

THE STORY-RETELLINGS OF PRESCHOOLERS FROM DIFFERING
HOME-LITERACY ENVIRONMENTS

by

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Abstract

Research into emergent reading behaviors of preschool children has centered on their metalinguistic awareness and developing concepts about print. Emerging at the same time is their sense of story and ability to engage in various storying activities. A causal-comparative study linked these two areas of research by examining the story-retellings of three and four year old children from differing home-literacy environments. Comparison groups were based on age and results taken from an inventory of literacy background. It was expected that four year olds would include more story elements and literary devices and demonstrate more book orientation behaviors in their retelling of a wordless picture book than three year olds. It was predicted that significant differences would be apparent in comparisons of three and four year olds from differing home-literacy environments. Results indicated clear differences by age and statistically significant differences between four year olds from higher and lower home-literacy environments. Differences between three year old groups were in the predicted direction, but were not statistically significant. With evidence that a rich home-literacy environment nurtures more sophisticated storytelling , implications for parents and educators were discussed, as well as future research directions.

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1. CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

During the past decade, a great deal of research has examined the emerging reading behaviors of preschool children. (Wells, 1985; Harste, et al, 1981, 1984; Doake, 1983; Holdaway, 1979; Clay, 1979) Attempts have been made to identify factors in the home environment that nurture reading behaviors and provide motivation for young children as they learn to read (Wells, 1985; Teale, 1981). The majority of this research has focused on the metalinguistic awareness of preschool children and their concepts about print.

Paralleling the development of this field of research are theoretical frameworks attempting to explain the cognitive processes children use to interact with their world. This second body of work suggests children are developing an understanding of the world around them, and are seeking to organize it by using the narrative structures common to us all (Hardy, 1977; Bettelheim, 1976; Searle, 1973). As we relate personal experiences and create stories, we are applying these narrative structures. Since storytelling is active in all children, it may provide a methodology for the researcher to better observe and understand children's emerging reading behaviors.

This study is an attempt to link these two areas of research by utilizing children's storytelling as a demonstration of their emerging reading knowledge. How

children apply storytelling in the reading situation may lead to a fuller understanding of their reading development.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Educators traditionally began children's schooling with an assumption that children know very little about reading and writing. Therefore the job of the teacher was to get children 'ready', before beginning the teaching of reading. Writing was only taught after many reading skills were mastered. However, researchers have shown that literacy skills begin to emerge at a much earlier age, well before school starts (Doake, 1983; Holdaway, 1979).

Research into the roots of literacy arose in an attempt to determine the best environment in which children can learn to read and write. Holdaway (1979) made a link between children's oral language development and the similar development of all language strands. Other researchers (Bissex, 1980; Chomsky, 1972) developed longitudinal studies concentrating on a single case in order to observe and document the emerging reading and writing behaviors of a preschool child. Goodman (1981) described the importance of print awareness and how children begin to act on literate forms within their environment. In extensive longitudinal studies, Wells (1985) attempted to identify literacy-related events within the home that lead to success in school. Following his subjects for eight years, Wells was able to provide a wide perspective on several factors within the

literacy development of a single population.

As well as observing and documenting the literacy development of children in their home environments, researchers have focused on the behavior of early readers in order to identify any common characteristics that may have been significant in their learning to read. Durkin(1966) identified experience with books and being read to frequently as key factors in the development of early readers. Keshian(1963), Plessas and Oakes(1964), and Frost(1964) used questionnaires to document the importance of children being read to at an early age.

These earlier studies linking the reading of books to children and future success in school went mostly unheeded in the late 1960's and 1970's, an educational era characterized by vast technological innovations. It was only with the research into the roots of literacy and an awakening to the role of the home environment, in the emergence of reading and writing skills, that attention again became focused on the role of reading to children. Harty(1975), Brown(1979), and Teale(1978) concentrated renewed attention on identifying consistent environmental factors related to early reading. Many of the major factors they identified involved print materials found within the environment. The availability of these materials, the children's own use of these materials, and the frequency of parents reading to their children were consistently reported as common factors in the homes of children who learned to

read easily or early.

In general, the research into the home factors related to literacy development, and the research looking at the characteristics of the successful reader have been centered around children's concepts about print in their environment and in books.

1.2.1 PRINT AWARENESS

The majority of the research in the field of emerging literacy is in the area of concepts about print. Researchers such as Clay(1977), Bissex(1980), Read(1971), and Chomsky(1971) have attempted to describe and classify the development of children's ability to handle print. Preschoolers are described as knowledgeable users of print, capable of handling more sophisticated print-tasks than educators traditionally believed. Certainly this body of research is having a direct pedagogical influence upon the development of emerging reading and writing programs. Clay's Concepts About Print Test (Sand) is a direct example of how far this area has developed. By measuring children's concepts about print, we can learn a great deal about their ability to handle some of the reading activities presented in school.

Closely linked to children's concepts about print is their ability to recognize print in the environment. Goodman(1981), Luse(1983), and Harste,et al(1981) provide many examples of how children are aware of environmental

print. Identification of popular logos, common street signs, and other strongly contextualized uses for print are observable behaviors in all children in our highly print-oriented society. As children get older, they are better able to link their knowledge of the print around them with reading situations that have much of the context removed (Goodman, 1981; Luse, 1983).

Children not only recognize print in a physical sense, they learn to understand it as having a function and purpose. Harste, et al (1981, 1984) have described in detail the meaning children attribute to print. Children recognize the writing activities that their parents purposefully engage in and they learn that print can tell them something. This is evidenced even in the early scribbblings of very young children (Harste, et al, 1984).

1.2.2 READING ALOUD TO CHILDREN

As the research on children's concepts about print continues to grow and add new knowledge to our understanding of emergent reading, it has sparked renewed interest in the role of reading aloud to young children. Many of the print-oriented tasks engaged in by parents and children are centered around the book-reading event. Reading aloud from good quality books, purchasing or receiving books as gifts, and visits to the library are times when books play a central role in print-oriented activities.

The importance of reading aloud to children is stressed over and over again in correlational studies linking it to success in learning to read. Data gathered on the home experiences of preschoolers in studies by Glazer(1981) and Walker and Kuerbitz(1979) indicated that children who were read to more often in their preschool years succeeded more easily in school. Reading aloud is attributed to motivating children to want to learn to read, teaching them syntactic and phonemic language patterns, as well as promoting listening and comprehension skills (Schickedanz,1978; McCormick,1977; Hillman,1975). Reading aloud to children has also been explored with school-age children in attempts to observe differences in achievement after an increase in reading aloud experiences. Children of elementary school age improved in their reading achievement when they were read to (Miles,1985; Lauritzen,1980; Chomsky,1974; Cohen,1966).

While some of the early research focused on the quantity of books read to children(Sutton 1964), more attention is now placed on the interaction between parents and children during book reading. Teale(1981) saw a need to closely examine the underlying construction and organization of book reading events. Roser and Martinez(1985) identified several roles parents take during the book sharing event. As well, children are recognized as active participants in these reading events. They learn a great deal about reading from these situations, and then practice their skills through private manipulations of their books

(Holdaway, 1979).

With lots of book experiences , a shift develops from the highly contextualized experiences of early oral language development into the more decontextualized experiences of book reading and storytelling (Snow, 1983). Nelson (1985), in her focus on children's acquisition of shared meaning felt that interactions between parent and child are centered around social purposes and object-oriented activities. Children move into a conceptual phase where the language centered on activity is transformed into reflective language where children use words to refer to objects in the world. Sharing of contexts gives rise to a sharing of concepts and children refine their concepts to fit the meanings conveyed by others (Nelson, 1985). Book-sharing allows opportunities for children to share the concepts of others and refine their understandings to fit the larger cultural understanding of a concept.

Bruner (1983) described "game-like" formats that adults use when they interact with their children. These formats help establish a structure that first focuses children's attention on objects together with appropriate actions. In book-reading, a structural language routine is provided, allowing children to take on a more significant role which requires them to contribute more and more language to the situation.

Heath (1983) identified parents who talked about language to their children and showed them how language is

broken into bits and pieces. This prepared their children for the metalinguistic nature of reading instruction that takes place in school. Parents and children interacting around books is one way this decontextualized language develops. Literacy events centered around daily life, religion, and entertainment also provide opportunities for children and parents to use language to talk about reading and writing (Anderson and Stokes, 1984).

Children's emerging reading ability is seen then as a combination of their developing metalinguistic awareness and their growing concepts about print. However, developing at the same time and equally influenced by the interaction of parents and children around literacy events is children's concept of story.

1.2.3 CONCEPT OF STORY

To understand the development of children's concept of story, it is necessary to go back to their early oral language development and the role narrative plays in that development. Narrative is understood as a "primary act of the mind" (Hardy, 1977) that enables us to make sense of the world around us. From an early age, children engage in all sorts of "storying" activities in which they create fictions based on actual experiences. As well, they imagine new situations in which they play out their evolving understandings of the world (Wells, 1985). Children use language to create the context for their stories and

language becomes a narrative tool used to create their stories.

Even into adulthood, we use narrative to dream, fantasize, work out problems, daydream, and organize our world. Narrative remains the fundamental process by which we order our lives (Searle, 1973). Arising from this private or inner narrative comes a willingness to share in the narratives of others, which we call "stories". As children, we create our own stories as well as listen to the stories of others. These stories can be told to us or read to us. Story becomes a way to communicate our own narratives, as well as share in the narratives of others.

Because it arises from a common human process, story allows sharing and bonding across cultures and from one generation to another. All cultures contain stories with common themes and these stories are handed down to each generation through oral and written traditions. Not only is narrative a common process, but many of the forms and styles of story are consistent across cultures and from one generation to another (Meek, 1977).

Applebee (1978, 1980) provides detailed evidence of children's developing "sense of story". Children's early storying begins with very personal experiences, such as a visit to grandparents or a day at the zoo. Gradually, character development, actions and settings become removed from that experience and narrative structures become more tightly controlled. Applebee (1978) refers to "centering"

and "chaining" as two strategies which help to control narrative structure and which children use with increasing sophistication to organize their stories. Using evidence gathered from children's retelling of stories, Applebee describes how children add a main theme (centering) to their stories as well as link characters and events with a common thread (chaining).

Sutton-Smith (1981) outlines how children use narrative structures to make up stories in their play and to create dramas that they act out alone or with peers. Dreams and play provide the content for their stories and parents and older siblings provide models of the language of storytelling. Sutton-Smith describes parents as "coaches" who provide children with scaffolds that assist them in storytelling. Parents' willingness to listen when their children have stories to tell may also be crucial to the development of storytelling (Sutton-Smith 1981).

In addition to the direct coaching by adults, a large part of children's developing sense of story comes from listening to stories told or read to them by parents. In an attempt to determine what preschool activities were related to later literacy development, Wells (1985) reported that the activity of looking at and talking about books helps a child develop new vocabulary as well as providing practice at asking and answering questions. More importantly, by listening to stories read aloud, children gain experience with the organization of written language and its

characteristic rhythms and structures. Children experience language as it is used to create new experiences, such as escaping the "big bad wolf" or sailing away to "where the wild things are". These experiences are related through literature in its traditional oral and written forms.

Literature is also close to a child's own inner sense of story. The best stories a culture has to offer its children are found within its literature (Spencer, 1976). The basic types of literature such as fables, fairy tales, parables, proverbs and myths are the closest to the child's own inner story (Bettleheim, 1976). Bettelheim suggests these forms of literature parallel a child's attempts to organize the world as they seek to understand it. Literature provides the framework for children to compare their own stories with the established ones of past generations.

As children experience literature, they respond with an increasing sense of form (Britton, 1977). As they gain more experiences with literature, children gradually develop an awareness of the more complex patterns of events within a story and they start to perceive the various relationships between the elements in the story and the real world around them (Britton, 1977). The telling and reading of stories allow the deepening sense of literary form to develop concurrently with the naturally evolving sense of story.

By school age, children are seen as experienced users of narrative. Their own inner storying is active within their play; they create stories to establish order in their

world; they have listened to many stories told or read by adults and they are heightening their sense of story with perceptions of formal literary elements. Children begin to learn how to read and write with a firmly established sense of story (Applebee, 1978).

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Attempts to identify the emerging reading behaviors of preschool children have produced no measures that adequately reflect what they know about reading. Research has concentrated on children's concepts about print, their understandings of the functions of written language, and their recognition of print in their physical surroundings. Researchers seem to be matching children's emerging reading ability with their metalinguistic awareness and their attention to print.

However, approaching the problem from this perspective is expecting very young children to demonstrate their knowledge about reading in a very abstract manner. The tasks they are asked to perform may not match their cognitive and linguistic abilities. Approaching the question from a different perspective may prove more fruitful.

The major strategy employed by young children to understand and organize the world around them is storytelling. Both their inner storying and the overt storying of their play allow children to establish control of their world by organizing it in ways they can understand.

If story is the way they interact with the world, then drawing on that storytelling ability may reveal more of their emerging book behaviors. Presenting preschool children with a wordless picture book and asking them to tell the story may help us explore elements of emerging book behavior not evidenced through the abstract tasks usually presented to them. The use of a wordless book will remove the print variable and allow the subjects to demonstrate their knowledge of story language within a book-sharing situation.

Children from high home-literacy environments have been identified as engaging in more storytelling activities than children from low home-literacy environments (Wells, 1985; Doake, 1983). Children from these high home-literacy environments are also described as receiving more input into the development of their storytelling ability from the oral storytelling and book-reading experiences provided by their parents. We can infer that differences will be observed in the type of reading behavior demonstrated by children from high and low home-literacy environments and these two groups may utilize different story elements and literary devices in their storytellings. Allowing children to apply their storytelling skills in a book-sharing situation may be a more natural and productive methodology for exploring emerging reading behaviors.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of this study was to determine what differences would be evident in the storytelling abilities of three and four year old children from differing home literacy environments. The story elements, literary devices and book orientation behaviors, evidenced in the story-retellings, were measured to discover differences comparable by age and literacy background.

1.5 QUESTIONS

This study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What story elements do three and four year old children from differing home-literacy environments include in their story-retellings of a wordless picture book?
2. What literary devices do three and four year old children from differing home-literacy environments include in their story-retellings of a wordless picture book?
3. What book orientation behaviors do three and four year old children from differing home-literacy environments demonstrate in their retelling of a wordless picture book?
4. Will three and four year old children from high home-literacy environments include more story elements in their story-retelling of a wordless picture book than three and four year old children from low home-literacy environments?

5. Will three and four year old children from high home-literacy environments include more literary devices in their story-retelling of a wordless picture book than three and four year old children from low home-literacy environments?
6. Will three and four year old children from high home-literacy environments demonstrate more book orientation behaviors during their story-retelling of a wordless picture book than three and four year old children from low home-literacy environments?

1.6 HYPOTHESES

The research hypotheses derived from these research questions are:

1. Three and four year old children from high home-literacy environments will include significantly more story elements in their story-retellings of a wordless picture book than three and four year old children from low home-literacy environments.
2. Three and four year old children from high home literacy environments will include significantly more literary devices in their story-retellings of a wordless picture book than three and four year old children from low home-literacy environments.
3. Three and four year old children from high home-literacy environments will demonstrate significantly more book orientation behaviors during their story-retelling of a

wordless picture book than three and four year old children from low home-literacy environments.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following statements will clarify the frame of reference for these terms as they were used in this study.

1. Story Elements: the basic structural components found within most stories. For example, formal opening, formal closing, the setting, plot, etc.
2. Literary Devices: language techniques common to the oral and written traditions which attempt to add interest, drama or emotion to a story. For example, repetition of words, intonation, dialogue, simile, etc.
3. Emergent Reading Behaviors: any behavior demonstrated by a non-reader that is related to known behaviors used by able readers. For example, following in a book, turning pages in the book, moving from left to right, etc.
4. Story Retelling: The pictures in the wordless book used by the children do tell a specific story, so the child's version of the story is in actuality a retelling of the story in the book.

By way of organization, this chapter has presented a statement of the problem, the research questions and hypotheses undertaken by this study. Chapter Two reviews the literature related to the problem and provides further detail on the background to the study . Chapter Three outlines the methodology and procedures used in the

collection and analysis of the data. Chapter Four presents the results of the data analysis. A discussion of the major findings of the study comes in Chapter Five, highlighted by an outlining of the major limitations and implications of this research . Suggestions for future research are also given.

2. CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The present chapter offers a review of related literature considered within the framework of this study. The intent of this review is to acquaint the reader with the major studies relevant to this area, as well as furnish background for the conceptual framework within which this study operated. The review is organized under two major headings. The first is Environmental Factors influencing emergent reading behaviors including studies of successful readers, literate homes, concepts about print, and the importance of stories. The second heading includes research outlining children's evolving Concept of Story and how it is demonstrated by their storytellings.

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

2.2.1 LOOKING AT THE SUCCESSFUL READER

Prior to the mid 1970's interest in the environmental factors affecting reading achievement concentrated on children who were already reading (Frost, 1968; Napoli, 1968; Durkin, 1966; Plessaa and Oakes, 1964; Sutton, 1964; Keshian, 1963). Questions about the backgrounds of these readers concerned their personal qualities and the types of experiences these children had in their preschool environment that might have influenced their later reading

achievement. A variety of questionnaires were used to probe these background experiences and the questions were asked of parents, the children themselves and their teachers.

Several characteristics of these successful readers were consistently identified by these studies. The successful readers were described as conscientious and serious -minded (Durkin,1961), interested in reading (Plessas and Oakes,1964: Sutton,1964), with a well-adjusted personality (Keshian,1963). A consistant picture of parent qualities also emerged from these questionnaires. Parents had a strong interest in and regard for reading (Durkin,1961; Keshian,1963; Sutton,1964). They responded to their children's questions and expressed an expectation that their children would read (Frost,1968). In virtually all the homes surveyed, books held a special place . Parents read to their children regularly and considered it helpful as their children learned to read (Durkin,1961; Keshian,1963; Sutton,1964; Plessas and Oakes,1964; Frost,1968).

All of this survey research was retrospective. Subjects had to remember back to their preschool experiences. Some subjects were questioned after their children were into Grade 5 or 6 (Keshian,1963; Durkin,1966), a considerable length of time since the preschool factors were evident.

When the questionnaires focused on parents reading to children and the role of books in the home, their questions centered around the quality of material used, frequency of use of the public library facilities, and how often parents

read to their children (Durkin, 1966; Keshian, 1963; Frost, 1968). These studies ignored or could not illuminate the interaction taking place between parent and child during book-reading events, as well as the language development of these children.

Generally this research showed us that readers came from homes where reading was done. This fact was interpreted as not really telling educators something they didn't already know. It did not identify any specific skill development that could be addressed in readiness programs, so the research was basically overlooked throughout the late 1960's and early 1970's when many technological innovations were being introduced into our schools. The home and its influence on children's early literacy development was virtually ignored.

In the early 1970's, new survey research began to probe the preschool experiences of children who had been in school several years. Rossman (1974) attempted to explore the possible correlations between reading achievement and being read to at home. She surveyed 261 high school students with reading problems and found that less than half (44%) were read to as children. While limited by the subjects' ability to remember back so far, Rossman felt the results supported the relationship between parental reading to preschool children and their future interest and skill in reading. Hansen (1973) surveyed the mothers of Grade 4 children and found the same basic factors of parental interest and

involvement, reading to children, and children motivated to learn, that were found in the other reported surveys.

One of the more clearly documented and frequently cited survey studies of home environment factors is Margaret Clark's study of Young Fluent Readers(1976). Clark interviewed the parents of 32 children who at the age of five were reading fluently. These same parents were interviewed two years later to identify what influences the home continued to supply as their children's reading developed. Although her population represented children of well-educated and professional parents, her interviews revealed a pattern similar to the previous research. The parents of these children were interested in their children's learning and they provided experiences centered around books. Parents expressed concern for the quality of interaction within the family and they stressed activities that encouraged shared enjoyment. They described their children as curious and possessing a good memory and power of observation. Their children showed an early interest in reading and writing and were provided with various print-related experiences. Although her study was retrospective in design and descriptive in nature, it did confirm the findings of earlier studies conducted in the 1960's. More importantly, it stressed the importance of the interaction between parents and children as forming the basis for language growth and the development of an interest in print, as well as nurturing the desire to learn to read

and write .

2.2.2 LOOKING AT LITERATE HOMES

During the early 1970's a renewed interest was shown in the home environments that produced successful readers (Chomsky, 1972; Clay, 1972). Instead of concentrating on the child who could already read, this research focused directly on preschool children in their home environments. It was hoped this effort would identify early clues that might be related to later literacy acquisition. Attempts were made to identify those behaviors that might be signs of early reading and writing development.

Organizationally, the research studies attempting to identify environmental factors affecting literacy acquisition were longitudinal in scope and ranged from single case studies to large populations followed for several years (Wells, 1985; Doake, 1981; Bissex, 1980; Holdaway, 1979; Chomsky, 1972). Following one or several subjects over an extended period of time was seen as essential to detail any development that may be taking place.

Many of the same environmental factors identified in the earlier survey research became better understood as a result of the observational, correlational and ethnographic studies on emerging literacy. Some of the most important clarifications came in our understanding of how children learn. Children were described as active participants in

their learning, capable of formulating, testing, and reformulating hypotheses (Read,1971; Chomsky,1972; Bissex,1980). Children determined what they would learn by selecting activities that served their needs. Children were observed applying a variety of strategies as they approached new learning (Bissex,1980).

Using the single case study design, Bissex (1980) observed her son's literacy development over a nine year period. She recorded his earliest attempts at literacy events through to the full maturing of his reading and writing ability. Although Bissex's findings lack any generalizability because she observed only one child, her description of the characteristics of the subject's learning style at home compared to how his teacher presented information poses some important questions for the present practices in schools. While her subject learned from direct interaction with his environment, in school, the teacher directed all the learning by selecting, organizing and calling attention to what she thought the child needed to learn. Within the home environment, the subject asked the questions, while at school the teacher asked all the questions and the child supplied the answers. Bissex's suggestions are supported by Chomsky's (1972) case study and Read's (1971) descriptions of preschool children's invented spelling. In these studies , children are also described as being in control of their learning, actively seeking answers to their own questions.

These descriptive studies laid the groundwork for a re-evaluation of our understanding of children's literacy awareness as they enter school. The work of Clay (1972) and Holdaway (1979) in New Zealand and the longitudinal studies of Harste et al (1981,1984) and Wells (1985) added more support to this dynamic understanding of how literacy was developing.

Don Holdaway (1979) observed the "reading-like" behaviors of preschoolers and described the "literacy set" as the range of early skills and attitudes demonstrated by these children. They had high expectations of print; they could orally model the language of books; they recognized written language in their environments; they knew print contains a message and they had some concept of print direction; they could listen for long periods of time; they could respond to language in complex ways and were not bound to the here and now; and they had an extensive background experience with books. Holdaway combined the behaviors he observed into four major groups --- motivational, linguistic, operational and orthographic factors --- providing a detailed description of children with a strong literacy set. Holdaway (1979), Goodman (1981), Clay (1972) and Frank Smith (1971) paint a picture of children as having a great deal of knowledge about reading and writing and as capable of interacting with print in more sophisticated ways than previously understood.

Holdaway (1979) describes teaching procedures that emulate the emerging reading behaviors demonstrated by children with a strong literacy set. He also outlines implications for readiness programs that traditionally begin instruction by developing a set of hierarchical skills that were seen as prerequisite for beginning to learn to read and write. The strategies of the shared book experience, self-correction, language experience and hypothesis testing were all field-tested by Holdaway in programs in his native New Zealand. They represent manifestations of the types of experiences found in the home environments of children. They have been adapted to the school environment, where large groups of children must interact with one adult.

2.2.3 CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT

Some of the earliest of the observational studies of preschool children's developing concepts about print were conducted by Marie Clay (1967, 1970, 1972). She used various populations, sample sizes and research designs to gather data that would help her identify what children know about print. Reading: The Patterning of Complex Behavior (1972) provides detailed descriptions and examples of children's interactions with print. She traces print awareness from the children's earliest interest in environmental print to a recognition that print contains a message. Clay (1979) stresses the importance of fostering children's desire to communicate in print. Parents and teachers need to be

keen observers of the development taking place as children move from the early recognition of print as functional to a more advanced understanding that print moves in a certain direction (for example, in English from left to right and top to bottom), and contains a consistent and systematic visual form, composed of letters, spaces and punctuation marks.

Clay's research led to the development of the Concepts About Print Test (SAND, 1972), which provided a new and valuable instrument to determine how far a child's concept about print had developed. Teachers particularly welcomed the Sand Test as one way to accurately observe how children handle books and react to print. Subsequent experiences could be planned to build on children's strengths and allow weaker print concepts to develop. Although time consuming to administer, the Sand Test has gained an increasing popularity and acceptance in the educational community. A significant influence of Clay's research is also being felt in her call for teachers to look at children's writing as one way for them to demonstrate what they understand about print (Clay, 1972). This one recommendation alone has proved significant in launching other researchers into analyses of children's early writing, most particularly Harste, Woodward and Burke (1981, 1984).

The results published in Language Stories and Literacy Lessons (Harste, et al, 1984) represent data analyses from several longitudinal studies. The original study (begun in

1977) consisted of a random sample of twenty three, four, five and six year old children, representing middle and upper class children. Four research settings were employed: (1) the reading of environmental print, (2) dictating a language experience story and reading and rereading it, (3) writing their name and anything else they could write, and (4) drawing and labelling a self-portrait. These research situations were video-taped during this first study and the children were transported to the research site. This procedure proved to be inhibiting for the children, so in future studies the research was conducted at the children's location.

Several other studies grew out of this original one and helped broaden the perspective and sampling of the study. Several individual case studies were also conducted by graduate students. In the second major component of their research, Harste, Woodward and Burke (1981, 1984) collected writing and drawing samples from 68 three, four, five and six year olds over a six year period. These subjects represented the full range of socio-economic levels, ethnic groups and rural and suburban families. Harste, et al established the Uninterrupted Writing and Uninterrupted Drawing techniques within several preschool classrooms. These procedures allowed for the collection of the children's written work and the video-taping of what they were doing while writing or drawing. The observations of the children , as well as the analysis of their products, led

the researchers to conclude that young children distinguish between writing as a print medium and drawing as a way of representing meaning pictorially. The subjects' responses were organized, intentional and planned. Even the "scribbling" of very young children showed their ability to discriminate print as meaningful. When children were asked to write, observations of what they said as they wrote were recorded. Children were asked then to "read" what they had written. They used their markings much as we use print --- to conserve memory and to make the retrievability of that memory possible (Harste, et al, 1984). It was also felt that the oral language that the children engaged in while they wrote was significant, particularly as a way of organizing what they were doing.

Harste, Woodward and Burke (1981, 1984) had picked up on Marie Clay's suggestions and approached their research with the assumption that young children are written language users and learners prior to coming to school. Furthermore, they felt that by comparing, contrasting and evaluating the strategies evident in children's literacy prior to school entry, we could determine future directions for our instructional system within the school (Harste, et al, 1984).

Their research helped change the focus of much of the previous research from product alone to a combination of observation during the actual creation of the product and an analysis of the product itself. They considered the child as "informant" during their data collection and feel it is

essential to observe the children while they are working. Researchers were encouraged to move into the homes and classrooms where children were working and let the children "inform" the researcher of what they are doing.

Most of the results reported by Harste, et al (1981, 1984) arose from this combination of observational records and product analysis and are not based on any empirical evidence or even correlational support. They formed several general conclusions which they feel characterize how children treat print. First, writing serves a pragmatic function. Secondly, writing can "placeholder" thoughts. Thirdly, writing and drawing are organized differently, although both are used to communicate. Finally, children are capable of making complex decisions when dealing with print.

The work of Clay (1970, 1972) and Harste et al (1981, 1984) drew the attention of educators to the knowledge that children have about print. They are active users of print in a variety of situations and they recognize print as functional and symbolic. Both these bodies of work respect the child as the source of information on the processing and development of concepts taking place. They encourage teachers and other researchers to employ multi-modal approaches in their observations of children, since no one approach can provide insight into all questions.

2.2.4 PRINT AWARENESS

As well as examining children's concepts about print in books, researchers looked at their awareness of print in their environment. Yetta Goodman (1981) outlined a development she saw taking place in environmental print awareness. Children could most easily identify print with the strong contextualized background of its logo representation; for example, "Coke" as it is commonly portrayed in its red and white sign. As the context is removed, and we move closer to the print as it would be presented in a book, the more difficult it becomes for the preschooler to identify (Goodman, 1981). Children try to read these print examples by naming their specific brand name or by identifying the generic type of product or the use the product may have. So for "Coke", the child may say "Pop" or "You drink it." As children become more acquainted with the graphophonemic system, they begin to apply phonic rules to the task and try to identify the word from its beginning sound (Goodman, 1981).

In an attempt to focus on the print awareness of her kindergarten class, Luse (1983) conducted a descriptive study to determine if children who are aware of print in their environment were also aware of print in books. She developed the Environmental Print Awareness Assessment and compared the results on this test to the children's score on the Concepts About Print Test (Clay, 1972). Her children seemed aware of the samples of print from her test and their

results followed a similar pattern to those of Goodman (1981) in that the subjects were dependent on the usual form and appearance of the item for identification. As the test item lost concreteness, it became more difficult to recognize. When the scores on the Environmental Print Awareness Assessment Test were correlated to the Concepts About Print Test, they were found not to be significantly related. Luse (1983) concluded there was no significant relationship between her children's awareness of print in their environment and their awareness of print in books. The study could be limited by the items used on the Environmental Print Awareness Assessment, since such items are dependent on a child's previous experience with them. However, the fact that the scores dropped as the items became less concrete does suggest that environmental print awareness is very much context-based.

2.2.5 A LIMITATION TO CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT

Another researcher who used Clay's Concepts About Print Test was David Doake (1981). His review of research led him to conclude that (1) preschool children were able to direct, regulate and monitor their own learning. (2) Our concepts of what constitutes readiness for reading, pre-reading or even pre-literacy are untenable. (3) Learning to read should be a natural language learning task (Doake, 1981).

Doake was particularly interested in the story reading events taking place in the home. He visited four homes, 56

times over a seven-month period. He gathered 67 hours of tape on four children ranging in age from two years and eleven months to five years and five months. All of the children were read to frequently. Doake also adapted the Concepts About Print Test (Clay, 1972) and included his own storybook as the test measure. He not only measured the children's understandings of the conventions of print, but he also examined some of the functions written language serves. The testing situation was interactive and reflected the type of situations parents and children might naturally engage in. His storybook was more like a "real" storybook and not as mechanistic as the Sand book of the Concepts About Print Test.

Doake (1981) concluded that reading was occurring as a developmentally organized task, controlled and monitored by the children themselves, particularly through reading and re-reading their favorite storybooks. The children's growing awareness of print and of what reading is all about is a product of the progress they were making in learning to read, their experiences with language, and their learning to write.

The development of reading arose from the positive attitudes nurtured in the book-reading events and became manifested early on by the children's desire to gain control of the reproduction of stories (Doake, 1981). They wanted to control the oral dimension of written language first. So they told stories to themselves and "read" their storybooks

as they were read to them.

With the gain of control of the oral dimension, children attempted to gain control over the visual dimensions of print. Attempts at writing and a focus on words and letters all reflect this desire. Doake sees the final stage of reading development as a return to the oral, where the child again attempts to gain control of the oral aspects of reading, but this time the visual aspects are integrated into it (Doake, 1981).

However, the Concepts About Print Test really only probes one aspect of reading development and ignores the search for meaning as the main goal in reading. Testing children's print awareness must not be seen as a complete measure of their reading ability. Children seem interested in the "story" first and then in how we interpret the words to tell the story. How children get meaning from text should not be looked at solely from the print awareness perspective. Doake's Reading Concepts Observational Scale represents a strong attempt to probe reading development from this broader perspective since he combined a test of print awareness with probes about the story itself.

Doake (1981) recognized the limits of his sample size and the fact he used children of high socio-economic status, but his research does raise important questions on the role of the book sharing event in homes that produce readers. It could be suggested that Doake should have followed his sample longer and perhaps re-administered his test to

document more fully his proposals for the stages of reading development. However, his inclusion within the Sand Test of items on the functions of written language, as well as a focus on the story itself, greatly expands the limited approach of tests that probe awareness only.

The survey research, outlined earlier, identified homes where reading was done as ones that produce readers. The use of books within these homes was consistently identified as characteristic of the background of successful readers. The most recent research, focusing on literary acquisition has detailed the importance of children developing concepts of print that will prepare them to read. However, measuring children's concepts about print can only be seen as one indicator of their emerging literacy. From the sharing of books, children not only develop concepts about print, they also gain important messages about what written is and how it works.

2.2.6 THE IMPORTANCE OF STORIES

For a period of eight years, Gordon Wells (1985) probed the home environments of 128 preschool children randomly selected from the population of Bristol England. This longitudinal study attempted to determine what preschool literacy-related factors contributed to later success in school. Using a system of electronically timed and regulated tape-recorded sampling procedures, Wells was able to collect natural language samples from his subjects. Only a total of

36 minutes per day were recorded, so the count taken on the frequency an activity was engaged in are really only estimates. However, the samples were taken from naturalistic observations and they did not rely completely on questionnaire responses.

As his subjects entered school, they seemed to have achieved a fairly consistent level of oral language development and general maturity. However, once they were in school, differences in performance began to be observed consistent with the socio-economic level of the children. A re-examination of the data indicated that the less successful children came from environments judged less literate based on the parent questionnaire developed for the study. His questionnaire centered on the children's background experiences with literacy events. Since this part of his data was based on questionnaire responses, Wells went back to his transcripts of the recordings made in the homes and did a count of four activities that the children frequently engaged in: (1) looking at print materials; (2) listening to a story read or told orally; (3) drawing and coloring; and (4) writing. His sub-sample of 32 engaged in looking at books more than any of the other three activities. Only 53% of the sample were observed listening to a story, while 78% engaged in drawing or coloring activities. Only two children were observed in any writing activity. Each of the four activities became the independent variables in determining the relationship between the

activity and subsequent progress in literacy, as measured by the Knowledge of Literacy score and Reading Comprehension scores, which were taken at ages 5 and 7. The Knowledge of Literacy score was determined by combining the scores on Clay 's Concepts About Print Test and Letter Identification (Clay 1972). Neither looking at books nor drawing and coloring correlated significantly with the dependant variable measures. However, listening to stories did prove to be significantly associated with both measures ($p .05$).

Since looking at books failed to show any significance, while listening to stories read or told did prove to be a significant factor, Wells (1985) concluded that an important distinction had been made in describing the literacy-related factors associated with later literacy acquisition.

However, Wells did not dismiss the activity of looking at books. In fact, Wells felt that this activity provided important assistance in learning new vocabulary since objects are pointed out and their names given. As well, looking at books allows children the opportunity to practice answering display questions which are so characteristic of teacher-student interactions. Wells describes display questions as ones that are asked by someone who already knows the answer but wants the child to tell it to them (Wells, 1985). When parents and children look at books, often the parent will point to a picture in the book and say "What's that?" and the child answers. This is a display question, since the adult already knows the answer and

merely wants the child to "display" their ability to name or describe it.

While considering looking at books important, Wells (1985) felt it does little to introduce the child to actual written language. Listening as stories are read to them or told to them provides children with experiences with the organization and characteristic rhythms and structures of written language (Wells, 1985). Children also experience language in the form which allows it to create experiences. Stories provide the opportunity to realize that language has the power to create "possible worlds", which children can explore with their own minds.

Having established an important link between listening to stories and literacy acquisition, Wells (1985) moved further and linked the language of stories to children's ability to create stories in their play. Wells says that children's story language used in play is similar to the written language that creates a story since they both create "the context against which the action takes place." For example, children use language to create the environment of their play (a cave perhaps); they change people into story characters ("You be the bear in the cave and I'll be the explorer."); and objects into story props ("I'll use this stick for a sword."). In the story reading event, adults mediate between the child and the text and help with the interpretation of the text. Such discussions around the story allow the child to relate their own experiences to the

events that occur in the story (Wells 1985). These discussions facilitate children's awareness of the essential nature of written language and help them cope with the disembedded uses of spoken language so characteristic of school (Wells 1985).

In summary, Wells' research combined the traditional questionnaire format with the direct "natural" observations of children in their home environments. It clarified the distinction between merely looking at books and listening to stories read. This distinction focused attention on the interaction between parent and child and dismissed as less significant the quantity of books read and the socio-economic level of the family as principal factors in literacy acquisition.

For the direction of this study, Wells removed the focus on concepts of print or print awareness as the definitive determinant of literacy skill and pushed this researcher to look at the connections between children's use of story in their play and its links with the written language of books. It directs us to look beyond the mechanics or structure of written language to the interpretation of written language as "meaning making" (Wells, 1985). It also makes it necessary to look at the literature about children's concept of story to expand our understanding of the natural "storying" ability that children possess and to examine how it can be demonstrated by their storytelling.

2.3 CONCEPT OF STORY

Research on our concept of story began with attempts to document the development observed in the oral narratives of children. Research by Applebee (1978, 1980) and Sutton-Smith (1981) was based on an acceptance of narrative as "a primary act of the mind" (Hardy, 1977). Hardy's theory suggests narrative is the basic structure children use to organize and understand the world around them. In the beginning, narrative is the way the mind works and our stories are not conscious or deliberate. As children mature and gain experience with the world, their use of narrative becomes more conscious and they begin to select and order the elements that are brought together in their story (Wells, 1985).

Even two year olds can tell a story (Applebee, 1978), although they need a great deal of adult assistance. As they hear more stories and gain experiences telling their own stories in their play, children's storytelling takes on the form and language usually associated with stories. Wells (1985) says the constructing of stories in the mind (storying) pervades all aspects of our learning and should not be limited to the early development of reading. All aspects of curriculum can be addressed from the narrative perspective.

As well as constructing stories in our minds, we give expression to our stories through words. All cultures tell stories and many write them down as well. Most of our myths

and legends arose from attempts to understand the mysteries of life around us. The literature of any culture contains the best stories of that culture and reflects the social conditions of its time. Stories remain one of the most effective ways we have to share our thoughts, feelings and ideas.

The language we use to express ourselves is seen as operating in two roles. James Britton (1970) differentiates language used in the spectator and participant roles. Within the spectator role, there is no expectation to directly intervene in the action and the parts of language are judged against their place within the whole. The participant role requires some sort of intervention and attempts to make sense of something by looking at the individual parts as separate details. From the spectator role we adopt a certain attitude or approach to experience, rather than addressing the experience with an external set of standards for measuring and judging.

The distinction between participant and spectator uses of language formed the basis of Arthur Applebee's outlining of the development of a concept of story. Applebee (1978) used participant role to describe our use of language as a tool to exchange ideas and information. While in the spectator role, we use language to create a new experience. Each person reading our expression of that experience interacts with it and gives it a meaning of their own (Applebee 1978). Applebee attempted to detail how we use the

spectator role and what development takes place in our use of it.

Applebee used a sample of 360 stories told to Pitcher and Prelinger (1963) by a group of two to five year olds. He analysed these stories to examine children's use of simple narrative structures, the length of their stories, and the complexity of characters, actions and settings. Applebee (1978) felt a clear development was taking place along age lines. As children got older, their stories became more sophisticated. They began with "heaps", described as a collection of characters or things related in some way to a story context. Children quickly develop the strategies of "centering" and "chaining", which they impose on their initial heaps. Applebee says centering involves the holding constant of some central element throughout the story. The other elements in the story are tied to this central element. Chaining sets up events in such a way that one event leads to another which leads to another.

By the time children enter school, Applebee (1980) describes their stories as containing elements bound together in complex chains and with an overall center as well. Applebee feels children at this age have a "firmly established set of expectations of what a story is". These expectations guide them in their response to new stories and in their own storytelling.

In another component of his study, Applebee pursued children's understandings of what certain story characters

are usually like in stories. Children aged six to nine were asked questions like: What is a wolf usually like in a story?, and What's a witch usually like in a story? Forty one percent of the six year old children could identify how these characters usually are portrayed. By the age of nine, this number rose to eighty-six per cent. When questioned on the fact or fantasy of characters and events, children again differed developmentally. Five year olds were not consistent in their assessment of real and make-believe while nine year olds were quite consistent.

Applebee (1978) points out that any development of concept of story is not constructed on a level to level basis, since many children maintained less developed traits in their storytelling or used ones more sophisticated than many at their age level. Applebee does feel there is a pattern, but not one that can be structured hierarchically. Obviously collecting one story from a child could not be used to establish any assessment of a child's ability. Applebee analysed them as a group in search of consistent patterns and frequently demonstrated traits.

In an attempt to update and extend the range of the Pitcher and Prelinger (1963) collection of stories used by Applebee, Brian Sutton-Smith (1981) included stories from two year olds to ten year olds. Over a two year period, Sutton-Smith collected stories from 16 preschoolers aged two to five. He collected over 1000 samples, but reported on only 500 in The Folkstories of Children(1981). Sutton-Smith

recognized his sample as non-representative of the general population since they were highly verbal children, of superior intelligence, who were being raised by professional and ambitious parents. The parents were financially able to pay the required fees for their children to attend the private preschool in New York City . After a period of observation and orientation, graduate students recorded the stories of any child who wished to tell one.

Sutton-Smith (1981) also accepted narrative as the basic model of the human mind. He felt narrative was of two kinds: personal narratives, which are reports of one's personal experiences ; fictional narratives, which are the story kind. His purpose was to give scope to the idea that children manipulate themes and ways of acting in a systematic and patterned way. He feels children apply these structures first to their personal narratives and then bring that experience to their storytelling (Sutton- Smith, 1981).

With the story samples collected, Sutton-Smith analyzed the stories into 91 elements, which could describe the stories. These elements were then grouped into the major headings of beginning, middle and end. When this was done, he found that the youngest children used mainly beginnings and endings, while the oldest children distributed the 91 elements over the three major categories.

A plot analysis indicated there was no real development in the plot of their stories. They were usually in the past tense; they were often about impersonal characters; the

characters usually experienced a problem event; and there was little sense of time. Sutton-Smith (1981) refers to "chronicity", where the youngest children sequence each event as one event tied to the one before it. This is a strategy associated with personal narrative first and it is then brought to the story telling experience.

When he looked at the stories of the very young children, Sutton-Smith made an important point about our method of analysis. He suggested that we have approached their stories as prose and have attempted to do plot analysis on them. Sutton-Smith claims that in many ways these stories are really verse. All the stories tend toward a line-by-line regularity. They are told like a nursery rhyme in a strong and regular voice and they are full of repeated sound, much like poetry. Sutton-Smith refers to these as "verse-stories" to distinguish them from the prose structure, so evident by age three and a half.

The studies of Applebee (1978) and Sutton-Smith have provided a tremendous amount of detail on the development of our sense of story. Both researchers ground their work in our understanding of narrative and they conclude that our concept of story operates within us as we approach new stories or try to tell a story. The implications of their work may be limited by their sample sizes and population traits, but they do suggest that a concept of story is an important component of our reading development and one that is "emerging" just as other concepts are. Such research is

time-consuming and difficult to analyze, but it is necessary to continue probing this important concept. Both Sutton-Smith and Applebee used methods of analyses that were self-made or borrowed from others, pointing to a need for replication of their procedures for data analysis. One used stories gathered 15 years earlier by other researchers and the other collected samples from volunteers, procedures which may limit their generalizability. There is a need to develop a procedure to gather stories from children, as well as a need to collect these stories from a broader sampling of children.

2.3.1 STORYTELLING

The major strategy employed by researchers to probe children's concept of story and how they employ it has been storytelling. Children are asked to spontaneously tell a story (Applebee, 1978; Sutton-Smith, 1981) or after they hear a story read to them or one they read to themselves, they are asked to retell that story (Mandler and Johnson, 1977; Morrow, 1985). In the first case, researchers were interested in detailing the development of concept of story, while the latter group examined how children apply their concept of story.

Storytelling and story retelling are becoming more common as methods to explore reading behavior. Mandler and Johnson (1971), working at the same time as Applebee, felt there was a strong structure common to stories that could be

described and easily identified by applying specific rules (or a story grammar) to the story. They felt if children had this knowledge, they would develop a set of expectations about story and would be able to recall the story or predict what might happen. These researchers used children's retellings of stories to examine which story elements they contained. Children producing retellings that contained more of the structural elements associated with stories, and that matched the content of the original story, were said to be better users of their story structure.

The studies of Mandler and Johnson (1977), Thorndyke (1977), and Rumelhart (1975) involved developing a story grammar they felt could be applied to stories and then asking children to retell a story after they had heard it or read it themselves. Jill Whaley (1981) attempted to determine how children were using story structure while they were reading rather than after they had finished reading. She used prediction and cloze tasks rather than simple recall or memory tasks.

The use of story grammar has been criticized extensively because of its limited nature (Rand, 1984). Story grammar (1) concentrates on structure and not content; (2) it tells nothing about the interaction among the key elements of the story; (3) it tells nothing about the story language; (4) it is applicable only to simple stories; and (5) it concentrates on literal recall from the story. The inherent weaknesses of story grammars plus the new research

in early literacy which links experiences with stories with future success in school (Wells, 1985; Doake, 1981) has changed the direction of how storytelling and story retelling are being used in research.

Some of this new research still uses story retellings as the task done by the subjects, but attention is given to what is happening in the story telling event. Martinez (1983) monitored a parent reading a favorite storybook to a preschooler and found that the child was moving from the literal level of comprehension at the first reading to the inferential and even evaluative levels after repeated storytellings.

Morrow (1985) employed the strategy of story retelling as a teaching methodology. Kindergarten children who had the opportunity to retell a story heard by the whole class were found to score higher on a comprehension test than children who were not given the chance to retell the story before they were questioned. Repeated experiences with story retelling moved these same children to significantly higher levels of comprehension than children who were just being read to with no chance to improve their story retelling skills.

One researcher who has linked the storytelling procedure with an examination of emergent reading behaviors is Elizabeth Sulzby (1985). Sulzby developed a classification system for describing emergent storybook reading behaviors (1983) and ordered these behaviors

developmentally. Several of her studies have used this classification system and found it consistent across storybooks used and age group described. Her tasks require the child to use a book of their own choosing and to "read" it to the examiner. The subsequent reading is recorded and transcribed before the Categories of Storybook Reading Scheme is applied (Sulzby 1983).

With each new study, Sulzby is able to clarify the categories and add new behaviors to describe them more clearly. She has used children from ages two to six and from high and low literacy backgrounds. Sulzby (1985) determined that children from high literacy backgrounds showed greater development in their reading of favorite storybooks as measured by her Categories of Storybook Reading than children from low literacy backgrounds. Although her samples were small (21 to 24 students per study) and the measures used are still in the developmental stages, Sulzby does provide impetus for other researchers to pursue emergent reading behaviors from the child's demonstrated ability to tell back a story by pretending to read it. Such methods require children to apply a holistic approach to the task and they allow the children to draw on their growing sense of story and apply it to the reading situation.

Fox (1983) suggests that children have learned many narrative conventions well before they begin the formalized learning of reading and writing. Many children have the beginnings of literary competencies before they are

independent readers and writers. Fox studied these competencies by examining the story monologues of a small group of preschoolers. She concluded that books exerted a strong influence on the stories her subjects produced. This influence was manifested on the superficial level where a character name from a book , a small part of the plot or a quoted phrase was included. On the linguistic level, her sample made their language sound like that of books and even adapted the larger forms and techniques found in books to their own storytelling purposes (Fox, 1983). Fox encouraged further exploration of preschooler's storytelling in order to explore the influence that stories from all sources and not just from books have on children's literacy development.

2.4 SUMMARY

The research probing environmental factors affecting success in school has been divided into two major categories --- research that looked retrospectively at successful readers and research that looked at preschool children in their home environments. The research centering on children who were already able to read usually consisted of questionnaires administered to parents, teachers and the children themselves. Sample sizes were large and covered a broad base of socioeconomic status, grade levels and achievement levels. Responses to the questionnaires depended on the subjects ability to remember back to their early development.

Research that looked at the preschool child was descriptive and observational in nature and longitudinal in scope. Children became informants in the research situation and researchers conducted their observations in the natural home or preschool environments of the young children. Single case studies, small groups and large groups formed the sample populations. Researchers looked at the subjects' products, but also at what they were doing while they created their products.

The major factor affecting later literacy acquisition, consistently reported across all this research, is experience with stories. The earlier survey research considered quantity of book experience and the quality of material used as significant. The more contemporary research has clarified this finding to emphasize the interaction between parent and child as the crucial element in the story sharing experience. Looking at books on their own or with parents is considered a valuable activity for children, but listening to stories read to them or told to them provides children with the opportunity to experience written language as it is used to create new experiences, not part of the here and now.

Research into emerging literacy has focused on children's concepts about print and their interactions with print. Although these are important developments to examine, another body of research emphasizes our emerging concept of story as a vital factor in literacy acquisition. Attempts to

trace the development of our concept of story have used storytelling as the major research technique. As well, this strategy has been used to probe children's ability to recall story events, comprehend story meaning and demonstrate their emerging reading ability. This linking of storytelling with emerging reading ability adds a new dimension to our exploration of literacy acquisition.

3. CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 DESIGN

A causal-comparative study was conducted in which story-retellings were collected from three and four year old children identified as similar in age and socio-economic status but different on a measure of their home-literacy environments. The performances on a story-retelling task by contrasting groups from higher and lower home-literacy environments were compared.

The independent variable was the total score on the Home-Literacy Environment Index (HLEI) (Shapiro, 1985). The HLEI is a questionnaire consisting of eighteen items intended to probe the literacy environment and the literacy experiences provided by the parents of the sample. Areas questioned include:

1. Quantity and variety of print material within the home.
2. Frequency children were read to by the parents.
3. Types of literacy experiences provided, such as trips to the library.
4. Exposure to the writing process.
5. Modelling of literacy skills by parents.
6. Children's attempts at literacy events at home.

Parents of all the children attending the University of British Columbia Child Study Centre completed the questionnaire in their homes. The total possible score on the HLEI is 72 and the range of scores for the sample used

in this study was 37 to 66. Subjects at the extreme ends of the distribution of scores on the HLEI were then identified and formed into the four contrasting groups: Four year olds from higher and lower home-literacy environments and three year olds from higher and lower home-literacy environments.

The dependant variables were:

Story Elements

A checklist of eighteen story elements was completed on each subject's story-retelling. Items were marked with 0 if the element was absent and with 1 if it was present. A total score for each subject was computed and then the mean score for each contrasting group was calculated. The eighteen story elements are similar to those used by Nurss, et al (1981), Sutton-Smith (1980), and Applebee (1978). Details on the story elements and how they were applied are outlined below.

1. Title--Was the book title repeated or paraphrased at the start of the story-retelling? For example, Pancakes for Breakfast or Pancakes.
2. Formal Opening--Was a formal opening used? For example, Once upon a time....., One day.... .
3. Setting--Was a setting for the story established? For example, on a farm, or in the country.
4. Main Character (a)--Was the main character (an old woman) identified and used throughout the story?
5. Main Character (b)--If a main character was used, was the character identified generically or specifically?

For example, She or her (generic) and the little old woman, or the Grandmother (specifically).

6. Secondary Characters--Were secondary characters used in the story-retelling? For example, the cat and dog , the man selling syrup or the neighbours.
7. Time--Was it established what time the story took place? For example, in the winter or at breakfast time.
8. Past Tense--Was the past tense used consistantly throughout the story-retelling?
9. Main Problem--Was the main problem within the story identified? The main problem centered around the main character's frustration trying to get pancakes for her breakfast.
10. Resolution of the Problem--Was the solution to the main problem identified? The main character solves her problem by getting pancakes from her unsuspecting neighbours.
11. Story Action 1--Was the first story action included?
Story action 1 centers around the main character waking in the morning and deciding to have pancakes for breakfast.
12. Story Action 2--Was the second story action included?
Story action 2 centers around the frustrated efforts of the main character to gather the materials needed to make the pancakes.
13. Story Action 3--Was the third story action included?
Story action 3 centers around the mess made by the cat

and dog while the old lady was out of the house.

14. Story Action 4--Was the fourth story action identified?
Story action 4 centers around the old lady smelling something in the air and discovering that her neighbours are cooking pancakes.
15. Story Action 5--Was the fifth story action included?
Story action 5 centers around the old lady eating her fill of pancakes and falling asleep.
16. Formal Closing--Was a formal closing used? This included statements that brought the story action to closure. For example, "and then she fell asleep." or "She was so full she went to sleep."
17. Tag Ending--Was a tag ending used? This referred to an ending that abruptly stopped the story-retelling but did not bring the story to any closure. For example, "The end." or "That's the end."
18. Expression of Feelings--Were any feelings expressed amongst the characters? For example, "The old lady got mad....." or "She was very sad.....".

Literary Devices

A checklist of eight literary devices was completed on each subject's story-retelling. The video-tapes were used to score any shift in the subject's voice intonation and emphasis of words. The transcripts were used to score the other six items. Items were marked 0 if they were absent, 1 if present once, and 2 if present two or more times. A total score for each subject was computed and then the mean score

for each of the four contrasting groups was calculated. The eight literary devices as they were applied to the story-retellings are outlined below.

1. Intonation. Did the child shift voice intonation to signal storytelling? The video-tapes were viewed to determine if the child modulated the voice or accented speech while telling the story.
2. Repetition of Words. Were words repeated as a literary device? For example, "more and more and more" or "lots and lots and lots of pancakes."
3. Emphasis of Words. Were voice accenting or modulation used to emphasize a particular word? For example, "vveeerrrrryyy sad or coooold outside. Again the video-tapes were used to listen for such emphasis.
4. Making Sounds. Did the child make sounds to enhance the story? For example , animal sounds "Moo or Meow"; sounds to express feelings such as" BBBrrrr! it's cold."
5. Literary Language. Was any language used that is typical of storybooks? For example, "Once upon a time...." or "In a dark, dark forest..."
6. Dialogue. Did the child produce any dialogue amongst the story characters? For example, "She said, "Get out of my house!"
7. Descriptive Language. Did the child use any adjectives and adverbs to add descriptive details to the story? For example. "It was very cold outside...." or "The silly old lady.."

8. Interjections. Did the story contain any interjections?
For example, "Suddenly!" or "Look!"

Book Orientation Behaviors

Five major book orientation behaviors were identified from a close scrutiny of the video-tapes. They were rated in frequency on a scale of 0, 1 or 2. A total score for each subject was computed and then the mean score for each contrasting group was calculated. The five book orientation behaviors and their frequency rating are outlined below.

1. Pointing

Included in this item were all instances where the child told about something in the picture while pointing to it. A count of 0-5 times rated a 0; a count of 6-10 times rated a 1; and a count over 10 rated a 2.

2. Reading-Related Comments

Included in this item were all references to the lack of print in the book, and to the task of reading itself. For example, statements like, "This is just a looking book." "I can't read." "There are no words in this book." Rating: No references was rated a 0; one reference rated a 1; and two or more references rated a 2.

3. Pages as Separate

Measured within this item was the number of times the child treated pages as separate. When the child turned a page, were separate statements made about the pictures or were the two pages treated as one. Rating: 0-5 times

rated a 0; 6-10 times rated a 1; and 11-15 times rated a 2.

4. Left to Right

From the video-tape, a count was made of the number of times the subjects began on the left-hand page and moved to the right-hand page. Rating: 0-5 times was given 0; 6-10 times was given 1; and 11-15 times was given a 2.

5. Self-Corrections

Included in this item were any attempts to correct page-turning behavior (for example, realizing two pages had been turned rather than one) or turning back in the book to check a detail or correct a statement made.

Rating: No references was rated a 0; one reference rated a 1; and two or more instances rated a 2.

3.2 SUBJECTS

The subjects were forty three and four year old children attending preschool at the University of British Columbia Child Study Centre. The twenty male and twenty female children ranged in age from 41 to 61 months and they attended the Center three or four half-days a week. The subjects were evenly distributed amongst four classes at the Center and were all healthy preschoolers with no apparent physical or emotional problems.

The population of the Child Study Center can be described as average to above-average in socio-economic status with the parents of the subjects representing a wide

range of professional occupations. Parents of children at the Center are also encouraged to be active in Center programs and are often called upon to participate in meetings, fund-raising, and field trips by providing transportation. All subjects were from two-parent families and had an older or younger sibling.

3.3 COMPARISON GROUPS

Parents of the entire population of 90 preschoolers attending the University of British Columbia Child Study Center completed the Home Literacy Environment Index(HLEI)(Shapiro, 1985). Four comparison groups of ten subjects each were formed based on the subjects' age and total score on the HLEI. The ten four year olds with the highest total score on HLEI formed Group A. The ten four year old children with the lowest scores on the HLEI formed Group B. The ten three year old children with the highest scores on the HLEI formed Group C. The ten three year olds with the lowest scores on the HLEI formed Group D. Table 1 outlines the four groups with their mean age and HLEI scores.

Table 1: Comparison Groups

Comparison Group	Mean Age(months)	Mean HLEI(max.72)
Group 1 High 4's	55.2	60.2
Group 2 Low 4's	54.7	45.2
Group 3 High 3's	45.6	54.6
Group 4 Low 3's	45.7	48.0

Group One and Two were similar in age yet differed in their score on the HLEI, so Group One was described as the High Fours and Group Two as the Low Fours. Group Three and Four were similar in age yet differed in their score on the HLEI, so Group Three was described as the High Threes and Group Four as the Low Threes. Although several children were one month over the three or four year age mark, they were included in the comparison groups. The mean ages presented here are based on their ages at the time they completed the research task.

3.4 TASK

After a brief warm-up conversation, each subject was asked to "Use this book to tell a story." Subjects were told that as they went through the book, they were to make-up the best story they could think of. Subjects were not taken through the book first by the researcher. If they chose to go through it first, they were allowed. The researcher noted those who went through the whole book before telling their story. Subjects who seemed reluctant or hesitant in their story-retelling were prompted by the researcher with questions like "What's happening here? and What can you tell me about this part of the story?" The researcher did not make suggestions for the subjects nor did he turn pages or point out important parts of the story for the subjects. If a subject questioned the researcher about an item in the storybook, the researcher asked a similar question of the

subject to encourage them to tell about the incident. Comments of acceptance (Yes, Good) and those of encouragement (Good job. You're doing fine. Keep going.) were made by the researcher when appropriate.

All subjects used the same wordless picture book, Pancakes for Breakfast by Tomie dePaola(1978). (For a summary of the story told by this wordless book, see Appendix D.) This book was chosen because it has a clear title page and an obvious opening page that establishes the setting for the story. It also has a main character, several secondary characters and repetitive story actions that move the story to a climax. A main problem is established in the story and an amusing and satisfactory resolution for the problem is evident. The last page allows for the telling of a formal closing.

The pictures in Pancakes for Breakfast are clear and consistantly tell the story in an amusing and entertaining way. The sequence of the story is easy to follow and the pictures do not run across the whole of two pages, but are kept separate as left-page and right-page. This was essential in order to observe if subjects followed the story with a left-to-right sequence. There is no text in this book designed specifically to tell the story, but print can be found as labels on supplies in the kitchen and in the cookbook that the main character reads on one page of the book.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

The researcher spent several months as a research assistant at the Child Study Center, so all subjects were quite familiar with him. The researcher spent time in all the classrooms observing and interacting with the children. He had worked with all the subjects previously on a one-to-one basis for other testing purposes. Once the population of 40 subjects had been identified, the subjects were randomly selected to go with the researcher to perform the task.

All story-retelling sessions were conducted by the researcher over a three week period in April. Subjects showed no apprehension about leaving their classrooms to complete the task. Teachers at the Center said they had not used the book Pancakes for Breakfast with the children and only one child mentioned that her mother had shared the book with her at home and she was replaced in the sample. All of the research sessions were conducted in an unoccupied classroom adjacent to the subjects' classrooms. Subjects were comfortable in this room since it was very similar to their own classrooms. The video equipment remained set-up in this classroom and was not conspicuous to the subjects. The small table used to do the task was also part of the classroom environment. The research sessions were video-taped and transcribed immediately after the session. The researcher also made anecdotal notes while the subjects were telling their stories and/or after they had completed

the task.

3.6 TRANSCRIPTIONS

Careful transcriptions of the stories were made by the researcher. (For samples of the story-retellings, see Appendix E.) They included all the verbalizations of the children and any questions or comments made by the researcher during the story-retelling. Any introduction and the warm-up conversations were omitted from the transcriptions. Verbalizations made by the children in response to the directions and the reading of the title and author were transcribed as well. A full-time research assistant, unfamiliar with the purpose and design of this study but with two years experience at transcribing audio- and video-tapes, went through the transcriptions to verify their accuracy with the video-tapes. The transcriptions and the observational notes were typed and used in the data analysis.

Another rater randomly coded 20% of the story retellings after a training session involving 26 of the test items. The percentage of agreement ranged from 80% to 95% with an overall inter-rater reliability of 85%.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Frequency counts were made of each of the eighteen story elements, eight literary devices and the five book orientation behaviors. A total score for all children on

each of the three dependant variables was computed and then mean scores for the comparison groups were calculated.

An item analysis was conducted to establish the internal consistancy of the three dependant variables. Results warranted confidence in the measures for story elements and literary devices with the items correlating positively with the overall test (Hoyt Estimate of Reliability = .74 and .76, respectively). Reliability for the book orientation measure was only .25, a result partially explained by the low number of test items (5) and also the rating system of three levels rather than two. When the three dependant measures were combined, results correlated positively (Hoyt Estimate .86).

One-way analyses of variance were performed on mean frequency counts of each of three dependant variables. The Home Literacy Environment Index (Shapiro, 1985) score was treated as the independant variable and the subjects' total scores on each of the dependant variables were used for comparison purposes.

For the purposes of analyses of variance, the research hypotheses outlined in Chapter 1 were replaced by these null hypotheses:

1. There will be no difference in the number of story elements used in the story-retellings of three year old children from high and low home-literacy environments.
2. There will be no difference in the number of story elements used in the story-retellings of four year old

- children from high and low home-literacy environments.
3. There will be no difference in the number of literary devices used in the story-retellings of three year old children from high and low home-literacy environments.
 4. There will be no difference in the number of literary devices used in the story-retellings of four year old children from high and low home-literacy environments.
 5. There will be no difference in the number of book orientation behaviors counted in the story-retellings of three year old children from high and low home-literacy environments.
 6. There will be no difference in the number of book orientation behaviors counted in the story-retellings of four year old children from high and low home-literacy environments.

3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations in the scope of this study are as follows:

1. The study was confined to subjects drawn from the population of only one preschool, which may be an environment atypical of other preschools.
2. Subjects were not randomly selected from the total population of the Child Study Center, but assigned to a comparison group based on age (three years verses four years) and score on the Home Literacy Environment Index (Shapiro, 1985).

3. Only one story-retelling was taken from each child. Two or three story-retellings would help establish their performance as valid indication of their ability.
4. The population of the Child Study Center may not be representative of the population at large because of factors like the high expectation on parents to take part in Center activities, the overwhelming number of two-parent families, and the generally high education and economic status of the parents.
5. In the story retelling situation, the more verbal, outgoing child may have an advantage over the child reluctant to speak.
6. The results may be hampered by the children's inexperience with being asked to tell stories. If storytelling was more frequently used in the home and preschool situations, children may be better able to demonstrate what they know about stories.
7. The use of a book to initiate storytelling may be seen as an asset since it provides a content for subjects to use in their own story-retellings. It may also be seen as inhibiting the freedom subjects may normally exercise in a storytelling situation not bound by the specific content of a book.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results are organized for presentation under headings for each of the three dependant variables, Story Elements, Literary Devices, and Book Orientation. Statistical analyses are followed by discussion of some of the details of each groups' results for items within each checklist.

4.1 STORY ELEMENTS

Appendix A contains the individual results for all subjects organized by comparison groups. A total score for each subject and for each item is provided to allow for comparisons. Table 2 (below) presents the means and standard deviations for the comparison groups on story elements.

TABLE 2

Means and Standard Deviations--Story Elements

Group	M	SD
Group 1-High 4's	7.7	2.83
Group 2-Low 4's	4.7	3.302
Group 3-High 3's	3.6	2.591
Group 4-Low 3's	2.3	1.636

One-way analysis of variance of story elements by group did indicate that the four groups differed significantly from one another. The F value was 7.495, which was statistically significant ($p .001$). The finding of a main effect by group was followed by the application of the Duncan multiple-range test as a post hoc t-test to determine which group means differed from each other. It was

hypothesized that Groups One and Two and Groups Three and Four would differ significantly from each other. Table 3 (below) presents the t test results.

TABLE 3

t-test Results--Story Elements

Groups	t value	2-tail prob.
High 3's-Low 3's	1.34	0.196
High 4's-Low 4's	2.18	0.043*

With the three year olds, children from higher home-literacy environments did include more story elements than children from lower home-literacy environments but the difference, while in the predicted direction, was not significant. Therefore, null hypothesis #1 can not be rejected. The t-test results indicated there was a significant difference between the number of story elements included by four year olds from higher home-literacy environments compared to four year olds from lower home-literacy environments. Thus, null hypothesis #2 was rejected.

Some interesting differences were observed in the item counts for three and four year olds and for higher and lower home-literacy environments. Informal comparisons of item frequencies across age and literacy groups illustrate some of these differences.

1. Title (Item 1). Of the twenty four year olds, only three repeated or paraphrased the title while eight of the three year olds used the title. A comparison of item

counts for Group One with Group Two and Group Three with Group Four indicated no difference in item counts by literacy background, disregarding age in the use of the title.

2. Formal Opening (Item 2). The four year olds used a formal opening nine times compared to only one instance for the three year olds. No differences were evidenced when higher and lower home-literacy environments were compared.
3. Setting (Item 3). Establishment of a story setting was not strongly evidenced in any of the groups . Six of the four year olds gave a story setting compared to only one three year old.
4. Main Character (Items 4 and 5). Subjects of both age groups identified the main character of the book. Eighteen four year olds and thirteen three year olds used a main character at least generically. Item 5 allowed for a further count of which children used a specific noun to refer to their main character. (For example, "the little old lady" as opposed to "she".) Only two three year olds and eight four year olds used a specific name for their main character. Of these ten examples of specific name, nine came from Groups One and Three, the higher home-literacy environments.
5. Secondary Characters (Item 6). A difference by age in the use of secondary characters was observed. Ten of the four year olds compared to only three of the three year

olds made use of secondary characters in their story-retellings.

6. Time and Past Tense (Items 7 and 8). A difference between age groups was also observed in the establishment of what time the story took place and in the use of past tense to tell the story. Nine of the four year olds and four of the three year olds set a time for their stories and fourteen four year olds used the past tense to tell their stories as compared to only two three year olds.
7. Main Problem and Resolution of the Problem (Items 9 and 10). None of the forty subjects made any reference to the main problem in the story or to the resolution of that problem. This may be a result of the fact that subjects were not taken through the book first where they could "learn the story" before they told their own version. It may also be just a story element that emerges with increased age.
8. Story Actions 1-5 (Items 11-15). Five major story actions were identified for the book. Nineteen counts of inclusion of a story action by four year olds were observed, while only four instances were observed among the three year olds. The groups from higher home-literacy environments included sixteen story actions while only eight were included by children from lower home-literacy environments.
9. Formal Closing and Tag Ending (Items 16 and 17).

Children from both age groups were fairly consistent in their use of a formal closing or a tag ending. Eighteen four year olds used one or the other as compared to eighteen of the three year olds. The use of formal closing or tag ending occurred twenty times among children from higher home-literacy environments and only thirteen times among children from lower home-literacy environments.

10. Expression of Feelings (Item 18). There were not many instances of children expressing feelings related to their story characters. The four year olds included them nine times and the three year olds five times. Subjects from higher home-literacy environments expressed feelings amongst story characters nine times , while children from lower home-literacy environments used them only five times.

In summary, when item counts for three and four year olds were compared , four year olds generally incorporated more story elements into their story-retellings than did three year olds. The only item not used more frequently by four year olds was the repetition of the book title (Item 1). Disregarding age, subjects from higher home-literacy environments included a higher total number of story elements in their story-retellings than subjects from lower home-literacy environments. An item-by-item count showed that subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored better on most individual items than subjects from lower

home-literacy environments.

T-tests on the differences in frequency of story elements between four year olds from higher home-literacy environments and four year olds from lower home-literacy environments were significant, supporting the research hypothesis. Total frequency counts for the eighteen story elements for the three olds from higher home-literacy environments were higher than those for three year olds from lower home-literacy environments, but t-tests indicated that this observed difference was not significant. Thus , the research hypothesis was not supported for the three year olds.

4.2 LITERARY DEVICES

Appendix B contains the individual results on literary devices for all subjects organized by comparison groups. A total score for each subject and for each item is presented to allow for comparisons. Table 4 (below) provides the means and standard deviations for the comparison groups on literary devices.

TABLE 4

Means and Standard Deviations--Literary Devices

Group	M	SD
Group 1-High 4's	6.5	3.20
Group 2-Low 4's	3.6	4.03
Group 3-High 3's	1.9	2.07
Group 4-Low 3's	0.5	1.08

One-way analysis of variance of literary devices by group did indicate that the four groups differed significantly from one another. The F value was 9.735, which was statistically significant ($p .000$). The analysis of variance was followed by the administration of the Duncan multiple-range test to determine which group means differed from each other. It was hypothesized that Groups One and Two and Groups Three and Four would differ significantly from each other. Table 5 (below) presents the t test results.

TABLE 5

t-test Results--Literary Devices

Groups	t value	2-tail prob.
High 3's-Low 3's	1.89	0.075
High 4's-Low 4's	2.15	0.046*

With the three year olds, children from higher home-literacy environments did include more literary devices than children from lower home-literacy environments but the difference, while in the predicted direction, was not statistically significant. Therefore, null hypothesis #3 cannot be rejected. The t-test results indicated there was a significant difference between the number of literary devices included by four year olds from higher home-literacy environments compared to four year olds from lower home-literacy environments. Thus, null hypothesis #4 was rejected.

Some interesting differences were observed in the item rating for three year olds and four year olds and between

groups from higher and lower home-literacy environments. Informal comparisons of item frequencies across age and literacy groups illustrates some of these differences.

1. Intonation (Item 1). The frequency of this item for the four year olds was nineteen and seven for the three year olds. Disregarding age, subjects from higher home-literacy environments (Groups One and Three) had a total frequency of nineteen compared to a total of seven for subjects from lower home-literacy environments (Groups Two and Four).
2. Repetition of Words (Item 2). Four year olds scored a total of eight and three year olds scored three. Subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored eight and subjects from lower home-literacy environments scored three.
3. Emphasis of Words (Item 3). The total score for both groups of four year olds was twenty and four for all the three year olds. The score for the two groups from higher home-literacy environments was eighteen and only six for subjects from the lower home-literacy environments.
4. Making Sounds (Item 4). Only one subject included any sounds to enhance the story-retelling. Including animal sounds such as "Mooo and Meow" or sounds that express feelings such as "Brrrrr! It's cold" may be a literary device that emerges with increasing age.
5. Literary Language (Item 5). The use of language typical

of storybooks was observed twenty times for the four year olds and only once for the three year olds.

Subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored thirteen, while those from lower home-literacy environments scored only eight.

6. Dialogue (Item 6). Four year olds scored seven and the three year olds scored one in their use of dialogue. Subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored five in the use of dialogue in their story-retellings and subjects from lower home-literacy environments scored three.
7. Descriptive Language (Item 7). Large differences were observed between four year olds and three year olds and between higher and lower home-literacy backgrounds in their use of adjectives and adverbs to add descriptive detail. The four year olds scored twenty-one and the three year olds scored two. The subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored fifteen and the subjects from lower home-literacy environments scored eight.
8. Interjections (Item 8). Not many subjects used interjections, such as "Suddenly! or Look!" in their story-retelling. The four year olds scored six, while the three year olds scored eight. Subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored seven and those from lower home-literacy environments scored four.

To summarize, when frequency counts for three and four year olds were compared, four year olds generally included more literary devices in their story-retellings than three year olds. An individual item examination showed that on every item four year olds scored higher. Disregarding age, subjects from higher home-literacy environments included a higher total number of literary devices, and they scored higher on each individual item than subjects from lower home-literacy environments. T-tests on the differences in frequency of literary devices between four year olds from higher home-literacy environments and four year olds from lower home-literacy environments were significant, supporting the research hypothesis. Total frequency counts for the eight literary devices for three year olds from higher home-literacy environments were higher than those for three year olds from lower home-literacy environments, but t-tests indicated that this observed difference was not significant. Thus, the research hypothesis was not supported for the three year olds.

4.3 BOOK ORIENTATION

Appendix C contains the individual results on demonstrated book orientation behaviors for all subjects organized by comparison groups. A total score for each subject and for each item is presented to allow for comparisons. Table 6 (below) provides the means and standard deviations for the comparison groups on book orientation.

TABLE 6Means and Standard Deviations--Book Orientation

Group	M	SD
Group 1-High 4's	5.2	2.09
Group 2-Low 4's	2.8	1.75
Group 3-High 3's	3.7	1.63
Group 4-Low 3's	2.9	1.37

One-way analysis of variance of book orientation by group did indicate that the four groups differed significantly from one another. The F value was 4.092, which was statistically significant ($p .013$). The establishment of a significant F ratio was again followed by the application of the Duncan multiple-range test as a post hoc t-test to determine which group means differed from each other. It was hypothesized that Groups One and Two and Groups Three and Four would differ significantly from each other. Table 7 (below) presents the t-test results.

TABLE 7t-test Results--Book Orientation

Groups	t value	2-tail prob.
High 3's-Low 3's	1.19	0.251
High 4's-Low 4's	2.78	0.012*

With the three year olds, children from higher home-literacy environments did demonstrate more book orientation behaviors than children from lower home-literacy environments but the difference, while in the predicted direction, was not significant. Therefore, null hypothesis

#5 cannot be rejected. The t-test results indicated there was a significant difference between the number of book orientation behaviors demonstrated by four year olds from higher home-literacy environments compared to four year olds from lower home-literacy environments. Thus, null hypothesis #6 was rejected.

Some interesting differences were observed in the ratings for three and four year olds and between higher and lower home-literacy environments. Informal comparisons of item frequencies across age and literacy groups will illustrate some of these differences.

1. Pointing (Item 1). Four year olds scored fifteen in their use of pointing behavior, while three year olds scored twenty. Subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored twenty, while subjects from lower home-literacy environments scored fifteen.
2. Reading Related Comments (Item 2). Quite a consistent result was observed in the frequency counts for reading-related comments. Four year olds scored seventeen in their use of comments that referred to the lack of print in the book or to the task of reading itself, while three year olds scored nineteen. Subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored twenty-one and subjects from lower home-literacy environments scored fifteen.
3. Pages as Separate (Item 3). Wide differences were observed in the number of times subjects treated the

pages as separate. Four year olds scored twenty and three year olds scored seven. Subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored eighteen and subjects from lower home-literacy environments scored nine.

4. Left to Right (Item 4). Four year olds scored twenty-two in their ability to begin on the left and move to the right, while the three year olds scored eight. Subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored nineteen compared to eleven for subjects from lower home-literacy environments.
5. Self-Corrections (Item 5). Four year olds scored six in their use of self-corrections and three year olds scored twelve. Subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored eleven and subjects from lower home-literacy environments scored seven.

In summary, when item counts for three and four year olds were compared, four year olds generally demonstrated more book orientation behaviors than the three year olds. Three year olds did score higher on Items one, two and five, but the four year olds were close to the same score as the three year olds. However, the four year olds were higher than the three year olds on Items three and four, treating the pages as separate and moving from left to right. Disregarding age, subjects from higher home-literacy environments scored higher than subjects from lower home-literacy environments on every item.

T-tests on the differences in the frequency of book orientation behaviors between four year olds from higher home-literacy environments and four year olds from lower home-literacy environments were significant, supporting the research hypothesis. Total frequency counts for the five book orientation behaviors for three year olds from higher home-literacy environments were higher than those for three year olds from lower home-literacy environments, but t-tests indicated that this observed difference was not significant. Thus, the research hypothesis was not supported for the three year olds.

4.4 DISCUSSION

The significant difference between the home-literacy environment groups on each of the three dependant variables was different for each of the two age groups. Frequency counts indicated that the four year old subjects included more story elements and literary devices and demonstrated more book orientation behaviors than the three year old subjects. Such differences could be explained by developmental factors operating within ages, but documenting these differences, as was done here, clarifies our understanding of the development taking place in children's storytelling ability.

While age may have been a factor in determining how often or to what extent the observed behavior was demonstrated, the literacy background was a significant

factor when within-age group comparisons were made. The rejection of null hypotheses two, four and six (which relate to the four year olds) supports the contention of this study that subjects from higher home-literacy environments would include more story elements and literary devices in their story-retellings and demonstrate more book orientation behaviors than subjects from lower home-literacy environments. The failure of the results to show a statistical significance that would allow for the rejection of null hypotheses one, three and five (which involve the three year olds) raises questions about why such strong significance was achieved for the four year olds and not for the three year olds. Were the two groups of three year olds as different from each other as the four year old groups on the measure of their literacy background? The mean score on the Home Environment Literacy Index (Shapiro, 1985) for the four year olds was 60.2 for the High 4's and 45.2 for the Low 4's, a difference of fifteen points between groups. The mean score on the HLEI for the three year olds was 54.6 for the High 3's and 48.0 for the Low 3's, which is a difference of only 6.6 points between the two groups. Although there proved to be a statistical significance between the mean scores for the three year old groups and the four year old groups, it may be that an even wider spread between scores on the HLEI is needed before a statistical significance would show up on the dependant measures taken in this study. The results achieved here were certainly in the predicted

direction but may have been weakened by the less significant difference between the comparison groups on the HLEI.

Three year olds may also be less confident and are certainly less experienced with story telling activities than four year olds. While a difference between higher and lower home-literacy environments is evident in three year olds, more opportunity to use their story telling ability may be needed before a significant difference can be achieved.

5. CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

The present study attempted to determine what differences would be evident in the storytelling abilities of three and four year olds from differing home-literacy environments. The study analysed the story elements and literary devices included in the retelling of a wordless picture book and made observations of the book orientation behaviors demonstrated during these story-retellings. It was hypothesized that children identified as coming from higher home-literacy environments would incorporate more story elements and literary devices and demonstrate more book orientation behaviors than children from lower home-literacy environments.

Transcripts of the video-taped story-retellings yielded item counts for eighteen story elements and ratings of 0,1 or 2 for both the eight literary devices and the five book orientation behaviors. Group means were also taken from the item counts and ratings, and comparisons on the three dependant variables were then made based on age (either three or four year old) and score on the Home-Literacy Environment Index, a questionnaire used to identify a range in home-literacy environments. Hypotheses predicted a better performance on each measure by the three and four year olds from higher home-literacy environments than three and four year olds from lower home-literacy environments. Statistical

significance supported the hypotheses for four year olds but not for the three year olds.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

Differences in each group's performance were attributed first of all to age, where it was expected that four year olds would perform better than three year olds. More importantly, differences were significant between the four year olds from the differing home-literacy environments. It must be concluded that for this sub-sample the environment in which storytelling is nurtured is a significant factor in the extent to which children will manifest literary qualities in their storytelling activities. The literacy environment also influences the quality of book orientation behavior demonstrated by subjects who were asked to use a wordless picture book to tell a story.

While the evidence is not conclusive, it suggests that even at three years of age, children from higher home-literacy environments include more story elements and literary devices in their storytelling activities. The same suggestion is also supported for the demonstration of book orientation behaviors by three year olds. A richer literacy background produced different results, but the age of three may be too early for observed differences to reach statistical significance. By four years of age statistically significant differences are evident.

Included within the conclusions of this study are descriptions of the different ways the four comparison groups approached the storytelling situation. These descriptions demonstrate the expected age differences and the predicted effects of literacy environment.

5.2.1 THREE YEAR OLDS

On the basis of their performance on the task in this study, it can be said that the three year olds generally did not respond to the task with a story. They tended to tell about the pictures by simply labelling the actions. They were more interactive in their relating of the story by asking the researcher questions, pointing out details to him and never really taking control of the storytelling situation. They did not completely assume the storyteller role and so scored less on the number of story elements they included. They repeated or paraphrased the title of the book more often than the four year olds, seemingly in an attempt to get started at the task. They rarely used a formal opening and usually moved into picture or action labelling throughout the session. They brought their story to an end with a formal closing or a tag ending. They concentrated on the beginning and ending of their "story" with few story elements evidenced in the middle.

Quite a dramatic difference was observed in the number of literary devices included by three year olds compared to four year olds. The total score for three year olds was

twenty-four, while the four year olds rated a total of one hundred and one. Since the three year olds didn't switch into the storytelling mode, they would obviously include fewer literary devices. Familiarity with the task or a lack of really knowing what they were expected to do may have played a role in their failure to use the story form.

Interestingly, the three year olds from higher home-literacy environments scored higher than the four year old group from lower home-literacy environments for book orientation behaviors demonstrated during the story-retellings. The three year olds in Group Three scored thirty-seven on book orientation, while the four year olds in Group Two only scored twenty-eight. While not a significant difference statistically and limited by the reliability of the book orientation measure, it does pose an interesting question about the effects of a higher home-literacy environment, where children are receiving more literary input and have more opportunity to tell stories and handle books. A closer examination of which items on the HLEI correlate to subjects' performance and a better measure of book orientation behaviors may prove fruitful in further detailing of the effects of a rich home-literacy environment.

It is also important to look at any differences between three year olds from higher home-literacy environments and three year olds from lower home-literacy environments. The prediction that there would be a significant difference for

the three year olds on the three measures was not supported. Some observed differences were noted, but were not statistically significant. Three year olds from higher home-literacy environments (Group Three) scored higher on all measures than three year olds from lower home-literacy environments (Group Four). As stated above, the three year olds used a lot of labelling behavior in their story-retellings. Group Three used whole sentences when labelling, while Group Four tended to use one word or a short phrase (for example, "She's making the pancakes." as opposed to "Cooking".) Although the three year olds used a few literary devices, Group Three by far used the majority of them. Their best scoring item under literary devices was Item 1, shifting intonation, indicating they are becoming more aware of the role of the storyteller and audience and that voice is one way to signal that role. The other items, while not high scoring, did indicate that this group was becoming more aware of some of the ways storytellers use language to express drama and emotion.

The researcher made note of any subject who went through the book to look at the pictures before telling the story. No suggestion to do so was given, nor was any attempt made to stop a subject who wanted to view the book first. Of the eight subjects who did go through the book on their own before telling their story, five were from Group Four, the three year olds from the lower home-literacy environment. This behavior may reflect their inability to handle the task

or may have been used as a delay tactic to get some idea of what they were expected to do. Many subjects in Group Four seemed uncomfortable with the storytelling situation, yet they found little direction from the book. It was as if they expected the researcher to lead the storytelling.

In conclusion, three year olds did demonstrate book orientation behaviors in their completion of the task, but they did not easily step into the storytelling role. Since three year olds will tell stories in their play and spontaneously when alone with books, it could be that the task was inappropriate or that three year olds still need adults as the major mediator between themselves and a book. Evidence from this study suggests the importance of a rich literacy environment to nurture children's storytelling, but further research is needed to discover methods to get three year olds to generate a story from a wordless picture book and to clarify the way they perceive their role in the storytelling situation.

5.2.2 FOUR YEAR OLDS

A very different picture emerges when the four year old groups are examined. Generally, the four year olds responded to the task by attempting to tell a story. They knew that the book contained a story. By assuming the role of the storyteller, they demonstrated a control of the storytelling situation. They relied less on repeating the title to begin their story and they used a formal opening or jumped right

into the story action. They recognized the need for a main character and kept her consistent throughout their story. Since they told stories rather than labelling pictures, the four year olds included many more story elements and literary devices than the three year olds, a sign they have a good grasp of what makes up a story. They were also able to keep their voice intonation more constant throughout the task, an indication of their understanding of how a story is told.

The four year olds also showed more skill at the book orientation behaviors included in the study. These children interacted more with the book than with the researcher. Their story came from their looking at the pictures and using them as a guide for their storytelling. They questioned the researcher about details in the book much less often, and generally required less direction and encouragement from the researcher at the beginning of the task and during the actual story-retelling. They knew what they were to do and quickly went at the task and completed it on their own. It is likely that age is playing a role here. As four year olds, they have had a whole year more experience with books and stories than the three year olds. The four year olds have had more stories read to them and told to them, as well as more chance to engage in storytelling in their play and the natural exploration of their environment.

Agreeing that four year olds are more sophisticated in their ability to handle this task, it is interesting to do some within-age comparisons. On each of the dependant variables used in this study, the four year olds from the higher home-literacy environments (Group One) out-performed four year olds from lower home-literacy environments (Group Two). All the between-group comparisons done with these two groups were statistically significant. The effects of a richer home-literacy environment are clearly evident in the performance of Group One.

The children of Group One were the real storytellers in this study. They switched easily into the storytelling mode and used many more story elements and literary devices. All of them used a main character, but more importantly, seven of the ten gave that character a specific name or label that they referred to consistently throughout their story (For example, "Coldie" and "the Little Old Lady"). The stories told by this group also matched more closely the actual story told by the pictures in the book. They identified thirteen story actions, while Group Two only included six.

Within the measures for literary devices, Group One maintained the intonation of voice more consistently than Group Two and used more examples of literary and descriptive language. Group One was also particularly adept in their book orientation behaviors. They made more reading-related comments about the lack of print in the book and they were much more consistent in their treating of the pages as

separate and in moving from left to right.

The significant differences within the two groups on the HLEI, that is, those who differed only in their home-literacy environments are a clear indication that the input children receive into their literary development from the presentation of many and varied experiences with stories is evident when these children are asked to use a wordless picture book to tell a story.

The major conclusion of this study is that an emerging concept of story is more evident in the story-retellings of four year olds than three year olds and also is more refined and sophisticated among children from richer home-literacy environments.

5.3 IMPLICATIONS

This study provides evidence that home-literacy environments rich in storytelling experience have a positive effect on preschoolers' ability to tell a story from a wordless picture book and to demonstrate more sophisticated book orientation behaviors. Parents will want to continue to provide this rich background for their children and may even extend it to include opportunities for their children to take-over the storytelling role during their already rich book-sharing events. Children's private handling of books should be encouraged so they can play-out the storytelling role in a non-threatening situation. Parents may want to tell more stories to their children which will provide a

model of the storyteller role. In everyday life at home, storytelling could be used to explain how things work and why things are done the way they are. Children's natural desire to tell stories must be nurtured in rich environments full of many opportunities to listen to and tell stories.

As children move into the preschool environments of nursery schools and daycares, it is important that storytelling continue to be encouraged as part of these preschool programs. Preschools offer a chance to share even more stories in an environment full of literacy experiences. Encouraging storytelling and providing strong input from literature in its oral and written form should be central in any preschool environment.

5.4 RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

With evidence that children from higher home-literacy environments are more effective storytellers, several research implications are given. Some of these suggestions would clarify the results of this study and others would broaden the focus for new study.

1. To strengthen the reliability of the results obtained here, the task could be repeated with another wordless book of equal sophistication. Subjects' performance over the two story-retellings would be a truer measure of their storytelling ability.
2. Some adjustment in the task may be needed to encourage three year olds to use the story mode. Suggestion One

above may help them establish a bit of confidence and respond to the task with a story. Some modelling of the activity within the whole preschool classroom may show the subjects how the task is done.

3. In another study using the story-retellings of a wordless picture book, it would be interesting to give the entire population of the Child Study Center the same task and correlate those results to their scores on the Home-Literacy Environment Index. This would provide a larger population and allow for more powerful statistical techniques that would pinpoint more accurately where differences might lie. Such a study would also allow for an analyses of the individual items on the HLEI to see which items correlate the highest on each of the dependant variables. This may help more accurately describe the characteristics of home-literacy environments that nurture sophisticated storytelling.
4. Any replication of this study should be expanded to include story-retellings from two year olds and five year olds. A broader population would provide more details of the developmental characteristics evidenced across ages.
5. Higher home-literacy environments provide more opportunities for parent-child interactions centered on stories. Some analyses of these parent-child interactions would help identify interactions that may be conducive to storytelling amongst preschoolers.

In conclusion, the present study adds to our knowledge of how preschoolers apply their storytelling abilities in a reading situation. Children at three and four years of age are already demonstrating some confidence in their ability to handle books and tell the stories found in those books. It remains to point out that such holistic tasks as story-retelling provide opportunity for the collection of empirical data for measuring specific behaviors, as well as ethnographic data essential in the observation of early reading behavior. More details on rich home-literacy environments and more evidence from the storytelling of preschoolers will help parents and educators provide experiences that will enhance and nurture literacy acquisition.

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APPENDIX A

FREQUENCY COUNTS

STORY ELEMENTS---GROUPS ONE AND TWO

GROUP ONE (High 4's) MEAN AGE= 55.2 MEAN HLEI= 60.2

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	TOTAL
F-01	52	F	66	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	9
M-02	52	M	63	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
M-03	55	M	62	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	10
F-04	61	F	61	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	9
M-05	58	M	61	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	11
M-06	55	M	59	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	6
F-07	52	F	58	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	8
M-08	55	M	58	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	11
F-09	52	F	57	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	4
F-10	60	F	57	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	6

Item Totals 2 4 3 10 7 6 4 8 0 0 3 1 7 1 1 4 7 5 77

GROUP TWO (Low 4's) MEAN AGE= 54.7 MEAN HLEI= 45.2

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	TOTAL
F-11	54	F	51	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
M-12	58	M	49	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	7
F-13	53	F	48	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	6
M-14	59	M	48	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	9
M-15	52	M	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M-16	53	M	45	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
F-17	55	F	44	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	8
F-18	55	F	44	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	4
F-19	56	F	42	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	8
F-20	57	F	37	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	5

Item Totals 1 5 3 8 1 4 5 6 0 0 1 0 4 1 0 4 3 4 50

STORY ELEMENTS---GROUPS THREE AND FOUR

FREQUENCY COUNTS

GROUP THREE (High 3's) MEAN AGE= 45.6 MEAN HLEI= 54.6

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	TOTAL
M-21	49	M	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	4
F-22	43	F	57	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
F-23	46	F	55	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
F-24	41	F	55	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
F-25	49	F	55	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	8
F-26	43	F	54	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
M-27	46	M	54	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	4
F-28	49	F	54	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
M-29	41	M	53	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
F-30	49	F	51	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	8

Item Totals	5	0	0	8	2	2	1	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	5	4	4	36
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GROUP FOUR (Low 3's) MEAN AGE= 45.1 MEAN HLEI= 48.0

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	TOTAL
M-31	45	M	50	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
M-32	47	M	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
M-33	47	M	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
M-34	44	M	50	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
F-35	45	F	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M-36	43	M	48	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
M-37	49	M	46	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
M-38	43	M	46	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
M-39	44	M	46	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
F-40	50	F	44	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	5

Item Totals	3	1	1	5	0	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	4	1	23
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ITEM TOTALS BY GROUP

STORY ELEMENTS

FREQUENCY COUNTS

Comparison Group	1	2	3	4
ITEM:				
Title	2	1	5	3
Formal Opening	4	5	0	1
Setting	3	3	0	1
Main Character	10	8	8	5
Main Character(specific)	7	1	2	0
Secondary Characters	6	4	2	1
Time	4	5	1	3
Past Tense	8	6	2	0
Main Problem	0	0	0	0
Resolution of Problem	0	0	0	0
Story Action 1	3	1	1	1
Story Action 2	1	0	0	0
Story Action 3	7	4	2	1
Story Action 4	1	1	0	0
Story Action 5	1	0	0	0
Formal Closing	4	4	5	2
Tag Ending	7	3	4	4
Expression of Feelings	5	4	4	1
Group Totals	77	50	36	23

APPENDIX B

FREQUENCY COUNTS

LITERARY DEVICES---GROUPS ONE AND TWO

GROUP ONE (High 4's) MEAN AGE= 55.2 MEAN HLEI= 60.2

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
F-01	52	F	66		1	1	2	0	2	2	0	1	9
M-02	52	M	63		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
M-03	55	M	62		2	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	6
F-04	61	F	61		2	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	7
M-05	58	M	61		1	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	6
M-06	55	M	59		1	0	2	0	2	1	2	0	8
F-07	52	M	58		2	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	12
M-08	55	M	58		2	0	2	0	2	1	2	0	9
F-09	52	F	57		1	1	2	0	0	0	2	0	6
F-10	60	F	57		0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

ITEM TOTAL 12 6 14 0 12 4 14 5 67

GROUP TWO (Low 4's) AGE= 54.7 MEAN HLEI= 45.2

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
F-11	54	F	51		0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
M-12	58	M	49		1	1	1	0	2	0	2	0	7
F-13	53	F	48		0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
M-14	59	M	48		2	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	6
M-15	52	M	45		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M-16	53	M	45		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F-17	55	F	44		2	1	2	0	2	1	2	1	11
F-18	55	F	44		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F-19	56	F	42		1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	4
F-20	57	F	37		1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	4

ITEM TOTALS 7 2 6 0 8 3 7 1 34

APPENDIX B (continued)

LITERARY DEVICES---GROUPS THREE AND FOUR

GROUP THREE (High 3's) MEAN AGE= 45.6 MEAN HLEI= 54.6

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
M-21	49	M	58		0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
F-22	43	F	57		1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
F-23	46	F	55		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F-24	41	F	55		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F-25	49	F	55		2	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	7
F-26	43	F	54		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M-27	46	M	54		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
F-28	49	F	54		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
M-29	41	M	53		1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
F-30	49	F	51		1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3

ITEM TOTALS 7 2 4 1 1 1 1 2 19

GROUP FOUR (Low 3's) MEAN AGE= 45.1 MEAN HLEI= 48.0

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
M-31	45	M	50		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M-32	47	M	50		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M-33	47	M	50		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M-34	44	M	50		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F-35	45	F	49		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M-36	43	M	48		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M-37	49	M	46		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
M-38	43	M	46		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
M-39	44	M	46		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F-40	50	F	44		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

ITEM TOTALS 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 1 3 5

ITEM TOTALS BY GROUP

LITERARY DEVICES
FREQUENCY COUNTS

Comparison Group	1	2	3	4
ITEM:				
Intonation	12	7	7	0
Repetition of Words	6	2	2	1
Emphasis of Words	14	6	4	0
Making Sounds	0	0	1	0
Literary Language	12	8	1	0
Dialogue	4	3	1	0
Descriptive Language	14	7	1	1
Interjections	5	1	2	3
Group Totals	76	34	19	5

APPENDIX C

FREQUENCY COUNTS

BOOK ORIENTATION---GROUPS ONE AND TWO

GROUP ONE (High 4's) MEAN AGE= 55.2 MEAN HLEI= 60.2

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
F-01	52	F	66		2	0	1	0	0	3
M-02	52	M	63		1	2	1	2	0	6
M-03	55	M	62		1	2	1	2	1	7
F-04	61	F	61		1	1	0	0	0	2
M-05	58	M	61		1	2	2	2	0	7
M-06	55	M	59		0	0	2	2	1	5
F-07	52	M	58		0	0	1	2	1	4
M-08	55	M	58		0	2	1	1	0	4
F-09	52	F	57		2	2	2	2	1	9
F-10	60	F	57		1	0	2	2	0	5

Item Totals 9 11 13 15 4 52

GROUP TWO (Low 4's) MEAN AGE= 54.7 MEAN HLEI= 45.2

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
F-11	54	F	51		0	0	0	1	1	2
M-12	58	M	49		0	0	1	0	0	1
F-13	53	F	48		0	0	0	1	0	1
M-14	59	M	48		0	1	1	1	0	3
M-15	52	M	45		2	1	0	0	0	3
M-16	53	M	45		2	0	0	1	1	4
F-17	55	F	44		0	2	2	0	0	4
F-18	55	F	44		0	2	1	2	0	5
F-19	56	F	42		2	0	2	1	0	5
F-20	57	F	37		0	0	0	0	0	0

Item Totals 6 6 7 7 2 30

APPENDIX C (continued)

BOOK ORIENTATION---GROUPS THREE AND FOUR

GROUP THREE (High 3's) MEAN AGE= 45.6 MEAN HLEI= 54.6

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
M-21	49	M	58		2	2	0	0	1	5
F-22	43	F	57		1	2	1	1	0	5
F-23	46	F	55		2	2	0	0	2	6
F-24	41	F	55		0	0	0	0	0	0
F-25	49	F	55		0	0	1	1	1	3
F-26	43	F	54		2	0	1	1	0	4
M-27	46	M	54		1	1	1	0	0	3
F-28	49	F	54		1	2	0	0	0	3
M-29	41	M	53		0	1	1	1	1	4
F-30	49	F	51		2	0	0	0	2	4

Item Totals	11	10	5	4	7	37
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GROUP FOUR (Low 3's) MEAN AGE= 45.1 MEAN HLEI= 48.0

ID	AGE	SEX	HLEI	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
M-31	45	M	50		0	1	0	0	0	1
M-32	47	M	50		0	0	0	1	1	2
M-33	47	M	50		0	2	0	0	0	2
M-34	44	M	50		2	0	0	0	1	3
F-35	45	F	49		2	1	0	1	1	5
M-36	43	M	48		1	2	1	0	0	4
M-37	49	M	46		2	1	0	0	1	4
M-38	43	M	46		1	0	1	1	0	3
M-39	44	M	46		0	0	0	0	1	1
F-40	50	F	44		1	2	0	1	0	4

Item Totals	9	9	2	4	5	29
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ITEM TOTALS BY GROUP

BOOK ORIENTATION

FREQUENCY COUNTS

Comparison Group	1	2	3	4
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ITEM:				
Pointing	9	6	11	9
Reading-Related Comments	11	6	10	9
Pages as Separate	13	7	5	2
Left to Right	15	7	4	4
Self-Corrections	4	2	7	5

Group Totals	52	30	37	29
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APPENDIX D

Pancakes for Breakfast

by Tomie dePaola

A Summary of the Story

The story centers on the frustrations experienced by an old lady with a strong desire to have pancakes for her breakfast. The opening page establishes the story setting as a farm and the time of year as winter. The main character gets out of bed and while she is dressing and washing she dreams of pancakes. Her two pets get up with her and move through the story action as inquisitive by-standers, curious about all the woman's actions.

The Old Lady starts to gather all the materials to make pancakes and realizes she has no eggs. She goes out to the barn and gathers fresh eggs. Upon returning to her house, she discovers she has no butter. She milks the cow and uses the milk to churn some butter. She has no syrup and buys some from her neighbour. When she returns home, her two pets have knocked over the milk, butter and eggs. The Old Lady sees her dream of pancakes disappearing.

She smells something cooking at a neighbour's house and follows the smell. She invites herself in for a large plateful of pancakes. The story ends with the Old Lady and her pets sleeping comfortably.

APPENDIX E
SAMPLES OF STORY-RETELLINGS

GROUP ONE---STORY SAMPLE

ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A VERY COLD WINTER.
IT WAS ALMOST THE COLDEST WINTER IN THE WORLD. THE WORLD.
COLDIE'S MOTHER DECIDED TO HAVE PANCAKES FOR BREAKFAST.
WHILE COLDIE WAS IN BREAKFAST, HER MOTHER GOT OUT OF BED AND SHE
STARTED WASHING AND GOT READY TO PUT HER BOOTS ON.
AND THEN SHE WENT OUT TO GET THE PANCAKES.
(THERE'S NO WORDS)

You can just tell the story with the pictures.
THEN SHE BROUGHT EVERYTHING FROM...FOR THE PANCAKES.
AND THEN SHE BROUGHT THE EGGS FOR THE PANCAKES.
AND THEN COLDIE WOKE UP AND SAW ALL THESE THINGS ON THE TABLE.
SHE SAID "WHAT ON EARTH IS HAPPENING?"
THEN SHE MADE A PANCAKE.
SHE STARTED MAKING THE PANCAKES.
AND THEN WHEN IT WAS EARLY OR LATE, SHE WENT OUTSIDE.
THEN SHE GOT SOME MILK.
THEN SHE WAS THINKING OF HOW SHE COULD MAKE THE PANCAKES.
THEN SHE SAW EVERYTHING WAS SPILLED.
AND SHE SCCCRRREEAAMMED!

SAW WHAT'S HAPPENING.
(break for a distraction)
AND WHEN COLDIE STARTED TO COME BACK, SHE WAS OUT.
WHEN COLDIE CAME BACK, THE PANCAKES WERE ALMOST READY. ALL AT ONCE...
THEN THEY ALL WENT TO SLEEP.
THAT'S THE END OF THE STORY.

STORY SAMPLE---GROUP ONE

I gave directions.

OKAY.

I gave title and author.

(title page) THERE'S PANCAKES ALL OVER THE HOUSE AND WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THEM.

IT'S WINTER NOW AND WE CAN'T GET ANY MORE APPLES.

Winter now, Yes.

I WOKE UP THIS MORNING BECAUSE MY DOG WAS RUFFING ALL THE TIME

Ruffing all the time, Yes. Keep going.

MY MOMMY WAS MAKING SOMETHING AND THE KITTIES WERE SAD BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T GET ANY OF THE PORRIDGE.

THEY'RE GOOFY AREN'T THEY?

Yes.

AND LOOK.

What?

SHE'S TRYING TO PUT THAT IN. DON'T KNOW WHY.

SHE HAD A BIG BOWL IN HER HAND AND SHE COULDN'T LIFT IT UP.

WE WENT OUT WITH MY DOG AND DIDN'T HAVE TO COME.

LOOK! (points and laughs) THE EARS WENT UP.

THERE WERE SO MANY CHICKENS WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THEIR EGGS.

A GREY CAT WANTED SOME MILK BUT SHE COULDN'T GET ANY.

A COW EAT A LOT OF HAY BUT SHE COULDN'T FIND ANY MORE HAY.

THERE'S MILK FOR KITTY AND KITTY WANTED MILK.

AND SHE PUT SUGER IN THE BOWL AND SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THIS ALL THE SUGAR AND THERE WAS SO MUCH SUGER AROUND THE HOUSE SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH IT.

SHE HAD SO MUCH PLAY-DOUGH, SO MUCH EGGS.

SHE CRACKED THEM SO MUCH SHE HAD TO GET MORE AND MORE AND MORE AND MORE.

AND THEY ALL..... THEY DIDN'T HAVE ANY FOOD IN THE HOUSE.

SO THEY HAD TO EAT SNOW ALL THE TIME WHEN IT SNOWED.

IT KEPT SNOWING ALL THE TIME AND WE COULDN'T GET ANY MORE FOOD AND GRASS.

LOOK! (points and laughs)

THE KITTY CAME DOWN THE TABLE TO GET SOME MILK.

SO CRAZY!

WE SPILLED SOME MILK...AND THEN WE....AAAHHHHHHHHHH!!!!

LOOKIT THAT TERRIBLE KITCHEN!

WE....I AND MY KITTY AND THE DOG...WE...THE KITTY WAS UP ON THE COUNTER DRINKING MILK.

THE THINGS SPILLED OVER AND THE PLACE WAS SUCH A MESS.

WHEN THE LADY GOT BACK SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THE MESS.

WHAT'S THAT? STEAM.

Uh....PANCAKES.

SHE GETS ALL THE PANCAKES.

ONE BIG PANCAKE.

STORY SAMPLE---GROUP TWO

Smiled at my directions.

Laughed at my saying of the title and author.

IT'S A LOT OF PANCAKES.

LOOKS LIKE CAKES.

They do look like cakes. Yes. Pancakes.

ONCE UPON A TIME IT WAS A VERY COLD DAY.

THAT'S THE BOY.

THAT GIRL...THAT GIRL WASHED HER HAIR IN HOT WATER.

AFTER THAT SHE READ A BOOK.

SHE LOOKED IN THE DOG'S DISH BUT THERE WAS NOTHING IN IT.

SHE PUT SOME SALT IN SOME... IN A BOWL.

SOME MORE THINGS AS WELL.

THEN SHE PUT THE EGGS IN A BASKET.

SHE WENT OUT THE HOUSE FOR A WALK.

BUT BEFORE THAT SHE POURED SOME WATER IN (pause) FOR THE CAT.

AND WHEN SHE CAME BACK THERE WAS NO BUTTER MADE.

AFTER THAT SHE WAS TIRED.

SHE WAITED AND WAITED AND WAITED A LATE TIME.

IT WAS A LONG TIME FOR NIGHT TIME.

AND SHE MADE SOME PANCAKES.

SHE SPILLED EVERYTHING.

SHE WENT OUTSIDE.

THERE WERE PANCAKES MADE EVERYWHERE.

THE END.

STORY SAMPLE---GROUP TWO

I gave the title and directions. She nodded "Yes".
ONE TIME IT WAS SNOWING.

One time it was snowing. Yes Good for You. Go on.
One time it was snowing.

AND I WAS IN BED.

AND WE HAD PANCAKES FOR BREAKFAST.

I WAS READING A BOOK.

I was reading a book.

I WAS MAKING BREAKFAST.

Making breakfast, Yes.

I WAS FEEDING THE CHICKENS.

Uh-Huh.

I WAS LOOKING OUTSIDE.

That's right. Good for you.

I WAS DOING SOMETHING.

I WAS MAKING CAKES.

Yes.

I WAS MILKING COWS. I WAS PUTTING IT INTO A CHURN.

A churn, Yes.

I WAS PUTTING IT ON THE PLATE.

I WAS GOING OUT IN THE SNOW.

WHILE I WAS OUT IN THE SNOW, MY MOM WAS COOKING.

WHEN I CAME IN, IT WAS A MESS IN HERE.

AND SHE DIDN'T STAND THIS MESS.

She didn't stand this mess. I see.

WE WERE HAVING BREAKFAST WITH PANCAKES.

I WAS HAVING A NAP.

STORY SAMPLE---GROUP THREE

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO READ.

You don't have to read. Just tell me a story.

I read the title and the author.

THERE ARE LOTS OF PANCAKES.

WHERE DO YOU HAVE TO START?

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO READ.

You don't have to read. What do you see here?

A HOUSE

Oh look.

SHE'S DREAMING ABOUT PANCAKES.

She's dreaming about pancakes. That's how you do it.

Tell me what you see.

(She laughs) LOOK IT.

SHE'S MAKING PANCAKES.

SHE MADE EGGS.

SHE'S FEEDING THE COWS.

MILKING THEM.

AND...WHAT'S SHE DOING NOW?

WHAT IS...WHAT IS SHE DOING?

What do you think? Make up a little story.

HE'S GIVING SOME MILK TO HER.

(pause) I'M READING IT.

SHE'S... LOOK AT WHAT SHE'S DOING. SHE WAKED SHE WAKED.

SHE'S GOING UP IN THE UP SKY.

She's going up in the sky.

WHAT. WHAT HAPPENED?

What do you think happened?

THIS...THEY CRACKED.

They cracked?

YEAH.WHY DID SHE?

WHY DID SHE LOOK LIKE THAT?

Why do you think she looks like that?

BECAUSE SHE SCARED OF THE CRACK.

WHO DID THIS?

(broke away--- I WANT TO PLAY WITH MY MUSIC.

First tell me the rest.

SHE'S GOING TO VISIT. AND HE'S... WHO'S THAT?

EVERYONE EATS THEM UP.

AND NOW SHE'S GOING TO SLEEP.

STORY SAMPLE---GROUP THREE

No reaction to the directions.

Smiled as I said the title and the author.

Anxious to get a start.

THAT. (for the cover page) LOOK WHAT'S ON IT.

That's butter.

I GUESS THAT IS BUTTER.

PANCAKES FOR BREAKFAST. (for the title page)

SNOW.

Snow, good. That's the boy. Tell me about the story.

CAT'S SLEEPING WITH HER. (laughed)

Funny.

PANCAKES IN THE SKY.

LOOKIT WHAT THEY'RE DOING..SLEEPING ON THE FLOOR.

LOOK AT WHAT SHE'S DOING. SHE'S NOT MAKING PANCAKES.

THE DRESS IS GOING ON A COAT HANGER.

NOTHING ELSE.

Go on then to the next page, if there is nothing .

PANCAKES LIGHT.

PUTTING BOOKS AWAY WITH HER APRON ON.

PUTTING THE BOOKS AWAY.

Putting the books away.

READING A BOOK WITH AN APRON ON.

LOOKIT WHAT SHE'S DOING. SHE'S NOT MAKING ANYTHING AND SHE'S GOT HER BAKING STUFF OUT.

Baking stuff, yes.

GOING OUT IN THE SNOW WITH HER DOG AND A BASKET.

DOGS HAVE TO BE ON A LEASH. BUT NICE DOGS DON'T HAVE TO BE ON A LEASH.CAN'T EVEN GET THIS OVER..(the page)

A COW EATING HAY THROUGH A WINDOW.

Through a window.

HE CAN'T REACH THERE.

POURING (pause) SUGAR WITH A SOUP THING.

A soup thing, yes. A soup thing.

WHAT IS SHE DOING? SHE'S DOING THAT.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE IS DOING THERE.

OH! LOOKIT WHAT SHE'S DOING. SHE'S MAKING STUFF TO PUT ON TOP OF THE PANCAKES.

Yes.

LOOK AT WHAT SHE DID!

What?

LOOK WHAT SHE DID ALL THERE.

Uh-Huh.

LOOK WHAT SHE DID THERE.

LOTS OF THINGS THERE.

Uh-Huh.

LOTS OF THINGS THERE TOO.

THERE THEY ARE EATING THE BREAKFAST.

FATHER (pause) FATHER HADN'T GOT ANY PANCAKES.

Hasn't got any?

NO.

THERE'S THE PERSON MAKING PANCAKES.

(studied the last two pages with no comment)

STORY SAMPLE---GROUP FOUR

Nodded 'yes' as I gave directions.

PANCAKES FOR DINNER (for the title page)

Just take one page at a time. You don't want to miss any of the story.

SNOW.

Snow. Tell me about this part.

GOING TO BED.

Going to bed. Can you tell me more?

UP AGAIN.

Up again. That's the boy. Go through the book now. Continue.

That's right. That's the next page.

READING BOOKS.

Reading books.

AND.....COOKING PANCAKES.

Cooking pancakes. Alright. Good.

AND COOKING PANCAKES AGAIN.

And cooking pancakes again. Good.

(skipped several pages and I had to put him on the right one.

SNOW AGAIN.

Snow again. What else?

A DOG.

A dog.

AND A CAT AND THEY ARE MAKING PANCAKES AGAIN.

They're making the pancakes again.

That's the boy ~~was~~. You're making a great job.

THEY'RE DOING IT AGAIN.

They're doing it again.

THEY'RE MAKING PANCAKES AGAIN.

Okay.

THEY'RE MAKING PANCAKES AGAIN.

I see. What's she doing here?

SNOW AGAIN.

What?

SNOW AGAIN.

Snow again. What's happening in this part?

CLOUD. CLOUDS.

What? Clouds? I see.

(pause)(He turned the page, studied the pictures but said nothing.

WORKING.

Working. What?

SNOWING AGAIN.

COOKING DINNER AGAIN.

DOING IT AGAIN.

STORY SAMPLE---GROUP FOUR

I gave the directions.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THESE THINGS ARE. (pointing to the pancakes)

I gave the directions and the title and author.

Do you know what these are now?

NO.

narrative They're pancakes all stacked up. (He went into a personal
about how he likes pancakes.)

Difficult to get him to focus on the task.

He ignored the book. I told the title again. What can you tell me?

PANCAKES FOR BREAKFAST (for the title page)

IT'S SNOWING OUT.

Yes that's right.

THEY'RE INSIDE THE HOUSE.

READING BOOKS.

MAKING.

Making.

GOING OUT IN THE SNOW.

Yes.

GOING OUT IN THE SNOW.

COWS.

LADIES.....

Pardon me.

LADIES.

Ladies. Tell me what is happeninh here?

THEY'RE MAKING SOMETHING.

They're making something.

OUT IN THE SNOW.

What about here?

THE MAN IS SOMETHING.

The man is something.

HAVING SOME PANCAKES.

What about here now?

SPILLED THE MILK.

Uh-Huh.

THEY'RE GOING WITH MORE PANCAKES.