ certain pedagogies but in many ways are asked to do so with one hand effectively tied behind their backs. In an age of increased pressures on the scope of instruction necessary in the classroom, large class sizes and the pressures of accountability, teachers may be looking for programs they can easily plug into the classroom space and a literacy object with the ability to stand in for the teacher may become highly attractive.

It may be that those of us who work to promote rich literacy pedagogies must consider in greater detail what that promotion may mean for teachers and students alike. This may mean resisting the invitation of the publishing world to take certain pedagogies and objectify them to make them easier for teachers to use. This study has demonstrated the way that an object remains intact and immune to criticism once it becomes a social fact in the educational structure – it does not easily go away. The study has also demonstrated the ability of literacy objects to reduce rich pedagogies and the increasingly powerful role they play in shaping classroom literacy practice. Taking measures, perhaps, to not lend their name, which carries tremendous authority, to the

213

endorsement of literacy objects that reduce rich pedagogical interactions to fill-in-the blank exercises or templates for ritualized learning may be one move literacy pedagogy researchers could make to address the negative aspects of the agentive activity of literacy objects.

Implications for Teacher Education

Related to the issue of Ms. Wynn finding literacy research impractical at times, recall that Ms. Wynn's graduate level course on writing in the elementary school used only photocopies of selected sections of Calkins' (1994) text on writers' workshop. At times this practice is engaged in to reduce the reading students must do or to reduce costs for texts. However, if these selected sections focus primarily on literacy objects and if sections scrutinizing issues identified as problematic in the framed pedagogical interaction are not provided in the photocopies, important critiques may be missed. At times I have noted in my own experiences that teachers may be impatient to receive pragmatic help with classroom literacy instruction and may not want to engage in theoretical discussions. However, providing teachers, particularly at the in-service training level (graduate level), with purely pedagogical tools that don't engage them in the critique of practice may help to build the immunity to critique that literacy objects enjoy. In teacher education, we need to resist the urge to provide bite-sized pieces of framed pedagogical interactions, such as literature circles or writers' workshop. While this practice may be helpful, to a certain degree, for getting pre-service teachers started, it is highly important that we ensure engagement with the pedagogical critique takes place in training for in-service teachers and in graduate studies. In in-service and graduate level courses, we need to be asking ourselves what it is that we are doing that may leave teachers with a limited understanding of the pedagogies we encourage.

Generalizing the Findings

Like all case study, the research from this study may not be universally generalized. The findings cannot be assumed to stand for all intermediate students and teachers, nor can it be assumed that the literacy objects under scrutiny in this study play the same role in classrooms everywhere. However, qualified generalizations (Bassey, 1999) that take into account fittingness (Lincoln & Guba, 2000a) or comparability and translatability (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Lincoln & Guba, 2000) may be drawn from case studies undertaken for interpretive or evaluative purposes (Becker, 1991; Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Eckstein, 2000; Mitchell, 2000). By applying the notion of comparability, it may be that readers of this study find themselves in a comparable

situation and thus the findings of this study may translate to their situation. I argue that the classroom, teachers and students in this study are not unlike many others in the region or, possibly, classrooms in most westernized nations. The kinds of findings seen in this study may well hold true for many students. It is my hope that an understanding of literacy objects as players in local literacy, players that are not necessarily benign in their activity may help individuals interested in the in-school literacy learning of young adolescents.

Further Study

The data from this study for the framed pedagogical interactions, literature circles and/or writers' workshop, could also be analyzed using a literacy practices framework, as proposed by Street (2003b; Street & Lefstein, 2007) (although one would first have to theoretically elaborate such a framework to make this possible). A comparison of the findings using a newly theorized literacy practices framework with a literacy-in-action framework could then be conducted. This kind of a study could provide those considering future directions for the NLS with the means to examine the affordances and limitations of both models.

A similar type of study using the literacy-in-action model could be conducted in a classroom where all or most of the students are of backgrounds not considered mainstream. With its ability to examine the way distant forces shape local literacy practices, the model would be particularly helpful for looking at the way that framed pedagogical interactions, such as literature circles and writers' workshop, originally piloted in homogeneous, middle-class schools where English was the primary mother-tongue, are taken up by those local actors and, in turn, how those literacy objects mediate the literacy learning of those actors.

The understanding of the kind of power to mediate students' literacy learning that has been demonstrated by this study may set the stage for similar investigations of literacy objects more contested in nature, such as standardized tests or edicts mandating the use of certain texts, studies that may potentially explore larger issues of power related to government mandates around literacy instruction and assessment.

In this study, I have chosen to use the term *hybridization* for understanding the way literacy objects come to appear and be utilized in the classroom. This term carries with it the understanding that heterogeneous elements come together to compose something new. Because so many sociocultural studies of literacy connect to Bakhtin and his notions of hybridity and intertextuality, I have chosen to use this term in this study. However, Latour proposed the term, *translation*, for this notion. He defines translation as, "displacement, drift, invention, mediation,

the creation of a link that did not exist before and that to some degree modifies two elements or agents" (Latour, 1994, p. 32). Latour alludes to some difficulty with the term translation because its common usage refers to shifting from one vocabulary or language system to another. I draw attention to these parallels in order to continue the conversation of which term should be used in future studies utilizing the literacy-in-action model.

Finally, as noted earlier, further theorizing of the concept of literacy objects is necessary in sociocultural studies of literacy utilizing the literacy-in-action model. I have proposed, based on the findings of this study, that we may be able to constitute a literacy object based on the following criteria:

> *A literacy object has a conceptual or material form that travels as a reproduction or facsimile between the spaces connecting the global and the local; but the concept must become an object at some point in its travels and the reproduction or facsimile must be recognizable in form as that which emanated from the distant space.*

However, it is necessary to deepen this conceptualization through further applications of the literacy-in-action model.

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Appendices

One: Further Possible Applications of the Literacy-in-action Model

The following three concepts, proposed by Brandt and Clinton (2002), localizing moves, globalizing connects, and sponsors of literacy, are useful for understanding literacy's role as a transcontextualizing agent and are offered as a means of acknowledging and understanding that literacy "historically has served in connecting people across time and space" (p.351).

Localizing moves: The concept of localizing moves enables researchers from social practice perspectives to investigate local literacies such as Barton and Hamilton's (2000) "ruling passions," Heath's (1983) cultural "ways with words," and Street's (1984) social institutions that influence the adoption of particular genres, but also brings into focus the role of things or literacy objects in enactment of local literacies. Literacy objects not only orient agents to the here-and-now of a literacy event but also may be agents themselves in the enactment of local literacies.

Globalizing connects: This concept acknowledges the movement of individuals, in and out of local reading and writing scenes. The role of individuals and things is evident in the shifting process: individuals may shift out of the local by joining abstract communities (e.g., when they read a particular genre or read everything written by a particular author, or when they complete income tax returns); and individuals may shift into local scenes through activities such as circulating petitions or writing a letter to the editor of a local newspaper. It is the technologies of literacy, Brandt and Clinton contend, that "accomplish globalizing connects as they carry reading and writing actions in and out of local contexts or consolidate them in one place, sometimes in transformed ways" (p.352). The concept of globalizing connects also allows the researcher to account for the way in which globalizing actors, such as the internet, the media, or

government literacy initiatives, appear in local contexts "without the mediating sanctions of local literate practices" (p.352). By seeing the global connections associated with many new literacy practices "we can appreciate that literate practices are, more often than not, responses to technological change" (p.352). In the proposed study, I could use this concept to ask: How have the students at this school shifted in and out of literate communities? Can we link the movement to the literacy instruction they have received from the school? What kinds of "globalizing connects" are present in these students' literacy practices?

Sponsors of literacy: The second concept, sponsors of literacy, defines sponsors as "those agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable or induce literacy and gain advantage by it in some way" (p.349). This concept acknowledges the power dimensions of literacy and helps the researcher "account for the fact that literacy practices are rarely invented or sustained by local agents alone" (p.350). The identification of literacy sponsors enables the researcher to inquire about the origins of literacy materials in a particular setting: "How did they get there? Who paid for them or provided them? How are they controlled or shared? What is the cost or obligation to the user for using them" (p. 350)? In this way it may be possible to identify the way hegemony comes to operate in local contexts. The concept of literacy sponsors also allows the researcher to identify the multisourced nature of agency; while agents in local contexts may engage in literacy practices with "ingenuity and diversity" (p.350), they are also subject to "distant demands" (p.351). By using this concept, social practice perspectives may provide a fuller picture of local literacy practice nested in the context of outside demands.

Literature Circles

Throughout the year, we will be involved in many literature circles where, in small groups, you will read and talk about many different novels. You will also need to complete different roles for discussions. Here are your responsibilities:
1. Read the section of the novel agreed upon by the group.
2. Complete your role for that week. This will change every week. You could be a:
   i. Group leader and Read Aloud Master
   ii. Discussion Leader
   iii. Problem Solver
   iv. Connection Maker
   v. Sequencer
   vi. Illustrator

At the end of the novel, you will be given a book report assignment. You will hand in this Language Arts duotang, with both the book report and all of your "role work" completed, titled, dated. Your mark will be based on the following criteria:

Roles	Criteria
Read Aloud Master	2 Paragraphs from section of novel clearly shown, 2 paragraphs about why you chose these paragraphs.
Discussion Leader	You wrote three "fat" questions (questions that you cannot answer yes or no to), you shared your questions and chose people in your group to answer because they put their hand up.
Problem Solver	You came up with 2 problems for that section of the novel. You also came up with 2 possible predictions or solutions. When sharing with the group, they can put up their hands to add any new ideas.
Connection Maker	You made 2 connections between the section of the novel and another book, your life, other events in history. You wrote out your answers clearly.
Sequencer	You summarized your section of the novel clearly into sentences, putting the main ideas in order, from first to fourth.
Illustrator	You drew a picture of a main event from your section of the novel, coloured it, and shared it with your group.

At the end of each novel, you will receive a mark out of 100: /50 for the novel Roles, and /50 for the book report itself.

Sample 1: Group Leader / Read Aloud Master

Always do your work in the exercise book provided. Look to this sample as to
how to do the role work for new novels. Always write your job description as your title,
the date, and the pages of the novel section that you have just read as a group.

Choose 2 paragraphs in the story that you found interesting. In your exercise book,
write down the page and paragraph number, and then a paragraph that describes why
you thought that paragraph was interesting. In the 2 paragraphs you will write, discuss
1. words that you thought were interesting that the author used
2. your thoughts about that paragraph (why you liked it and chose it)
3. any connections that you have made.

pages   Group Leader and Read Aloud Master   date

1) page 15, paragraph 13. Starts with "She waited"

Why I chose this passage:

     This paragraph shows Anna right at her worst moment.
Her teacher is pointing out the fact that she can't
read in front of the class. This makes Anna "tremble"
which I think means she is scared and ashamed. It is
like Anna just wants to curl up and die. But she
doesn't. She learns to be strong.

2) page 23, paragraph 3. Starts with "At first they..."

Why I chose this passage:

Sample 2: Discussion Leader

Always do your work in the exercise book provided. Look to this sample as to how to do the role work for new novels. Always write your job description as your title, the date, and the pages of the novel section that you have just read as a group.

Write 3 "fat," thoughtful questions (that cannot be answered yes or no). Use the following as possible question starters:

Why did...	What happened when...	What is the difference between...
Predict what would happen if...	What will happen when...	How did you feel when...
Why do you think...	Was it fair when... Why or why not?	How could the character...

pages _____ Discussion Leader _____ date _____

1. Why did the headmaster at Anna's school change to Herr Keppler?

2. How did you feel when Gerda disappeared from Anna's class?

3.

231

Sample 3: Problem Solver

Always do your work in the exercise book provided. Look to this sample as to how to do the role work for new novels. Always write your job description as your title, the date, and the pages of the novel section that you have just read as a group.

Identify a conflict in the story, and how it was solved. If the conflict has not been solved yet, make a prediction about how it might be solved by the end of the book. If the conflict is related to a history topic, make a prediction of how this problem was solved in real life.

pages   Problem Solver   date

Sample conflict:

In the story, Anna trips over everything, struggles to knit and sew like her mother and sisters, and also has trouble looking neat and tidy. I predict that by moving to Canada, Anna will have a better time at moving around, and won't be such a klutz.

Your conflict:

Sample 4: Connection Maker

Always do your work in the exercise book provided. Look to this sample as to how to do the role work for new novels. Always write your job description as your title, the date, and the pages of the novel section that you have just read as a group.

Show 3 connections between the text you are reading and the same text, other text, the world and your own life. You can use the following codes to help identify what kind of connection you made:

| T-T = Text to Text | T-W = Text to World | T-S = Text to Self | T-W-T Text in Text |

Then, write an explanation of the connection made, and any information on how this might help our understanding of the story.

---

pages   <u>Connection Maker</u>   date

1. T-T. Anna reminds me of the character Harry Potter, in J.K. Rawling's first book "The Philosopher's stone." Young Harry Potter seems just as alone and unsure of himself as Anna does at the beginning of this story.

2. T-W The changes in Anna's school that worries her family remind me of my knowledge of WWII and Hitler. Even though the book does not name Hitler, I know that he was behind the racism against Jewish people back in the 1930s.

3. T-

233

Sample 5: Sequencer

Always do your work in the exercise book provided. Look to this sample as to how to do the role work for new novels. Always write your job description as your title, the date, and the pages of the novel section that you have just read as a group.

Write 4 sentences that include the important events that occurred during the reading. Each sentence should be a different event. Make sure you have included the answers to the following: who? (character names), did what? (the event), when? and where? Share your four sentences with the group.

pages   Sequencer   date

1. We begin this story with Anna sharing her sister's story with her Papa, about how Herr Keppler would not let the school sing a song.

2. Anna's schoolmate, Gerda, along with her whole family, have left Frankfurt without saying goodbye.

3. Anna's father tells the family they must start speaking English while at home.

4.

Sample 6: Illustrator

Always do your work in the exercise book provided. Look to this sample as to how to do the role work for new novels. Always write your job description as your title, the date, and the pages of the novel section that you have just read as a group.

Draw and colour a main scene of the book. Use the pictures (if any) in the story to guide you, but do NOT trace or copy these pictures. Include a caption below to explain what is happening in the story.
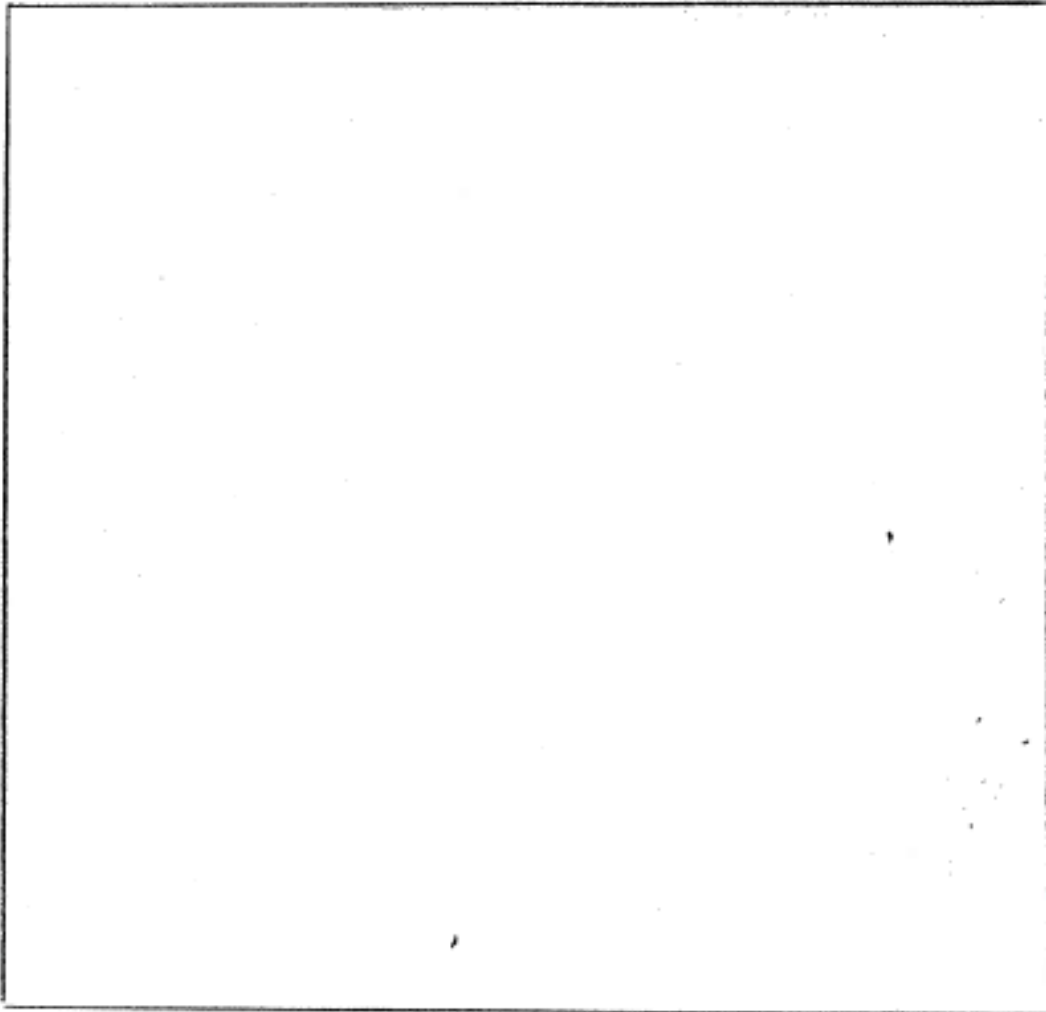
This picture shows Anna at the blackboard, trying to read. Her teacher is angry.

MY Teacher Is A Snowman
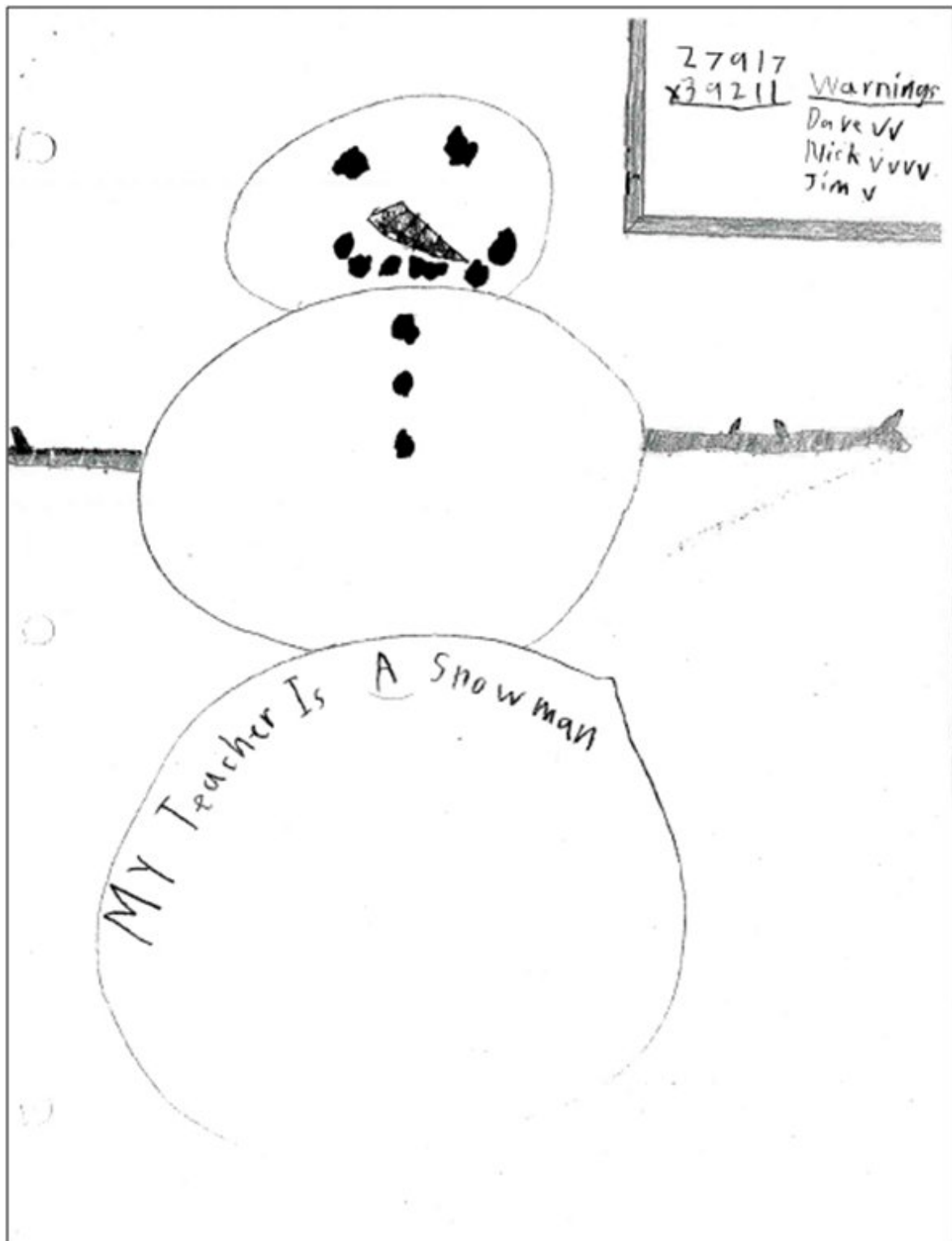
My Teacher Is A Snowman   Jun 24/08

It was on Monday the 1st of September and it was very hot. It broke the biggest summer record in history. Since it was the first day of the school year, I was dragging myself to school. I limped inside and crawled up the stairs. I walked into the classroom looking for the teacher. I looked to the front of the classroom and to my shock he was, a Snowman. I went to him and said you can't be my teacher your a snowman. No I'm not. Yes you are! No. Why do you have a carrot nose? I eat lots of veggies. Why do you have stick arms? I live in a tree. Why do you have coal all over you. I have a part time job as a miner. Then I thought of a plan. I took him outside and said lets race. He said ok. So I raced him about 40 feet. Then I looked behind me and all there was, was a long trail of wet and a big puddle with ten pieces of coal, two sticks and a carrot. Suddenly the bell rang so we grabbed our bags and left. When I got home my mom asked me how was your new teacher? He didn't know how to handle kside. He melted under the pressure. The End

237

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He melted under the pressure. The End.