# WRITING THEIR WORLD: CONCEPTIONS OF LITERACY

## IN A REMEDIAL BEHAVIOURAL CLASSROOM

by

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# ABSTRACT

The specific research question of this study was:

**What are the intermediate grade children's conceptions
of literacy within their remedial behavioural classroom?**

Research into the literacy activities of children in the past has been dominated by an exploration of the development of "skills" needed to progress from a novice to an expert writer. Developmental frameworks have provided guidelines and resulted in expectations of a sequential progression in both cognitive and affective growth. Constructs such as "audience awareness" have been identified as skills that demonstrate the developmental process of writing.

Children labelled by both educational and medical systems as "severely behaviourally disturbed" are frequently placed in remedial behavioural classrooms where they receive instruction on an individual and basic skills level. Their access to instructional techniques such as advanced writing strategies is hindered both by the reductionist teaching approach and by the use of behavioural modification techniques to alter.

The present study responds to more recent research in literacy instruction by using a qualitative perspective and related methodologies to investigate *the conceptions of literacy* held by children placed in a remedial behavioural classroom. The study accepts as a basic premise a socio-cognitive view of literacy that recognizes writing as a communicative event representing interactions between the writer and their audience and also between the writer and their context. By using a qualitative perspective and a case study technique, categories were developed that represented the ways the children viewed the meaning and use of both writing and their writing and learning context. Shifts in personal verbal and written expression were enabled by use of scaffolded teaching strategies and by encouraging more freedom of oral expression.

Two questionnaires were administered to collect data about the children's initial conceptions of themselves as writers and their ability to determine the needs of their reading audience. The use of stories

written by the children and compiled for a booklet about their classroom and audiotapes of each writing

session resulted in additional conceptions in the four major areas as follows:

1.      the definition and meaning of good and bad behaviour within their classroom

2.      the meaning of classroom rules and regulations and the effects of compliance or

        resistance

3.      the potential and repercussions of honest communication with peers and adults

4.      the potential for children becoming teachers for their peers and adults.

By exploring these areas as viewed by the children, new insights into the issues of equity in

education are discussed.  As well, it was shown when provided with both active intervention and a more

liberated context in which to write the children used writing both to construct and explore the meaning

of their world and to resist and transform situations which place them at an educational and social

disadvantage.

        Insights from this study were integrated into three major areas of relevance to the study of literacy

instruction and equity in educational opportunities.  These issues were highlighted in the areas of 1) the

pathology deficit model, 2) the role of the remedial classroom and 3) conceptions of literacy within a

remedial behavioural classroom.  Suggestions for further research and implications for practice when

working with children who are described as "severely behaviourally disturbed" are included.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER I                    INTRODUCTION

"IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF YOU HAD HELPED ME." This statement was shouted by a frustrated nine year old boy to a peer in a remedial behavioural classroom as he tried to explain that he had hit her because she had ridiculed him during a writing task. Prior to admission to the classroom, this same boy had been diagnosed as having written and oral language problems and an attention deficit disorder. In the eyes of his family, the school, and the community, however, his over-riding problem was the physically aggressive behaviour that put himself and others at risk. What are we to make of this child's frustrations? Why is he struggling so hard with the literacy and social skills that are given such high priority within the school system? What might alternative forms of instruction and placement offer to this child that would allow him to experience greater academic and social success? This thesis explores issues related to literacy education with a small group of children who have been diagnosed as "severely behaviourally disturbed." Specifically, the research is concerned with the meaning literacy holds for these children. Previous studies of children's experiences of literacy activities (Dahl, 1985; Hillocks, 1985; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986) have been completed with children who are beginning to write or who are learning disabled (Bryson, 1987). Some studies which investigate the writing skills of intermediate grade students, typically use samples of "normal" children, and tend to focus on literacy in terms of skill attainment (e.g. Fontaine, 1988; Kroll, 1985).

Scardamalia & Bereiter (1986) state that most students can demonstrate a minimal level of literacy by being able to "set to work immediately and produce a composition that makes sense, that is on topic, and that meets the structural requirements of the appropriate genre" (p. 792). However, many students described as "severely behaviourally disturbed" at the intermediate grade level seem unable to produce even basic levels of writing, despite their years of schooling. To date, no specific literature exists that goes beyond a surface investigation of the literacy levels of severely behaviourally disturbed children. Specifically, no data are available that describes either their abilities or those factors that might impede them from using their abilities on a consistent basis.

If, as Scardamalia & Bereiter (1982, p. 169) suggests, child writers "have relevant knowledge that they do not yet know they have or they have not yet found any way to make use of in writing", then it may

be that an examination of how behaviourally disturbed children see themselves and conceive of the function of writing will provide valuable insights for subsequent researchers. It will also help fill in the current lack in research on literacy activities with "severely behaviourally disturbed" children.

The specific research question which guided this study was:

> **What are intermediate grade children's conceptions of literacy activities within their remedial behavioural classroom?**

Given this researcher's focus on the need for an in-depth understanding of the conceptions of literacy of children who have been described as "behaviourally disturbed" children, a qualitative research method was chosen for the study. In particular, the researcher undertook a case-study of three of eight children from a special remedial class which was administratively attached to a larger school. This facilitated a closer examination of the emotional, social, and academic context within which the children studied. The recognition that the attainment of literacy abilities is strongly influenced by and interactive with the learning context made it logical that the school environment be chosen as a study site. The case-study method was also seen as congruent with a theoretical approach which takes literacy activities to be both cognitive and affective in nature, and social and communicative in purposes.

The research question was then approached from two perspectives. The first involved an examination of the factors that contribute to or deter children in a remedial behavioural class from participating in and experiencing literacy in ways similar to their mainstream peers. The second looked at how the children in the study used an instructional intervention provided during the research period to develop and share the meanings that literacy has for them.

A specific communicative construct, that of "audience awareness" was selected as a lens through which to view the emerging conceptions of literacy expressed by the children. "Audience awareness" was selected as it has been defined in both psychological and developmental literature. As the empirical focus of developmental and psychological approaches has to some extent fostered a decontextualized (ie., a focus on studying attainment levels of specific literacy skills) view of writing instruction in particular, and literacy in general, it is important to emphasize that this study views literacy from a perspective that acknowledges the interaction of the cognitive with the social. This study, however, reframes the traditional research focus to one of investigating responses to literacy activities by observing and recording the

2

children's oral and written responses during sixteen writing group sessions. As they wrote an information booklet for new children who would attend their remedial classroom, the opportunity was created to explore the relationship between context and literacy activities.

This research adds to an increasing number of studies around literacy issues in elementary school education, and like them, touches on issues of equity in education, teaching interventions, the implications of medical and educational decisions related to groups with particular needs and/or problems, and the possibilities for change. Although the study focused on the particular topic of literacy activities, and thus only partially addressed the cognitive and affective diversity of the children involved in relation to one specific context, when viewed integratively with other studies it may "increase our understanding of commonalities and variations in language learning and teaching" (Dyson & Genishi, 1988, p. 793).

The remainder of the thesis is organized as follows. Chapter II offers an analysis of literature related to the research question. It first identifies how the population of "severely behaviourally disturbed" children has been described in psychiatric, psychological and mainstream and special education literature. Second, it reviews the construct of "audience awareness" as it has been discussed in two bodies of literature, developmental literature and in literature on methods of teaching with special education groups. Third, it addresses more recent views of literacy as a social and political act, and explores their applicability to children's writings. Finally, it discusses the specific context of the study, the remedial behavioural classroom. Chapter III discusses the research design. It begins by addressing the issue of qualitative research in general before moving to more specific discussion of questions of internal and external validity in qualitative research. The case study method used data collection, and methods of analysis are described. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study. Chapter IV provides the "rich description" of the study. First, a description of the three respondents and their conceptions of themselves as writers is provided. Second, the level of cognitive and affective awareness these three children demonstrated for their reading audience is described. Third, themes indicating emerging conceptions of the meaning and use of the literacy activities held by the three respondents is detailed.

The introduction of advanced skills in literacy instruction is discussed. Discussion is related to both the positive responses of the children to this active educational intervention and to the need for

3

changes of educational practices and social contexts to encourage creative growth in all areas of the children's lives.

Chapter V integrates the findings which are of most relevance to the issues of literacy education within a remedial classroom and for an educational population defined as "severely behaviourally disturbed." Issues are related to the three areas of the pathology/deficit model, the role of the remedial classroom and conceptions of literacy within a remedial classroom.

CHAPTER II          DEVELOPING THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This chapter focuses on clarifying the terms used in the research question and examines the terms "severely behaviourally disturbed" and "audience awareness" in detail, in order to refine the research question. It defines the role of context on respondents' social and academic experiences and knowledge and suggests how context influences their conceptions of writing.

Specifically the chapter:

1)     identifies "severely behaviourally disturbed" children. Psychiatric and psychological literature, as well as special education research literature, is used to present the traditional and more recent descriptions of this population.

2)     focuses on the communicative interactions of children as demonstrated by their writing activities. It is suggested that effective use of "audience awareness" requires the individual to be aware of the needs of another person. To many observers the performance of such skills would appear to create inevitable difficulty for "severely behaviourally disturbed" children. Observing the children in real-life interactions and interpreting their writing can help to define the meanings children assign to writing, their behaviour, and their talk.

Two approaches are used to explore research related to the potential of children to utilize their writing as a communicative activity. a) Developmental frameworks are often guidelines when considering the cognitive and affective development of "audience awareness" in normal children and adults. b) Research on writing and special education literature which explores the philosophy and practice of both traditional and innovative education methods that can be used to help children recognize the potential of both their writing and themselves as writers.

3)     addresses the recent literature in writing research which investigates the meanings that writing has for people in a variety of contexts. The roles of literacy as both a social and political act is reviewed, with a specific focus on the research that discusses meaning-making within children's writing.

4)     describes an altered learning setting that provided unique opportunities for the children to discuss and write about their learning environment while simultaneously challenging the values and norms

of this context. The social and learning context for the children described in this study was a remedial behavioural class. Within such remedial classes, both the teaching practices and behavioural interventions interact with the learning context.

5)      the chapter concludes by reframing the research question by providing definitions and perspectives that respond to both current literature and the pedagogical belief system adopted within this research study.

## A.     Defining "Severely Behaviourally Disturbed"

There is no consensus on what level or type of disturbance is represented by the label "severely behaviourally disturbed." Increasingly, evidence suggests that homogeneous diagnostic categories for children are ineffective in determining educational placement and treatment (Forness, 1981). Accordingly, there is some shift in educational thinking toward a more ecological perspective on behavioural problems. This approach views behavioural problems as "a result of the interaction between a child, with his or her own array of idiosyncratic behaviour, and the countless unique environments through which the child passes" (Forness, 1981, p. 59). Despite this shift, however, both educational and medical systems continue to label children who represent the extremes in the continuum of learning and behaviour problems.

"Severely behaviourally disturbed" children are categorized as having either a pathological condition or an academic skills deficit and medicine and psychology play a part in maintaining this view of behavioural disturbance as pathological in nature. *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association): III-Revised 1987* (DSM III-R) provides numerous diagnostic criteria for a variety of behaviour disorders. For example, the DSM III-R label used for the children in this study would fall under the subclass of disruptive behaviour disorders. The DSM III-R also provides terminology about "severely behaviourally disturbed" children that is familiar to the educational community, including the general categories of learning disabilities, language disorders and coordination disorders. Despite criticism on empirical, political, humanitarian, pragmatic and ontological grounds

(Tomm, 1990), use of the DSM III-R continues. The criticisms of the DSM III-R can be extended to educational analysis of "severely behaviourally disturbed" children. A study of evaluation approaches used with students referred to special education services (Ysseldyke, Thurlow, Graden, Wesson, Algozine & Deno, 1983, p. 82), found that evaluators "function nearly entirely under the assumption that it is their task to find out what is wrong with a student ... to find the internal causes for behaviour evidenced by students". The majority of evaluation methods used with children in general, and especially children being considered for remedial behavioural classes, focus on defining basic skills and behavioural deficits.

The usual interpretations of "severely behaviourally disturbed" in medicine and education then, share a common theme, that of individual deficit or "blaming the victim."

> Blaming the victim occurs exclusively within an exceptionalistic
> framework where all instances of deviance or social problems are
> seen as a result of unusual circumstances, defect or accident. It
> consists of applying exceptionalistic explanations to universalistic
> problems (Ryan 1972, p. 18-19).

Children who are labelled "severely behaviourally disturbed" are often viewed only within the framework of family, past neurological history (brain trauma, prematurity etc.) or prenatal factors, rather than a broader context which includes school and community.

However, unlike children who have learning disabilities and who in the past have been grouped according to their specific disabilities, it is recognized that the characteristics of individual behaviourally disturbed children differ and often occur in combination with other problems (Shultz, Carpenter & Turnbill, 1991). For instance, a severely behaviourally disturbed child may be labelled "oppositional" as well as having a "mathematics learning disability". Much of the special education literature directs its attempts towards descriptions of teaching methodologies designed to address secondary problems, such as learning disabilities. Although the problem behaviours may be acknowledged by educators, children are generally sent to mental health or medical staff for a more specific diagnosis, medication and/or therapy related to their behaviour.

Having shaped a definition of "severely behaviourally disturbed" in terms of skill deficits and individual pathology, both education and medicine readily justify why "naming and blaming" is an acceptable and necessary part of helping these children. The process of remedial class placement it is claimed, allows scarce resources and personnel to be allocated to provide specialized effective educational

7

interventions. What this system also effectively does is to remove and contain the most disruptive students so that the larger school organization can remain "objective, inherently orderly and rational" (Foucault, 1954/1976, in Skritic, 1991, p. 152).

A brief description of the types of challenges these children present suggest why their problems might disrupt an orderly system. A disproportionately high number of children who have been placed in remedial behavioural classes come from situations of poverty, parental substance abuse, violence or mental illness. Their experiences outside school affect both their inner world and their response to school experiences (Knitzer, Steinberg & Fleish, 1991). These children often do not achieve academic success. Many experience repeated school failures and with nearly two thirds functioning below grade level, re-entry into mainstream education is less likely. Numerous students drop out of school entirely during late intermediate years and involvement with the courts after leaving school is frequent (Knitzer, Steinburg & Fleish, 1991).

For some the term "severely behaviourally disturbed" is assigned early in their school career. Their behaviour has often put either themselves, or more frequently other children and/or adults, at physical risk and eventual placement in a remedial behavioural classroom is almost inevitable. Placement in such classes is often preceded by suspension, expulsion or involvement with a variety of alternate programs. If they have had a medical suspension (as had two of the three children in this study) their parents must obtain a letter from a psychiatrist stating they are no longer a physical threat to others, before they are eligible to return to a mainstream classroom.

At the beginning of the research process the original phrasing of the research question was formulated as:

> "In what ways do intermediate grade severely behaviourally
> disturbed students in a remedial behaviour classroom experience
> audience awareness in writing tasks and social interactions?"

This approach to the research question, while supported by the rhetoric of both educational and medical systems, represents a perspective which views children in terms of their individual pathology and in need of specific skills.

Yet, how successful is placement in remedial behavioural classrooms? Glass (1981, p. 8) points out that "special education shows no tangible benefits whatsoever for the pupils". Another study with emotionally disturbed children found that remedial classes did not result in long term changes for the sample children in remedial classes compared to emotionally disturbed children placed in mainstream classes. Any advantage the special classes had existed only as long as the children remained in the special program (Vacc, 1972). One recent study (Grizenko & Sayegh, 1990) points out that past research evaluating the effectiveness of specialized placement in "remedial" settings such as the day treatment program that was the setting for this study were simplistic in the focus of school reintegration as the sole outcome measure. In their study Brizenko & Sayegh (1990) examined the outcome of placement in a psychodynamically orientated day treatment program to include reintegration and behavioural and academic measures. Results indicated that all children improved significantly in all three areas, with improvement in behavioural performance being greater than academic performance. This study found that children with oppositional, hyperactive or depressed diagnoses benefited more than those with conduct disorder related behaviour. Nonetheless, placement in special behavioural classes continues to be a practice for the "severely behaviourally disturbed" even in the face of increased mainstreaming for many other conditions and for children considered only "mildly disturbed".

Skritic (1991) suggests that educational administration distorts the problem of school failure to maintain the belief that school organizations are rational. Educational systems support the idea that academic failure is pathological, that differential diagnosis is objective and useful, that specialized education benefits the diagnosed students and that improvements in diagnostic and instructional practices represent progress. By perpetuating this belief they can avoid examining their own administrative practices.

Consequently statements about children who are labelled by the school system "Say more about the political-social realities of the placement process than they do about the scientific validity of the concept of a specific diagnostic category" (Torgesen, 1986, p. 405).

In an attempt to provide a workable description of the "severely behaviourally disturbed" child which avoids "naming and blaming", the broad definition of behaviour disorder used by Gresham (1985)

is valuable:

> "A behaviour disorder is said to be present when a child or adolescent
> exhibits behavioural excesses and/or deficits that authoritative adults in
> the child's or adolescent's environment judge to be too high or too low.
> These behaviours are considered to be atypical because the frequency,
> intensity and/or duration deviates from a relative social norm. The excesses
> and/or deficits which constitute a behaviour disorder can be expressed through
> one or all behavioural systems or repertoires (cognitive/verbal, overt/motoric,
> or physiological/emotional) and occurs across settings, situations and time" (p. 50).

This definition indicates that those students with behavioural disorders demonstrate the same

behaviours as other students, although behaviours are more frequent, intense and last longer than "normal"

children. This definition is also sensitive to contextual variables such as "setting, situation and time" and

includes the effect of "authoritative adults".

In an attempt to re-write the research question to better represent a more ecological perspective,

this researcher then asked:

> "In what ways do behaviourally at-risk intermediate grade
> students in a remedial behavioural classroom experience
> audience awareness in writing tasks and social interactions?"

To this point in the discussion it has been suggested the research is dominated by a particular

perspective which casts severely behaviourally disturbed children in terms of pathology and skill deficits.

Current research that challenges this assumption has been cited and the research question reformulated

to respond to this information.

However, while this lessens the implication of blame towards the children, it does not adequately

present the influence that the learning context has on the lives and academic achievement of those

children.

As Smith (1986) observes, "persons grouped together by a label may have various sources and

meanings in their lives - when one traces these meanings and sources, a trait or label is no longer an

adequate explanation and is unlikely to be changed in isolation to the context" (p. 262).

Consequently, the remainder of this chapter will refine the study's area of investigation by; first,

defining the construct of "audience awareness" and its use as a developmental marker and secondly, by

describing the role that social context holds within the production of knowledge in literacy tasks. The specific context of this study, the remedial behavioural classroom will then be described.

**B.     Defining "Audience Awareness"**

This section identifies current definitions of "audience awareness" found in research on writing and in psychological and psychiatric literature. This particular aspect of writing skills was chosen as a lens with which to view children's conceptions of literacy.

"Audience awareness" has generally been studied in one of two ways; from a cognitive perspective (coordination between one's own viewpoint and another's perspective and the recursiveness involved in thinking about the others' perspective), or from an affective perspective-taking (emphasizing and understanding of motives and affect) (Waterman, Sobesky, Silvern, Aoki & McCauley, 1981). Additional features of "audience awareness" that have been studied are person perception (how one describes and categorizes the behaviour of others) and role taking (in which a reciprocal relationship between others and oneself occurs) (Parrill - Burnstein, 1981).

Empathy is considered a key aspect of "audience awareness". Current views categorize empathy in three ways: 1) as cognitive (perceptual accuracy); 2) as affective (shared affect); 3) as multi-dimensional (sharing both models) (Strayer & Schroeder, 1989).

Embedded within these definitions, two interpretations have emerged of "audience awareness" and hence of the potential for children to attain this literacy and communicative ability.

First, "audience awareness" is treated as part of a natural development that children move through. Second, "audience awareness" is treated as a teachable literacy skill. As the majority of research literature in education and psychology treats these two approaches as separate, a similar approach will be followed in this review.

**1.     Developmental perspectives on "audience awareness"**

Although the   development of "audience awareness" is presently viewed as requiring the involvement of both cognitive and affective components, past research has investigated these two aspects separately. This model of separate treatment will be followed here.

a)     Cognitive approaches

The concept of "audience awareness" as a developmental cognitive process was first investigated by Piaget (1955). Piaget suggested that young children are unable to take account of others' viewpoints until they reach the age of decentred thinking, for some as late as 12 years old. New analysis of the experimental tasks used by Piaget has demonstrated that if tasks are culturally familiar to the children it is easier for them to be able to see other's perspectives (Fontaine, 1988). However, general understanding of childhood still tend to assume, as Piaget did, that there can be a single universal response to intellectual tasks that are independent of class and culture.

In contrast to Piaget, Vygotsky, (1978) rejected a sequential approach to development by suggesting that higher mental functions of cultural development and mastering one's own behaviour were dynamic processes subject to changes, reversals and additions.

Vygotsky's study of concept formation led him to suggest that children can reconcile and integrate their own spontaneous reasoning with the adult scientific concepts introduced at school. He described this discovery as happening in a "zone of proximal-development". This zone is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). He further contended that 1) children can construct meaning for themselves, and 2) that their discovery of the use of written symbolism for communication, specifically when they realize that the symbols they use have meaning for others represents a major cognitive step (Vygotsky, 1978). The process of reaching this cognitive awareness that written language is an interactive process with oral language develops as children respond to a need to be understood in a variety of ways within their own social environment. Consideration of the similarities and differences between oral and written language adds insights to the contributions each makes to the other. Oral language depends on response (either verbal or non-verbal) from a conversational partner, such as smiles, nods, brief interjections, encouragement for the speaker to continue. Written language requires that the person function independently and use an internalized monitoring of thoughts to sustain production of text in the absence of signals from the conversational milieu (Scardamalia, Bereiter & Goelman, 1982). Traditionally, writing was seen as a coded representation of speech and this shift from oral to written

language was encouraged to happen in early primary years. However, recognition has now been given to the benefits of encouraging writing, speaking and listening as language events that are closely related and attainable during pre-school years (Leigh, 1980). For school age children support for this process requires that children be encouraged to make purposeful use of oral language in meaningful social contexts (Goodman, 1985) as part of the writing process.

The initial knowledge that children have about the function of writing and their conceptions of themselves as writers contributes to their development of "audience awareness" skills in writing. Blazer, (1986) categorized using a developmental framework the patterns of initial knowledge that children have when they begin writing. Her overall framework corresponds with Piaget's (1955) in that it shows cognitive development as linear, with children progressing through and mastering tasks at specific stages of development. She found children were able to demonstrate knowledge within consecutive categories, but seldom skipped a category.

The four categories of knowledge about writing defined by Blazer (1986, p. 87) were:

1.  Affective - a child's feelings about print
2.  Concrete - the form or graphic display of print incorporating use of tools, the mechanics and the actual physical display and production of the written words.
3.  Constructive - the awareness of the function and meaning of writing as a communicative process, development of personal meaning for writing and an awareness of the relationship between oral and written language
4.  Creative - an ability to use print in an imaginative manner and an awareness that written content can be controlled and have variable intent. This stage also involves active problem-solving with hypothesis testing, risk-taking, reference-making and evaluation by the learner.

Because these categories also reflect the growth of conceptual processes, they also help demonstrate some of the differences observed between expert and novice writers.

Studies of the process of composition supplement an understanding of the development of "audience awareness" as a cognitive process. For example, in a study of 9, 13 and 18 year old writers, Fontaine (1984) found that while 9 year olds had some sense of their audience, they could rarely adapt their written message for this audience and generate or change their writing focus. In contrast, the 13 and 18 year olds demonstrated that they thought about their audience as they wrote, and could make shifts in their writing to reflect their view of the audience's possible perspectives.

Kroll (1985) demonstrated with a group of 9 year old children that "audience awareness" was most strongly related when completing oral tasks, weakly related when completing literary/narrative writing tasks and non-significantly related to performance on explanatory, persuasive or personal writing. His explanation has two components. First, oral tasks, may be familiar and brief, therefore not tax information processing resources. Second, children who have a larger number of interpersonal construct dimensions, who can "interpret, anticipate and evaluate the thoughts and behaviours of others" (p. 303) should be able to provide story features that readers would enjoy.

When asked about their thinking processes during writing tasks, O'Keefe & Delia (1988) found that although the children they studied demonstrated adequate social knowledge, their ability to adapt messages to audience, purpose and setting was not as competent. In common with other researchers (Fontaine, 1989), they observed that "as message producers come to reason in increasingly abstract and integrated ways about communication, they come to appreciate that audience may be invoked and not simply addressed" (p. 92). They extend this acknowledgement to present a view that relates audience, situation and message as multiple goals that are integrated by writers for any communication event. Similarly, Rogoff (1984) suggests that all "cognitive activity is socially defined, interpreted and supported. People, usually in conjunction with each other, and always guided by social norms, set goals, negotiate appropriate means to reach the goals, and assist each in implementing the means and resetting the goals as activities evolve."

The writing problems and the integration of these multiple goals that expert writers posed for themselves throughout their writing sessions have been found to be qualitatively different from the thinking used by novice writers (Bryson & Scardamalia, 1991). Expert writers both formulate and solve rhetorical problems as they develop goals and subgoals as they write. This allows the writer to achieve both personal writing goals and respond to procedural needs (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1982, Flower and Hayes, 1987). This planning process engaged in by expert writers allowed them to simultaneously attempt such writing tasks as use of techniques to develop interesting features within the text or use of alternate methods to help refocus the writing when ideas ended. At the same time they were able to assess the needs of their audience, without compromising the expression of their own feelings and experiences.

Flower and Hayes (1987) stated that competent college-age writers (i.e. writers close to "expert" status) used two major types of plans when writing a course paper. These plans were reader-based plans and product-based plans. The product-based planning process involved writers focusing on how they thought the form of the final product should be. This approach of writing to a predefined criteria often resulted in "interference in the normal generating process (of ideas and sentences) that occurs during writing" (p. 51). Using reader-based plans, however, resulted in a recurring process of searching, developing high level plans, returning to specific sentences and keeping track of a variety of plans as the writer considered "who their audience is and develops plans or strategies based on what the reader might assume, object to, or need to know" (Flower and Hayes, 1987, p. 48). They also claim that if the writers are writing with the reader in mind, their concern operates "at a number of levels, governing not only the ideas and focus of the paper, but decisions about word choice and the general impression the prose creates", and that "planning for a reader is an intimate part of idea generation, one which leads the writer to go back and explore the topic itself" (p. 49).

Experienced adult writers have been found to expand their mental image of their readers, while college freshmen were content and topic bound. Using think aloud protocols with expert writers, Berkenkotter (1981) was able to determine when, and how, questions about audience were developed by a writer and to what extent considerations about audience may have guided rhetorical, organizational and stylistic decisions. The model Berkenkotter (1981, p. 398) developed to classify audience related thoughts involved the five categories of:

1.  Analysing/constructing a hypothetical audience
2.  Goal setting and planning for a specific audience
3.  Evaluating content and style with regard to anticipated audience response
4.  Reviewing, editing and revising for a specific audience
5.  Miscellaneous audience related activities eg. using "you" to directly address the audience, reminding oneself to keep the audience in mind etc.

Using this model it can be seen that the initial definition of goals may help direct the choice of style, but during composition, these goals are shifted and revised, or others are developed to accommodate new perspectives. By keeping the needs of an audience in mind as they write, authors are constantly engaging in a discovery process as the writers revise written work to meet both their own personal goals and their perception of the needs of the reading audience.

Developmental cognitive approaches to "audience awareness" indicate that as children develop

increasingly complex cognitive processes, their ability to respond to and communicate to an intended

audience increases in detail, sensitivity and creativity.

b)    Affective approaches

The second aspect of "audience awareness" treated from a developmental perspective is the

affective.  Selman (1976) offers a full developmental picture of "audience awareness" from an affective

perspective as having five separate domains or stages.  Selman's framework is similar to Blazer's (1987)

in that he found the sequence in development for what he called "perspective-taking", remained

predictable.  However, he recognized that "the particular social content or social context may lead to some

variation in the rate of development of the domain reasoned about" (p. 160).  Selman believed that

> "Each level of perspective-taking is a deep structure that underlies
> the surface structure of interpersonal stages.  It cannot develop
> after interpersonal concepts and may generally develop before them;
> or conceivably both a level of social perspective taking and its
> structurally equivalent stage of interpersonal conceptions develop
> synchronously as functions of the same stimulative conditions in
> development" (p. 161).

As the structural levels Selman (1976) described provided useful milestones when looking at the

behavioural interactions of the children in this study, they are worth elaboration here.  Selman suggests

five levels of perspective taking as follows:

1.    Level 0:  The Egocentric Level.
      The Child does not recognize that another may interpret the same social event
      or course of action differently from the way he/she does.
2.    Level 1:  The Subjective Level.
      The child begins to understand that even under the same circumstances, other
      people's thoughts and feelings may be the same as or different from one's own,
      or that others may think differently about social events depending on the
      information available to them.
3.    Level 2:  The Reciprocal Dyadic or Self-Reflective Level.
      The child incorporates level 1 awareness into a new realization.  The child
      realizes that others can view self as a subject reciprocally.  This generates an
      awareness that other's perspective on the self's own inner views is an important
      consideration in dealing with others and in understanding other's viewpoint.
4.    Level 3:  The Third-Person Dyadic Level.
      The preadolescent constructs a new and qualitatively distinct third-person view,
      which addresses the reciprocal dyad perspective and from which is generated a
      concept of mutuality of perspectives.
5.    Level 4:  The Qualitative Systems Level.
      The adolescent generates a further abstraction from the coordination of all
      possible third-person perspectives - a societal perspective.  There is a recognition
      that mutual perspectivism can occur at a number of levels of interpersonal

awareness within the dyad (p. 159-160).

Additional recent research has found that children's accuracy and understanding of others' emotions increases with age. A brief review of the development of the affective aspect of perspective taking reveals early acquisition of these skills for most children. Children as young as 10 months have been shown to recognize that others' visual expression can convey emotions. Even at 9-12 months children demonstrate, in a non-verbal manner, communicative intent that recognizes their behaviour could have an effect on a play partner or adult. When children begin talking, at the single word stage, language comprehension studies have shown that they are able to follow complex verbal commands including reference to a person, an action and a recipient of action. By the end of 28 months the majority of children are able to use emotion labels for a variety of both positive and negative feelings for both themselves and others. One study demonstrated the ability to show a reflective level of empathy, indicating awareness of the interactive function of emotion, words and behaviour, was attained by over 87% of 2 year olds who were able to make statements of verbal concern, reassurance and sympathy (Bretherton, Fritz, Zahn-Waxler & Ridgeway, 1986; Lane & Schwartz, 1987).

Specific studies of cognitive and affective elements of "audience awareness" with children defined as "behaviourally disturbed" have resulted in knowledge about the development of audience awareness/perspective taking from an interactional viewpoint. In a research project with behaviourally disturbed, learning disabled and normal grade 5 and 6 boys designed to examine the contributions of social cognitive deficits to children's adjustment problems (Waterman, Sobesky, Silver, Aoki & McCauley, 1981)), results indicated that although behaviourally disturbed boys were generally inferior in both cognitive and affective perspective-taking there were a substantial number of behaviourally disturbed boys with scores in this activity that were above the median for the sample. In addition emotionally disturbed boys who showed superior affective perspective-taking skills had relatively higher levels of anti-social behaviour.

In contrast, relatively high withdrawal behaviour was associated with inferior skills in both cognitive and affective perspective-taking across the entire sample. While the authors suggest caution in generalizing the results, these findings seem to indicate a relation between social cognitive development and behavioural manifestations for some (those exhibiting high withdrawal behaviour) but not all behaviourally disturbed children.

A child's desire to help a peer, and the methods they use to do this, is a function of both their own empathy with others and their ability to perceive others' emotions accurately. Strayer & Shroeder (1989) investigated levels of empathic response using a sample of children aged 5, 8 and 13 years. They found that helping behaviour is significantly more frequent when empathy is reported than when it is not. Children of the different ages reacted in generally similar ways. They responded with a similar number of helping responses at each age but increased the type of helping strategies they used as they became older and focused on specific emotions that provoked their help. The skills to effectively discriminate and understand others emotions were shown to develop in infancy and pre-school years and continue to be refined as children develop until by adolescence they include a broad perspective incorporating a wide variety of possible responses. This information on children's helping behaviours becomes increasingly significant given current instructional emphasis on collaborative learning experiences.

This research which emphasizes "audience awareness" as a developmental skill that combines cognition and affect shares with research on writing a common understanding of the communicative intent of "audience awareness".

2.      **Instructional perspectives - teaching literacy skills**

The view of "audience awareness" as a developmental skill has led to an exploration of differences in its usage in writing done by novice or expert writers and to methods of increasing specific literacy skills in children. Flower and Hayes (1982) and De Beaugrande (1984) both suggested that skilled writers have "flexible access to a wide range of mental representations of actual and intended text and of conditions bearing on plans for the text as well as a highly sophisticated control structure for coordinating operations on these many different kinds of knowledge states" (in Hillock, 1986, p. 783). In a process they call "knowledge-telling" Scardamalia & Bereiter, (in Hillock 1986, p. 792), describe young writers as "converting all writing tasks into tasks of telling what one knows about the topic". While this kind of writing may vary in topic choice it is often repetitive in style, and lacking in complexity. Particularly, knowledge-telling writing used by novice writers did not often reprocess goals, shift plans and develop texts in response to both their own or their audience's reflections on the text. Although knowledge-telling itself is part of a composing strategy used by expert writers, when used singly it often resulted in mere addition of information.

Given the number of sub-processes used by expert writers when they consider "audience awareness" in their writing, it is obvious that novice writers may need help in developing these strategies. Opportunities and strategies need to be provided for children to learn to both represent their personal feelings and intentions to others and to take into account the needs of those who will read their work. As well, assistance in setting and adjusting personal writing goals may be needed. Recognition will also need to be made of the interpersonal and cultural context in which the children write and its relationship to the writing task.

Historically, in an effort to respond to what was perceived as a "literacy crisis" during the 1970's, education emphasized the lower level cognitive skills of computing and decoding - the "basic skills" of learning. By the 1980's dissatisfaction with the ability of this approach to increase problem-solving and higher-level thinking skills, caused more emphasis to be placed on thinking skills programs. Most of these programs have an explicit focus on metacognitive activities with the teacher and students explicitly focusing on their thinking processes and how to use them with curriculum subjects (Martin, 1989, p. 3). However, for children who are "at risk" for academic problems and placed in remedial behavioural classes the communication functions of writing and the methods for enhancing it are largely ignored in favour of emphasis on mechanics and basic skills. Opportunities for young writers in remedial classes to transfer their knowledge into writing may not readily occur.

Currently, much of the research into writing skills of "at-risk" students who have been defined as having poor literacy skills has occurred with learning disabled students rather than the children identified as having "severe behavioural problems". However, since there is a high proportion of learning disabilities among the behaviourally disordered population it is worthwhile to discuss some of their specific learning "disabilities". It should be noted that the following discussion recognizes that all children have individual learning styles and requirements that need to be considered, and that teaching approaches considered effective in regular classrooms should also be used with the "special" population.

Learning disabled students often demonstrate deficits in an ability to describe what they know about writing processes and in text organizational abilities. They are more likely to be dependent on the teacher to offer cues and to monitor their writing productions, and are less likely to be able to demonstrate sensitivity and concern for their audience when they write (Englert, Raphael, Anderson,

Anthony & Stevens, 1991).

Parrill-Burnstein (1981) found that children with learning disabilities had difficulties with the problem-solving skills needed for effective perspective-taking - those of "selective attention, response generation, response execution and appropriate response to feedback" (p. 180). "Remedial" approaches often attempt to address these individual problems.

However, in a discussion of teaching approaches for learning disabled children, Torgeson (1986) points out that there is a great deal of similarity between what are considered effective education practices for groups of normal children and for other categories of children at-risk for learning problems. Effective teaching methodologies remain consistent irrespective of the students or their academic or behavioural problems.

Recent research has responded to suggestions that all children need exposure to current effective teaching practices. Such research has led to studies that have demonstrated that teaching higher level strategies is an effective instructional method for students in both regular and remedial classes in all areas of curriculum (Means, Chelmer & Knapp, 1991). In special education classes, and in particular within the writing curriculum offered in these classes, it has been found that teachers frequently continue to reduce content to sub-skills and emphasize mechanics and teacher control of topics and writing tasks. The belief that this is an appropriate approach is supported by the same principles that encourage extensive assessments and labelling of children in the school systems, although the process purportedly helps in the design of systematic remediation (Smith-Burke, Deegan & Jagger, 1991).

Recently published textbooks likely to be used by special education teachers acknowledge that "teaching behaviourally disordered students academic skills is very similar to teaching other students academic skills. These students learn much like other students" (Schultz, Carpenter & Turnbull, 1991, p. 116). Despite recent research to the contrary, these texts advise that, in terms of remedial approaches teachers emphasize a direct instructional method "characterized by increased opportunities to respond, maximum use of time-on-task, frequent measurement of progress, definite answers, and a developmental approach" (Schultz et al, 1991, p. 117). Because these approaches focus on basic skills and "correct" answers they often result in the children in remedial classes having less exposure to literacy activities that have a commitment to uniting reading and writing within meaningful contexts, or to higher level strategy

thinking processes. For the individual child, a decontextualized approach to learning skills reinforces a misconception that they have less ability than children in regular classes (Graves, 1983).

The introduction of whole language approaches to literacy activities appears to offer unlimited opportunities for all students to develop their potential in writing and reading skills. By rejecting a basic skills approach to literacy it provides opportunities for children to invent and reinvent language usage, and to own their learning situations. As a whole language model directed the underlying teaching approach taken with the subjects of this study, a brief description of its potential and problems will be outlined here.

While whole language approaches to literacy share some similarities with other theories and methods, they work from different premises. The model of whole language embraces "research methodologies, principles of learning, the classroom environment, the teacher and child behaviour and more recently methodological issues" (Rentzel & Hollingsworth, 1988, p. 406).

The term whole language indicates that language in its many forms - listening, speaking, reading and writing - is given equal importance within all areas of the curriculum. Within a whole language perspective, both oral and written language systems are seen as structurally related and attainable simultaneously. A whole language framework presents opportunities for children to become skilled language users, rather than simple recipients of language skills (Altwerger, Edelsky & Flores, 1987, p. 148). Reading and writing are not just a matter of "getting the words" (Altwerger et al 1987, p. 146), but focus on the construction of meaning. For this to happen within writing tasks it requires the reader or writer to make use of the cycle described by Flower and Hayes (1982) of creating tentative texts, assigning tentative meaning and revising meaning based on cues attained as one reads or writes.

By using meaningful text for reading and allowing children to select meaningful topics for writing, the whole language approach ideally helps children to see the inter-relationship of one higher level system to another (eg. using sytaxical, semantic and pragmatic skills in a coordinated fashion). Children's learning occurs in a more obvious manner as the meaningful content also helps provide clues. An awareness that these higher level skills are available and necessary to direct appropriate use of the basic skills is emphasized. A whole language approach stresses that understanding and development of meaning for the written word occurs both before and during the act of writing. Instead of instruction in a series

of fragmented sub-skills, whole language researchers demonstrate that vocabulary, syntax and stylistic conventions can be learned directly through the children's own personal writing experiences (Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984).

This approach to literacy then, must not only include meaningful text and writing topics but must also occur within a context that is meaningful for both student and teacher. From kindergarten onwards, children are encouraged to write their own stories in writing workshops and to learn to read both from their own writing and from shared reading of high quality literature. At higher grades, literacy experiences extend through content areas of science and social studies with materials that include textbooks, tradebooks and those written by the children (Pickering, 1989). The children are encouraged to consider how and why they wrote and to become independent learners capable of solving the problems they meet as they read and write (Shanklin & Rhodes, 1989).

This search for a meaningful context for literacy instruction points out a vital difference between the whole language model and other teaching models: whole language is, above all, a belief system related to learning and language. It is a perspective on language and language acquisition that extends far beyond literacy, products or achievements (Altwerger, Edelsky & Flores, 1987).

The relationship between teachers and students in a whole language classroom is interactive, with respect and accommodation for individual differences playing an integral role. The reading/writing program is negotiated by the teachers and children rather than imposed. The teacher acts as a facilitator, coach and helper who supports the young writers through risk-taking and error by creating a safe supportive learning environment for children to explore and experiment with language skills.

There are, however, a number of students who continue to have problems with writing tasks, who are reluctant to take risks to start the writing process, who find it difficult to accept the inevitability of errors when learning new processes (Graves, 1983a). Children who have been defined as "severely behaviourally disturbed" often experience learning in this way. The belief system of whole language has not provided teachers with effective approaches that could help those at-risk students to realize that they too can join the "literacy club" (Sawyer, 1991; Heymsfeld, 1989). Because these students often do not demonstrate that they view writing as a purposeful activity, they focus on knowledge-telling strategies rather than generating ideas, planning and revising. The lower level cognitive processes of spelling,

punctuation, sentence formation and neatness, while necessary skills for clear communication, are often the main focus of both students and teachers (Hull & Rose, 1989). The students often have difficulty finding language to describe their own writing processes which leads to additional problems in recognition and independent use of more advanced strategies.

Goodman (1985) believed that with the exercise of patience and whole language experiences could help these "severely labelled students" to "turn around and start believing in themselves as writers" (p. 57). According to him the transition will require a building up of their understanding of what print can do for them in the context of real literacy events. It is in this transition stage - the stage Vygtosky (1978) termed the "zone of proximal development" - that the introduction of advanced writing skills can provide support, or "cognitive scaffolding" to novice writers so they can recognize composing strategies and begin to transform their knowledge rather than merely tell it. Scaffolding "help" consists of "supports intended to enable students to carry out more complex composing processes by themselves" (Bryson & Scardamalia, 1991, p. 152).

The provision of specific models of writing strategies to children may appear a rejection of the freedom and creativity that the whole language program initially promised for both students and teachers. Rather than viewing the two approaches as conflicting, it is more useful to see them as complementary. Teaching advanced strategies represents a method of instruction that helps students utilize knowledge they already have or helps provide links until children are able to initiate higher level processes themselves. This approach presents "new forms, models, criteria" (Hillocks, 1985, p. 225), in the form of advanced skills or strategy instruction (Bryson & Scardamalia, 1991, Englert, 1990) to help provide the necessary "scaffolds" to assist children to develop the more advanced skills. Problems that the teacher or children pose related to writing are discussed together, with the students using their own experiences and sharing their own strategies as well as incorporating the new information into extending their writing efforts. The "scaffolding" assistance may also take the form of tips, strategies, dialogue or specific cues or prompts to help the child recognize or develop their own approaches to problem-solving.

Instruction in advanced skills is supported by many researchers and practitioners in the field of writing instruction. De Beaugrande (1984) suggests that "appropriately designed methods can provide a workable level of literacy to many children denied that privilege" (p. 8). He defines current methods of

teaching as "vague and elusive" and suggests that the writing tasks need to be "explicit and realistic" (p. 9). He describes at-risk students as those who need to have the processes and skills defined clearly enough to help overcome their blocks to written language production.

Elsasser & John Steiner (1987, p. 65) suggest that:

> short-term improvement in literacy skills can be achieved by motivating students and by reinforcing their written work. But only programs that build upon cognitive processes can help individuals meet the long-term objective of using their literacy as a tool of personal growth and social transformation.

Other researchers (Englert et al, 1991, Bryson & Scardamalia, 1990) have demonstrated that, at least for the learning disabilities population in their samples, when scaffolding techniques were provided, the children's writing improved. L.D. students produced:

> better organized compositions, showed increased awareness of their audience and ownership of their writing (as measured by significant changes in their reader sensitivity) as well as increased use of text structure features. The students who had received strategy training were more successful in generalizing their knowledge to less structured writing tasks.

(Englert et al, p. 365).

The use of advanced strategies and "scaffolding" approaches includes encouraging the children to relate their writing to their experiences and social context. In *The New Literacy*, Willinksy (1990), supports the need to generalize from literacy as task specific to literacy as a culturally dependent communicative social process. He points out that "literacy is not a series of sub-skills that are mastered and applied in isolated exercises" but an interactional process between writer and reader used to "discover, connect, respond and confront" (p. 153). The necessity of establishing a learning community to help students master the covert rules of oral and written language is emphasized by Heath (1987). She points out that habits of "observing, valuing and organizing", which have previously been considered "natural", are attained only through repetition in and out of school. The learning of writing, in her view, must consist of "multiplicity, infinite opportunities to categorize, label, recategorize, combine and associate knowledge" (p. 106).

Current research argues for the creation of a "culture of writing" that develops a collaborative social context supportive of written expression (Graves, 1983a; Bryson & Scardamalia, 1991). The shift

from working as an individual to working as a collective endeavour, re-emphasizes one of the basic tenets of the whole language movement. Not only do the peers provide a real audience, they also represent a portion of the unseen community who may have an alternate perspective from the writer's. Working together, there is the potential for the children to offer feedback and generate alternatives during the writing process (Englert et al, 1990, Elsasser and John-Steiner, 1987). However, for children who have been designated as "at-risk", particularly those described as "severely behaviourally disturbed", and who see themselves as non-writers, it is vital such support be offered. Not only do these children often approach writing tasks with a feeling of inability, but their personal interactional styles often interfere with effective use of collaborative approaches to writing activities.

Because each classroom has its own unique approach to literacy events, use of a whole language approach creates a number of challenges for teachers. First, there is a need to let go of the belief in a one-to-one correspondence between their teaching and the total learning experiences that happen in their classrooms. In part, this requires breaking from the tradition where the teacher provides knowledge and then questions the student, and replacing it with a situation where the teacher is receptive to, and questions, information provided by the students. This process constitutes new ways of learning for both the children and teacher. Rosen (1985) suggests that, when pushed to a logical conclusion, this recognition of different ways of talking and knowing could have powerful social and political implications for the child, the teacher and the community. For true, honest communication there must be equality among speakers. This shift in social relationships also requires an understanding of the educational impact of changing roles and states at a larger systems level (Elsasser & John-Steiner, 1987).

The review of the literature suggests that abilities in recognizing and using "audience awareness" skills are informally learned and also can be taught. Use of a whole language approach that recognizes the inter-relationship of listening, speaking, reading and writing and the need for involvement with meaningful texts and environments can help expand the children's communicative abilities in areas such as "audience awareness". The introduction of "cognitive scaffolding" techniques to provide strategies that help novice writers to develop beyond a basic level of ability and awareness can also focus children on such broader constructs as "audience awareness".

Research using the cognitive-developmental tradition presents affective and social cognition as

25

specialized applications of cognition attributable to intellectual abilities.

However, there is now recognition that literacy activities present an opportunity to both represent and confront the cultural activities of individuals and groups. This has led to an increased interest in the relationship of social context to the beliefs, practices and skills within the culture. As Elmer and Heather (1980) state:

> "The cognitive skills involved in representing the perceptions,
> feelings and intentions of other individuals have been explored,
> but not those involved in representing processes of transaction,
> negotiation and exchange between people, let alone those involving
> representation of the complexities of interpersonal relations". (p. 147)

The following section will review literature on the relationship of social context to the construction of the conceptions of writing held by children who are in a remedial behavioural class.

## C.   Writing Within A Social Context

Increasingly, both educators and psychologists have emphasized the role of context in cognitive activities. Rogoff (1984), for example, suggested that both the content and context of intellectual activity needs consideration to gain understanding of thought processes.

Vygotsky (1978) also held it necessary to consider social context. He observed that tools and practices were provided within each society to help develop solutions to that society's problems. He further observed that social interactions between children and more experienced members of their society channelled the information about these tools and practices, thus encouraging culturally specific responses. He also emphasised socialization, which occurs through formal institutions and informal interactions of the members of the society as central to the process of cognitive development.

Recently, literacy advocates have recognized the potential of exploring language learning as both a "social and personal invention" (Goodman, 1985, p. 18). Rubin (1988) suggested that neither a social nor cognitive focus individually provided an adequate perspective of writing skills. Rather than describe the processes as unrelated, researchers are now acknowledging that many writers consider both their own social and cultural contexts (Heath, 1983) and the needs of their audience in their message production (Flower & Hayes, 1987; Fontaine, 1988; Berkenkotter, 1981).

Several researchers preceded Goodman and Rubin in expressing this belief in literacy as both a social, and even political, act. These writers include Freire, (1972), Heath (1983) and Vygotsky (1978). Paulo Freire strongly opposed "the myths of neutrality, objectivity and impartiality which percolate every facet of education" (Mackie, 1980, p. 2). He believed that literacy could either liberate or oppress human beings. Focusing on how social and political structures inhibit the goal of literacy - the "humanization" of the learner -Freire emphasizes how language and literacy form our perceptions of the world and our intentions toward it.

In working with the "urban poor" people in Brazil, Freire involved illiterate adults as active participants and makers of their culture and history. He created learning situations that involved discussion and critical reflection to help the people "to become aware that they can know as conscious beings and therefore can act upon their world to transform it". (Bee, 1980, p. 41)

Throughout his writing, Freire (1972) stressed the active part the mind can play in learning. People see, experience, and discover particular things, depending on what they already know. Their first reflections offer a naive representation of their social context which, with help, can be replaced by more sophisticated and theoretical approaches that allow them greater control over their own lives (Matthews, 1980, p. 88-89).

Different cultures of literacy have different ways of defining literacy. In *Way With Words*, Shirley Heath (1983) suggested that the different ways the children in three communities used literacy was determined by the structure of their families, concepts of childhood, and definition of roles for community members. She defined these responses to their culture as learned behaviour, and saw language habits as part of that shared learning. The place of language in the cultural life of each social group is interdependent with the habits of and values attached to behaviour shared among members of that group.

Vygotsky shared this belief in a constant interaction between private and social meanings which in turn contributes to the social basis of meaning (Saint Amand, 1990). He also believed that we organize our lives through inner speech, the "language of thought". He believed that the development of internalized language was where "thoughts and speech unite." To be able to learn to write, he suggested not only requires the ability to learn cognitive skills but also to have a conscious awareness of both the

common social context that is shared with the reader and the potential for broader viewpoints. He supported the belief that the "communities in which the child spends his formative years must be absolutely crucial to his development and the development of society" (Britton, 1985 in Willinsky, 1990, p. 213).

Traditional classroom practices based on the belief that the child learns alone, are reversed by Vygotsky's beliefs that meaning - especially in language - develops first out of social experiences and then from the personal internalization of these social meanings. He believed that this understanding of the world is expanded by working in cooperation with others (Willinsky, 1990, p. 213).

When defining how literacy issues should be approached in the classroom, much of Freire's beliefs are similar to those expressed within the whole language approach. He emphasized a problem-posing approach and rejected the "banking" system of education, where teachers deposit information that students are expected to receive, memorize and repeat. Used knowingly or unknowingly, Freire felt this process dehumanized the students and turned them into "automans". Rather than have education as "an exercise of domination" (Freire, 1987, p. 65) he urged teachers to help students to study, learn and know, and to "internalize the discipline that is necessary for learners to discover and feel the inherent joy that is always ready to take hold of those who give themselves to the process of learning" (Freire, 1987, p. 214). These suggestions can be seen to point towards a classroom where the teacher becomes a facilitor, and where students can be mutual partners in the learning process.

In contrast to traditional research approaches to childhood cognitive and affective development Steedman (1982), Heath (1983) and writers such as Blazer (1986) used the words written by the children they observed to interpret the meanings of the social and cultural worlds of these children. Heath (1983) believed in the need for both students and teachers to explore and experience the role of participant in a language community. In her work in the Piedmont Carolinas she encouraged students to become "ethnographers" to help them develop links between their familiar strategies of knowing (personalized, contextualized and orally expressed) within their homes and communities, and the unfamiliar context and tasks of the classroom which often appear depersonalized, decontextualized and require primarily written responses (Heath, 1983, p. 321). In *The Tidy House*, Steedman (1982) interpreted the writing and

interactions of three young working class English children to provide a description of their socialization within their culture. She observed that their writing "offered them a chance to play with the sound patterns of their first language and also to deal with the systems of social meanings that underlay the words they wrote" (p. 98). Use of such interactive approaches to research examine the novice writer's role within their writing context and has helped provide insight into the dynamic nature of meaning making.

The works of Heath (1983) and Steedman (1982) reveal that the psychological implications of the process of writing and the function that writing served for the children have both similarities and differences to the uses of literacy made by expert writers. In addition to demonstrating that the children could begin to explore the meaning of their own lives, themes and symbols emerged that had a general cultural validity (Steedman, p. 152). The views of childhood development and skill attainment in the use of literacy were thereby broadened and expanded.

In the present study the children completed their writing activities within a unique environment, the writing group within their remedial behavioural classroom. Their social context thus differed greatly from that of their peers in mainstream classes. The unique differences of this learning environment and its effects on children's involvement in and conceptions of literacy activities will now be described.


**A particular context - the remedial behavioural classroom**

The effects of social context are highlighted within the confines of a remedial behavioural classroom. There are a number of reasons why these segregated classrooms may inadvertently perpetuate children's at-risk academic status.

The focus on behaviour management approaches, the use of the Individual Educational Program, the use of basic skill instruction described previously and the lack of opportunity for interactive social responses throughout the school day contribute to a restrictive learning context for the children. Each of these factors will be briefly discussed.

The traditional approach of behaviour modification to manage the children's behaviour can contribute to a lack of development of personal competence for the children in these classes. Management techniques frequently relate to individual star charts for positive reinforcement of desired behaviour and time out for negative behaviour. The general expectations in the regular classroom become

more explicit and obvious in behavioural classrooms The number of rules, routines and regulations of a regular classroom are often increased in these classes and at times appear to over-ride attention to the academic curriculum.

The approach of sending home children who "act out" as a means of dealing with extremes of behaviour is an alternate behaviour management technique. But this procedure means the children lose even more exposure to academic tasks, social involvement and modelling of appropriate behaviour and problem-solving techniques. In addition, this experience can confirm to the children that they are truly out-of-control and uneducable.

Further problems can be seen in the use of the Individualized Educational Program (I.E.P.). This planning approach was intended to provide programs tailored to the individual child, which involved parents and professionals in the planning process. What it may be doing is creating an educational approach in remedial education classes that focuses on individual needs to the exclusion of considering the benefits of group involvement and instruction. In other words, the I.E.P. may contribute to regressing the teaching approach to one of basic skill attainment to meet predefined lower level goals and ignoring the need for learning more elusive higher order strategies that are more difficult to define and assess.

When rewards and limits are consistently imposed by adults and the classroom focus is related to behavioural control, children defined as "behaviourally disturbed" may not have as many opportunities as their peers in the regular classroom to "display their own competence or monitor the competence of their peers" or to develop the "social collective" central to the creation of an environment in which they can be actively involved in writing tasks (Dyson & Genishi 1988).

During classroom hours, in behaviourally oriented remedial classes, verbal interactive responses of a social nature are frequently instigated by the adults. Those from the children are often negative and non-elaborative or discouraged as representing off-task behaviours. Therefore, two of the functions of spoken and written language, social function (the ability to create, express and to sustain human relationships) and interpretation of one's environment (Fontaine, 1988) - may be severely limited.

The learning environment for the three children in the remedial behavioural classroom described in this study was unlike that of any others described in research on literacy. Because of their placement

in the remedial behavioural class, they frequently did not have a variety of opportunities to demonstrate the full range of their academic and social competence. The limits dictated by the numerous classroom restrictions in most instances stifled the use of literacy activities to express their true thoughts and feelings.

### D.    Summary

The foregoing discussion has refined a number of issues related to the research question. First, definitions used to label "severely behaviourally disturbed" children have been shown to serve a purpose for educational and medical systems but to not address the needs of the child in a holistic manner. Second, the use of educational and psychological concepts such as "audience awareness" has been shown to provide a framework for defining developmental levels of this skill within cognitive and affective domains. The view held within remedial learning environments that focuses on attainment of basic skills rather than recognizing the contextual influences that effect children's use of both basic and advanced literacy skills was discussed. Third, recent developments in providing "scaffolding" techniques to help children attain advanced writing skills and to recognize the meaning of their writing were shown to hold promise for teaching at-risk children in mainstream classes. However, it has been suggested that the educational and social context of a remedial behavioural classroom may inhibit access to such liberating experiences. This context was shown as a potential contributor to limiting the children's conceptions of themselves as writers and their awareness of the potentials of literacy activities.

The provision of an alternate learning environment during the writing group which included both perspectives and approaches from the whole language movement and provision of "scaffolding techniques" resulted in the written products and interactions documented when observing the three children in this study. Their involvement in literacy activities provided a window to observe their conceptions related to all three of the issues discussed above.

In Chapter IV the responses of the three children are analyzed and discussed. Their answers to specific questionnaires, their writing of personal stories, and their verbal interactions will be viewed from a perspective that takes into account both the function and meaning their writing had for them and the influence of their social context on their writing.

**E.     Statement Of The Research Question**

The review of the literature has dictated a change of focus for the research question. The original designation of these children as "severely behaviourally disturbed" has been broadened to view the children, first as children, and secondly as students. The writing and affective skill of "audience awareness" has become a lens used to view the children's conceptions of the meaning of their writing within the context of their remedial classroom. Assumptions that labels for either the children described as "severely behaviourally disturbed" or levels of attainment of a specific writing skill (audience awareness) might imply have been discarded.

Given this reframed perspective the research question which this study now addresses is:

> **What are intermediate grade children's conceptions of literacy within their remedial classroom?**

CHAPTER III          RESEARCH DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

A.     The Qualitative Research Perspective

Over the years, quantitative research and statistical analysis techniques have provided educators

with abundant information about the writing skills of children. Recently, suggestions have been made that

the additional perspectives provided by qualitative methodology need to be added to the research

approaches used in this area of interest.

Hillocks (1985) provided a balanced perspective on the value of both methodologies to literacy

studies when he stated, "We cannot afford to reject one mode of research in favour of another. Rather,

if we wish to understand the processes of composing and to improve the teaching of composition, we need

to use whatever modes of research are useful" (p. 246).

A recognition that qualitative methodology had the potential for creating new knowledge,

reconceptualizing problems and relocating the problem area has led to an increasing number of

researchers choosing qualitative approach for their studies.

In choosing to undertake a qualitative study both choice of method and research perspective were

to some extent pre-defined. Qualitative studies focus on "recording the complexity of situational contexts

and interrelationships as they occur" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 148). The context, setting and frame

of reference of the subjects and both their own and the researcher's interpretations of their thoughts,

feelings and actions, provide the data for the study. This type of study attempts to discover questions,

answer the questions of why and how, and define processes and relationships in order to understand the

basic nature of the process under study.

Traditional research viewed literacy as a cognitive process, influenced by access to appropriate

knowledge and instruction, and definable in terms of quantifiable changes. However, writers such as

Heath (1983), Graves (1983a), Braig (1986) and Goodman (1985), when conducting research in the area

of literacy attainment, chose qualitative methods to "make accessible what might have been esoteric"

(Dyson & Genishi, 1988, p. 790). These authors viewed literacy activities as socio-cognitive functions

because they believed they were "socially derived activities involving socially derived knowledge, and

involving taught ways of thinking and problem-solving" (Sawyer, 1991, p. 17). The classroom and method

of instruction were also viewed as representing social and cultural beliefs because "they derive from social and cultural conceptions about teaching, educability, learning reading, writing and classroom life" (Sawyer, 1991, p. 16).

The ways that children experience their educational environment and how they share their understandings of literacy activities through both their writing and interactions can best be explored by observing their daily life and by participating with them in an exploration of a collaborative learning project. In so doing, it is possible to obtain a rich contextual description and to generate themes, identify recurring ideas and beliefs and determine the children's conceptions of the communicative potential of literacy activities.

The present study investigates an aspect of literacy learning and instruction. It accepts as a basic premise a socio-cognitive view of literacy: "Learning is socially based and interactive and that context produces or constrains both cognitive behaviours and the meaning the learners produce" (Langer, 1987). By researching the ways a group of children defined as "severely behaviourally disturbed" use and experience literacy skills in a classroom writing activity, the study attempts to clarify and extend knowledge about the interaction of context and literacy activities. The research perspective responds to the literature on children's writing skills that suggest an interpretive perspective is required to help uncover the meanings that children attach to their writing activities.

The qualitative perspective chosen for this study in many ways duplicates the writing process itself. It provides many opportunities to "categorize, label, recategorize, combine and associate knowledge" (Heath, 1987, p. 106). By involvement in the culture of the children in this study, a qualitative approach also respects the developing view of literacy as "a culturally based way of thinking rather than a simple act of reading and writing" (Langer, 1987, p. 17).

## Issues in qualitative research

When using qualitative methodology there are a number of concerns to be addressed that revolve around validity, reliability and objectivity.

Although researchers who choose qualitative methods such as Emig (1982) and Graves (1980) are said to have "condemned all experimental research as positivistic and scientistic" (in Hillocks, 1985), a

more reasonable approach to these concerns is to acknowledge them and to recognize that research data gains relevance if it's truthfulness is established.

Because qualitative research is inductive in approach, no fixed hypothesis is developed at the beginning of the study, nor is a specified experimental design developed to test predetermined propositions related to the research situation. "Guiding hypotheses" - questions and concepts developed from theory and research related to the area of study - may be used to help develop questions and possible directions when searching for patterns within data. However, as these new patterns emerge during fieldwork, the guiding hypotheses may be discarded as analysis of data produces new relationships among the concepts under study (Marshall & Rossman, 1989).

In challenging emerging hypotheses, searching for negative instances of the emerging patterns and determining which data is relevant to the developing themes and categories, it is necessary to ensure informational adequacy and usefulness and the plausibility of the introduction of any new hypothesis (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). The qualitative approach of developing a theory as data is collected can, however, lead to problems with external and internal validity.

## 1.   Enhancing external validity

Le Comte & Goetz (1982) define external validity by asking the question, "To what extent are the abstract constructs and postulates generated, refined, or tested by scientific researchers, applicable across groups?" (p. 221). In other words to what degree can observations and measurements, made within the fieldwork process that is used for qualitative research, be compared across groups? Qualitative research cannot be exactly replicated because these studies concentrate on "recording the complexity of situational contexts and interrelationships as they occur" ie., the studies are contextually relative to some extent (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 148). Qualitative researchers study events in the real world and consequently they are studying events that are in process and that change. Given that qualitative research responds to the changing research situation exact replication of qualitative studies is denied to future researchers.

There are, however, a number of ways of addressing the issue of external validity. These will be discussed in the following section with specific reference to how they apply to the present study.

Owens (1982) suggested approaches to enhance external validity in ethnographic research. Description of how these suggestions were used in the present study will now be described.

i)      **Accurate, systematic recording and analysis of data**

By using a recording process that describes each research decision and its rationale and by keeping all collected data, the researcher can easily make the findings available for re-analysis. While use of more formalized research instruments such as a structured interview helps to provide some data that could be compared across groups, the very nature of observing individuals within changing contexts means that generalizability in the strictest sense is difficult to establish. However, Becker (1990) suggested it is possible to develop generalizations "by seeing how each case, potentially represents different values of some generic variables or processes" (p. 240). By clear documentation of the process used to develop and implement the research design and by use of systematic data analysis it is possible to develop a similar model that could be used in future studies (Steedman, 1982; Heath, 1983; Blazer, 1986).

ii)      **Prolonged data collection at the research site**

Audiotaped and written data were collected over twenty sessions, in a specific research site with a stable number of respondents. Sessions varied in length from twenty-five to forty minutes in length. Staff remained the same during the research period.

iii)      **Member checks within the fieldwork situation**

A multi-disciplinary team approach was utilized by the program at the research site. This means that a great deal of consultation among team members was expected and did occur. This consultation extended to areas such as general interest, involvement and willingness to respond to questions, define their perceptions. Information sharing occurred in both a formal (weekly conference) or informal manner.

iv)      **Engage in peer consultation**

As well as the members of the thesis committee reviewing this study, there were a number of colleagues with research experience in areas of both health or education who were interested in the issues addressed by the study. Their input was solicited to add an objective perspective to the research process and observations.

**v)    Development of a "thick description"**

The final descriptions of the extended observations should result in observations sufficient for the to reader feel that they, too, have personal knowledge of the setting and the respondents. Participant observation is an interactive-adaptive process and involves immersion in the setting under study so the researcher can experience life in a manner similar to the participants. It allows the researcher to check definition of terms, observe events the participants cannot report and become aware of possible distortions between the subjects perceptions and alternate views (Rossman & Marshall 1989). The "understanding" that results from a qualitative study "assumes that a complete and ultimately truthful analysis can only be achieved by actively participating in the life of the observed and gaining insights by means of introspection" (Rist, 1980, p. 4).

After over sixteen sessions of participant observation in the writing group, as well as in one to one sessions, in the classroom, and participation in other groups and outings, it was thought that an in-depth description could legitimately be made of the culture of the special behavioural class and the children's culture of writing. Additional documents that were available to support or provide alternative perspectives were the teacher's log, the twice monthly case conference notes and the notes of the child care workers. Transcripts of three writing group sessions were made and extensive quotes from additional sessions were included in the data analysis.

**vi)    Definition of treatment if used**

In qualitative research, focus is rarely on treatment "unless a treatment or experimental manipulation is part of the overall context" (Le Compte & Goetz 1982).

The introduction of "think-sheets" and POWER writing outlines (Englert, 1990) to help present advanced writing skill strategies and the use of a group context for the writing activities could be loosely termed an "experimental manipulation". These two aspects offered an alternative approach to the majority of the academic work completed by the children which was primarily orientated towards the individual.

The advanced skills strategies and the group context were deliberately introduced to allow the children to participate in a literacy learning experience where they were encouraged to both pose and solve problems and compared to their usual experiences in the remedial classroom, to have increased freedom to respond to the sociocultural context in which they were writing.

## 2. Enhancing internal validity

Internal validity is defined by the question, "To what extent can qualitative observations and measurements be considered an authentic representation of some reality?" In other words, do scientific researchers actually measure what they think they are measuring (Le Compte & Goetz, 1982).

There are a number of approaches suggested by qualitative researchers to respond to the issues of internal validity. The following methods were incorporated into the present study.

### i) Interpretation of observations from multiple perspectives

By interpreting the detailed observations in the data from both the subjects' realities and perspectives, as well as that of the researcher, not only will the process be true to the qualitative approach but also broader patterns and processes (Rist, 1980) should emerge. Because many of the meanings of behaviours are part of an unconscious repertoire held by group members, it is necessary to question the participants for their own meanings and to seek additional information from others in similar situations. Obtaining information directly from the subjects who are studied by way of an interview has numerous benefits. The subjects know the setting better than the researcher; they can usually see both a broader picture and the parts of the setting and they often can offer an historical perspective.

### ii) Addressing the issue of respondent and observer bias

The question of whether the informants are both knowledgeable and accurate raises the issue of respondent bias. Salame (1977) suggests that even lies, when identified as such, provide useful sources of information. A variation of perspective can be provided by use of strategically selected informants and the "lies, incomplete perceptions and ulterior motives" (in McClintock, Brannon & Maynard-Moody, 1983, p. 160) can be viewed as representing aspects of the setting as much as the "truthful" statements of other informants. At least several of the children observed in this study were known to use fabrications and exaggerations as part of their behavioural repertoire. By keeping in mind that behaviour is motivated, these behaviours present interesting information to be included in the data.

Observer bias is also an issue in qualitative research design. Researchers must be aware of their own biases resulting from their own enculturation that may affect internal validity. Smith (1986) warns that "past experience and accumulated knowledge of a particular research site may provide considerable orientation to it" (p. 264) and this may influence the interpretations made of interactions or language.

However, by reporting both the pre-conceptions and post-conceptions of the research events to their reader, there is a more specific attempt to respond to observer bias and participant reactivity (Goetz & Le Compte, 1984).

In this particular research site, the program was newly developed and the study site was a new location for both children and staff. By the time data collection began the children had eight months experience in the setting. The presence of this researcher as a participant/observer within an activity that is generally considered "academic" (ie. developing/investigating literacy activities), was helpful in addressing issues about internal validity. Because the researcher approached the project lacking a strong educational and practical teaching background fewer pre-conceived ideas about literacy were brought into the study. However, in contrast to staff members the orientation used by this researcher in contacts with the children was generally one of problem-solving, rather than behaviour modification approaches that were used by other staff members. This does represent an acknowledged personal bias on the part of the researcher regarding approaches to children and their behaviour that varied both from the methods used in the research site, and in remedial behavioural classrooms in general.

## B.    The Case Study Research Technique

Of the variety of qualitative techniques available, the one chosen as being most congruent for the research was the case study.

Three criteria for making such a selection have been described by Merriam (1988). First, a descriptive and explanatory methodology must be required rather than a cause and effect result. Second, inability, lack of feasibility, or a specific choice to not manipulate the behaviour to obtain before and after data, must have been determined. Third, the variables may be difficult to identify or sufficiently embedded in the phenomenon to make study difficult.

The choice of three respondents and the study of their conceptions about literacy within their remedial behavioural classroom also fit the description of a case study as an examination of "a particular phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group. It is an instance of a larger concern, issue or problem" (Merriam, 1988, p. 217).

The type of case study used in this thesis is directed by both a psychological construct ("a study of an individual program, event or process") and an interpretive perspective ("used to generate conceptual categories or to illustrate, support or challenge theoretical assumptions") (Merriam, 1988 p. 219). By choosing to observe three children who share the same educational context, the themes that emerged increased in credibility as they could be compared and contrasted over time and situation.

### Summary

The choice of a case study research technique involves an interactive communicative approach between the observer and participant. A case study approach attempts to procure findings that are both credible and dependable. The problems that were addressed in this thesis required exploration of the conceptions of the children to add authenticity to the observations made by this researcher.

### C.    Data Collection

### 1.    Selection of setting for the study

This study was conducted within a remedial behavioural classroom in a newly developed Inter-ministerial Day Treatment Program, designed to respond to the educational and behavioural needs of eight children ages 6 to 12 years in a large metropolitan school district in British Columbia. Access to this setting was possible because of the researcher's position as the Occupational Therapist working half-time in the program.

Several factors made this facility ideal for research using a participant-observer format. There were a number of opportunities to interact with the children in learning situations beyond those focused around the writing group. An adapted school program which is individualized for each child was offered, with therapy and recreational and community activities provided as an integral part of the program. The school program was designed to meet individual behavioural, social and educational goals, using the traditional format of an IEP for each child. In addition, goals related to both child and family needs were being developed and changed throughout the school year.

In addition to general goals related to interactional and classroom behaviours individual target behaviours were defined for each child. A behavioural modification approach predominated during the

majority of the school day.

Strong expectations of collaboration among the educational and health care staff existed within the program. The program also emphasized opportunities for parents to participate in decision-making around program planning and treatment goals for their children and themselves.

The actual physical setting used during most of the data collection period was a small 10 foot by 10 foot ante-room to the main classroom which was also small and crowded. These two classrooms had been converted from three original rooms in the basement of the residential treatment facility. An additional basement room in another building 20 metres away was used for a cooking group, lunch room and a time-out room. There were two portables within 50 metres, used as classrooms for the children in the residential treatment facility in which the research classrooms were located. The children also had access to a grassy area and small adventure playground. This setting was four blocks away from the main school to which the program was attached. The setting was two blocks away from a community park and playground.

A specific context for data collection was introduced into the curriculum for the three sample children. This consisted of a twice weekly "Writing Group". Over a two and one half month period this provided twenty specific opportunities to participate and observe the children in a more focused environment. Each of the "Writing Group" sessions lasted from 25 to 40 minutes. The writing group was focused around the children's production of an information booklet about their school. The children were encouraged to discuss their ideas, needs, and topics of interest before they began the process of writing. They were given help when they appeared to need it or when they asked for it.

A specific instructional intervention was chosen for use within the writing group developed for this study. The choice of intervention technique, strategy instruction, was made first because current research (Englert, Raphael, Anderson, Anthony & Stevens, 1991; Bryson & Scardamalia, 1991; Graham, Macarthur, Schwartz & Page-Voth, 1992) indicated that such methods resulted in change in the children's approaches to writing, and second, because use of such methods matched the need for a more liberating problem-solving and problem-posing learning environment.

Strategy instruction for writing tasks has a number of goals. As introduced by Englert et al (1991) in their POWER writing model, it emphasized a number of more general facts of written language as well

as specific strategies within writing tasks. The POWER acronym referred to the words Plan, Organize, Write, Edit/Editor and Revise, was introduced and referred to frequently. Simple questions to help the children focus on the strategies they could consider in each facet of the writing process were used. As well, questions to help children retrieve relevant ideas, encouragement and coaching of editing skills, and a focus on writing approaches utilized by the other children in the group were emphasized. Specific procedural writing methods were made explicit by the use of individual "think sheets" and enlarged versions of these sheets were attached to the walls. The children were directed to the enlarged cue-cards to encourage independence in their use rather than reliance on therapist cuing.

The goals of POWER strategy instruction are designed to increase students' independence by developing their self-regulation of learning strategies. First, emphasis on the child's inner thinking and description of their writing process helps them to recognize their ownership and control of the writing process. Second, writing strategies and how these are incorporated into the writing process are made visible. The POWER writing outlines provide concrete guidelines for students in these areas. Third, instruction emphasizes the structures that underlie well formed expository text.

Englert et al (1991) further delineate what characterizes effective instructional interventions. They suggest "an emphasis on dialogue related to writing, the provision of scaffolding instruction and the transformation of writing from a solitary to a collaborative activity are necessary" (p. 338-339). In the present study dialogue between the children and between this researcher and the children was encouraged and elicited. Given the short nature of the study, most dialogue was of an external nature, with children responding to questions, thinking aloud or making suggestions to one another. Gradual internalization of these processes could be observed over the course of the sessions.

The children were encouraged throughout to use a collaborative approach in their writing to problem-solving, goal setting and in the various stages of pre-writing, writing and editing. Emphasis was put on the benefits of interaction with and use of their peers to develop their own writing club. The POWER writing models (Englert et al 1991) used were introduced into the sessions as a scaffolding instruction to help the children bridge the writing and social skills they had, and those required for independent work and interactions.

Besides the "Writing Group", additional time was spent with individual children, as needed, to help them use the school computer to type their stories. As well, this researcher continued her work with the children in both group and individual sessions in such activities as cooking, social skills groups, recess and lunch time activities, and play therapy.

2.      Selection of the respondents

Three of the eight children in the remedial behaviour class were selected as respondents. This small class size is typical of most remedial classes with class size seldom exceeding ten students even at a senior level.

The respondents, one girl aged 10, and two boys aged 9 and 11 1/2 were the oldest children in the class. This age group was selected for a number of reasons. The children had already been in the education system and exposed to academic materials and strategies for four to seven years. The developmental literature related to literacy attainment suggested that this was proximal for the assimilation and use of increasingly complex skills in their thinking processes and written productions. The children had demonstrated an ability to attend for longer periods of time and there was potential for slightly more mature interaction styles with them than with the younger children in the class. It was believed these abilities would make a collaborative project more productive for both themselves and would enhance data collection.

Introduction of the idea of the writing group was made to the parents of the children, prior to discussion about it with the children themselves first at a parents' meeting for parents of all the children who attended the school, and subsequently by use of an information letter and consent form to the parents of the three specific children in the study. The parents of the three respondents all expressed interest in the project.

The research setting represented a collaborative effort by education, mental health and social services to provide multi-faceted help for these children and their families. But it also offered a chance for the various professions to test, assess and diagnose the children before they joined the program. Consequently, all the subjects had a thorough educational, psychological and occupational therapy assessment before admission to the program or during the early weeks after their admission to the

# Figure 1

## PSYCHOLOGICAL, EDUCATIONAL, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY,

## SPEECH AND PSYCHIATRIC ASSESSMENT RESULTS OF

## THE THREE RESPONDENTS

(assessments were completed in school year of 1990 - 1991 preceding
admission to Slocan School for school year 1991 - 1992)

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

|  | JEANETTE | MICHAEL | BRIAN |
|---|---|---|---|
| **AGE** | 9.2 YRS | 10.8 YRS | 8.5 YRS |
| **WISC-R**<br>verbal<br><br>performance<br><br>full-scale | Average<br><br>Average<br><br>Average<br><br>Relative strength - reasoning and comprehension in areas of social judgement.<br><br>Relative weakness - short term auditory memory.<br><br>Lowest performance coding | Upper end of low average<br><br>Upper end of low average<br><br>Middle of low average<br><br>Relative strength - general knowledge and information<br><br>Relative weakness - digit span - short-term auditory memory<br><br>Lowest performance coding | Upper 1/3 of average<br><br>Lower 1/3 of average<br><br>Middle of average<br><br>Relative strength - general knowledge and information<br><br>Relative weakness digit span - short-term auditory<br><br>Lowest performance coding |
| **WRAT**<br>Reading<br><br>Spelling | Not assessed<br><br>Not assessed | Low average - grade equivalent 3E<br><br>Borderline - grade equivalent 2E | Average - grade equivalent 2E - 3B<br><br>Low average - grade equivalent 2M |
| **BENDER-GESTALT** | Not assessed | Not assessed | upper end of low average |
| **CHILD DEPRESSION INVENTORY** | Not assessed | somatic complaints below cut-off for depressive indicators | average range |
| **HOPELESSNESS INDEX** | Not assessed | average range | |
| **REVISED CHILDREN'S MANIFEST ANXIETY SCALE** | Not assessed | Significantly elevated anxiety score - markedly high scores on worry oversensitivity, social concerns and concentration | Acknowledged that easily angered<br><br>elevated score on physiological scale |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **KAUFMANN**<br>Math<br><br>Reading - decoding<br><br>Reading - comprehension | 50th percentile<br><br>16th percentile<br><br>8th percentile | Not assessed | Not assessed |
| **JORDON LEFT-RIGHT REVERSALS** | Inconsistent responses | Not assessed | Not assessed |

## EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

| | JEANETTE | MICHAEL | BRIAN |
|---|---|---|---|
| **LAC ASSESSMENT<br>MANN SUITER TEST**<br>Oral Reading<br><br>Word Recognition<br><br>Spelling | Grade 2 level<br><br>Grade 1 - Grade 2<br><br>4/20 words at Grade 2 | Not assessed | Not assessed |
| **WOODCOCK-JOHNSON**<br><br>Broad Reading<br>Broad Math<br>Dictation<br>Writing Samples<br>Proofing<br>Writing Fluency<br>Punctuation and Capitals<br>Spelling<br>Broad Written<br>Basic Writing Skills<br>Written Expression<br>Broad Knowledge | Not assessed | Standard Score<br>Mean 100 ± 15<br><br>96<br>95<br>88<br>87<br>79<br>101<br>75<br>84<br>86<br>81<br>94<br>98 | Standard Score<br><br><br>112<br>111<br>88<br>82<br><br>93<br><br><br>86<br><br>90<br>113 |

## SPEECH ASSESSMENT

|  | JEANETTE | MICHAEL | BRIAN |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | No speech assessment considered necessary | auditory memory and recall problems<br><br>difficulty understanding and using abstract concepts, solving verbal problems<br><br>disfluency<br><br>low self-esteem around communication | auditory memory a weakness<br><br>no statistical difference between receptive and expressive language |

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSESSMENT

|  | JEANETTE | MICHAEL | BRIAN |
|---|---|---|---|
| BRUININKS-OSERETSKY TEST OF MOTOR PROFICIENCY Composite SS (mean 50 ± 10)<br><br>Gross Motor<br><br>Fine Motor |  <br><br><br>33<br><br>49 |  <br><br><br>33<br><br>50 |  <br><br><br>56<br><br>44 |
| BEERY - Test of Visual Motor Integration<br><br>SS mean 100 ± 15 | 107 | 89 | 89 |
| SCIT DESIGN COPYING SS mean + 0.9 TO - 0.9 | + 0.9 | - 1.1 |  |
| DURRELL HAND-WRITING (speed of letters per minutes) | Grade 2 | Grade 5 | Grade 3 |
| GARDNER TEST OF VISUAL PERCEPTION (motor-free) perceptual quotient 100 ± 15<br>or<br>MOTOR FREE VISUAL PERCEPTION TEST perceptual quotient 100 ± 15 | 118 | 106 | 121 |

## PSYCHIATRIC ASSESSMENT

|  | JEANETTE | MICHAEL | BRIAN |
|---|---|---|---|
| **AXIS I**<br>Clinical Syndrome | Dysthymic disorder formulation made | Oppositional defiant disorder | ADHD<br>Oppositional defiant disorder |
| **AXIS II**<br>Developmental Disorder and Personality Disorders | Histrionic traits | Visual motor output problems | Developmental writing skills disorder |
| **AXIS III**<br>Physical Disorders and Conditions | Obesity | No diagnosis | Mildly abnormal EEG |
| **AXIS IV**<br>Severity of Psychosocial Stressors | Moderate - chronic poverty, mothers' depression, isolated family | Major stressors at home related to parents interactions and inconsistency | Severe stress |
| **AXIS V**<br>Global Assessment of Functioning | Fair functioning in the community | No diagnosis | Poor functioning in community in recent months with fair to good functioning in hospital |

program. Although they all were of average intelligence they all had been diagnosed as having learning disabilities in at least one area of learning. The two boys were assessed as having below grade level abilities in written expression. Each of the children had been given a medical/psychiatric diagnosis under the broad heading of behavioural disorder, followed by a more specific diagnosis from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-III-Revised* (DSM-III-R) that further refined the diagnosis into categories related to learning problems, maladaptive family interactions and medical problems. Figure 1 indicates the data available on each child.

Preceding their admission into the Day Treatment Program, the children had been in a variety of school settings. The girl had been in a regular classroom with an assigned child care worker, the two boys had been receiving home instruction because of violent-aggressive behaviour. The two boys were on "medical suspension" meaning they could not return to a mainstream school unless a psychiatrist certified that they would not hurt themselves, others, or property. Individual children were admitted into this program for periods of three months to two years, to allow for intensive treatment in the areas of behaviour, education and family interactions. This longer treatment period allowed for more frequent and prolonged observations.

The behaviour of the three respondent children was considered extreme enough to warrant special placement in a setting other than a regular classroom yet not so extreme as to warrant residential treatment. Of paramount importance for the children's admission to the program was the parents' willingness to participate in the family treatment program along with their children. The admission of the children into the Day Treatment Program was based on these and other established criteria and by a review of an admissions' committee consisting of staff from both Health, Education and Social Services.

3.     Selection of the data collection technique

Informed parental consent was obtained before data collection began. Questions from two open ended questionnaires were administered to the children preceding the introduction of the writing group. Questionnaire A was adapted from Braig (1986) and asked questions related to the child's perceptions of uses of writing, skills needed for writing and their view of themselves as writers. Questionnaire B investigated the children's awareness of the communicative intent of their writing as they rewrote a

familiar story for a child in their class who was at a primary reading level. The questions were developed to elicit responses indicating how the children made decisions about editing, goals of their writing, and preliminary approaches and thought processes they used in making their story meet the needs of their chosen audience.

Preceding Questionnaire B, each child completed an individual writing project. As a group, they read aloud a short soft-cover version of the book *The Ugly Duckling* retold by Lilian Moore (1987). This book was selected because of its reading level which was at a Grade 2 level. Following the Fry (1977) (in Harrison 1980) graph of readability level the method for determining this grade level was to take three individual randomly selected samples of 100 words from the book *The Ugly Duckling* (pages 10, 21-22 and 43). Syllables in each 100 word passage were counted as were the number of sentences. An average was taken of the three samples (117 syllables, 13 sentences) and plotted on the readability graph. Although this story reading level often presented a challenge for Jeanette, the boys were able to read it with general fluency. Additional reasons for selecting this story were its familiarity, (all the children commented they had heard it at least once before), and for the potential interest it might have for children who have been previously ostracized by their own school community.

Each child in the writing group was requested to select one of the five primary children in their remedial classroom, and to rewrite the book for this child. For this task the children rewrote the story using the classroom computer to produce the original and final edited version of their text.

Each of the three respondents were asked the same questions and their responses from Questionnaires A and B were tape-recorded and transcribed. If the children made a single word (yes or no) response, they were frequently asked to elaborate on their answers. (See Appendix I and II for questions and responses).

The first four sessions of the total of twenty sessions of the writing group were devoted to the administration of the two questionnaires and the rewriting of *The Ugly Duckling* story. In the remaining sixteen sessions the children wrote the stories that eventually formed their book *Welcome To Slocan School*. With the exception of two of the sixteen sessions when the tape-recorder did not work, the remaining fourteen sessions were all audiotaped using a small tape-recorder and 60-90 minute tapes.

A collection of stories written by each student during the sessions was filed in this researcher's work file cabinet under the pseudonym which each child had chosen for themselves. Anonymity of the data was maintained by use of a pseudonym for the children in the written body of this thesis. Field notes on incidents related to the children's questions and interactions about writing tasks were kept by this researcher. Additional comments and observations by staff were noted from case conferences and informal discussion.

## D.    Data Analysis

The analysis of data from this study was related to both the effect the broader cultural context of the special remedial classroom had on the communicative intent of the children and the search for a more specific culture of writing shown by the interactions and written products completed by the children. Two approaches to data analysis were taken. The first involved a two step process designed to isolate the children's conceptions of literacy. The second used a Freirian framework to define and link themes and consider the relationship of context with these themes.

i)    Analysis of conceptions

To establish the children's conceptions of literacy first the responses to the two interviews (Appendix I and II) were fully transcribed for each child. An initial analysis of the transcriptions was used to isolate emergent themes and categories. Reference was made back to this initial analysis in documenting both the conceptions of writing that the children brought into the group and those that emerged and developed throughout the sessions.

The method of data analysis required that each tape be played several times to enable notation of phrases or sentences related to themes the initial interviews had suggested or potential new themes. Although a number of comments were lost (noted as indistinct in the transcripts) every attempt was made to ensure that all relevant comments were transcribed. A second consistent person was asked to listen to any statement that was indistinct. Quotations from the field notes were included in the analysis. The relevant phrases or sentences were written on individual pieces of paper with care taken to maintain the context of the words by including preceding or following statements if this was relevant. The quotations were then sorted into tentative groupings that became the initial conceptions. Those phrases and

statements that fell into two categories were included in both.

The categorization of statements into conceptions was reviewed several times and field notes and discussion with colleagues were used to help identify or reaffirm the appropriateness of the analysis. Negative instances and alternative interpretations were noted within the conceptions. The titles for each of the conceptions were chosen to represent both the behaviour of the children and the abstract concept that was represented by each conception.

Three methods developed by other researchers for classifying the conceptual and developmental levels of the children's use of writing were also used to approach data analysis. The categorization approaches used by Berkenkotter (1981), Selman (1976), and Blazer (1986) have been discussed previously in Chapter I and provides a familiar framework and background to a more holistic orientation to the conceptual themes.

ii)    Freirian approach to analysis

The second and more extensive analysis, was informed by a Freirian approach which searched for meaningful themes, looked for links between themes, and tried to discover how these themes represented problems, or demonstrated "historical-cultural context" for the children in the study (Freire, 1972, p. 99). Given the focus of this perspective on research design, the educational and medical diagnosis of the respondents was not a central concern during the analysis.


E.    Limitations Of This Study

The choice of a qualitative research perspective and a case study approach specific to the children's school context provided rich data for the purposes of this study. However, this singular approach presented problems that might be considered to limit the study.

First, while recognizing that the social context of writers has wide-ranging implications on both cognitive activities and the writer's meaning-making, this study observed only one part of the respondents' culture. The remedial behavioural classroom, while admittedly a major influence on the children's lives, was not the only one. Their experiences with their families and their community would obviously have had significant effects on their responses and perceptions. These additional cultural contexts, while alluded to, were not explored. Second, the study did not address the influence of the five other students

on the respondents.

Third, it was only the children's experiences in the altered environment of the writing group that was studied. The effects of the larger classroom culture were subject to observation during data collection periods but not used for data collection purposes. Although this could lead to interpretive bias, the presence of at least one other classroom staff member in each of the writing groups was both a real and symbolic reminder of the larger classroom culture.

The influence and interactions with the two child care workers and teacher who were the major influence in the students' lives within the class resulted in the children writing descriptions and interpretations of specific remembered incidents within the larger classroom. While this accurately presented the children's perceptions it possibly misrepresented the staff who were caring, thoughtful people who genuinely extended themselves "beyond the call of duty" for all the children in the program. Inclusion of the children's interactions throughout the school day would have presented more incidents of alternate (ie. more positive) responses to the classroom staff.

The involvement of this researcher as a participant observer in an "educational" activity related to literacy skills created as much dissonance for myself as it may have created for the children. On one hand there was the challenge to be the "good" teacher, able to offer a learning experience that extended the children's classroom literacy experiences and skill level. On the other hand this researcher's resistance to the role of teacher meant that use of the "scaffolding" strategies may have been presented in a less effective manner than might have done by a "real" teacher. The written productions of the children may have been even more informative if they had been given expert instruction. An alternate view was that the strong group therapy skills that this researcher brought to the setting helped the children feel comfortable and enabled the honest responses they demonstrated in their interactions and written communications.

Future research could address the influence of these varied and larger contexts on the conceptions the children have about their literacy experiences.

**F.     Summary**

This chapter outlined the research design and implementation of this study.  It identified the qualitative research perspective and addressed issues of external and internal validity sometimes raised by use of this methodology.  The specific research technique chosen for this study, that of a case study, was defined and then demonstrated to match the needs of the research question.

The chapter continued by describing the selection of the setting and respondents.  Three intermediate grade children in a remedial behavioural classroom that was part of a Day Treatment Program for eight children ages six to twelve were chosen.

Description of the data collection techniques and data analysis process was outlined indicating use of structured questionnaires and audiotaped sessions.  Data analysis was based first on comparison to pre-existing categories and developmental levels, and then second, through the development of new categories and themes.  This part of the thesis concluded by discussing the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER IV        THE CHILDREN'S CONCEPTIONS OF WRITING

AND THEMSELVES AS WRITERS

> If we are to understand a child's view of writing in school,
> we must ask children themselves to interpret the situation
> and their products for us. Such studies, designed to help
> us understand children's concepts of their writing, can provide
> a valuable new perspective on that which adults may take for
> granted (Hudson, 1988, p. 43).

Obviously, some progress has been made in understanding how learners construct meaning and make sense of their learning experiences. As noted in Chapter II one area of research has investigated how literacy skills are socially constructed. If learning and literacy can be viewed as social in nature, then we need to elaborate how literacy is shaped by its social context. The new literacy, Willinsky (1990) claims, "engages schools as sites of possibility" (p. 239) where students can "be educated to take their places in society from a position of empowerment rather than from a position of ideological and economic subordination" (Giroux, 1986, p. 49 in Willinsky, 1990, p. 235). For the subjects of this study, their educational site was the remedial behavioural classroom: its instruction, the interactions that occurred and, more broadly, the social network constituted by the classroom. The examination of these elements presents a framework to discuss possible reasons why the remedial behavioural classroom only partially addresses the needs of children who have been described as "severely behaviourally disturbed."

This chapter will first describe the conceptions the three young respondents had about themselves as writers. Using responses from a structured interview and quotes from their verbal interactions during the writing group/sessions, a picture of their beliefs about the function and process of writing, the problems which writing poses, and their own and others writing abilities, was developed.

Second, the chapter will detail the ways in which the respondents demonstrated their personal awareness of their immediate audience - their peers, and of the hidden but ever-present audience that would read their work.

In the process of observing and participating with the three respondents in their collaborative writing project it became obvious that they each had a personal story they wished to tell. Collectively, they had a story to which parents, teachers, administrators and educators of teachers need to listen.

Consequently, the third part of this chapter will describe their stories. The themes that emerged around the thoughts and feelings the respondents had about their placement in a remedial behavioural class provide telling insights into their literacy experiences.

The data will be analyzed and discussed using three frameworks. First, the children's knowledge and beliefs about the purposes of literacy will be explored. Second, their actual communicative competence will be demonstrated by using school-based literacy tasks. Third, the more abstract thoughts and beliefs around the meaning of their writing will be discussed. The chapter ends with a metaphoric encapsulation of the social problems that faced the children and their attempts to bring order and understanding into their lives.

## A.    The Children's Initial Conceptions Of Literacy Activities

> The children explore their knowledge about the
> role of a writer for themselves and others.

### Jeanette

Jeanette was a plump blond-haired ten year old, the only girl in the writing group and the oldest of two girls in the classroom. Originally designated as the "queen" in a play the children created during free time in September, she rapidly became the child most frequently scapegoated by the majority of the other children. She was sensitive to the needs, behaviours and feelings of others and herself - so sensitive that she frequently collapsed into floods of tears after real or imagined slights from the other children. A child who clearly wanted to be the boss of adults, particularly her mother and teachers, in one-on-one session, she revealed she could be insightful, empathetic and creative in discussing alternative to extremes of behaviour.

Of the three children in the writing group, Jeanette saw herself first and foremost as a writer. "I'm an author", she would say. "I'm going to send my story to a publisher and get it published". No project was too big. "I want to write a play - a play for a movie". Curiously, the only thing that she thought could stop her from such a venture was, "I can't because you need three pieces of I.D".

Jeanette gained support for her writing skills from both home and school. Her teacher, she confided, had said she was "the best writer and best artist in the class" and her grandparents "really read

them [her stories] and sent their opinions back." Her mother was seen as a strong advocate of her skills. "My mom is sending my story to a publisher", she proudly related one day. In a separate conversation with her mom about Jeanette's tendency to exaggerate incidents in a way that might compromise her safety, her mother related a family trait of "tall tales". She said she tried to redirect Jeanette by getting her to put her tales into story form.

During the interview, Jeanette provided a comprehensive understanding of both the function and process of writing. Her initial response went immediately to the heart of why people write and represented how she herself used writing, "to communicate". She could also see that writing had other uses: for business and planning, and for social interaction. Using this knowledge she was able to define a range of writing that she knew she was able to do, citing funny stories and funny poems, "writing my mom a note", use in games, and "my journal", as examples.

For Jeanette, the hard part about writing was "writing it down". She at times was concerned with the look of the written product and during initial groups protested when her story was edited by others. "Don't write on that - it makes it look awful", she pleaded to the boys in the group. In the initial interview, she introduced this idea only once, however, by referring to her "handwriting and stuff like that" as something that others liked to read. Like the other children, she preferred to dictate her ideas, and when she did, her stories were more complete and flowed well.

The use of the computer to augment handwriting proved frustrating for her. "I'm never going to use that computer again," she claimed, when she had to learn a new function. When she had to type, the length of even one of her short stories overwhelmed her and she would begin to edit parts out to make it shorter. "I'll never get it done. I shouldn't have done one so long", she would moan, "I'm going to leave that part out". A computer at home remained broken and unused, partly due to financial constraints and partly because of lack of interest on Jeanette's part in using it.

Jeanette was able to clearly articulate the creative process as involved in writing. "I don't want to write on a topic." "I can't do it - it's too hard", she would state yet admitted to writing stories at home. When asked how she decided on a topic, her response indicated her own method for generating acceptable topics. "I just think. I just think about "bike" and then write about it". In one session she sat quietly without producing any written material. When asked what she was doing she responded, "Thinking", and

was given support for the idea that authors do need time to think. She readily expressed her annoyance over much interruptions in her thinking when primary children entered the writing room, "Well, maybe I get an idea and as soon as I get it, interrupts (sic) the door. I can't think about it, I can't remember it". She much preferred "to go somewhere like the middle of City Park where there are no paths and no people", to think.

Left to her own methods, writing for Jeanette was "really fun". She "might get a reward for it" like the badge that she got at camp but most of all the rewards of writing were inherent in the process. "It challenges my brain" and "You get to make up stories that aren't true", she responded enthusiastically when asked, "Why do you like to write?" "Using her head" for writing was acceptable and enjoyable, in contrast to her beliefs about reading which she described as "I can't read - I just use the pictures. I can't sound out the letters. Everyone says to do that but I can't".

Some of the problems writers face, and what makes a poor writer, were clear to Jeanette. A poor writer was a procrastinator, thinking, "Well I'm not going to do it today, maybe I'll do it tomorrow". They were also people who "wanted to write it but didn't want to write it" (do the work). Her perception that poor writers were not willing to do the work led to her protesting on several occasions, "That's not fair, you are doing everything for them", when the other children dictated their stories to this researcher.

Both the problems and privileges of co-authoring presented challenges for her, as it does to many authors. She had briefly worked together with Brian on the ideas that eventually became *Go, Go, Go To School*. When Brian helped edit it, she claimed, "This is just mine because I did all the work and Brian did hardly anything". She pointed out that "Brian has done just editing. I'm doing everything else and he gets the privilege of putting his name on it".

Editing of her work by the other children or adults presented a dilemma for Jeanette. Although she understood the idea behind the process of editing, her most frequent response was rejection. When questioned about why she so rapidly dismissed the ideas of others she responded instantly and with force, "I don't like any of them." At this point she also referred to earlier discussions about the prerogatives of a writer to choose which editorial comments to include. When it was suggested that she at least consider the ideas more fully before she threw them out, she stomped out of the room. Her need to establish

"ownership" of her stories was shown again when she insisted that both *The Power To Learn About Schools* and *Go, Go, Go To School* (the expanded version she had completed with Bill, the child care worker) should be included in the booklet *Welcome To Slocan School*. However, she didn't want Bill's name on the story because, "Then people might think the boy had written it".

From both her stories and her responses it could be seen that Jeanette had already absorbed and could use advanced writing strategies. She was aware of the benefits of using a model to help improve the style of writing and initially urged the others to write "a book like they [the authors of the information leaflet about the local Children's Hospital] did." Of the three students, Jeanette was the one who would most frequently initiated such questions as, "Can we brainstorm again?" to help in the writing process. She provided suggestions to the other children based on her own knowledge and experience in writing. Her focus on readability and having the story make sense led her to try in vain to convince Brian to "Make it more like a story and not like a list" when editing *Fun Stuff/Boring Stuff*.

For Jeanette, presenting writing in a form where "You can understand it better" was important. It was important to "use my head and not write using other people's books". Given Jeanette's positive awareness of herself as a writer and the writing process, her belief that "I might grow up to be somebody who wrote a lot of books - an author" might just come true!

**Michael**

Michael, a chubby, round-faced, dark-haired nearly twelve year old, was the oldest child in the class and clearly acknowledged by the other seven children as leader. However, he often used this position to align the other boy in the group, Brian, with himself and against Jeanette. Master of a shrug and upward rolling eyes in response to suggestions or requests he didn't like, at the end of a year in the program he was still likely to burst into tears when frustrated. Although his attitude of always being in the right changed, he continued to have difficulty in asking for or receiving help and in saying he was sorry. He varied between demonstrating empathy for the younger children to a "he/she/they deserve it" response to the distress of others. The expectation that he would work independently at academic tasks often resulted in anxious and negative behaviour.

Initially Michael appeared to have no sense of himself as a writer. As a comedian he had more of an image of personal competence and he used his writing to explore this role. "What kind of writing (of your's) do the others like to read?" he was asked. "Maybe a comedy or something" was the idea he thought would be enjoyed.

Michael generally wrote because someone else (the teacher, the principal, the researcher) wanted it. "Why do you write?", this researcher asked. "Because I have to. I gotta (sic) write in my journal", he responded. However, with encouragement Michael could expand his answer and explain additional functions of writing. Social communication was cited as a main purpose - "to get to other people" and "to write to other people and tell them what's happening". As well, he thought of "writing to other people and to grandparents" and "to share information such as the weather". In academic work he could use writing "to take notes, my journal, my language, my math and my homework". With further questioning he was able to extend the possibilities to sharing "what you're thinking of or feeling".

Although he described his parents as using writing for "paying bills, taking notes and sending letters", Michael was unable to describe additional functions of writing in his home. Interest from home about his writing was only discussed in the final two sessions when he insisted he wanted to have the original copies of his stories to show his parents.

Michael could clearly see the use of writing as a way of maintaining a level of personal control.

"Let's say you are doing your drawing and then you'll write your name or something and then you send it away or something", he suggested. The power of a sign he had made, "NO GIRLS AT THIS TABLE" impressed him as a way to "bug" the other children. "The teachers are cute and sexy says Jeanette", he wrote in his first draft about school. The use of his initial draft information or editorial comments as a way "bug" Jeanette was tried numerous times throughout the sessions. When Jeanette provided the expected response of outrage and tears, he easily produced his comedy script - changing the words to "said Tom Cruise!! & Robert De Niro".

Despite Michael's knowledge of the varied functions of writing, he described a good writer in terms of concrete skills, suggesting that what was important was "his printing or stuff. Like if he tries". Poor writing was described as "writing that goes down the paper so that it's like a die-angle". He also speculated on what constituted a poor writer. "They don't try to write down, like the thing. And working around them breaks their concentration". A poor writer was also someone who "doesn't write good stories", who "doesn't try" and whose work was "sloppy". When asked what kind of writing that he did that others liked, he often returned to concerns about appearance. "I usually do printing", "Handwriting, printing," and "It's neat". "It's not smudgy", he would explain.

At one level, Michael found generating ideas difficult. "It's hard to think of a story that is right out of base - that's out of nowhere". Yet in retelling *The Ugly Duckling* and when typing in his story about *Behaviour, People and Fun*, he chose to ignore his brainstormed ideas or the book as guides to organize his thinking. Instead, he composed as he sat at the computer, continuing with a free flow of ideas that did not show much variety in content. Although he could use the computer to put down his ideas, at times he suggested that writing ideas in long hand was necessary before typing it in on the computer.

Writing for Michael represented something private. "Nothing on mine - not on my story" and "Mine is already organized" would greet suggestions related to a possible change in sequence or other editing comments by others. If a suggestion was made to leave out information his response at first was "Well, I'm going to keep it -it's my own personal story" and "They don't have to read it" (if they don't like it). As sessions continued, editing of his own work by others became more tolerable to Michael - "The

teachers are nice and sometimes mean and sometimes fun", he read to the group for editing suggestions. Brian picked up on the missing part about "sexy teachers" and asked, "So you are going to edit the last part are you?" Michael, still reluctant to give up his humorous comment, (and perhaps sensitive to repeated suggestions to eliminate this part) replied, "I may, but I don't want to read it".

Use of revision symbols became more tolerable and even useful for him. "I used one of those marks - that means change order" he proclaimed. Changes in simple surface text took up much of Michael's attention. When asked, "What are you going to do when you edit?", he replied, "Capitals and periods, spelling mistakes, punctuation and revising it." However, during the final session, he appeared to have at last "gotten it" (sic) and began to independently make suggestions to Brian about joining and deleting sentences to aid in clarity. He also shifted and changed large sections of his own personal story so it would "sound better".

However, Michael continued to vary in his propensity to let others edit his work. During one of the last sessions he spontaneously asked Jeanette, "Do you want to hear my story?" When asked if he wanted Jeanette to be his editor, he replied, "No, I'm just reading it" - demonstrating a reluctance to accept suggestions from a peer who was acknowledged as being a "good writer". Suggestions from the other boy Brian, and staff, Bill, appeared more tolerable. "I took Bill's idea", he said proudly, and within that same group he claimed, "When Brian's finished then I will have had three editors [Bill, Brian and this researcher] look at it."

Although Michael could repeat the POWER writing words that had been introduced as an advanced writing strategy, he was still in the process of expanding his knowledge of how to use them to improve his writing. He undertook to provide some "scaffolding" himself, particularly for his buddy Brian, by offering to help write down ideas and making suggestions such as, "Put it into paragraphs". He made use of either the individual or enlarged "think sheets" to identify the stage he was at with his writing. Gradually he progressed to the point where he was able to shift his ideas to enhance the meaning of his writing.

By the final session Michael saw his writing skills in a much more positive light. When he described himself, he wrote, "Michael is a star at writing stories. He is good at writing drama. I get my

ideas from my head". The writing group had taken on enough importance for him that he now explained, "I go to a writing class every Monday from nine-thirty a.m. to ten o'clock". It appeared that writing had changed for Michael from being something that's "easier than drawing" to something that offered possibilities - the possibility of "writing a travel book" or of having his ideas accepted by a larger audience.

## Brian

Brian was a freckle-faced, slender nine and a half year old with reddish hair, who had energy to spare. He was the youngest child in the writing group and would do anything to remain friends with the oldest boy, Michael. Although frequently tearful when disciplined in the classroom, he had gradually gained control over the impulse to rage when frustrated. Described by the staff as likeable and as one of the most considerate of the children in the classroom, he at times expressed concern about adults and inquired about the children of the staff outside the context of the remedial classroom.

In the writing group Brian readily offered help to the other two students in the one area he felt competent in - that of spelling. His perception of himself as a writer was negative. "I'm not a storyteller", he stated during initial groups as he tried to retell the story of *The Ugly Duckling*. "I'm not a writer. I just copy stories". A sense of lack of control and personal initiative over his ability to write, and to a lesser extent over his behaviour, pervaded his responses throughout the sessions. A boy of few words, he frequently displayed "distractible" behaviour, playing with equipment, slouching on pillows, mumbling off topic comments. Although Brian realized his family used writing to send off "bills and stuff" and "to leave messages", he never mentioned their interest in his own writing. His father, however, had expressed considerable interest in the writing project when it was first introduced to the families and said he would like to read this completed thesis.

Brian described the reason for writing as "to explain something". He related this to elaborating "something that the teachers say", rather than something he might want to explain or expand on by himself. Throughout the sessions, writing for Brian represented something frustrating and seemingly unattainable. When allowed to dictate he was happier, but still searched for ideas and content, frequently relying on others' ideas.

Above all, writing for Brian had to do with handwriting. In the initial brainstorming sessions he suggested handwriting as something of interest to the readers of the booklet the group was writing. Good writing was defined as "handwriting". A concern over neatness created problems for Brian when editing his own or others' work. The use of editing arrows, addition of new words and most feared of all, crossing out even a single word, were often met with resistance. The genuine difficulty Brian experienced with the

motor output aspect of writing affected his participation in the writing project. Each word became precious if he had to write it down himself. "Every word I write down is staying in", he insisted. Adding information suggested by others during editing was frequently rejected as much because he would have to write down the ideas, as it was a rejection of the content of the suggestions. Brian could take a firm stance on what he believed was a good format and idea. When he read out his lists for his story about fun and boring stuff he was given support that lists were one form of giving information. However, although the majority of suggestions from the other children were related to putting it in a story form, Brian steadfastly maintained his list idea through the final editing.

By the end of the writing group sessions a subtle change had happened. Having seen that the computer could ease problems with the motor aspect of writing, the use of revision symbols gradually became acceptable to Brian as short forms to change the order of surface text. He was also able to see that the computer could help him to "change the ideas around". When discussing editing and my efforts at writing this thesis he expressed horror at the thought of having to rewrite a paper ten times. "Ten times! Holy!" he exclaimed. "You should have a computer. Have one program that keeps on printing it ten times". When it was explained that the revised information had to be different he suggested, "Just write it and save it". Jeanette listened to the conversation and recognized that it wasn't quite that easy. She suggested, "And add some words".

The ideas that Brian independently produced were also precious and his to own. In the first brainstorming session he protested, "Don't write that down - it's my idea - I don't want her (Jeanette) to use my idea". However, throughout the sessions Michael's ideas continued to be the predominant means Brian used to generate text and he readily incorporated examples and ideas from adults. In discussing the possible content for his personal story this conversation ensued.

Brian:      I don't know what to write. You write it.
Aileen:     It's not my story. My story would be completely different.
Brian:      Let's hear it.
Aileen:     When I first started at this school, I was a little bit worried.

A discussion followed about why I would use this type of opener. Michael suggested he should dictate his story first because "His (Brian's) won't be so long". When it was Brian's turn to dictate, he clearly stated, "I want the same story as Michael's". Despite Michael's protests he began to dictate a story

that duplicated my opening line (one Michael had copied too) and continued with content similar to Michael's.

Brian's sensitivity towards others' feelings often worked to his disadvantage and created distractions for him in the writing sessions. Laughter from Michael over his spelling of the word "Slocan" and the order in which he presented his ideas resulted in a quick defense. "Aileen did that. I only wrote to there, that's all". Over half an hour later, after lots of encouragement but minimal increase in his contribution of ideas, he suddenly said, "I want my copy back - I want my original." When he was given it he stated, "It is spaced. Look ... I wasn't the one who did it". Having indicated that he had at least kept his work neat and orderly, "not sloppy", he was able to begin to again participate in the session.

To some extent Brian's early description of his writing skills were true. In his final story, using an example provided by children's author Robert Munsch to guide his description of himself as an author, he stated, "He gets his ideas from other stories and from a person called Aileen Stalker". When it was pointed out that he got his ideas from his head he changed the information to "and from POWER writing outlines".

By referring to the POWER writing outlines, Brian clearly indicated that the use of advanced writing strategies had been a help in the writing process. Throughout the sessions he was the child who most frequently referred to the enlarged versions of the think sheets that were on the walls of the group room. However, he needed help to make use of the cuing questions. When asked, "What is your topic?", he would respond, "Topic?" in a quizzical voice and further explanation would be given. At other times he could use the POWER words accurately and with barbed intent, such as when he insisted that he was going to "edit it in" with the phrase "Teasing Jeanette". The outlines and the visual cues helped to make clear some of the words and organizational skills he needed to become more independent in his writing. They provided him with necessary scaffolding to begin making use of some of his own ideas and helped to shift his perception of himself as a writer. His final story began "Brian is a story-teller" - and this time he appeared to believe it.

Summary

Using Blazer's developmental levels regarding knowledge about writing as a framework, it can be shown that the three children demonstrated a range of awareness and movement between consecutive levels of knowledge about the purposes of literacy activities. Brian was generally at a literal and concrete stage with emphasis on the graphic display of the work and little attention paid to the potential for making meaning by writing. In his interview answers he seemed to have only an initial awareness of the relationship between oral and written language and of written language as a tool of communication. As will be described subsequently, Brian's actual written productions demonstrated a more advanced construction of personal meaning. His ability to respond to the needs of his audience developed as he made use of the external cues from his peers and of teaching materials which emphasized advanced writing strategies.

Brian's concern about handwriting reflected numerous messages he had received during previous experiences with writing tasks. While his handwriting verged on illegibility, he had not been challenged to forget appearance and concentrate on developing his own ideas. He did not use his ability to build upon group ideas from brainstorming sessions. During his year in the behavioural class he improved somewhat in responding to a daily journal question but still was hesitant to explore his own thoughts.

In contrast, the support that Jeanette got for her writing from both school, her mother and people outside her home meant she had an expanded social context that recognized her literacy skills and reinforced her own self worth. She saw herself as a writer and was able to demonstrate that she could control content by providing real or imaginative text depending on both her own needs and her perception of the needs of the reader. Her writing demonstrated that she could be placed at the creative level of both knowledge and ability regarding writing.

Michael could be described as in the constructive stage, exploring the problem-solving process necessary for progress to the creative stage. Not only was he learning to accept the ideas of others, he also explored how to alter meaning in his text to get a desired response. His responses around knowledge about writing showed this transition stage in their variation between a focus on grammar and graphics and a recognition of the potential to use various forms of writing to meet the needs of his audience.

All of the children started by seeing the purpose of literacy activities as others defined and others required. Yet as the writing groups progressed, they had real proof of the interest of their peers, and increased experiences with collaborative writing, they began to shift their beliefs about their writing. This shift took place as they increased in their ability to tell their own real story and to have others read it and believe it.

B.      Rewriting A Familiar Story As A Metaphor For Their Lives

>       The children use a metaphor to begin an exploration of
>       their lives within and without their behavioural remedial
>       class.

Re-writing the story of *The Ugly Duckling* was a project the three children in the writing group completed with varying levels of enjoyment. They all liked the version of the story that was read together and set to work using the computer to tell their version of the story. Their own re-written version of the story was to be given to a primary child who they had previously selected in their class.

During this early period some of their approaches to the writing process gave glimpses of their sense of audience. Additionally, their comments about their own versions of the story demonstrated varying awareness of the needs of the specific primary child whom they had selected as their special audience.

**Jeanette** took only one session to write her story using no help from either notes or the book. In its original form it read:

> **The beautiful duckling**
>
> A duckling was in a pond when the duck was suddenly in the air.
>
> I'm flying. The duck was so happy he didn't see the hunter who
>
> shot him down.

Her startling ending at first seemed incongruent with her own sensitive nature and on the surface could be interpreted as an unpleasant reminder of the type of "disturbed" thinking that resulted in her placement in a behavioural class. However, further questioning revealed that Jeanette had accurately observed her audience and had wanted to appeal to the younger child's interest in guns.

Usually quite verbal, Jeanette gave terse one word answers for many of the interview questions about her re-writing. She "hated" the tape recorder and frequently made comments during following sessions such as "Turn that stupid tape off" and "Why is that beside me?" She was aware that there was an audience that might hear her words and she was suspicious of them.

Jeanette was generally satisfied with her version of the story and having been unwilling to start the rewriting process was not about to acknowledge it could be rewritten in an alternate form. Jeanette made a deliberate decision to "trash" the original "dumb" version and make her "own story", one she claimed she had written before in kindergarten and that which would meet the needs of her selected audience. However, for another child in the primary class she said she would make an extra effort. She would make "the writing really, really small so he would have to squint, squint, squint" - because "I hate him." She envisioned how her story could be typeset to "get back at" someone with whom she was having difficulty. That is, Jeanette saw the possibility her writing could be manipulated to evoke positive or negative responses in her readers.

Jeanette's conclusion to the story shifted its moral considerably from the original. The duck who was "suddenly in the air" and was "so happy", "didn't see the hunter who shot him down." Jeanette spent her entire year in the class protesting the injustice of her placement: no one had really told her what the class would be like or asked her if she wanted to go to it. Like the duck she had not seen the hunter who shot her down and wanted to warn others.

**Michael** sat at the computer and began to work immediately when asked to begin his version of *The Ugly Duckling*. He was most concerned about the appropriate title, finally keeping the original. The use of a title to define and shape his writing was apparent in other sessions that followed. As the following conversation with Michael and Jeanette and this researcher indicates:

| | |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | What are you thinking about at this moment? |
| Michael: | Nothing. I'm just drawing pictures. |
| Aileen: | You are starting with the pictures? |
| Michael: | No, I have the title. |
| Aileen: | Do you always have to have a title before you start? |
| Michael: | Yes. |
| Jeanette: | No, you write the story and then have a title. |
| Aileen: | Yes, sometimes you can write it all down and do the title at the end. |
| Michael: | Yeah but then you have to read it all again. Say, if you said it was "The Hitch-hiker", it's easier. |

Finding the title first and then moving sequentially to the development and completion of the story made eminent sense to Michael as an efficient way of recording his thoughts. Yet he would progress from title to text with little apparent regard for his audience. While choosing the original title, Michael's actual story gave little resemblance to the original and on the surface appeared to have little regard for his audience until he directly addressed them at the end of the story - "I hope you enjoyed the story." His completed story in original form was:

### The Ugly Duckling

It was winter the air was cold in the town of little Tokyo.

The ugly duckling was being kicked at and hit. The ugly

duckling left the town of Tokyo! Then he went to Vietnam!

He did not stay long because of the war! Then he went to

China & Japan. Then he went to the U.S.A. Then he went to

a veterinarian he would be cared there. He left in two days.

Then he walked out and got shot THREE TIMES BANG BANG

BANG HE WAS DEAD!!!

Although he commented as he typed "I don't know what I'm doing. Well, this bird likes to travel", his story remained consistent with his original plan of a travelling bird. As he got closer to the end he defined another goal. "At the end will be a sad ending - he will get shot up - have him for roast beef." However, his question as he finished, "Does it make sense?" suggested that he did have some awareness of his audience's needs. Having as his audience a primary child who was just beginning to read, his writing concern focused on the surface features of length of story, size of letters and limited "hard words". He recognized that including the names of foreign countries and cities might present a problem but felt they "made it good".

The questions Michael asked himself as he composed reflected both simple and complex writing goals and awareness of audience. Although he continued to focus on surface features of his writing, questions such as, "Is it appropriate and good" recognized the possibility of response on a more abstract level. He had determined that the death of the duck was "touching", "sad" and "heart-warming" and that both of the children who might read the story would think it "good, neat, fun". His story satisfied both

69

his need to demonstrate his increasing knowledge of world geography and what he perceived as the needs of the younger children.

The ending that Michael chose shifted the moral of the original story. A veterinarian was able to care for the duck after his long, dangerous voyage but when he walked out, he got shot. A parallel between the protection offered by the behavioural remedial class and the "real world" of the regular classroom could be drawn. Discussion with Michael and his family was occurring related to reintegration and Michael rightly suspected that he might indeed be returning to a situation where he would get "shot down".

**Brian** took several sessions to complete his rewriting of *The Ugly Duckling* story. Distracted by such things as the placement of the letters on the keyboard, he would interrupt his typing to make such comments as, "Do you know what I like about computers? A S is always in the same place." By using the original book as both a dictionary and to sequence his ideas, he was able to reproduce a condensed version of the original story. His story in its original form was:

> **The Ugly Duckling**
>
> It was summer .... a hot summer day and a egg hatched.
>
> A ugly duckling was born his duck mother taught him to
>
> swim. He lives in country on a farm a very big farm.
>
> As he grew and grew four a year he turned to a swan.

He was satisfied with this short story and the "big printing" matched well the skills of the child he had chosen. "It has great big printing so he can read it and it's a small story," he explained. However, for a slightly older child who was an excellent reader, he would have "made it longer - four pages longer" because "Justin knows how to read" and "He would want to read it." Given more time he would have made it longer but could not suggest changes in content or style that might have appealed to younger readers. Having the original story available for reference made the writing task easier for Brian. His main problem became one of having to remind this researcher to bring the original book to the computer room. An apparent disregard for the possible varied and deeper preferences of his reader is suggested by his brief and repetitive verbal responses during the interview. However, he did show an awareness of developmental

reading levels and was prepared to match his text to readers needs at that level.

Insufficient time for rereading the original story and revising it were cited as problems that interfered with more extensive content. Brian, in contrast to the other two children, took the assigned task at face value and retold the story by choosing to simplify the original content and style. He did not appear to impose his own writing goals and personal needs when rewriting the story. However, his choice to maintain the original happy ending and thus the complex moral within the story may have represented a larger goal he had for both himself and his peers. At the end of a year, in the behavioural remedial class, Brian appeared to find it a safe nurturing environment and staff felt he liked the remedial classroom and did not want to return to the regular school.

The developmental patterns related to audience awareness demonstrated by the three children in this study are similar to those found in other studies. Like the Grade 5 children in Kroll's (1985) study who completed a similar task of rewriting, Brian tended to copy parts of the original story or replace parts on a word for word basis. Jeanette and Brian were similar to students in Grades 5 to 7 who attempted to replace a number of the difficult items and who took a predominantly word oriented approach.

Kroll suggests that it is students at higher grade levels (Grade 9 to college level) who "adopted a different kind of strategy that could be described as more meaning oriented", that made their written stories more accessible to younger readers (1985, p. 133). The structure and meaning of *The Ugly Duckling* stories when rewritten by Jeanette and Michael changed the surface details of the story. However, by so doing they created their own "meaning orientated" stories which they felt compelled to tell their young peers. Kroll also suggests that "the ability to adapt writing for an audience is fundamental to successful communication" ( 1985, p. 137). Jeanette, Michael and Brian adapted the retelling of *The Ugly Duckling* to accommodate the needs of a younger audience but also as a way of obtaining the attention of an adult audience.

## Summary

The retold stories described, in part, the perception of the children of their life within and without the remedial behavioural classroom. If we choose to listen to their stories, they can successfully

71

communicate many lessons to the adults who care for and teach these children. These lessons include a lack of awareness on the part of adults of the powerlessness children feel when taken from the regular school situation, their fear of returning back to their community schools, and their recognition of the safety of the remedial class. They represent control and security issues, and a plea for access to as interesting and diverse a scholastic life as that which other children within the school system take for granted.

C.      Writing A Booklet About Slocan School

> The children at Slocan School explore communicative intent as they define their relationships with the children who might read their booklet.

The initial introduction of the idea of writing a booklet about their school for others who might come to it, was met with varying responses that to some extent demonstrated their awareness of audience and needs to address this audience. One student (Michael) scowled, one student (Brian) made no comment and one student (Jeanette) said, "I'm going to smother myself" followed by her urgent message, "We can tell them it's bad".

Yet when invited to brainstorm about who might want to read their booklet, all three children were delighted to participate and provided a wide variety of audience possibilities ranging from staff, the cleaning lady, the Deaf Society, the public, and perhaps most importantly, to the new children who might come to the school. This was followed by an extensive list of possible topics that might interest these readers (See Appendix I).

As the children progressed with developing their stories, the adult audience faded in importance and their main focus became the children who might come into the school after they left. Each child took on a unique role in their relationship with their future reading audience which they demonstrated in their writing and in their interactions with each other.

By the second session Jeanette began to realize the full possibilities of the project. "You mean I can tell them it's horrible?" she questioned. Jeanette had already decided the needs of her audience as being one of hearing the ultimate truth and being warned of possible pitfalls. She assumed the role of

the truth teller and protector of the new children who might read the booklet before attending the school. These themes were played over and over in varying ways culminating in her story *All About Gene*. Her final edited version varied little from her first draft because as she said, "I already have it done at home". She had been rehearsing the story frequently in her mind. Throughout the year she made reference to the school as a "jail with bars pressing down" on her and a place she "hated" but her story was the first opportunity she felt she had to legitimize her feelings and warn future students. In her effort to protect the other children she assumed that the new students would have a perspective similar to hers. A discussion related to what should be included in the booklet about the sorts of things they learned in school found Jeanette suggesting that none of this type of information should be included, "Because they might freak out."

In a session close to the completion of the booklet, Jeanette joined with the boys to discuss whether the new students should be given any information at all before they came. In a sudden reversal from her protector role and negating an explanation that she had given to Michael in an earlier session that the booklet was important because "It's written by kids and it's for kids", she questioned, "Why should they know about our school?" Jeanette felt it appropriate to let the new children feel nervous and scared, "Because we had to". By the end of the session, however, she relented and agreed that, although she didn't want any more written information in the booklet, pictures would help because "then they aren't just walking in a strange place and then they won't think it so strange".

Jeanette actively searched for an audience. She joined the other children in speculating if the Queen could read and if it would be worthwhile to send her the stories. She was going to send her stories that she wrote at home to a publisher and she appreciated the opinions that her grandparents sent back after they read her writing.

Jeanette's need for an audience for her story *All About Gene* was always foremost. She never tired of having it read aloud although she resisted efforts to have it edited by others. On one occasion she ran after visiting teachers as they left in an attempt to get them to read her story. When the psychiatrist working with the program read her story and interpreted it to her as possibly reflecting difficulty in leaving the school, rather than dispute the interpretation she remained silent about what she had previously

insisted was the truth of her story. As the time drew closer to her leaving she became more enthusiastic about having the booklet to take as a memory of part of her experience at the school. It also became obvious that she would miss the audience of the boys who, despite their teasing and taunts, had acknowledged both her personal experience and her writing abilities.

Michael was cautiously positive about the possibility and use of writing a booklet to explain the classroom to newcomers. Early on, he assumed the role of the group censor in terms of what should be put in the book. In his original story about *Behaviour People And Fun*, he described himself in terms of "told by Michael, the oldest kid in the class!" It was in this role that he also monitored the behaviour of the others, initially pointing out their deficits but gradually changing to making helpful suggestions. Like Jeanette, he used his stories to explore some of his own feelings about the classroom and the staff. His first draft suggested that "the teachers are nice and sometimes mean." He cautioned his audience by suggesting they censor their reading because, "If you read this and you will be sorry (sic)."

Initially he projected his more daring statements onto others. He verbally tried out, "The teachers are cute and sexy said Jeanette" and when this met with a negative response from Jeanette he changed to "Tom Cruise!! & Robert De Niro." After many editing suggestions from the other children and the child care worker, he finally decided, "That last word (sexy) shouldn't be there." Michael cautioned Jeanette that she shouldn't use "f and sh" in her description of the school, when she asked the question, "You mean I can tell them it's horrible?" He also redefined some words in the brainstormed ideas list (hairy armpits, sexy) as "boring and sick" although he had originally suggested some of them.

Michael experimented with the effect his words had on others. He liked to have an immediate verbal response to his writing. He would innocently read from his draft, "Then another girl came by the name of Jeanette. I didn't like her that much either" and then protested, "This is all true, I'm not lying", when Jeanette reacted to his words.

The needs of the children who might come to the school varied in Michael's mind. Although he recognized, "They probably never heard of this place", he also questioned the benefit of the booklet. Relating to his experience at the hospital where he had received his initial assessment, he claimed, "Who cares. No-one is going to read it. They (the hospital) had a book about the ward but the children didn't

get to read it."

Towards the end of the sessions Michael again joined with Jeanette and Brian to sort out what information would be helpful to new students. His response was a definite, "They can find out for themselves", explaining, "We didn't know what was going to happen." He suggested, "They can write their own story" as a possible way of helping the transition for the new students. By the end of the session, however, he acknowledged that he felt sorry for them and possibly could show them around as a way of helping them. By the following week he relented somewhat in his censor role and pointed out, "But then we would waste all our time doing all that" if they quit writing the book and didn't show it to others.

During editing sessions he would ask staff and occasionally Brian to read his work. Michael also searched for an audience. On several occasions he decided to send his work to the Queen. One day the following conversation ensued with Jeanette regarding what kind of a story the Queen would read.

| | |
|---|---|
| Michael: | I'm going to send this (the story about *Behaviour People And Fun*) to the Queen. |
| Jeanette: | Would the Queen read it though" |
| Michael: | No, she would probably throw it into the garbage. |
| Jeanette: | Not unless you made it like a real young kid wrote it - like a little bit sloppy. |
| Michael: | I'm not going to make it sloppy! Yeah, but she don't read though - there are people who read to her. |
| Jeanette: | She probably doesn't know how to read. |

He did, however, type in an addition to his story that was never read to the others and edited out on the computer. It said:

DEAR QUEEN Can you write to me. I need to write about

your royal live $$ I am only 5 years old PLEASE WRITE

BACK LOVE SINCERELY

Michael

Michael's search for whether the story "made sense" also indicated his awareness of audience. In his final editing of his story about *Behaviour People And Fun*, he removed large portions of the story and made shifts in order to help his story to "sound better". His ability to edit others' work also improved and he used similar strategies of joining sentences and suggesting more or different information to help the other children increase the clarity of their work.

Both Michael and Brian said they had different stories to tell about the school than the one Jeanette told. The "ups and downs" Michael mentioned in his story were typical of his own responses and behaviour in the classroom. Yet he also wanted his audience to know about friends, teachers that turned out to be nice and that "It was fun here." His message of "Enjoy it while you can" was a subtle warning as he prepared for reintegration into a modified program in the regular school.

Brian's role in the group was often like that of the character Charlie in the movie *Being There*. He too "liked to watch". To a large extent he followed Michael's lead both in ideas and comments about the content of the booklet. Even for his own personal story he stated, "I want the same story as Michael". Brainstorming helped him produce more ideas and he was prepared to accept the suggestions of others as long as he did not have to write them down.

Similar to Michael, he used his writing to tease Jeanette. His initial list for having fun included "free time, recess, games and teasing Jeanette, which you are not going to edit". When Jeanette burst into tears he was sensitive to her needs and scribbled out that section.

Brian often appeared to assume his readers would know his meaning without clarification or extension of his information. Despite Jeanette's explicit suggestion, "You should put it (the list of fun and boring stuff) into sentences and then it would explain it why it's fun or why it's boring", he refused to change his format stating, "I like it this way, you can read it easier".

The children who might come to the school from the hospital were Brian's main anticipated audience. He addressed them in his story, first describing experiences such as swimming that they too might remember and then suggesting they have fun "while you can" both at the hospital and at the school. He had some specific advise for his audience. One was to be really good and the other was taking Ritalin to help them focus. Brian joined with Michael and Jeanette in suggesting that the new children to the school deserved to suffer nervousness and fear, as they themselves had before arriving. "We're not telling them any more" and "I don't want any pictures", he stated following Jeanette and Michael's lead.

Generally, however, he tried to modify the other's negative opinions, pointing out fun aspects of the classroom, and such perceptions as "the teachers are nice sometimes". At one point he took a stance against both Jeanette and Michael telling them it was a "bad idea" to cancel the whole writing group.

Brian wanted to make sure that his view, that was distinct from both Jeanette's and Michael's, was presented to the new children. He wanted to "let them read about all the good things there is (sic)".

Summary

When writing the stories to put in the book *Welcome To Slocan School*, it can be seen that all three children showed advanced levels of communicative competence. They were able to maintain a focus and goal for sixteen sessions and saw their project through to completion. Both Michael and Jeanette became increasingly more competent in working independently and together, to accomplish their goals of having their stories "make sense". Brian developed in his use of structured guidelines to help himself focus and organize his thinking. Throughout their writing, they demonstrated all of the activities that Berkenkotter (1981) had defined as an expert writing ability to respond to the needs of their audience.

They also showed increased awareness of the social aspects of "audience awareness". Within Selman's terms, it is obvious that the children also made shifts towards more mature social interactional behaviours as they learned to work cooperatively with one another. At times all three would seem at the egocentric level when they suggested that their interpretation of events was the only possible interpretation. However, they could also recognize that given more or different information, the readers might respond differently, thereby demonstrating awareness on a more subjective level. The children's discussion of the impressions the royal children might have about the school and themselves indicated that they recognized the potential of others around them to reflect, suggesting at times they reached the reciprocal dyadic or self-reflective level.

Carolyn Steedman (1982) suggests in her book *The Tidy House*, that the three children she described "were not motivated to convey something to an audience by use of the written word." She felt "It would be a grave mistake to involve children in our discoveries and theories and to impute to them the desire to please us in this way" (p. 8). For the main part the three children in this present study clearly felt no need to try to please the adults within the classroom or adult readers. Their real audience of children who would potentially come to the remedial class was foremost in their minds, and the needs of this audience paramount in their plans of what they needed to include their stories. They were

prepared to take risks to be able to maintain the meaningful parts of their stories. Their focus was to inform, warn, protect and support future children who might come to their "special school". As well they felt a need to explain the culture of the classroom so the new children would not experience the same sense of alienation they had initially felt.

The sudden reversal of the children from enthusiasm about informing the new children about the pleasures and pitfalls of their school, to one of reluctance and resistance to disclosing anything, demonstrated several levels of behaviour. On the surface it could be said that they were at Selman's third level of pre-adolescent development demonstrating a third person view of their disclosures The third person might be sympathetic but equally likely could be retributive or deny their beliefs. On a more abstract level, they may have felt that by exposing themselves and their feelings they had joined the remedial behavioural classroom culture rather than challenging it. Either way, their writing and discussions had set up enough internal dissonance that they momentarily wished to retract it all.


D.      The Children's Advanced Conceptions Of The Meaning Of Their Writing And Their Context

Both the childrens' writing and their interactions with one another indicated a prevailing concern. They wanted to describe their classroom culture and by doing so to validate their own beliefs and also to question the assumptions of others. The four dominant themes that emerged reflected both positive and negative responses to their placement in the remedial classroom.

1.      Getting in bad and getting out good

                        The children explore their ideas of why they are in a
                        remedial behavioural class and how to get out of it.


In the minds of the three children in this study the reasons for their placement in a remedial behavioural classroom were similar. They believed they were "bad". However, they, like the adults about them, could disguise this by providing other explanations. The following conversation was one that resulted from the children initiating the question, "Why do we come here?"

Michael:        We have solving problems.
Jeanette:       We get in trouble a lot.
Brian:          We are always fighting a lot.
Michael
and Brian:      And we are always teasing Jeanette.

Starting with this broad based explanation for their placement the children were then able to define one behaviour they knew caused distress to both the recipient and to adults, that of teasing Jeanette. This specific, repetitive, obvious behaviour became an immediate representation for them of why they were in the class over and against the reasons offered by the adults.

Defining each other's behaviour as "bad" also was commonplace. After an altercation with the boys, Jeanette raged out of the room shouting, "I'm not being bad - they are the bad ones." For Jeanette a variation of "bad" was being "crazy". She described her own behaviour as "crazy" sometimes, and explained she had to be crazy, "Because everyone else in the class acts that way."

When deciding what sort of information to include in the booklet, Jeanette suggested, "I know - pictures of the kids and then say this is the kind of kid you see", perhaps implying that the uniqueness that resulted in them being in the remedial class would be observed even within a photograph. Michael went one step further within the session when all three children decided they shouldn't tell the new children any information but instead let them suffer. He called the new children "the little brats", thereby entering into the same naming and blaming that had led to his own placement.

Jeanette was vehement that placement in the class had never been the right spot for her. When the group was asked what questions they thought Steven, (a child who had entered the program 2 months before) would have liked to ask before coming, Jeanette related to her own needs. "I only had one question. When in hell do I get out of here? I asked that question as soon as I got here." Brian was more pragmatic as he responded, "I just asked if they had a Nintendo".

One of the more amusing conversations about getting into the school took place over several sessions and was related to the possibility of the royal children coming to Slocan School. Jeanette was sceptical, stating, "Oh yeah. A royal child coming to this weird school!" When asked what the royal child might think of this school, she responded, "I want to get back to my private school". Michael dismissed the possibility of the royal children ever coming because, "Most of them have tutors". Jeanette decided, "I could lie, then they would want to come here."

"Bad" and "good" were affixed to both the events and staff within the school as the children tried to resolve their ambivalence about what they should tell children coming into the school. Jeanette suggested outright lying but she also joined Brian and Michael in their role as protectors. Modifying the

truth about "bad" things that happened at the school was suggested as an alternative. When asked what should be done about information that might be upsetting for the new children, Michael suggested, "Tell them good things, not bad things so they get their hopes up high." Jeanette, presenting her own perspective, stated in disgusted tones, "Yeah, then they get their hopes up high, and then they come here and they have to face something really bad." In her story, *All About Gene* Jeanette described some of these bad events and the staff, as well as defining the consequences of "bad" behaviour. The school was horrible, the teachers mean, bossy and rude. Not being quiet got you in big trouble and if you weren't good you could get dragged out of the classroom. Brian added to his list that "being held on the floor when bad" was boring stuff in the classroom. Michael professed shock at finding out that the teachers who he thought would be mean "turned out to be nice."

The Child Care Worker Bill had a number of conversations during several sessions, attempting to convince the children they were not bad. Once this resulted in the children finally accepting the word "inappropriate" to be put beside the word "bad" in the list of boring stuff that Brian had written.

When I tried to find out what additional meanings good and bad held for the children they were immediately suspicious that I was going to make them edit the word out. Jeanette was not present but the following discussion was held with the boys and Bill.

| | |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | What do you think about what Bill is saying about the "bad" part there? |
| Brian: | Keep it. |
| Aileen: | What does bad mean for you guys? |
| Michael: | We are being horrible. |
| Aileen: | In what way? |
| Michael: | Outrageous. Mischievous. |
| Aileen: | Is it that you are being bad people? Is it that you are bad boys? |
| Michael: | No. Well sometimes. |
| Michael and Brian: | (singing) What you gonna do? What ya gonna do when they come for you? Bad boys, bad boys. (The boys laughed and sang this again.) |
| Aileen: | Brian do you think you are a bad boy - a bad person? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | So what do you think it means? |
| Michael: | Drugs. |
| Aileen: | That's not something in this school. What does bad mean in this school? |
| Michael: | I can tell you about a couple of people that are very (indistinct) poor though. |
| Aileen: | Well I'm talking about for you guys. What does bad .... |
| Michael: | The S's and the J's (initials of younger children in the school). |
| Aileen: | What does "bad" in this school mean? Because Bill brought up a very good point. What does it mean to you? You said horrible and outrageous. |
| Michael: | She's trying to change our mind. It's not working. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Brian: | It's not working. |
| Aileen: | What isn't? You mean bad means not working. |
| Michael: | No. You're not going to suck us into it. |
| Aileen: | What do you think I'm going to suck you into? I'm curious to know .... |
| Michael: | Into changing it. |
| Aileen: | I see. O.K., but bad is a word that comes up a lot here. |
| Bill: | Good and bad. I don't believe any of you kids are ever bad. |
| Michael and Brian: | We are bad (laughing). |
| Brian: | We are bad boys. |
| Bill: | Unfortunately that is not true. Brian, I'm going to take marks off and you don't have very many left this morning. |
| Aileen | So bad is something that comes up often as a word .... |
| Michael: | O.K., fine, take it out. |
| Aileen | If you want it in that's fine .... I'm just curious to know what it means. |
| Bill: | Inappropriate is a word. |
| Aileen: | I'm curious to know what it means. |
| Michael: | All right. Fell (sic) on the floor - then you are inappropriate. |
| Bill: | It's like at a baseball game if you show up with hockey equipment. |
| Michael: | It's our story. |
| Brian: | (Indistinct) it's ours too. |
| Aileen: | They really want bad in. But Bill seems to feel that it needs to be explained some more - because people coming in won't know. |
| Michael: | When you are in this program. |
| Bill: | I don't think kids can be bad - that they are bad. |
| Aileen: | (to Bill) So should we put that in brackets? Actually they said when you were out, they said they didn't feel that they were bad kids or bad people but they want that word in. |
| Michael: | I do. |
| Brian: | It's my story and I said keep it. |
| Michael: | It's my story too. |
| Aileen: | So do we need to put an explanation in? Bill says he needs an explanation because bad is a word he doesn't like hearing about kids and you kids aren't bad. |
| Michael: | (grudgingly) Well, put in brackets, inappropriate. |
| Bill: | It's not true. |
| Aileen: | (to Brian) Is that O.K. with you? |
| Brian: | It's my story too. |
| Aileen: | Here's another question. What does good mean? |
| Michael: | Oh, come on. |
| Brian: | You're good, you're excellent. You're good, you're excellent. |
| Aileen: | So is good an O.K. word? |
| Michael: | No. |
| Brian: | Good is bad. Bad is good. |
| Bill: | You guys are good. |

For the two boys, despite reassurance from staff, the words good and bad were inextricably linked and at times confused in their minds. Like Jeanette, who said she had to act crazy because everyone else in the class acted that way, the two boys also indicated that the class culture at times meant being "bad" was "good" and was an expected behaviour.

While the children had varying levels of understanding about the reasons for their placement in the remedial class, the process necessary for "getting out" and its relation to being "good" appeared to be

somewhat of a mystery. Earlier in the year the children had been heard discussing the behavioural modification point system and how many points had to be earned to "get out". "You have to earn 1000 (points)", Michael asserted, only to be greeted by varying numbers from the other children. Yet in May, the children were still unsure of whether earning points was the way to get out. In reality, as the children's behaviour improved, the points they had to earn increased. This obvious moving of the goal posts confused Brian most of all and his uncertainty escalated. Both Michael and Jeanette were leaving the school in June and he did not yet know the "getting out" rules. As he said in his story, "I didn't know it would take so long to get out."

Michael tried to help him, pointing out you have to "behave". Jeanette confused the issue suggesting, "Tell them not to behave and you get out of here". Michael redefined the reality of an escalation of behaviour by saying, "Yeah, and then you go upstairs (to the residential treatment centre). They had all observed this process earlier with a child who had spent six chaotic weeks in the classroom before a decision was confirmed that residential placement was more appropriate. In a later session discussing how to get out of the school Michael was more explicit, referring to the point system again as he said, "You have to earn it - I've earned it".

When Bill explained to the children that, "There's no such thing as a not good kid" Michael gave more suggestions about what good meant by saying, "You have to try though." Jeanette was even more forceful suggesting that, "You better behave or you won't get out."

Both Michael and Jeanette each had one very clear idea about what the relationship with their teachers had to be before they would be considered "good." Michael stated explicitly, "You have to suckhole to the teachers" and Jeanette followed by saying, "You have to pretend that you are acting really nice, and that you are really good and then you can come back to a normal school." The culture of the remedial class dictated to them to be something that they weren't, at the same time as it ostensibly provided an environment for them to work towards maximizing their potential.

The meaning of getting out of the school "good" continued to be a quest the children engaged in to the final session. Their personal experience stories gave clear messages what "good" meant to them. In one way or another they all wanted a happy ending. In Michael's story (*Michael's Personal Experiences*

*At Slocan School*), he initially wanted to keep an ending that claimed, "We (Brian and himself) are still best buddies today 5/4/1992." When it was suggested that this sentence be joined with the initial information to provide a more logical order, he argued, "I know, but that the original order is a happy ending." The final editing of Brian's story of *Fun Stuff/Boring Stuff* saw Brian unusually forceful in his determination to keep the word "bad" as a descriptor. (See preceding transcript) But by the end of the conversation bad equalled good. Perhaps this represented his hope that bad could turn into good and he too could have a happy ending at the end of his time in the class. Right to the final session Jeanette continued her claims of hating the school and joy at leaving in mid-May to return to Ontario. However, in her last story - the description of herself as an author - she wrote, "I love to raite abowt ramass and love sores with happy eneing". [I love to write about romance and love stories with happy endings]. During the final weeks at the school Jeanette's behaviour had many ups and downs. From tearfulness to rage, she demonstrated her ambivalence about leaving the children and the school in a final way. Perhaps haunting her was Michael's statement, "You're not leaving. That's cheating.", and her reply, "It's not my fault that I'm moving." The undefined rules that she had fought all year long in the final moments captured her so that she did not have a clearly defined sense of getting out "good" or of the "happy ending" that she expressed hope for within her personal description.

To the children "good" meant both happy and "excellent" but how excellent one had to be to return to a mainstream school remained undefined in the their minds. They reflected the ambivalence of the educational and medical systems which find it easier to define pathology and deficits than they do to determine when sufficient change has been made to ensure a return to the mainstream school.

"Suck-holing the teacher" and "pretending" were compromises the children felt they had to make to get out of the remedial class. Similar compromises are made both in placing children in or removing the from the remedial class due to lack of real alternatives because of the inflexibility of the larger educational system.

## 2.    Rules, regulations and resistance

> The children explore the boundaries of the rules
> in their classroom.

Typical of the majority of remedial behavioural classrooms, this class had an approach to behaviour modification that used both positive and negative reinforcement. Central to the work of the day were the points that could be gained for a variety of on-task behaviours and several social interactions. When Brian wanted to take the word "points" out of his list of boring stuff, he and Michael had the following conversation.

Aileen:     (reading out list of boring stuff) - points, getting dragged out of class ...
Brian:      Points. Take it out.
Michael:    Yeah, but don't they have to learn about points?
Brian:      True ....keep it in.

This conversation was replayed in a similar form when we were discussing what else new children would need to know. Brian suggested, "Let them know about all the good things there is." When I asked whether they should know about negative things or problems, he once again said, "Yeah, just tell them about the points."

Not answering, ignoring, distractible behaviour could all be considered indirect resistance to a traditional teacher-child interchange. Intermittently, Jeanette would express her resistance and annoyance more directly. One day when she had spent a great deal of time complaining about the boys, we had the following exchange.

Aileen:     I hear you complaining. I'd like to hear a suggestion of how....
Jeanette:   I already said it.
Aileen:     I'm waiting to hear it.
Jeanette:   I already said it and if you didn't hear it's too bad!"

Although the classroom rules were explicit and staff explained why points had been taken away, giving or taking away of points was primarily a decision made by the adults. Arguments about the fairness of these decisions were discouraged. Consequently the children would resort to surreptitious resistance. The most direct discussion around the effects of resistance occurred when the children shared a lesson about when one should just give up. The choice of physical removal of a child from the class was used only when a child was at risk of injuring himself/herself or someone else, or if they were out of control and would not leave the classroom voluntarily to calm down. Although infrequently used, each child had

been removed at least once and it had obviously impressed them. Jeanette stated, "Getting dragged out of the classroom - that's what you don't want to get." Michael replied, "Never force - and don't force against them or it will really hurt." Brian added his advice, "Go by yourself if you have to go somewhere."

In their personal stories each of the children spoke about rules and resistance in different ways. Jeanette pointed out if you weren't quiet you would be in "big trouble" and if you weren't careful you could be "dragged out of the classroom." She had observed that the teachers didn't follow the classroom expectations and "never said please or thank you." Brian's list of "boring stuff" was primarily directed at the rules that meant he didn't get to do art or outings or free time because he did not gain enough points. In his original personal story and in many of his verbal exchanges, Michael tested the classroom rule of "making others happy." He initially wrote, "Then a girl by the name of Jennifer came. I didn't really like her at first but then we became friends. Then another girl came by the name of Jeanette. I really didn't like her that much. I hate her still today." Although Jeanette and Michael often played together after school, Michael took this opportunity to test the rules and Jeanette's tolerance of him by expressing his dislike in front of Brian and the staff.

The rules and regulations of the classroom were one constant the children could depend on. Throughout the year they improved in assessing their own behaviour and owning up to obvious misconduct. However, because the majority of the classroom rules were chosen and imposed by adults, the children never truly owned them. In turn, this lead to continued resistance on their part, resulting in varying levels of effectiveness in meeting their own needs.


3.      Trust, tears and tyranny

> The children explore the meaning of friendship
> in their classroom.

Within a classroom which contains only eight children ranging in ages 6 to 12, the selection of a friend is largely restricted to who is available. In the writing group and in the classroom the two older boys, Michael and Brian, quickly aligned themselves together against Jeanette. During the early groups any word or opportunity was turned into a taunt. For instance when the children were discussing other possible words than fun and boring as categories, Jeanette suggested, "Fun and funner." Brian quickly

responded, "We're fun and you're boring." The usual response by Jeanette was tears. At times Jeanette would ignore the boys or withdraw and the boys would then make such comments as, "She's sulking." The tyranny of just a few pointed words either spoken or written, was used over and over by the boys to engage Jeanette in predictable responses.

In many ways, the children's name calling and taunts duplicated the official labelling that the children had received preceding their placement. By being called severely behaviourally disturbed, different responses to and expectations of the children were made by the adults in their lives than to children who were in mainstream classes. Just as it could be predicted that Jeanette would often burst into tears, so it could be predicted that at times the children would act "emotionally disturbed".

The issue of trust as a part of friendship frequently arose. Jeanette clearly said, "I'm not trusting him - my head still hurts" (after being hit by Brian). When I suggested we could help each other Brian complained, "No one ever helps me - no one ever likes me around here." The development of editing skills required establishment of trust and a relinquishment of control on the part of the children. Not only did they have to entrust their story to someone else but there also was an expectation that they consider alternate ideas. Michael engaged in a guessing game the first time I tried to get him to see that the other children could be good editors.

| Aileen: | Has anyone edited theirs? |
|---|---|
| Jeanette: | Yeah, you wrote them up. |
| Aileen: | I didn't edit them - I just wrote (typed) them up the way they were on the paper. Do you want another person to help you? |
| Michael: | Are you crazy? |
| Aileen: | What would be the problem with that? |
| Michael: | I'm doing that myself. |
| Aileen: | Sure that's what you usually do first. Is there anyone else who can help? |
| Michael: | The teacher. |
| Aileen: | Anyone else? |
| Michael: | The people across the road. |
| Aileen: | Possibly - anyone else - anyone in this room? |
| Michael: | You, Bill, Gene. |
| Jeanette: | You aren't thinking of everybody. Kids! |
| Michael: | (pretending to ignore her) Me. |

In her writing, Jeanette demonstrated trust and took risks. She was the first child to write an expose of the school in her story *All About Gene*. Although the other children chose to interpret the story as funny, they followed her lead and added their own more daring comments into their stories. With the

help of Bill, Michael was able to describe the process of making friends as one of ups and downs but maintained that Brian was a long-time friend. Brian who wrote his story after Michael and followed his story-line, responded by calling Michael his buddy. Neither boy risked ever acknowledging to each other or in this group that Jeanette could be a friend.

Friendships in the remedial behavioural class were tenuous. Trust was difficult to establish because of frequent extremes in behavioural responses and the depth of the emotional needs of the children. However, without other children to choose from, the children made the best of it and developed alignments among each other both within and outside the school.

The problems of the isolation of the classroom from mainstream classes and children was made most obvious by the lack of discussion that the children had about their social world outside. With the exception of referring to the children who might come to the school and their brief fantasy about the royal children coming to the school, the three children never spoke about previous or present friends or acquaintances or what a "normal" school had been like for them. While admittedly many of their experiences in their mainstream schools had been emotionally painful, it was as though the remedial class was disconnected from reality. The tyranny of silence about the real world of a mainstream school both protected them and disempowered them.

4. Teachers teaching and teaching teachers

> The children explore their potential as teachers
> within the classroom.

Within the context of a remedial behavioural classroom the opportunities were limited for children to become teachers of either adults or their peers. Because of individual education programs (IEPs) and the general inflexibility of the behavioural modification approaches used, most academic and behavioural choices were made for the children. Teaching approaches used in mainstream classrooms that require collaboration and cooperation between both teachers and peers were seldom used here due to the negative interactions that often occurred when the children were in unstructured situations.

Introduction of a writing group format that included sitting on pillows, writing on papers held on clipboards, brainstorming, external prompts from POWER outlines and the expectation of helping one

another, was therefore a somewhat unique experience for the children. The children were familiar with this style of learning for skill-builders (social skills group) and cooking class but not for academic subjects.

The children were not used to this researcher in the role of a teacher, although they had always called the child care workers teachers. The views they held of teachers varied but were specific to the remedial classroom. The children never discussed their previous teachers from their mainstream schools. Michael thought that in Slocan School the "teachers are smart, teachers are cute here!" He was "in love" with his teacher and in his story experimented with "sexy" as a description for her. Depending on how the day had gone he sometimes reversed his opinion and said, "She's not fun", but would also challenge Jeanette's story saying, "They [the teachers] do not boss you around a lot."

Brian was never heard to state or support an opinion about the teachers, although, as an artist, Bill was listed under fun stuff in his writing. Jeanette asserted that, "We have dumb teachers", and at one point told me, "You should be less teacher-like and more human."

The idea of acting as teachers for each other was rejected very early in the sessions. Jeanette would angrily tell the boys, "I asked the teacher [Aileen] and you both answered." She would refuse to listen to answers given to her by the boys, "Because I asked you". In part her refusal to accept the boys help was retribution for their teasing, but it also represented a perception of teachers as the ultimate and only legitimate authority. Using the phrase "helping each other" was more acceptable to the children. In his personal experiences story Brian explained that he and Michael had helped each other make a bomb business. Although he had yelled at Jeanette, "It would have been better if you helped me", when asked what sort of help he would like, he answered, "I don't know." His needs, both academic and emotional may have overwhelmed and confused him. Helping and teaching each other frequently focused on challenging each other's behaviour rather than supporting or questioning ideas. The focus on behaviour in all other aspects of their day provided a model that they carried with them even when given an opportunity to interact in a different manner.

Teaching teachers, however, became a mission. They all really tried to teach Bill the lesson about "bad" and "good". They were also determined to teach this researcher to talk less. When it was suggested that, "All you guys can be teachers in this group", Jeanette forcefully said, "And you're the student!" She was most vocal and assertively tested the boundaries of how blatantly she could state the lesson. She

would suggest, "If we can get Aileen to shut up for a minute" and that, "You can't talk at all, period, you can't break up fights or anything." When the children were asked what they would have to do if I wasn't going to talk, Michael answered, "Work together", while Jeanette, wary of being coerced into giving the desired answer, responded, "Be quiet." Midway through the sessions we had a discussion about what they had taught me. They developed a list that included knowledge about their stories, how to use the computer, how to brainstorm, and "making sure you don't become a motor mouth." By the end of the sessions they felt they had been partially successful in teaching me to talk less. An accompanying lesson that they did not define was the need for teachers to listen more.

The lessons the children felt they could teach the new children, have been described previously. After generating a large amount of information in the original brainstorming session each child picked out the most meaningful personal happenings and lessons they had learned to share with their readers. Their last minute decision to tell nothing to the newcomers may have been a recognition that by sharing their stories, they too were accepting the labels that had been placed on them and acknowledging this to the children who would take their place.

There was one lesson that continued to puzzle the children. When I asked Jeanette and Brian about the name changes of the story that became *The Power To Learn About Schools*, we had the following conversation.

Jeanette:     We are going to do *The Power To Learn About Gene* but then we changed it [to *The Power To Learn About School*].
Aileen:       What was it to start with - it was *The Power To Learn About People* - how come you changed it?
Jeanette:     Because we couldn't figure out about people.

Although the Day Treatment Program was designed to meet both social and academic needs, the children were still struggling with many questions about the adults and peers who interacted with them in their school.

## 5.     Pillows as politics

The children use the pillows to explore the experiences
of both oppression and liberation within the group.

By discussing the varied use of the pillows (provided as floor seats) by the children, it can be demonstrated that their actions are a reflection of the actions, concerns and frustrations felt by themselves and those working with them. The children's use of the pillows was metaphoric of the themes previously described, of the dilemmas created by the place of the remedial behavioural class within the education system, and the placement of children within these classes.

### Bad pillows and good pillows

For the children the themes of bad and good were redefined by the pillows in several ways. The pillow they grabbed when they came into the writing room represented "good" (the two coloured ones being the most desirable) or "bad" (the four older, tatty mustard coloured ones). At a subliminal level the brightly coloured pillows may have represented the appearance and demeanour that a "good" student has - bright, healthy, active, alert, and appropriately dressed. The plump, tatty, mustard-coloured pillows were second-class - tired, functional and not very exciting, requiring more effort to appreciate their soft and responsive inner qualities.

How the pillows were used also represented "bad" and "good". Hitting others with them was "bad", sharing them was "good". In their extreme forms, these two behaviours are deemed as reasons for placement in a behavioural class or for reintegration into the mainstream class. A child who is labelled as "severely behaviourally disturbed" confirms for many people the existence of pathology or deficits. They thereby represent the "bad" child in contrast to the "good" child who meets social and academic expectations. The reasons for placement in a remedial behavioural class (getting in bad) are easier to define and justify than the kinds and quantities of behaviours that represent enough of a change to allow for successful reintegration (getting out good). These judgements are often as ambiguous for the staff as they are for children. Similarly, opinions about the comfort and desirability of the pillows at times would vary among the children creating uncertainty in the group about which were the most desirable, or "good" ones to have.

**Pillows as objects for resistance**

Use of the pillows became an easy and subtle method for the children to act out their resistance to rules and regulations. The child-care worker had created an expectation that all the children sit upright on the pillows because "You can't think lying down". Both I and several of the children believed you could think lying down. The issue of making the practice of lying on the pillow acceptable was never resolved because of my ambivalence which resulted from additional observations in the group. The children were obviously more comfortable sitting or sprawling on the cushions and participated well when alert. However, erratic bedtimes for Brian meant he was often tired and sitting up kept him more alert. This issue of sitting versus laying on the pillows, gave the children an opportunity to observe adult ambivalence over imposed rules. It also provided a way to communicate needs unmet in their home environment, such as the need for consistent bedtimes.

The pillows were used as both weapons and as protection and this also challenged the rules of the classroom and represented the children's needs. Hitting, grabbing and throwing the pillows presented opportunities for personal power over other children. It provided a chance to experiment with different styles of authority or power in the classroom. A behavioural modification approach preferred by the child care workers, yielded a fast efficient and predictable response for both the children and staff. A problem-solving approach, which I favoured, required the equal participation of adult and child but was more time-consuming, and could be frustrating and inconclusive. Participation in problem-solving strategies, even over such a mundane issue as use of pillows, highlighted for the children the wide divergence between life in their remedial class and in regular classes, and created additional ambivalence. Concerns that a more democratic process within the behavioural classroom would lead to chaos, frequently stifled shifts by the teachers and students towards working as partners in the class. Removing the pillows would have been the easiest solution for the ongoing problem. The decision to keep them was based on ambivalence about depriving needy children of a physical comfort, and, on the part of myself, an observation that they provided many opportunities to resolve social and interactional needs.

A similar ambivalence existed about sending children home from the remedial behavioural classroom. In such instances their behaviour is considered too "bad" even for the behavioural class, and their removal duplicates the original removal from the regular school. This leaves the justice system to

define how "bad" is really "bad". Statistics demonstrate that numerous children defined as "severely behavioural disturbed" eventually end up with contact with the law (U.S. Department of Education, 1989).

While the pillows provided protection, this too was linked with the possibilities for resistance. They could be used as shields to fend off blows by other children, or as a statement of personal space that others were expected to respect. By making their own rule, "This is my space", "Stop hitting me", the children encountered and indeed often precipitated even more resistance on the part of their peers.

The ambivalence that staff, children, parents and educators feel over the function of the behavioural remedial class is demonstrated in the children's actions. The flagrant disobedience of the rules and regulations of the regular school served a purpose in justifying the expulsion of the children from the regular school. These rules and regulations were then incorporated into a remedial setting so the children could really learn them and then return to the regular system. The remedial behavioural class provided protection for the larger school community from the behaviour of the children and purported to provide protection for the children from the negative experiences and reputations they often had in their regular school. However, by removing the children from the context of their community school and a regular classroom, it has been shown that neither the individual battle or the larger war is won. Research has demonstrated that children defined as "emotionally disturbed" who did not receive remedial class placement accomplished academic, behavioural, and social objections at the same level as children placed in special classes (Vaac, 1972).

**The tyranny of the pillows**

Risk taking and rejection became familiar interactions in use of the pillows. Physical proximity of working together could be altered by the placement of the pillows. While working in a cooperative fashion was often a novel experience for these children, and as the sessions progressed, their ability to work together improved, division and placement of pillows remained a struggle. They were easy to give and share, but equally easy to snatch away. They provided opportunities to boss others, tattle or act beneficent in allowing use of the "good" cushions. The ability to rapidly reintroduce a struggle over pillows made surface gains in interactions tenuous, so the possible tyranny of the pillows always remained in the background of any activity.

The opportunities for self initiated risk taking in a remedial behavioural class is minimized due

to the adult dominated approach and the lack of alternative peers and experiences beyond the classroom doors. However, for some children (Brian in this group of children), a remedial class did provide a necessary and positive opportunity to break from old patterns and experiences. It provided an opportunity where he could safely risk aggressive or other behaviours deemed unacceptable in the regular school and begin to find alternate responses and solutions. The therapeutic environment of the behavioural class allowed for rage as well as tears. While a therapeutic approach is often necessary to help the children to progress emotionally, placement of children in remedial classes that are isolated either graphically or socially outside the regular school makes a statement to society, the child and their parents about the child and their right to equitable education in all areas of learning.

### The pillows and teachers

The pillows became an observable teaching tool for both the teachers and the children. Rules that the children were expected to learn in the classroom (sit up straight, share objects, help make others happy) were assigned to behaviours with the pillows. The potential for the children to develop a repertoire of more advanced problem-solving strategies around a consistent problem made the pillows a useful teaching tool.

The children used the pillows to try and teach the teachers and each other many lessons. They showed that their perception of teaching, at least in this type of class, was often equated with behavioural control. Without following the rules themselves, the children spent a lot of time reminding each other what those rules were. They also tried to show that particularly with writing tasks, productivity could happen by just sitting comfortable and thinking for a while. And, they consistently tried to teach that "being on task" also meant dealing with the negotiation of status, position and power, acted out through the use of their pillows. The main lesson, however, was that pillow "talk" could easily become never ending. There were always many variables that could be introduced and confused or redirected. This confusion sometimes worked to the children's advantage, allowing them to express their opinions and needs, and to challenge authority. Sometimes the confusion was to their disadvantage, provoking rage on the part of their peers and annoyance and frustration among the staff.

Discussion about placement of children in remedial behavioural classes and the location of these classes could easily duplicate a never-ending pillow fight. There is confusion, ambivalence and frustration

related to both lack of classes and the existence of such classes. The decision of who should be put in the classes and when they should be reintegrated also continues to present problems. It is essential to look beyond these issues to how the academic and social needs of these children can met fairly and adequately within the educational system.

## E. Summary

The preceding data analysis and discussion has pointed to recurring verbal interactions and behaviours of the children while in the writing group. Both their behaviour and the themes that emerge in their written work presents consistent messages to the larger educational and medical systems about the function and fiction of the remedial class in its present form. These two areas will now be summarized.

Throughout their writing and interactions the three children demonstrated they had a wide variety and sophisticated level of understanding and beliefs about the meaning and power of their writing. For them, a major discovery was the power of their written words. They used their personal stories to state many of the beliefs about their classroom and the staff they seldom expressed verbally. They believed their written words had to be accepted, whereas, if they spoke similar words there was the fear that the adults would try to coerce them out of their feelings. Their writing, that is, also represented the potential for freedom. By explaining the culture of their class they were demonstrating they had learned the rules and should soon be allowed to leave the remedial behaviour class. When informing others of what they might expect when in the class, they also became aware both that information can give freedom to others and that they could provide such freedom through their writing.

The remedial behavioural classroom observed in this study functioned both negatively and positively. It effectively contained the children and focused intensely on their problem behaviours. Yet, so self-contained was the classroom, the children seldom discussed other children or events beyond its doorways, and the staff remained largely isolated from their professional colleagues. Although specialized staff and extra funds were provided, the most important resources available to teachers and children in regular schools were not available. Diversity of models of behaviour, teaching practices and the ready availability of physical resources were denied because of isolation of the class from the mainstream school.

CHAPTER V          INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS AND

                   IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

A foundational assumption of this research, then, has been that literacy activities are socially constructed and situated - that is, literacy activities involve interaction between both the individual writer, the reader and their literacy environment. It is important here to note that this perspective is broader than that typically represented in research in special education literacy activities. In this thesis, literacy activities encompass communicative ability, conceptions about reading and writing and the use of writing and dialogue about texts as a vehicle for the negotiation of meaning.

An argument has been presented suggesting that by shifting the research perspective and technique, children's writing can be characterized using both cognitive and social explanatory models. More importantly, it was shown that when supportive environments were provided, that children actively choose to use their writing to persuade, teach and resist within their learning culture. By doing this they demonstrated both specific behaviours and a sense of agency that they did not generally show within other academic settings. As the children improved in their ability to work in a collaborative fashion, behaviours that were previously deemed to be socially unacceptable decreased. The children's willingness to take risks with one another is indicative, possibly, of a need both to understand and to change their world. Their willingness to explore the world of the remedial classroom could be used as an inspiration to those who work with them at all levels of educational and medical systems.

In the following chapter the implication of these findings will be discussed in relation to the interaction of specific literacy activities with broad questions pertaining to the design of "remedial" education environments. The findings will be discussed under the headings: a) the pathology/deficit model, b) the role of the remedial classroom and c) conceptions of literacy within a remedial classroom. Within each of these areas, implications for future research and practice will be elaborated.

Results from this study only permit tentative generalizations as they are based on a pedagolocial intervention which, in altering classroom conditions, allowed variations in both interactive and written results and ultimately in the conceptual beliefs of the specific children in the study. Although it is with caution that these generalizations are extended to a larger sample, the findings suggest insights into a) productive ways of recording the literacy skills of the children "at risk" for academic failure and b)

designing related remedial interventions.

## A. The Pathology/Deficit Model

As noted in Chapter II, research studies conducted within the medical model investigating children

defined as "behaviourally disturbed" have most often focused on first, describing taxonomies for a range

of pathological condition and second on prescribing remedial approaches related to these conditions.

Although these definitions have typically been both ambiguous and narrow, the research studies built upon

these description have generally investigated the effects of specific skill-based interventions. Researchers

(Englert, 1990; Bryson & Scardamalia, 1991) have recently characterized this strategy as "reductionist".

Reductionist principles focus on remediating the small problems before addressing the issues related to

the whole problem and have been used for addressing perceived problems in both cognitive and affective

domains.

Children in remedial behavioural classes are frequently faced with this "part-to-whole" approach

to their literacy activities. Despite the increase in acknowledgement that literacy learning is social and

collaborative in nature, there is often a focus on a literacy skill-based, rather than a literacy activity-based,

model in special education classrooms.

Literacy activities are the use of written and oral language to mediate activity. Remediation, then,

assumes the meaning of "a shift in the way mediating devices regulate coordination with the environment"

(Cole & Griffin, 1986, p. 113). The perseveration on basic skills interventions used in many remedial

classes forces the children to remain at a deficit or pathology level without ever seeing what they might

reach in a more optimal environment. They are not encouraged to see that literacy activities could

mediate or contribute to changes in their environment.

By challenging traditional assumptions about skills hierarchies, new pedagogical principles can

be considered. This has led to development of strategies that focus on meaningful problems, embed

instruction of basic skills within more global tasks and give recognition to the experience and culture of

the student.

The three children in this study were provided with specific "scaffolding" assistance (Englert et

al, 1991) to help provide both instruction in, and support for, the use of more advanced writing strategies.

97

These supports were generally used by the children when they were referred to by this researcher. Gradually, some of the vocabulary and general approaches were incorporated by the students in a more autonomous and self regulatory style. However, the scaffolding procedures that appeared most useful were the alterations made to the interactional opportunities for the children. During the writing sessions, a change was made from a basic skill and individual focused model, to one where the children were encouraged to work collaboratively in a group, and to gain more personal control in the amount, content and format of their writing. As well, by placing emphasis on the development of a collaborative relationship between the "teacher" and the students in their use of varied strategies to solve specific problems, the children were helped to explore and enhance the meanings that were the focus of their writing activities. This approach resulted in the children seeing their work responded to and admired by adults, peers and teachers. For the children to be able to generate questions, challenge adult's beliefs and speak freely was a novelty. However, until they saw the final published product, the children remained convinced that they would be forced to change their writing to the "right" way of describing themselves, their class and their lives within it.

The results of this study suggest that children who may appear non-literate in fact bring to their classroom many literacy skills that are quite sophisticated. When engaged in literacy activities that provided the necessary "scaffolding" between their prior knowledge and their ability to represent this in a written form, the students were able to use writing for a wide variety of communicative purposes. The combination of providing a writing environment that encouraged the children to use their writing for communicating to a meaningful audience, the provision of writing strategies and the use of a computer to overcome difficulty with production factors, resulted in stories that demonstrated personal awareness and sense of power.

None the less, it would be foolhardy to deny the existence of the obvious negative behavioural interactions the children had with one another throughout the day. Just as literacy activities are contextual, so too is children's behaviour. When one considers the most frequent result of being labelled "severely behaviourally disturbed" and placement with seven other like children, it is little wonder that the children began to incorporate and act out the labels as part of their personal identity. The placement of children in totally segregated classrooms, away from alternate behavioural or educational models further

marginalizes the children. As well, it increases the likelihood of difficulty in returning to the larger school community, as the children become increasingly remote from the realities and expectations of working, playing, and learning within the larger and varied world of the mainstream school.

A number of recommendations can help shift the emphasis from the pathology/deficit model to one of looking at the whole child.

1. The security of the remedial behavioural classroom for some children can provide what appears to be a positive, emotional growth-enhancing experience. Given this, if one accepts that such specialized classrooms do serve a purpose within the current organization of schools, then a number of challenges are presented. First, researchers and practitioners need to determine which of the children described as "severely behaviourally disturbed" would function best with mainstreaming, and which with a remedial class. Second, the separation between the children who are determined to need special placement and those in the mainstream classes will have to be as minimal as possible. This will require both geographic placement of the classroom within the mainstream school, and use of the academic approaches and resources from the mainstream school. Third, there is a need to balance the environment of a remedial class in such a way that children see it as part of a continuum - always focused on return to the mainstream classroom. Fourth, the optimum solution of maintaining the child within a mainstream classroom will require the provision of adequate funding to provide essential support personnel within the classroom with each child.

2. Recognition that effective teaching strategies work equally well with all children will mean that children previously labelled as having cognitive deficits should be exposed to more advanced skills. "Cognitive scaffolding" (approaches such as those used in this study) will need to be provided to help them reach their potential. The two instructional approaches used in this study, advanced strategy instruction (Englert et al, 1990) and collaborative problem-solving (Palincsar, David, Winn & Stevens, 1991) had three observable benefits: 1) they provided the support necessary for the children to begin identifying their composing strategies, 2) they allowed the children to enter into a process

of transforming their knowledge in ways that responded to the needs of their readers, and 3) they responded to the children's own needs to create meaningful text. More extensive research into the efficacy of alternate methods of strategy instruction will need to be undertaken to assess both their efficacy, and their generalizability across children of different ages and learning styles.

3.    A form of "affective scaffolding" is also necessary for the children and their families which should be a part of their school program. Additional staff with specialized training in therapeutic approaches for children and families needs to be provided. Such resources could allow the children to have the support they need for emotional change and growth and give them access to the variety of real-life experiences of a mainstream classroom. The specialized staff could act as mediators between the family and school to bring together the varying perspectives that schools, parents and children present and could help develop responses that are acceptable to all involved.

4.    For the children to begin valuing themselves, their experiences, beliefs and ways of knowing have to be shared and valued as much as those of children who are considered to have the "correct" social and emotional background. A sense of personal and cultural identity must be validated for all children so they can draw upon and respect the world in which they live. The children also need to be encouraged to undertake critical reflection about their culture. These children, like the Brazilian peasants with whom Freire (1972) worked, need to be given opportunities to recognize their ability to think for themselves and to help transform their world if they wish.

5.    The children's homes are major cultural influences and parents need to feel comfortable and aware of the culture of the school in which their child is immersed for a large part of the day. They will need to be supported and encouraged to provide their own "scaffolding" between home-based and school-based literacy activities. They will also need help in altering their perceptions about their children as lacking or deficient.

6.    Educational and medical systems must cooperate in decreasing the labelling of children and focus on addressing the needs of the children with a holistic perspective. The stories

100

that the children wrote about Slocan School and their experiences within it remained fairly static over a three month period. While this may have been a function of their resistance to editing their material, it also could have represented their perception of the potential for little or no change within themselves or their learning context. Labelling these children to justify placement and remedial approaches perpetuates this perception of inability to change. The children struggled with this question of when one was "good" enough to no longer be considered "severely behaviourally disturbed". Viewing the child from a holistic perspective, allows for participation by the children and their parents in defining and posing problems. There is a need for school-based mental health services, interagency collaboration and a structure that allows empowerment of both the child and family to plan for their futures.

## B.    The Function Of The Remedial Behavioural Classroom

In the formulation of the research question, it was pointed out the role that a remedial behavioural class serves for the larger school system is to remove and contain disruptive students. The organization of the remedial class as a self-sufficient unit resulted in limited contact with the mainstream staff and resources, which in turn leads to educational and social isolation for the children and staff. Although allocation of extra financial and support staff resources are often allocated to these programs, they do not lessen the educational inequity experienced by the children.

Analysis of the data from this study suggest that the social and cultural norms prompted by the larger school system were adopted by the students in the remedial behavioural class. They accepted their isolated situation and lack of contact with the larger school. This exclusion from the mainstream school lessened opportunities for the children and the staff to observe and challenge the implicit power of the larger education system.

During the writing sessions their only stated awareness of the school to which the Day Treatment Program was administratively attached was their "juice and cookies" time - an interaction with the school principal. Without consistent involvement in and observation of alternate models of classroom

101

management or instruction their highly structured classroom became the norm. The children thus had few opportunities to learn, mimic or integrate the culture of the mainstream school to which they will eventually return.

The context of both the children's behaviour and stories was to some extent dictated by their isolated school setting. Within that setting the children knew many of the outcomes related to possible alternate behaviours. They had all been in "mainstream" schools at some point so also had experienced that environment and its norms and expectations. As they tried to make sense through their writing of their own emotional world, the world represented by their home, and the remedial behavioural classroom, their perceptions were partially influenced by the isolation of and behavioural control techniques in their classroom. However, they responded to the altered teaching approach used in the writing group, by expressing themselves honestly and by a consistent demonstration of awareness of the possible needs of the children for whom they wrote. Within the classroom they wrote for the teacher and their stories seldom challenged the system. Only Jeanette questioned the behavioural management system by making a statement in her journal. When asked the question, "Please explain the difference between adults and children?" her answer was, "The differences between adults and children are adults always think thar (sic) the boss. Maybe children be the boss too." This plaintive response suggests an educational approach that researchers are now demonstrating as effective - that of allowing children to take ownership of their learning, to both problem-solve and problem-pose and to work cooperatively and reciprocally with their teacher and peers (Palincsar et al, 1991; Graves, 1983; Goodman, 1985).

Undoubtedly problems do occur with placement of remedial classes in mainstream schools and integration of children described as "severely behaviourally disturbed" within mainstream classes. However, by continuing to isolate these children, the message is presented to teachers, parents and children that it is only by removing the children from the mainstream system that change occurs. An alternate message that needs support is the potential for change within the educational and medial systems with which the children and their families interact.

Continued use of efficient but disempowering behavioural management approaches within the remedial behavioural classroom placed the children and staff in situations of resistance and conflict. Success in real-life or even in a mainstream classroom seldom depends on the type of ritualized responses

expected in a remedial behavioural class. Since other models are seldom tried and the context remains the same the children can not experience and practice variations in responses to people and situations. The inequities in power and control structures that behaviour modification approaches develop have impact on the understanding the children have about themselves, adults, and peers. These inequities "contribute to [people's] understandings of what [they] are allowed to say and therefore allowed to be" (CLSL, 1987, p. 30 as cited in Harman & Edelsky, 1989). Within their classroom the children in this study learned to respond to the norms and structures required by the star chart. Within the writing group they began to explore what they really felt within, and to share their thoughts with each other and their future readers. By doing this they were able to take on a more powerful role as mediators and interpreters of the culture of their classroom.

Use of the individual education programs limited exposure of teaching techniques such as those of writing program used for this study. Particularly with writing skills, opportunities to be collaborative and interactive are now considered an essential part of the learning process within mainstream schools. If children continue to work on individual programs they miss the chance to take the risks - both academically and socially - that working together provides.

This shift in the emphasis, however, also requires a change in the traditional role of the teacher. The mainstream school resists taking risks by isolating the remedial behavioural classroom and this reticence filters down to the classroom. Just as the larger educational system must make a commitment to equality for the remedial behavioural class, so must the teacher with their students. The fact that the children so readily rejected the role of being a "teacher" themselves but gradually could accept the idea of helping each other suggests the approach that is necessary. A dialogue between teacher and student, and student to student was shown to be possible and productive.

The following suggestions make general recommendations for remedial behavioural classroom and more specific recommendations for an alternate approach to learning and literacy activities.

1.    The larger education system must make a commitment to students and teachers in remedial behavioural classrooms to become partners by integrating the children within the mainstream school. Particularly, the children must be integrated into mainstream classes, so they can benefit equally with their mainstream peers from the use of effective

103

teaching approaches in both cognitive and affective areas. A continuum of support needs to occur both academically and emotionally. This may at times necessitate there be a "pull-out" class, but most frequently schools should utilize a "placement-in" to a mainstream class for both the child and support staff. Outcome studies and long-term follow-up need to be initiated to assess effectiveness of the variety of placement approaches.

2.  The teachers will need to look at their own underlying beliefs about literacy, learning and their role as teachers. Entering into a dialogue with students enacts the very nature of literacy skills - that of social interaction and communication. To become literate it is necessary to participate in literate activities with adults and peers. The drills and exercises will need to be used in combination with, or at best be replaced by, literacy activities that offer both meaning and usefulness to a child who engages in them. As the study indicates, when the children wrote on topics in which they were involved, they demonstrated what researchers such as Graves (1983) and Goodman (1985) have found: meaningful writing activities will result in written products full of meaning.

3.  Risk-taking behaviour must be shared by everyone, students and teachers alike. To be able to "join the literacy club" (Smith, 1988) the club has to be open to everyone. For children such as those described in this study, who have a long history of academic and social failure, the changes and the risk-taking may have to be modelled by the teacher and any other professionals working with the children and their families. Teachers must be allowed to be innovative within their classrooms and to feel free to challenge the larger educational system. The nature of change must be explored and thoughtful change must be encouraged. Development of a shared language between special education teachers and mainstream teachers and mental health professionals must evolve so that expertise can be shared.

4.  The suggestion has been made that collaboration is needed at all levels to encourage positive change within the educational and medical systems. Similarly, collaboration must also exist between researchers who use quantitative and qualitative approaches to

describe any changes that may occur as approaches are initiated to try and keep these children within the educational mainstream system.

## C. Conceptions Of Literacy Within A Remedial Behavioural Classroom

During the three month period that this study was undertaken, the three children enthusiastically participated in writing, editing and revising their stories. It was evident that the stories had both personal and public meaning for them and that they were developing a truer sense of the potential of literacy activities. The stories they produced are both fascinating and discomforting to read. After a long history of literacy research that looks at the writing of "normal" children, the sense of oppression and the lack of spontaneous play and fun within their writing is unsettling.

The children, however, used their writing for purposes for which writing is meant to be used - to explain, expand, to construct and explore meaning for themselves and others about their lives and their world. Because they were allowed to use a collaborative learning approach for this project, they could readily move between spoken language and their written language. It has been suggested that writing is a problem-solving process and the three students exemplified this by using their writing for problem-solving. The main problems they addressed were ones the adults working within the class also were facing such as the criteria for reintegration, how to make learning fun, and, at a systems level, issues around control and power. Within the isolated context of their remedial behavioural class they received feedback from each other that varied only slightly in opinion and provided few alternatives. Despite this all three children believed in the power of their writing to inform and possibly influence the new children who would come to the school.

Their writing clearly demonstrated the social and cultural norms within their classroom as they experienced them. It also indicated how their world overlapped and conflicted with the one the adults within educational system felt they were providing (St. Amand, 1990). Writing from within the context of a remedial behavioural class placed an extra boundary between the children and the culture of their home and communities. Not only did they have to address the discrepancies between their class and the mainstream schools but also between their homes and the class. In this study, the children appeared to

105

avoid this conflict by looking inward to describe either their small classroom, or at best, to the fun time that they had within the hospital setting where they had been assessed prior to admission to the remedial behavioural class. The discontinuities in their beliefs about the several cultures they belong to were difficult to address since they seldom talked about the differences nor did their writing examine these issues.

The recommendations that stem from these findings have a broader, more conceptual basis than the preceding ones dealing with remedial practices and learning environments.

1. Individual teachers and the larger educational system need to become familiar with the environments and cultures of their students. For children who have been defined as "severely behaviourally disturbed", this will require knowledge of their social situation. Collaboration with mental health workers will be necessary to enable effective education programs that address all the issues in the everyday life realities of the students.

2. Continuity between school and home culture must be maintained so that neither one becomes the ultimate and only authority. Literacy activities strive to encourage children to develop their own voice and it is only by exploring many alternatives that they can make effective choices. Parents will need to be encouraged to be collaborative partners with their children and the school so they do not inadvertently sabotage their children's growth.

3. Clarke (1987) suggests that we not blame the system for a less than perfect response to problems within it. It would be easy to enter into the perseverative behaviour of the children and define one answer as "good", another as "bad". Instead, using the model of literacy learning, we must look at the whole before the parts, include all portions of the system, and assume that all aspects have some value. Research that includes the conceptions of how the children view their learning experiences and environments is essential to add authenticity to such findings.

## D.    Conclusions

This thesis began by noting that much of the research related to children's literacy abilities has been skill-based and evaluated using developmental models. It has been demonstrated that by changing the content and context of their classroom literacy activities, the children in this study could establish individual and group goals and use literacy activities for a wide variety of communicative purposes. The more advanced social and cognitive abilities demonstrated during the writing sessions put into dispute current "remedial" approaches using basic skills instruction and isolated settings. By using a qualitative perspective and case-study technique, the study reframed the approaches to literacy activities which have dominated the research. This resulted in new recognitions about the conceptions, abilities and responses to literacy activities made by children who have received educational and medical labelling and have been placed in a remedial behavioural classroom. In their writing and interactions the children presented a valuable picture of many aspects of the culture of their remedial behaviour class.

Finally, this thesis challenged traditional responses to the issues of remediation and placement and suggested that the children in remedial behavioural classes, and the people who work with them must work collaboratively to provide educational settings and pedagogical approaches that are responsive to the needs of the children. Such settings and approaches must encourage both the children and adults to use literacy activities to explore and challenge previous knowledge, beliefs and assumptions and to develop adaptable thinking to change their social context to meet their needs and abilities.

# CHAPTER VI                              BIBLIOGRAPHY

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An interview related to the children's conceptions of writing was given to each child preceding the writing tasks of re-writing the story of *The Ugly Duckling* and the children's production of their own book *Welcome To Slocan School.*

This interview was used to discover the initial conceptions the children had of their own abilities as writers, of the present uses of writing within their own lives and their awareness of who was interested in reading their writing.

The interview was adapted from one used by Braig (1984), in *Six Authors in Search of an Audience.*

Questionnaire A
Instructions before asking the questions:

I am going to ask you a number of questions about your feelings and thoughts about writing. I will tape record your answers to help me remember what you say. Answer with as many ideas as you can for each question.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. | What is writing? |
| 2. | Why do people write? |
| 3. | Why do you write? |
| 4. | How do you use writing at home? At school? |
| 5. | How do your parent(s) use writing? |
| 6. | What is good writing? What is a good writer? |
| 7. | What is poor writing? What is a poor writer? What does a poor writer do? |
| 8. | What kind of writing do you like to do? |
| | (stories, letters, explaining something, describing something) |
| 9a. | Why do you write _____ (response(s) from # 8)? |
| b. | To whom (or for whom) do you write (response(s) from # 8)? |
| c. | What kind of writing that you do, do the others (response from # 9b) like to read? |
| d. | What makes them like your writing? |
| 10. | Are you a good or a poor writer? |
| 11. | Do you like to write? Why (or why not)? |

Respondent **Brian**

| | |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | What is your name please? |
| | (Repeated) |
| Brian: | Brian. |
| Aileen: | What is writing? |
| Brian: | Explaining something. |
| Aileen: | Why do people write? |
| Brian: | To say something but they don't want to say it. |
| Aileen: | Is there any other reason? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | Why do you write? |
| Brian: | Our teacher will explain something in our journals, so we all have to answer it. |
| Aileen: | Any reason why you write during the rest of the day? |
| Brian: | To explain something. |
| Aileen: | How do you use writing at home? |

| | |
|---|---|
| Brian: | We don't do writing at home. |
| Aileen: | How do you use writing at school? |
| Brian: | To explain something that teachers say to us. Like out of science books and things. |
| Aileen: | How do your parents use writing? Or your grandma or your uncle? |
| Brian: | My dad uses writing so he can send off bills and stuff. |
| Aileen: | Sure. Oh yeah, that's an interesting way. What do you think good writing is? |
| Brian: | Handwriting. |
| Aileen: | So doing handwriting is good writing? |
| Aileen: | Is there any other thing that you would say would be good writing? |
| Brian: | Really neat handwriting. |
| Aileen: | Okay. What is a good writer? If you had to describe a good writer, what would you say? |
| Brian: | They write good books. Like Robert M. Munsch. |
| Aileen: | What is poor writing? |
| Brian: | Really sloppy. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything else that you would describe as poor writing? |
| Brian: | Letters are too far apart. |
| Aileen: | What is a poor writer? |
| Brian: | They don't write really good stories and stuff. |
| Aileen: | Okay. What would it be like? What does a poor writer do? |
| Brian: | Writes poor stories. |
| Aileen: | Any other way you could describe it? |
| Brian: | Nope. |
| Aileen: | What kind of writing do you like to do? |
| Brian: | Handwriting. |
| Aileen: | You like to do handwriting do you? Is there any other kind of writing that you like to do? |
| Brian: | My handwriting is better than my printing. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything when you do your handwriting that you like to write about? |
| Brian: | What my teacher puts in my journal. |
| Aileen: | So you like answering questions that Mrs. MacKay puts there? |
| Brian: | Yeah. |
| Aileen: | Why do you write those answers? |
| Brian: | It's the homework. So Mrs. MacKay will understand what I wrote in the journal. |
| Aileen: | Now the next one I think you've answered. To whom do you write those answers? And I guess you've told me that, haven't you? That it's back and forth with Mrs. MacKay that you write that stuff. What kind of writing that you do, do you think that Mrs. MacKay likes to read? |
| Brian: | My nice and neat handwriting. |
| Aileen: | What other kind of writing, things that you write about, would she like to read? |
| Brian: | I like to write stories. |
| Aileen: | So when you write stories, she likes those ones? |
| Brian: | She likes to read stories. |
| Aileen: | Does she like to read your stories? |
| Brian: | Yeah. |
| Aileen: | Great. Is there anything else she likes to read? |
| Brian: | I don't know. |
| Aileen: | Anything else that you write down in your journal? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | Okay. What do you think makes her like your writing? |
| Brian: | I'm real neat at it. |
| Aileen: | So you think that it's just because it's neat handwriting? Is there anything else that you think would make her like your writing? |
| Brian: | It's not sloppy. |
| Aileen: | So that's sort of the same idea about neat - that you do it really neatly and try to do your |

|          | best there.  Is there anything about what you say that would make her like to read your writing? |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Brian:   | No. |
| Aileen:  | Okay.  Do you think you're a good or a poor writer? |
| Brian:   | Good writer. |
| Aileen:  | Okay.  Do you like to write? |
| Brian:   | Yes, I do. |
| Aileen:  | Okay.  Why do you like to write? |
| Brian:   | I like to write because .... it make my writing skills a whole lot better. |
| Aileen:  | Okay.  What do you mean "it makes your writing skills better" when you say you like to write?  What sort of skills would you say? |
| Brian:   | My printing skills and .. (indistinct). |
| Aileen:  | Is there anything else about why you would like to write?  You said that Mrs. MacKay likes to read your stories.  Is there anything about why you like to write? |
| Brian:   | I like to write my stories because they're neat. |
| Aileen:  | What do you mean by neat? |
| Brian:   | They aren't sloppy or stuff. |
| Aileen:  | Are they interesting stories? |
| Brian:   | Yes. |
| Aileen:  | Is that sort of neat too?  That they're neat stories that way.  Two different kinds of neat. |
| Aileen:  | Do you like to write interesting stories? |
| Brian:   | Yes. |
| Aileen:  | Great! |

## Respondent Michael

|          |          |
|----------|----------|
| Aileen:  | What is writing? |
| Michael: | What is writing? |
| Aileen:  | Yes. |
| Michael: | It's when you write something down, like a sentence.  You have to print or write it.  Whatever, (indistinct) writing they call it. |
| Aileen:  | Okay.  Is there anything else that you can think about that if you were to describe what is writing? |
| Michael: | It helps people understand what you're thinking of or feeling. |
| Aileen:  | Good answers.  Anything else? |
| Michael: | You use a pencil.  I can't think of any more. |
| Aileen:  | Okay.  Why do people write? |
| Michael: | To get to other people. |
| Aileen:  | Okay.  What do you mean by that? |
| Michael: | Like by a letter - you can send it by airmail or mail, and you can write to other people and tell them what's happening.  Or you can talk on the phone, but I prefer writing.  So you can write, jot down like a couple of ideas, like weather, and then you can send it away, like, let's say, to New York or (indistinct). |
| Aileen:  | Any other reason why people write? |
| Michael: | It's just easier than drawing. |
| Aileen:  | Why do you write? |
| Michael: | Cause (sic) I have to.  I gotta (sic) write in my journal. |
| Aileen:  | That's one thing.  Any other reasons why you would write? |
| Michael: | To write to my grandparents.  Or to other people.  To take notes.  Maybe.  A shopping list. |
| Aileen:  | Okay, those are good ideas.  Have you got any other ideas? |
| Michael: | No. |
| Aileen:  | How do you use writing at home? |

| Michael: | A test. Sometimes you may bring home homework or something that has involved writing. You can write, or let's say you're doing your drawing, and then you'll write your name or something and then you send it away if you want. Like to write, "NO GIRLS AT THIS TABLE", that's just to bug (indistinct). |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | I saw that you did that this morning. So you made a sign there. |
| Michael: | Yes. It's a big one. That's about it. |
| Aileen: | What do you use writing for at school? |
| Michael: | My journal, my language, my math, my handwriting sheet that I've got. Write down like 'a' and then you've got to do all 'a's. |
| Aileen: | Like practising the actual handwriting? |
| Michael: | Yeah. Sometimes in P.E. we have writing too. We have to write down what we did, like a day thing. "inking your thinking", that we have, and we have to write down. The teacher will give us a subject and we have to write down and then you draw a picture of what you think of in your "inking your thinking" book. |
| Aileen: | Okay. How do your parents use writing? |
| Michael: | For bills. |
| Aileen: | Anything else that you can think of? |
| Michael: | Letters to send away. |
| Aileen: | Yes. |
| Michael: | Let's see. Take notes. I guess that's about it. I don't know what my parents do. |
| Aileen: | What do you think is good writing? |
| Michael: | I don't know. |
| Aileen: | Do you have an idea - what is good writing? |
| Michael: | Not putting down swear words. |
| Aileen: | Anything else? |
| Michael: | To send good news to somebody, then other bad stuff. Optimistic. That's about it I guess. |
| Aileen: | Why would not putting swear words down be good writing? |
| Michael: | That wouldn't be good writing. |
| Aileen: | So good writing is not to put it down. |
| Michael: | Yeah. |
| Aileen: | And why would that be? |
| Michael: | It makes the other person feel rotten. |
| Aileen: | What do you think is a good writer? |
| Michael: | An author. Who writes all good stuff. |
| Aileen: | How would you describe a good writer? |
| Michael: | By his writing. Or by his printing or stuff. Like if he tries. Or something. He or she tries. |
| Aileen: | What is poor writing? |
| Michael: | Like when your writing goes down. Down like that. Down the paper so that it's like - what do you call them? A die - angle. |
| Aileen: | Oh, a diagonal! Yeah, instead of across straight. Is there anything else that you would consider and say, well, that's poor writing? |
| Michael: | Smudge. Like when it smudges. When you're writing and you've got to erase and it gets all black around your paper. |
| Aileen: | What do you think is a poor writer? |
| Michael: | A person who doesn't write good stories. |
| Aileen: | What does a poor writer do? |
| Michael: | He ...He or she don't (sic)try. |
| Aileen: | What do you mean ....? |
| Michael: | They don't (sic)try to write down, like the thing. And working around them breaks their concentration. |
| Aileen: | And what's the end result of that? |
| Michael: | Sloppy. |

| Aileen: | So, it's how they actually put it down on paper? |
|---|---|
| Michael: | Yeah. |
| Aileen: | What kind of writing do you like to do? |
| Michael: | Cursive. |
| Aileen: | Is there any other kind of writing? |
| Michael: | Printing. Printing and writing. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything that you like to write about? |
| Michael: | No, not really. |
| Aileen: | What would be your choice? |
| Michael: | Stories. Write down stories. |
| Aileen: | Why do you write stories? |
| Michael: | So the younger kids can read it and get better at it. Better at reading. |
| Aileen: | Great. Good reason. To whom do you write? |
| Michael: | Usually to myself. |
| Aileen: | Do you? |
| Michael: | Then I can write them by myself. Like a hard cover. Or a plastic book. |
| Aileen: | Is there anybody else that you write these stories for? |
| Michael: | My parents. Younger kids. I write for them too, sometimes. |
| Aileen: | Do the kids here at school read them? |
| Michael: | I've got one book out, but I haven't put it onto the shelf yet. |
| Aileen: | Your scary story one? |
| Michael: | Yeah. |
| Aileen: | What kind of writing that you do, do the others like to read? Like your parents or younger kids? |
| Michael: | I usually do printing. Handwriting, printing. |
| Aileen: | What about your stories? You said you like to write stories? |
| Michael: | Yeah. I do printing on my stories. |
| Aileen: | But what kind of writing do the others like to read? |
| Michael: | Maybe comedy or something. |
| Aileen: | They'd like a comedy? |
| Michael: | Funny stories. |
| Aileen: | Any other kind of writing that you do? |
| Michael: | I'm going to start a travel book. |
| Aileen: | What makes them like your writing? |
| Michael: | It's neat. |
| Aileen: | What about your parents? |
| Michael: | It's not smudgy. |
| Aileen: | What makes them like your writing? Your parents or the younger kids? |
| Michael: | Um, I don't know. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything special about your writing? |
| Michael: | No. |

Respondent Jeanette

| Aileen: | I remember you said you wanted your name to be Jeanette. What is writing? |
|---|---|
| Jeanette: | Hard work. |
| Aileen: | What else would you say if you were talking about writing? |
| Jeanette: | Putting your name on paper. |
| Aileen: | Anything else you can think about writing? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | Why do people write? |
| Jeanette: | To communicate. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | What else would you say about why people write? |
| Jeanette: | To be able to give money to someone else or something. So they don't have to talk. |
| Aileen: | Do you have anything else to say about why people write? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | Why do you write? |
| Jeanette: | Because my teacher makes me. |
| Aileen: | Is there any other reason why you write? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | Think about other times you might be writing. |
| Jeanette: | Maybe to send a card to my grandmother or something. |
| Aileen: | Those are good ideas, do you have any others? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | How do you use writing at home? |
| Jeanette: | Maybe to write my mom a note for the fridge or something if I'm going bike riding. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything else? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | Do you use writing in any other way? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | How do you use writing at school? |
| Jeanette: | In my speaking language and every thing like that. I write funny stories and funny poems. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything else you do at school that uses writing? |
| Jeanette: | Maybe some cooperative games and things like that. |
| Aileen: | How do you use writing there? |
| Jeanette: | Maybe a flower game where you have to name all the parts of the flower. |
| Aileen: | How would you use writing? |
| Jeanette: | You have to write them on the board what they say and you have to get them correct. |
| Aileen: | How does your mom use writing? |
| Jeanette: | I don't know. |
| Aileen: | Think about what she does at home - how would she use writing? |
| Jeanette: | She either writes income tax refunds or letters to my Grandma or she really doesn't write that much, or she writes plans for our new house. |
| Aileen: | Are there any other ways she writes? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | What do you think - what is good writing? |
| Jeanette: | Stories and using words that mean sense and not using words that don't mean sense. |
| Aileen: | Any other ideas about what is good writing? |
| Jeanette: | Maybe because you ... |
| Aileen: | Any other ideas, what do you think? |
| Jeanette: | Writing stories and stuff. |
| Aileen: | What is a good writer? |
| Jeanette: | Somebody who concentrates on their work and doesn't think, oh I'm not going to do this any more, and just keeps on continuing until they are finished. |
| Aileen: | Any other ideas about what is a good writer? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | What is a good writer? |
| Jeanette: | Somebody who completes their work and never does failing stuff - never thinks that they are going to fail and everything. |
| Aileen: | What is poor writing? |
| Jeanette: | People who think when they are writing a story, well I'm not going to do it today - maybe I'll do it tomorrow. I'll write it today or maybe I'll do it another day or something or maybe I'll finish it next week. |
| Aileen: | Any other ideas about what is poor writing? |
| Jeanette: | Somebody who really wants to write a story but doesn't want to, if you know what I mean. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | Not really, can you explain? |
| Jeanette: | Well, they want to write it but they just don't want to write it - get it - but they want it done. |
| Aileen: | But they don't want to do the work? |
| Jeanette: | Right. |
| Aileen: | What is a poor writer? |
| Jeanette: | You just asked that. |
| Aileen: | I asked what is poor writing, but you answered what is a poor writer. Try again on what is poor writing. |
| Jeanette: | Somebody who wants to write a book but doesn't want to write the book and he writes the book for a little kid and uses big words in it so the kids can't understand. |
| Aileen: | Are there any other ways you can tell poor writing? |
| Jeanette: | Somebody who doesn't look up in the dictionary what the words say and it doesn't mean anything. |
| Aileen: | What does a poor writer do? |
| Jeanette: | Sits around most of the day and only does one minute of writing on it - or writing a story every day and doesn't pay much attention about it and when it's finished just puts it somewhere and forgets about it. |
| Aileen: | What kind of writing do you like to do? |
| Jeanette: | Stories and poetry and stuff - like my journal and everything. |
| Aileen: | Any other things? |
| Jeanette: | No, not really. |
| Aileen: | Why do you write stories and poems and journals? |
| Jeanette: | So I can send it to a publisher and maybe get it published. |
| Aileen: | Any other reasons? |
| Jeanette: | Because I like to. |
| Aileen: | Anything else? |
| Jeanette: | Because I might get a reward for it. |
| Aileen: | What kind of a reward? |
| Jeanette: | When I wrote it at camp I got a badge for it. |
| Aileen: | To whom do you write the stories and letters? |
| Jeanette: | To a publisher. |
| Aileen: | Anyone else? |
| Jeanette: | To my teacher and my mom. |
| Aileen: | Anybody else? |
| Jeanette: | To my grandma, and grandfather, who really read them and send their opinions back. |
| Aileen: | What kind of writing that you do, do the others like to read? |
| Jeanette: | My handwriting and stuff like that. |
| Aileen: | What other kind of writing do the others like? |
| Jeanette: | Slang, my slang writing. |
| Aileen: | Slang writing? Anything else? |
| Jeanette: | Sometimes my weird stories and poems. |
| Aileen: | What make them like your writing? |
| Jeanette: | They like it because I'm using my head and I'm not writing using other people's books and I might grow up to be somebody who wrote a lot of books - an author. |
| Aileen: | Any other reasons why they like it? |
| Jeanette: | Because they have to like it because they are my family. |
| Aileen: | Are you a good writer or a poor writer? |
| Jeanette: | In between good and bad, but I say I'm a good writer for my age. |
| Aileen: | Do you like to write? |
| Jeanette: | Yes. |
| Aileen: | Why do you like to write? |
| Jeanette: | Because it challenges my brain. |
| Aileen: | How does it challenge your brain? |

| | |
|---|---|
| Jeanette: | It gives my brain more and more ideas and maybe when I get older I can go back to them. |
| Aileen: | Any other reason why you like to write? |
| Jeanette: | Because it's really fun. |
| Aileen: | How is it fun? |
| Jeanette: | You get to make up stories that aren't true and stuff and read them to someone and you can get their opinion. Because I can write weird stories and nobody has to look at it and then I can tear it up if it's bad. |

APPENDIX II. REWRITING *THE UGLY DUCKLING*
INTERVIEW AND RESPONSES

An interview related to the children's conceptions of the writing adaptations needed to respond to the knowledge, needs and interests of a younger reading audience after they had completed re-writing the story *The Ugly Duckling*. Questions were developed by addressing the categories developed by Berkenkotter (1981) in *A Writer's Awareness of Audience* ...

Questionnaire B

Instructions before reading the story to be rewritten:

We are going to read this story together and then I want you to write the story in your own words so one of the children in the primary class would be able to read it. I will help you with reading the story and the spelling of any word that you need when you re-write the story.

Question before rewriting:
1.      For which primary child are you going to write this?

Questions after the rewriting:
1.      What will (selected child's name) like about the way you wrote the story for him/her?
2.      Is there any thing he/she may not like or understand?
3.      How would you have changed the story if you were writing it for (name of a primary child of either higher or lower writing ability than the child chosen to be the recipient of the story)?
4.      What questions or comments did you ask or say to yourself as you were rewriting this story?
5.      How did you decide what parts of the story to keep or to not use?
6.      What was easy about rewriting the story?
7.      What problems did you have in rewriting the story?
8.      Are there any changes you would have made in your story if you had more time?


Respondent **Brian**

| | |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | For which primary child did you write your story? |
| Brian: | For Shane. |
| Aileen: | What do you think Shane will like about the story? |
| Brian: | It has great big printing so he can read it and it's a small story. |
| Aileen: | Anything else you can think that he will like about it? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | Do you remember what your story said? I'll get it for you. I need those (retrieving the paper) because I don't have my questions memorized. |
| Brian: | It only has five sentences. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything Shane may not like or understand? Do you think there is anything in the story? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | How would you have changed the story if you were writing it for Justin? |
| Brian: | I would make it longer - four pages long. |
| Aileen: | Why would you do that? |
| Brian: | Because Justin knows how to read. He would want to read it. |
| Aileen: | Oh yeah. Good thinking. Is there anything else you would have changed? |
| Brian: | No. |

| Aileen: | What questions or comments did you say or ask yourself as you were re-writing the story? |
| Brian: | Make it small. Don't make it too long. |
| Aileen: | Anything else that you thought about? That you were thinking in your head? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | How did you decide about which parts of the story to not use? |
| Brian: | I used some lines from the real story. |
| Aileen: | Was there anything else about parts to keep or not to use? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | What was easy about re-writing? |
| Brian: | I didn't have to write - to read the whole story out because it was here. |
| Aileen: | Anything else that made it easy? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | What problems did you have in re-writing the story? |
| Brian: | Aileen would forget the book so I could copy the lines out. |
| Aileen: | You're right, Brian - every time, didn't I! I had to run out and get it. Were there any other problems for you? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | Just one problem? Are there any changes you would have made in your story if you had more time? |
| Brian: | Oh, yes. |
| Aileen: | What sorts of things? |
| Brian: | Make it a bit longer. |
| Aileen: | Anything else? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | That was the main thing. We stopped after two or three sessions. It was a bit short. |


Respondent **Michael**

| Aileen: | For which primary child did you write the story? |
| Michael: | Steven. |
| Aileen: | What do you think Steven will like about the story? |
| Michael: | It's easy to read. |
| Aileen: | Anything else you can think of? |
| Michael: | It's short, it doesn't have hard words - except for my last name. |
| Aileen: | But they'd probably remember that. |
| Aileen: | Anything else you can think of that they might like? |
| Michael: | It has big letters so they can see it better. |
| Aileen: | Good ideas. Can you think of anything else? Is there anything else that Steven many not like or understand? |
| Michael: | The towns that I put in China, Japan. He may not know those places. (indistinct) Made it good. |
| Aileen: | How would you have changed this story if you were writing it for say, Justin? |
| Michael: | I would make it harder words and bigger, and a longer story. |
| Aileen: | Anything else? |
| Michael: | I'd make it small print because he had better eyes. I'd make it longer and harder to read. |
| Aileen: | Okey. Now what questions or comments did you say or ask to yourself as you were re-writing this story? |
| Michael: | Is it appropriate and good? Is it too long, too short, too         hard? |
| Aileen: | Wow, a lot of questions! What do you mean, is it appropriate? |
| Michael: | Like at the end when they get shot. |
| Aileen: | Right. And what did you think about that part. |
| Michael: | Touching. |
| Aileen: | Touching? |
| Michael: | That it was sad. |

| Aileen: | Oh I see, that it was sad. |
|---|---|
| Michael: | Heart warming. |
| Aileen: | Oh, and did you think about that? |
| Michael: | No. |
| Aileen: | What makes you think about it now? |
| Michael: | I don't know. |
| Aileen: | Just when you are re-reading it for yourself? |
| Aileen: | What do you think Justin will think of it? |
| Michael: | Neat (laughs). |
| Aileen: | What do you think Steven would think of that? |
| Michael: | Good, neat, fun. |
| Aileen: | That that's a good ending? |
| Michael: | Yes. |
| Aileen: | How did you decide what parts of the story to keep or not use? |
| Michael: | Could you repeat the question? |
| Aileen: | How did you decide what parts of the story to keep or not use? |
| Michael: | I don't know, I just (indistinct). |
| Aileen: | So did you have any way of thinking about the original story? |
| Michael: | No. At the end the real one has a beautiful swan and it is dead in my story. |
| Aileen: | Right. How did you .... |
| Michael: | I don't know - no, not a lot. |
| Aileen: | Did you think about anything in your head about changing that? |
| Michael: | No. |
| Aileen: | It just came when you were re-writing? What was easy about re-writing this story? |
| Michael: | Because I knew I would understand it. |
| Aileen: | And what made that easy? |
| Michael: | I don't know. Because it's easier for me to write something. |
| Aileen: | In what way? |
| Michael: | Kind of (indistinct). |
| Aileen: | Oh, for the younger kids. Ah, I've got you! What problems did you have in re-writing the story? |
| Michael: | Thinking of all the stuff (indistinct). Like thinking of it without writing my story down first. |
| Aileen: | Oh, by writing it on the computer at the same time as you were thinking of it. Oh, okey. What made that hard? |
| Michael: | You can't really think of a story unless you write it down first. Like right now I'm writing a story about hitch-hikers - part one. It's a comedy. He gets hit by a car. |
| Aileen: | Oh, those deadly endings, eh? |
| Michael: | No, it's not deadly, it's funny. When he gets hit he goes through this office and this guy is kissing ... |
| Aileen: | Are there any changes in your story that you would have made if you had more time? |
| Michael: | No. |
| Aileen: | So that's as much as you would have put even if you had more time. |

Respondent **Jeanette**

| Aileen: | Who was the primary child that you wrote this for? |
|---|---|
| Jeanette: | It was for Sean. |
| Aileen: | Is that who you started off to write it for? And is that who you decided in the end to write it for? |
| Jeanette: | Yes. |
| Aileen: | What do you think Sean will like about the story the way you wrote it for him? |
| Jeanette: | It has big letters. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything else about it - that he might like? |

| | |
|---|---|
| Jeanette: | Because it gets shot in it. |
| Aileen: | Why would he like that part? |
| Jeanette: | Because he likes guns. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything he may not like about the story? |
| Jeanette: | That there is a duck in it. |
| Aileen: | Why might he not like that? |
| Jeanette: | I mean because the title has the word beautiful in it and he doesn't like the word beautiful. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything else he may not like? |
| Jeanette: | I don't think so. |
| Aileen: | Is there anything he might not understand? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | How would you have changed the story if you were writing it for say, Justin? |
| Jeanette: | I would make it in really, really, small writing so he couldn't understand it. |
| Aileen: | So he couldn't understand it - is that what you said? |
| Jeanette: | Yes. |
| Aileen: | What would make you want to do it that way? |
| Jeanette: | So he would have to squint, squint, squint - I hate him. |
| Aileen: | So you would make it very hard for him. |
| Jeanette: | Yes. |
| Aileen: | What questions or comments did you say or ask yourself as you were re-writing that story? |
| Jeanette: | None. |
| Aileen: | How did you go about writing it then? |
| Jeanette: | I just typed whatever I felt. |
| Aileen: | Do you think that it told the story like the original one? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | How did you decide what parts of the story to keep or not use from the original one? |
| Jeanette: | I just trashed the whole story. |
| Aileen: | You trashed that whole story? |
| Jeanette: | Yeah. And wrote my own. |
| Aileen: | What made you trash that story? |
| Jeanette: | It was dumb and I wanted to make my own story. |
| Aileen: | Okey, what was easy about re-writing that story? |
| Jeanette: | I've written it before. |
| Aileen: | You've written that same story about the duckling before? |
| Jeanette: | Yeah. |
| Aileen: | Oh I see, so you were sort of repeating something you had done previously were you? |
| Jeanette: | Yeah, in kindergarten. |
| Aileen: | In kindergarten you wrote one like that, did you? |
| Jeanette: | Yeah. |
| Aileen: | What did people think of it when you wrote that one? |
| Jeanette: | Okey. It was good. |
| Aileen: | What problems did you have in re-writing this story? |
| Jeanette: | Nothing. None. A couple of spelling errors. That's it. |
| Aileen: | Are there any changes you would have made in the story if you had had more time? |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | So that's the way you would have done it even if you had a couple of days to write it. |
| Jeanette: | Yes. |
| Aileen: | Okey, thank you - that was interesting to find out what you were thinking about. |

In this section each of the stories are first presented in their initial unedited form, including grammatical, spelling and typing errors and reproduced the way they were first typed on the computer by the children or this
researcher.

A number of the stories were dictated to the researcher (*All About Gene, The Power To Learn About Schools, Brian's Personal Experience At Slocan School, Michael's Personal Experiences At Slocan School*, and *About the Authors* for Brian.)  All three of the children typed portions of their original drafts on the computer.  Michael was the most productive in independently typing his stories.

The second story of each set represents the completed edited version as their stories appeared in the information booklet.  In the booklet the text varied in size and placement to accommodate pictures of the school and the authors.

### Brian

About the Author

1.      Brian is a storyteller.  He is only nine years old.  He lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.  He spends most of his time playing baseball.  He gets his ideas from other stories and from POWER writing outlines.

About the Author

2.      Brian is a story-teller.  He is only nine years old.  He lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.  He spends most of his time playing baseball.  He gets his ideas from other stories and from POWER writing outlines.

1.      classroom The calass room is very small   .WE have a computer  a tv vcr a lunchroom  is very big bill has synthesizer  the class room is in many spots two rooms  and lunchroom  lord beaconsfield

2.      The classroom  is very small.  We have a computer, a TV and VCR.  The lunchroom  is very big. Bill has a synthesizer.  The classroom  is in many spots.  We have two rooms and lunchroom.  We have gym at Lord Powell.

1.                                    Free Time Recess Games

Fun     Teasing Jeanette                    Boring Stuff

artist                                      points
synthesizer
outings                                     getting dragged out of class
watching videos                             not having free time
computer games
co-operative games points                   Aileen talking too much

                                            not getting a piece  of cake on people's birthday

                                            not getting art

                                            not getting to play  on the computer
                                            not watch  TV

                                            held on floor when bad


2.      FUN STUFF                           BORING STUFF

freetime                                    points
recess                                      getting dragged out of class
games
artist (Bill)                               not having freetime
synthesizer                                 not going on outings
outings (swimming)                          Aileen talking too much
watching videos                             not getting a piece of cake on people's birthday
computer games                                      not getting art
co-operative games                          not getting to play on the computer
T V                                         not watching T V
art                                         held on floor when bad (inappropriate)
V C R
        list by Brian

1.      Brian's Personal Experience at Slocan

When I first came here I was nervous
I did not expect to see Michael here.  I did not expect to ever see him again.  I thought I would
never see him again.  We were buddies in the hospital where we were making a business call the
Bomb Business.
I didn't know it would take so long to get out.  It took almost a year and a half to get out of this
place - Slocan School.  You have to be really good to get out.

It took almost a month to get out of the hospital.  It was quite fun there because we could go
swimming on Tuesday and Thursday.

Some people take a pill called Ritalin  It helps them focus and slows you down so it makes you
do your work.  It's working for me and it might work for some of the other kids.

2.    BRIAN'S PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AT SLOCAN SCHOOL

When I first came here I was nervous. I did not expect to see Michael here. I did not expect to ever see him again. We were buddies in the hospital where we were making a business call the bomb business. It took almost a month to get out of the hospital. It was quite fun there because we could go swimming on Tuesday and Thursday.
I didn't know it would take so long to get out. You have to be really good to get out.
Some people take a pill called Ritalin. It helps them focus and slows you down so you do your work. It's working for me and it might work for some of the other kids.
Have fun while you can at the hospital or if you do come here.

**Michael**

1.    About the Auther

Michael is a star at wrighting storys  He lives in vancouver.b.c.  He is good at wrighting drma. He likes body building & swimming, + Math. I get my Ideu from my head. I go to a wrighting class every Monday at nine thirty am. Two Ten o'clock.
This is a real book.  $9.95 only per book

2.    About the Author

Michael is a star at writing stories.  He lives in Vancouver, B.C.  He is good at writing drama. He likes body building and swimming and math.  He gets his ideas from his head.  He goes to writing class every Monday at nine-thirty a.m. to ten o'clock.

**My story about Behaviourpeople&fun**

Told by Michael the oldest kid in the class!
FUN!!

1.    We have aTV & a VCR we watch movies and learn. We have a COMPUTER and SYNTHESIZER! The teachers are nice and sometimes mean. IF YOU READ THIS AND YOU WILL BE SORRY!! The teachers are cut and sexy said Tom Cruise!!& Robert DeNiro!! Every Friday we go on a outing &Swimming evry second Friday. We get recss & freetime. We have math games and we play POLO!!!  DEAR QUEEN Can you write to me I need to write about your royal live$$ I am only 5 years old PLEASE WRITE BACK LOVE SINCERELY MICHAEL.

2.    MY STORY ABOUT FUN  by Michael

We have a TV & VCR.  We watch movies and learn.  We have a computer and synthesizer.  The synthesizer and computer are fun because you learn.

1. Michael's Personal Experiences at Slocan School

When I first came here I was scared. I thought the teachers would be mean but they turned out to be nice I was shocked I was surprised to meet david here because I didn't know he would be here. Me and David played together well. We are still best buddies today on 5/1/92. Then a girl by the name of Jennifer came. I didn't really like her at first but then we became friends. Then another girl came by the name of Jeanette I really didn't like her that much. I hate her still today I had ups and downs with her. I was shocked to meet by friend Gene here I was shocked to see Aileen Stalker here too.

The !!!!! end!

2. MICHAEL'S PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AT SLOCAN SCHOOL

When I first came here I was scared. I thought the teachers would be mean but they turned out to be nice. I was shocked. I was surprised to meet my friend Brian here because I didn't know he would be here. Then two girls by the name of Jennifer and Jeanette came. I didn't really like them both at first but then we became friends. I had ups and downs with them still on May 4, 1992. I was shocked to meet my friends Gene and Aileen who also worked at the hospital. I am leaving soon. It is fun here. Enjoy it while you can!

**Jeanette**

About the Author

1. hello my name is Jeanette. Im form Toroto Ontavro and I Love to raite obowt romass and Love Sores. with happy eneing.

About the Author

2. Hello, my name is Jeanette. I'm from Toronto, Ontario and I love to write about romances and love stories with happy endings.

1. all aBout Gene

There once was a girl and a boy who had to come to a place they did not want to come to. The school that they had to go to was horrible. The teachers were man and bossed you around a lot. You had to be quiet or you would be in big trouble. They never ever said please of thank you. You better be careful for Gene will drag you out of the class room if you are bad.
I am leaving this awful place in May, so if you are taking my place, be careful.
Sweet wishes.                    Love, Jeanette

2. ALL ABOUT GENE
There once was a girl and boy who had to come to a place they did not want to come to. The school that they had to go to was horrible. The teachers were mean and bossed you around a lot. You had to be quiet or you would be in big trouble. They never ever said please or thank you. You better be careful for Gene will drag you out of the classroom if you are bad.
I am leaving this place in May, so if you are taking my place, be careful.

Sweet wishes.                    Love Jeanette

1.  The Power To Learn about Schools
    - two schools on property
    - playground is small
    - is next door
    - we do lot of stuff with our teachers when we are good
    - Bill and Gene are nasty sometimes
    - you can go  upstairs to meet with the principal
      you can have a conversation with the secretary
    - we have an artist and musician in our class


2.  Go Go Go To School   by Jeanette helped by Bill

    At our location we have two schools on the property.  We also have a small playground. Mary
    Turner school is next door to us.  We do lots of fun things with the staff when we earn it.  Bill
    and Gene can be nasty sometimes -other times they can be nice  At times, we can go upstairs and
    meet the principal for juice and cookies.  Also, you can have a conversation with the secretary.
    We have an artist and a musician here who helps us explore the arts.

These transcripts were taken from tape recordings of three separate sessions during which the children were working on their book *Welcome To Slocan School*. They are the first, sixth and fourteenth sessions from a series of sixteen sessions in total. Each session varied from twenty-five to forty minutes in length.

## SESSION ONE

| | |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | I'm going to give you something to look at and what I want you to do is - we're going to start today, thinking about how we're going to put together - just a minute 'til I finish this part and then we'll talk. We're going to start today thinking about how we are going to put together our booklet about this school, and what sorts of things we want to write about it. |
| Jeanette: | Make a map of it. |
| Aileen: | Okay, you're starting to think already. What great ideas. |
| Brian: | A map? |
| Jeanette: | M - A - P. Like the weather (garbled) and everything. |
| Aileen: | Okay, I have an idea ... |
| Jeanette: | Then this room and where everything is. |
| Aileen: | I have an idea... |
| Jeanette: | A map, not the whole place. |
| Aileen: | A sample here, but we can start thinking right off the top what we want to do in our book. So you're saying you'd like to put a map in it. Good. |
| Jeanette: | Not of Canada, of the class. |
| Aileen: | Exactly. What we're doing right now is called brainstorming. We're trying to think of all the possible ideas. |
| Jeanette: | Oh, don't put mine down, okay, don't put mine down. |
| Aileen: | I'm going to put down every idea. Every idea is good. |
| Jeanette: | Don't. No. |
| Aileen: | When you are brainstorming absolutely every idea. |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Aileen: | Yes. |
| Jeanette: | No, I didn't make that idea. |
| Aileen: | To me, a map is a good suggestion. |
| Brian: | (crying) |
| Aileen: | Brian. Let me think. Excuse me. Brian, would you sit on your seat there please? Because we need your good ideas. |
| Jeanette: | Oh come. |
| Aileen: | Brian, we're all going to throw in some ideas. |
| Jeanette: | No, I'm not ... |
| Michael: | Oh come to where the throw pillows are. |
| Aileen: | Because with brainstorming every idea is good. |
| Michael: | Pictures of the class. |
| Jeanette: | Take pictures of the classroom and everything. |
| Brian: | That's my idea! |
| Aileen: | One of the things is, that when we're working together here, just like when we were talking with the little kids, is ... |
| Jeanette: | Oh, the baby is crying now. |
| Jeanette: | Don't. |
| Jeanette: | Put my head here. |
| Aileen: | This is why, Jeanette, that sitting up is a bit better. 'Cause you're able to keep your hands and feet together, just by yourself. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | Okay, so pictures of the class. What kind of pictures did you have in mind, Michael? |
| Jeanette: | What are we doing? |
| Aileen: | We're trying to think. Remember I said what we were going to work on in skill-builders from now on? Is we're going to be ... |
| Jeanette: | Pictures of games, classroom. |
| Aileen: | Okay, games and a classroom. What kind of pictures? |
| Brian: | I've got one. |
| Aileen: | Just a minute, 'til I finish this idea. |
| Jeanette: | I know one. |
| Brian: | Photographs. |
| Aileen: | Photographs? Okay. |
| Jeanette: | I know one for the photographs. Pictures of the kids and tell 'em this the kind of kids you'd meet. |
| Brian: | Don't write that down. It's my idea, Jeanette. |
| Aileen: | She's adding on to it though. One of the things we can do is add to each other's ideas. |
| Aileen: | A picture of the kids. And what kind of kids you might meet? |
| Jeanette: | Maybe Michael might be in them. |
| Aileen: | Michael, what can you think of? |
| Aileen: | Great ideas when we put our heads together. |
| Jeanette: | Tell 'em it's a horrible place and they don't want to come here. |
| Aileen: | One of the things you want to do is tell them that it is horrible? Okay. |
| Jeanette: | And tell them not to behave and you'll get out of the place faster. |
| Michael: | And then you go upstairs. |
| Jeanette: | And not to behave! |
| Aileen: | Not to behave? Okay. |
| Aileen: | So, Brian, do you want to put down the things you can play with here? Do you want information? |
| Brian: | Leggo. |
| Aileen: | Is that something that you think we can include? |
| Michael: | Leggo is games. |
| Jeanette: | All that stuff goes underneath games. |
| Jeanette: | Make like, a list that has all the toys that are here. |
| Brian: | Every book, every book. Oh yeah, I'm gonna really write down ... |
| Michael: | No. Write down the chalk board. That's a toy, too. |
| Jeanette: | No, you geek. |
| Jeanette: | Oh, oh. |
| Aileen: | Okay, are we ... |
| Brian: | Are we "they" again? (referring to printing on the board) |
| Jeanette: | Oh, no. |
| Aileen: | That's in with the younger kids. We are doing "we" right now, "we" are deciding co-operatively how we can make a book. And we're together to do that. |
| Jeanette: | But we don't need all those pictures for a book. |
| Aileen: | Other people are thinking that would be a good addition. When I look at this book ... |
| Michael: | A cover to tell you who it's from, who's the authors. |
| Aileen: | So you're saying you don't think that you need pictures. But, when I look at this, which is a book that I talked about for kids that come to Children's Hospital ... |
| Brian: | I want to see it. I want to see it. |
| Aileen: | That was one thing that they chose to do. We don't have to choose that. |
| Brian: | I want to see it. |
| Aileen: | We'll look at it in a minute. We're thinking about our own book right now. |
| Michael: | Pictures in the book. |
| Jeanette: | I believe you about the duck. |
| Michael: | Oh yeah, right through the middle of the story and all of a sudden you have a picture of Jennifer ... |
| Aileen: | Well, we have a real possibility of putting it in. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Michael: | Jennifer, the Ugly Duckling or Something. |
| Aileen: | We're not talking about the Ugly Duckling now, we're talking about a booklet about people, when they come to school here. |
| Aileen: | Okay. Anything else, other ideas that you want? |
| Jeanette: | Like what they did. |
| Aileen: | We've got a map, pictures ... |
| Brian: | Like what they did. |
| Aileen: | Pictures of classroom, photographs, pictures of kids who you might meet here.. |
| Brian: | Like what they did. |
| Jeanette: | Tell them who's all in the class. |
| Aileen: | Tell them who all is in the class. What else? |
| Jeanette: | Pictures are like telling the world. |
| Aileen: | Okay, anything else? We're going to write this in the book. |
| Brian: | Do what they did. |
| Aileen: | We don't know yet about that, we're trying to think of our own ideas. |
| Jeanette: | Is that what they did? They put like a person. That isn't really in ... |
| Jeanette: | Get up and look at it, I can't explain it. |
| Aileen: | So, have an outline? |
| Jeanette: | Look, I'll show you, just look at any page. |
| Aileen: | Okay, so do what they did - and that was that - have a picture of a person. What else? Anybody else got some more ideas? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | 'Cause we're all good writers. |
| Michael: | A picture of the computer |
| Jeanette: | That's a game. |
| Aileen: | Do you want to tell them anything about ... ? |
| Michael: | Tell them that we have a TV. |
| Jeanette: | We have a TV and we get to watch ... |
| Michael: | And a VCR. |
| Aileen: | And a VCR. |
| Aileen: | Okay. Do you want to say what those are used for at all? |
| Michael: | They're two separate things. It's hooked together, but one's a TV and one's a VCR, and we can watch all the TV movies on. |
| Aileen: | Do you want to tell people what it is those are used for? |
| Jeanette: | For movies, of course! And watching cooking shows. |
| Aileen: | What might they be interested in about those sorts of things? |
| Michael, Brian and Jeanette: | Learning. |
| Aileen: | So would we tell them what sorts of things you learn in this school? |
| Michael: | No. |
| Jeanette: | Yeah. 'Cause they might freak out. |
| Aileen: | So you're saying yes? |
| Jeanette: | Yeah. |
| Jeanette: | I can smell your feet. |
| Aileen: | Brian, could you sit up with your feet away from people? |
| Jeanette: | (coughs/gags) |
| Aileen: | Brian? |
| Brian: | They're laying down. |
| Aileen: | Well ... |
| Jeanette and Michael: | But we don't have our feet in your face. |
| Aileen: | That's it. 'Cause putting your feet right in other people's faces ... That's it, go the other way. |
| Aileen: | Sit up here then. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | Go the other way. |
| Jeanette: | Not allowed. |
| Aileen: | Brian, we've got the pillows to sit on, so please don't make an issue out of that, because |
| it | wastes all our good time, and your good thinking time. |
| Michael: | Ignore him. |
| Jeanette: | That's kind of hard to do. |
| Michael: | Go like this. |
| Aileen: | Just swing your feet around. And lets see your smart face too. |
| Michael: | Just do this. |
| Aileen: | Okay, so what we do at school now ... |
| Jeanette: | Lay on your stomach. |
| Michael: | What a goof, Jeanette. |
| Aileen: | Think about Robbie, because he was the newest kid. |
| Michael: | Oh, puleese. |
| Aileen: | What would he have liked to have known before he came? |
| Michael: | I don't want to come here. I want to play. |
| Brian: | I want to play scavenger hunt. |
| Jeanette: | This is a dumb school. |
| Michael: | We're not playing. |
| Aileen: | Okay, what else would he have liked to have known? |
| Brian: | Jeanette is a scavenger. |
| Aileen: | What else would he have liked to have known? Think about Robbie, he's the newest person. He came here midway through the school year. What other things would he have liked to have known? |
| Jeanette: | You don't want to come here. You better behave or you're not going to get out. |
| Aileen: | Okay, so the behaviour stuff. All about the behaviour - better behave. |
| Michael: | Marks. |
| Jeanette: | We have dumb teachers here. |
| Michael: | Journals. |
| Aileen: | So we want to say something about the teachers? |
| Jeanette: | Dumb teachers. |
| Michael: | Art. |
| Brian: | Outings. |
| Michael: | Teachers are cute here. |
| Aileen: | Outings. Cute teachers. You said something about art. Boy, people have great ideas. Okay, we've got teachers. That they are ugly and that they're cute. |
| Jeanette: | No, I said that they're mean - mean. |
| Michael: | No, they're beautiful. |
| Jeanette: | There's Gene. |
| Aileen: | Okay, so we've got teachers. Obviously people feel very strongly about that. |
| Jeanette: | You're in love with Mrs. MacKay. |
| Michael: | No, I'm not. I love my mom. |
| Aileen: | Everybody ends up loving their teacher, at some point in the school career. |
| Jeanette: | Not you. |
| Michael: | I love her. I love Aileen. |
| Aileen: | Thanks ... |
| Brian: | I like her too. |
| Michael: | I like her shoes only. |
| Aileen: | That's okay. I don't need to be loved. I hope that kids like me. But some days I know they don't like me either, that's okay. |
| Jeanette: | Shhhh! |
| Michael: | Calm down, calm down! |
| Brian: | Aileen, I like your earrings. They're neat. |
| Jeanette: | She never takes them out. |
| Michael: | I have a challenge for you. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Aileen: | I want to keep on ... |
| Michael: | No, I have a challenge for you. |
| Aileen: | What's the challenge? |
| Michael: | Be quiet for five minutes. |
| Aileen: | I think I would fail. |
| Jeanette: | Shhhh! |
| Aileen: | I can be quiet for five minutes, if you give me five more minutes of what we'll put in this book. How about that? |
| Michael, Jeanette and Brian: | All right. |
| Aileen: | Shall we start? |
| Michael: | Yeah, but no talking. |
| Aileen: | Well, can I just encourage a little bit? |
| Michael: | No. |
| Aileen: | Can I repeat what you say? |
| Jeanette: | No, this is a challenge. |
| Jeanette: | You can just say - if you didn't hear it, you can go (motion), and if you did hear it, you go like this (motion). Okay? |
| Michael: | Starting ... |
| Aileen: | Just a - no, second. I have to be able to trust you guys, that if I see people poking or punching or ... |
| Jeanette: | You can't say anything. |
| Aileen: | No, I do have to be able to say that, okay. |
| Michael: | Okay. That's the only reason - punching. |
| Aileen: | Okay, so if there's behaviour - so that means you guys are going to have to manage your own behaviour really well, if I'm going to be in this contest. |
| Michael: | Aileen. |
| Aileen: | Okay. |
| Michael: | Starting, now. |
| Jeanette: | Okay, we can tell them about ... |
| Michael: | Aileen. We can tell them about Aileen. |
| Brian: | Teachers. |
| Jeanette: | We can tell them about - that there's coat hangers, you don't have to buy your own if you chew up your pencil. |
| Jeanette: | You get a very comfortable desk. |
| Michael: | If you wreck something, you have to pay for it. |
| Jeanette: | The desks are beautiful. |
| Michael: | We have a language master - what do you call them? |
| Jeanette: | Language master. |
| Jeanette: | A film and tape thing. |
| Michael: | A garbage can that is too small, it's always full. |
| Jeanette: | And we have a sticker program thing. |
| Brian: | And you get a grab bag. |
| Michael: | Books. |
| Michael: | That we have headsets. |
| Brian: | A chalkboard which you can draw on. |
| Michael: | A white board |
| Brian: | We do art twice a week. |
| Jeanette: | Everybody hates math here. |
| Michael: | Yeah, you complain, but you (indistinct) |
| Jeanette: | We go to the playground every day. |
| Michael: | Okay. |
| Jeanette: | Ow. |
| Brian: | Jeanette hit me. |

135

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| Brian: | You hit me. Lose all your points. |
| Jeanette: | I didn't do it on purpose. |
| Brian: | You lose all your points. |
| Michael: | Yes. |
| Michael: | He loses all his points. |
| Michael: | (Laughs) You said it. You said it. |
| Michael: | I heard it, I heard it - you said, Come on. |
| Jeanette: | No, five minutes is over. I was watching her watch. The five minutes is over. |
| Aileen: | Unh unh. |
| Michael: | I heard her talk. Three more minutes. And I heard you talk. |
| : | I can hit you now. |
| Jeanette: | Don't touch me! |
| Brian: | You hit me. |
| Michael: | Aileen? Why do you come here? |
| Michael and | |
| Jeanette: | (Laughs) |
| Jeanette: | Tell 'em about ... |
| Michael: | We have solving problems. |
| Jeanette: | We have all these cushions for everybody to watch a movie, and ... |
| Michael: | We get in trouble a lot. |
| Jeanette: | We're always ... we get in trouble a lot. |
| Brian: | Fighting. |
| Michael: | Yeah, we're always fighting. |
| Michael and | |
| Brian: | Always teasing Jeanette |
| Jeanette: | We have that checkpoint thing. We have that points thing. |
| Michael: | Oh yeah, the points. |
| Jeanette: | And you get points when you're working on task. |
| Brian: | It's people's birthday and you get cake. |
| Michael: | You get a balloon. |
| Jeanette: | And you get your picture taken and you get it put up on the wall. |
| Michael: | Shut up. |
| Brian: | We have eight kids a class. |
| Jeanette: | No, if you come, there's going to be nine. |
| Brian: | Nine kids today. |
| Jeanette: | Twenty-three girls and one boy. |
| Michael: | Gene has a beard. |
| Jeanette: | Aileen has a beard. |
| Brian: | Aileen - has - a - |
| Brian: | Bill wears glasses and is funny. |
| Michael: | Mrs. MacKay |
| Brian: | Artist! |
| Michael: | Mrs. MacKay's cute. |
| Jeanette: | Mrs. MacKay has hairy armpits. |
| Jeanette: | Did she write it? Did she write it? |
| Jeanette: | Mrs. MacKay has ... |
| Michael: | She's cute! |
| Jeanette: | Hairy armpits. |
| Michael: | Put cute down there |
| Jeanette: | Yes |
| Michael: | Cute |
| Jeanette: | Be quiet! |
| Michael: | One more minute. |
| Jeanette: | Ready - one two three ... Go. |
| Brian: | We have to do all sorts of things for ... |

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| Michael: | Okay. |
| Michael: | And over here, we have all sorts of books that they can steal - robbers. |
| Brian: | We have a copier. |
| Michael: | They're killing each other. |
| Jeanette: | Let me go. |
| Michael: | And there's smelly boots in here. |
| Jeanette: | Yeah, everybody takes off their shoes, they're allowed. |
| Brian: | They are partners but that is not the official ... |
| Jeanette: | Everybody just loves each other - but not in the, uh, sexual, yeah... |
| Jeanette: | And you're allowed to do anything at freetime even pick your nose. |
| Michael: | Almost. |
| Jeanette: | Except take off your clothes. |
| Michael: | Right. |
| Jeanette: | Of course. |
| Jeanette: | Okay, all the ... here are the classroom rules. |
| Jeanette: | Moving quietly, clean your desks up properly and always ask ... |
| Aileen: | Shhh! |
| Jeanette: | And you're allowed laughing as loud as you want. |
| Jeanette: | And you can scream. |
| Michael: | Kids get taken out of class a lot. |
| Jeanette: | And Bill always finds (indistinct). |
| Michael: | Oh yeah, yeah. |
| Jeanette: | And they drag you out by your hands and arms. |
| Michael: | That's only if you're stubborn. |
| Michael: | Kid's are stubborn, except for the beautiful Michael. |
| Jeanette: | No, Michael is the ugliest |
| Michael: | I think you're uglier. |
| Michael: | I'm the cutest |
| Michael: | And the beautiful Mrs. MacKay. |
| Jeanette: | Brian has red hair. |
| Aileen: | You know what?  This is almost a miracle!  With the exception of a couple of little whispered words that came out - half words, before I caught them ... |
| Michael: | No, you have another five minutes. |
| Aileen: | Five minutes, of almost silence from Aileen. |
| Michael: | A challenge, another five minutes. |
| Aileen: | It was a challenge!  I accepted it. |
| Michael: | Thirty minutes. |
| Aileen: | (Laughs) You know when I'll do that Michael?  Between one and two in the morning. |
| Brian: | An hour! |
| Michael: | When she's sleeping. |
| Aileen: | Okay, I'll accept the challenge then. |
| Michael: | Yeah, but you're not allowed snoring, moving... |
| Aileen: | You know what though, what you said Michael, is a really important thing - this group, when we're writing this book - what you kids did just now - you're doing exactly what's going to happen.  And that is - I'm going to try my very hardest not to talk as much as I usually do -Do you know what?  All of you guys can be teachers in this group. |
| Jeanette: | And you are the student. |
| Brian: | All right. |
| Aileen: | You all can help each other, and teach others. |
| Aileen: | But I am, Jeanette, I am.  'Cause I'm doing this for my school, and I am a student about how you guys write, and how you think about writing. So what you said about today was really exciting, when you wanted me to be quiet. |
| Jeanette: | You're not in school. |
| Aileen: | You had super ideas here. |
| Jeanette: | Another five minutes because we have lots more. |

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| Aileen: | Have you got more ideas? |
| Jeanette: | Yes. |
| Aileen: | Okay, look at all these ideas, fantastic. |
| Michael: | On either side, too. |
| Aileen: | I'm going to write them all down for next day, and what we're going to do then is take all our brainstorming ideas and see if we can put them in categories. Here's the last thing I need to have you decide today. Do you think ... Are you ready Brian, because I need your ideas. Besides the kids who actually come here, like new kids that come, because some of you guys will be going back to regular schools - for instance, Jeanette will be leaving to go back to Ontario - so a new kid will come in ... |
| Michael and Brian: | Yeah. |
| Michael: | What's it like in Ontario? |
| Aileen: | I'm glad to see you kids are happy about this. She is going to be going somewhere where she really wants to go. That's nice to see you being happy. And you're asking about what it's like -that's really thoughtful. |
| Michael: | What's it like in Ontario? |
| Jeanette: | It's snowing there right now. |
| Aileen: | It is. |
| Brian: | Holy! |
| Jeanette: | It snows until ... |
| Michael: | Have you seen the Maritimes? |
| Aileen: | Yeah, major snow with that. |
| Jeanette: | Imagine not going to school in the wintertime for three months because the snow's up to your door. You have to go out your house window to get out of the door. |
| Aileen: | Maybe three days. I used to live in Ontario and it wasn't three months. |
| Jeanette: | My cousin ... |
| Aileen: | Aside from the kids who'll be coming into the school, for instance, when each one of you leaves to go back to your regular school, who else do you thing would be interested in reading a book about this school? |
| Aileen: | Is there anybody else who would be interested in reading it? |
| Michael: | The teachers. |
| Aileen: | Okay. So I am going to make a list here of who would be reading it. |
| Jeanette: | All right, you have to be quiet. |
| Michael: | We would. |
| Aileen: | Great! Wow! So okay, the teachers... |
| Michael: | Our parents. |
| Aileen: | Fantastic! Brian, can you think of anybody else who might be interested? |
| Michael: | Beautiful Mrs. MacKay. |
| Jeanette: | Hairy Mrs. MacKay. |
| Aileen: | Who else? Brian, can you think of anybody else? |
| Michael: | Gene. |
| Jeanette: | Oh, we have to tell the kids one more thing - there's a Jeannie in this classroom. |
| Aileen: | Anybody else? |
| Aileen: | All right. Let's do this. |
| Aileen: | Brian, honey ... |
| Michael: | Brian, honey! Ha ha ha! |
| Aileen: | That's because I call my boys honey sometimes. Brian, Brian, I want to hear a good idea about who else might like to read this. |
| Jeanette: | Be quiet for five minutes. |
| Aileen: | That's no problem. |
| Michael: | All right, lets talk for five minutes on any subject. |
| Jeanette: | You're a motor mouth. |
| Aileen: | Some days I am. Brian, I need to hear who else you think. We've got the kids who come here ... |

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| Brian: | Bill. |
| Aileen: | We've got teachers, parents, Gene and Bill. Who else would like to read this, do you think? |
| Jeanette: | Aileen. |
| Brian: | Toni. |
| Michael: | Cute Mrs. MacKay. |
| Jeanette: | The other class across the way, in the portables. |
| Aileen: | Right! They don't know everything about us. They see us coming and going but they don't ... |
| Michael : | Eileen Corbett |
| Jeanette: | (crying) |
| Aileen: | Do you think anybody else would like to know? Can you sit up Jeanette, please? |
| Jeanette: | He pushed my head down, the jerk. |
| Brian: | I went like this ... |
| Aileen: | Well, people are having trouble with the pillows again. Let's have a couple more names. |
| Brian: | Secretary. |
| Aileen: | The secretary. I bet she would! |
| Brian: | The cleaning lady. |
| Aileen: | The cleaning lady might very well. They see us coming ... |
| Michael: | Bill. Uh, Bill, wh, what's his name? The guy who smokes the cigars. |
| Brian: | Henry. That's Henry. |
| Aileen: | Henry. Okay. |
| Michael: | How about - what's his name? |
| Michael: | His helper. |
| Aileen: | I don't know, what is Henry's helper's name? |
| Michael: | What's his name? The program guy that's here. |
| Aileen: | Jim? Oh Jim, I bet he would. |
| Michael: | Yeah. |
| Aileen: | Anyone else you can think of that would want to read it? |
| Michael: | The public! |
| Aileen: | The public! Fantastic! Because there are a lot of people who don't know anything about our program at all. |
| Jeanette: | The people at the swimming pool. |
| Michael: | The people at Sunshine. (another Children's Hospital) |
| Aileen: | At Sunshine? Yes. |
| Michael: | The deaf, um, society - just up the road. |
| Aileen: | Anybody else, Brian, that you can think that would want to read? |
| Brian: | Freetime. |
| Aileen: | You got any other ideas before we go? |
| Jeanette: | Freetime! |
| Aileen: | Okay, that's it. |
| Michael: | Charge! |
| Aileen: | No, no. Brian, just calm yourself before you go out. Fantastic brainstorming you did. |

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| Aileen: | Let's all be very good editors here, and then I'll tell you what .... |
| Jeanette: | I can't read my own story, you go ahead and read it. |
| Michael: | I know what the triangle is for (revision symbols). It's for when you miss something. |
| Aileen: | Are you feeling shy?It was a good story that you made up. |
| Jeanette: | Yes. |
| Aileen: | Okey, I will read it for you. |

*ALL ABOUT GENE*

There once was a girl who had to come to a place she did not want to come to. The school she had to go to was horrible. The teachers were mean and bossed you around a lot. You had to be quiet or you would be in big trouble. They never ever said please or thank you. You better be careful for Gene will drag you out of the classroom if you are bad. I am leaving this awful place in May, so if you are taking my place, be careful.

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| Michael: | That should be behave. |
| Jeanette: | No. |
| Brian: | Read the rest. Read the rest. (Sweet wishes, Love Jeanette) |
| Michael: | Because it would rhyme. |
| Aileen: | Are you going to write down the suggestions that they are saying? |
| Michael: | Like behave. That would rhyme with the last part. So if you are taking my place you better behave. Be careful .... be careful for Gene will ... |
| Bill: | That's a different message. |
| Brian: | Behave or Gene will ... |
| Aileen: | Bill says that is a different message. Be careful and behave will make a different message. |
| Michael: | Yeah, but if you are taking my place you better be careful? |
| Jeanette: | (Loudly) Yeah! |
| Michael: | You might better behave. |
| Aileen: | Do you want to write down behave as a possibility? |
| Brian: | I know what. You better be careful or Gene will and you better behave or Gene will .... |
| Michael: | Take out words and put it in. |
| Aileen: | You might want to take out words and Michael is suggesting to put in other words. And think about what the meaning is. Think about what the meaning is. You can put behave just down there as something to consider. Okey. What was Jeanette's piece about? |
| Michael: | Behaviour .... What happens. |
| Bill: | Brian you are in class? Could you sit up please? |
| Aileen: | Anything else? |
| Michael: | It should mean Bill. Be careful or Bill will .... |
| Aileen: | Remember what we had here about ideas? Which one does this fit into? |
| Michael: | You will have to run away from school when Bill ... (indistinct). |
| Aileen: | Well that may be something you want to add in terms of adding ideas. |
| Michael: | It's under having fun. |
| Jeanette: | Yeah RIGHT! |
| Brian: | Put it under behaviour. |
| Aileen: | I thought it should go under personal experiences. Her story about her personal experiences here and how she felt about the whole thing. |
| Jeanette: | That was fun running away from school. |
| Brian: | Save it for recess. |
| Aileen: | Remember we all had thought about that, that was something people could write about their personal experiences, because people are interested. Somebody coming into this school would be interested. You might have a whole different story that you want to tell. You might have a different story that you would tell. |
| Michael: | I'll tell them how nice Gene is, how rotten Bill is. (laughing). |
| Aileen: | So that is a whole other story that you would be able to tell. |
| Bill: | That is a whole other story, a kind of mythology. |

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| Aileen: | That's what I thought, but it might have been about fun and boring and people - how friendly they are and that - so it had parts of all of that. |
| Michael, Brian and Jeanette: | (indistinct discussion about additional categories) |
| Aileen: | What did you like about the piece? |
| Jeanette: | What do you think I just wrote here? |
| Michael: | No, it's what did you like about it. |
| Jeanette: | Here. |
| Brian: | Nice handwriting. (sarcastic tone) |
| Aileen: | That was my handwriting because she was dictating. Its all going to go on the computer so we don't have to worry about handwriting. |
| Brian: | There is no handwriting in this . |
| Michael: | That is half writing and half print. |
| Aileen: | What other things do you like about it? |
| Brian: | I don't know. |
| Michael: | It has a catchy tune. |
| Aileen: | It's got a catchy tune.  What do you mean? |
| Brian: | It says stories Jeanette. |
| Michael: | Well it rhymes. |
| Jeanette: | Make it rap. |
| Aileen: | So there were a couple of rhyming words in it.  Was there anything else that you liked about it? |
| Brian: | It's a good story. |
| Aileen: | What made it a good story? |
| Michael: | Short and plain. |
| Jeanette: | You call that short? |
| Brian: | Short and plain. |
| Aileen: | Did it catch your interest? |
| Brian: | Nope. (sic) |
| Michael: | Oh come on. |
| Aileen: | Did it make you think of anything else? |
| Brian: | Nope. (sic) |
| Bill: | Was it fun? |
| Brian: | Yep (sic), a tiny bit. |
| Aileen: | Did it make you think about anything that you felt in this school? |
| Michael: | You never told the title to it. |
| Aileen: | I thought it did because you said that you would write something different about the school. |
| Michael: | What is the title? |
| Jeanette: | You never wrote down the title I told you. |
| Michael: | What's it called? |
| Aileen: | Do you have any comments questions or suggestions for this author? |
| Michael: | Ah, she don't (sic) even know it so... |
| Jeanette: | I do so. |
| Brian: | What is it then? |
| Aileen: | Michael or Brian do you have any comments or suggestions?  You made one about behave and be careful. |
| Michael: | Give it a title. |
| Aileen: | Give it a title.  You don't always have to have a title to begin with do you because she might ... |
| Michael: | She died over this place. |
| Jeanette: | *Over My Dead Body.* |
| Aileen: | So you want to call it *Over My Dead Body?* |

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| Jeanette: | (shouting) *OVER MY DEAD BODY!* |
| Aileen: | What would happen if she called it *Over My Dead Body*? |
| Michael: | Yeah, but the story wouldn't go with the title. |
| Aileen: | But what would it make you think of if she had that title? |
| Michael: | Then all the kids would think that Gene was slobbering over her. Gene has an accidental ... |
| Jeanette: | *Over My Dead Body.* |
| Aileen: | What happens inside your head when you hear a title like that? |
| | Brian, what happens inside your head when you hear something like "over my dead body" as a title? |
| Brian: | I don't think it would go with the story. |
| Aileen: | You don't think it would? |
| Jeanette: | The kids would freak out because Gene would drag you out of the class *Over My Dead Body*. |
| Aileen: | Okey. So you have another idea about "over my dead body". You know when you say "over my dead body" that's what makes me think it is something you are quite annoyed about, and you are not going to let it happen. |
| Michael: | Well once you are dead then they can do it. |
| Bill: | That's what it means exactly. |
| Aileen: | You have to be dead before you would let it happen. |
| Michael: | (indistinct) ... two counsellors. |
| Jeanette: | So what did I look like flab? |
| Aileen: | Any other suggestions for Jeanette to fix that up or to change? |
| Michael: | Glasses .... |
| Bill: | It's distracting. I think that is a good idea, Brian. |
| Aileen: | Any other questions, comments, statements? Okey, what I want you to do, Jeanette ... What do you think is the next step for Jeanette here, if she is going to do POWER writing? |
| Brian: | Power writing. |
| Michael: | She could revise it. |
| Aileen: | Okey, and she might want to look at these questions here. She might want to look at the editing ones, and to revise it because you guys gave her some ideas she might want to consider to put into her story. |
| Jeanette: | How do you spell "about". |
| Bill: | a-b-o-u-t |
| Aileen: | Michael, you are on the computer and Brian let me find yours. |
| Jeanette: | All about Gene. |
| Aileen: | We have this one on about the class room. Can you look and see ... here, about whether you think this might help with looking at the fun things and the boring things. This paper might help with how you would organize that information. Okay? We'll get you a ... |
| -: | What's the program you use for this? |
| Aileen: | We're just using the MacIntosh Works program here, just like a regular word processor, not ... |
| Bill: | Because I have a writing program - just to let you know that. |
| Aileen: | Yeah? And what does it have that is different? |
| Bill: | You can have a look at it. |
| Aileen: | Since all of us were just learning the computer, I thought the easiest would just be to use the new word processor because you can cut and paste and edit and things like that. The children's publishing program didn't really have that much more ... |
| Jeanette: | I want to go back to Ontario. |
| Bill: | You're going. You get a wish that comes true. |
| Aileen: | Jeanette, have you got a pencil that you can work and look at how this one, how your story's going to go for the next section? |
| Jeanette: | No ... |

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| Aileen: | You need to have your pencil. Okay could you get your pencil? |
| Jeanette: | I have my pencil. |
| Aileen: | You must have a pencil in your classroom. |
| Jeanette: | I have my pencil. |
| Aileen: | David, have you got a pencil? |
| David: | No, (indistinct) |
| Aileen: | Okay, I'll get you a pencil. |
| Aileen: | Sharp. |
| Jeanette: | You've got .. (indistinct) |
| Michael: | What a googie player???? You went.... |
| Aileen: | This is going quite well, I think, with all your stories. Now, I'll get you some lined paper, David, here too. |
| Jeanette: | Ooohh. |
| Aileen: | Jeanette, are you trying to set up a problem here in the classroom? It looks like it to me, because I heard Bill very clearly tell you to begin with, about one pillow. So that it's fair. You've got two pillows, too. |
| Michael: | Because, there's enough pillows for everybody. |
| Aileen: | Well, there are, as long as it doesn't turn into a fight. Are you going to be able to manage it? |
| Jeanette: | I don't care. |
| Jeanette: | Why does he have two big pillows? |
| Aileen: | Yes, I see that. |
| Brian: | And I have four little pillows. |
| Aileen: | I don't want to spend the time... |
| Brian: | This is a continual story. You see, were talking about pillows again. |
| Aileen: | If people are able to just manage, without fighting about them, or spending the whole time talking about pillows. Brian's over there, so we'll ... |
| Jeanette: | Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. |
| Aileen: | Okay, well your ... What stage do you think is the next thing that you need to do? With our story? What do you think would be the next stage? |
| Michael: | (indistinct) rough draft. |
| Aileen: | Okay. You have it written down here. Do you think there is anything else you're going to need to do to get it so that it will be able to go onto the computer for the next stage? You don't really need to copy it all over again. |
| Brian: | I just want to write on the computer. |
| Jeanette: | How do you spell "learn"? |
| Bill: | L-E-A-R-N |
| Aileen: | That little bit there ... we can put it on the computer and print it off and then it will be ready to have people help to edit it. |
| Bill: | A-R-N |
| Aileen: | That one you already have on and so this one you can get ready to put on. |
| Brian: | Bill, will you do up my shoe? |
| Bill: | Brian, I think ... I do know how to, but I think you can do up your boot. You know I rarely... when I ask people that question they rarely do it for me any more. |
| Aileen: | About tying up your shoes? |
| Bill: | Not for about thirty-seven years. |
| Aileen: | Strange about that. |
| Brian: | Are you thirty-seven? |
| Bill: | Well that was the last time that I got my shoes tied up. |
| Aileen: | (indistinct) you're thirty-seven. |
| Jeanette: | Aileen. |
| Aileen: | I'm glad you didn't lock that door because Bill will be coming in and out so I hope you didn't lock that door. |
| Jeanette: | Aileen. |
| Aileen: | OKEY, let's see some more good ideas (indistinct) what you're going to do. |

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| Jeanette: | Aileen how do you spell "learn", Aileen? |
| Brian: | L-A-R-N |
| Aileen: | Does anyone have some suggestions ... |
| Brian: | L-E-E-E-E-E. |
| Aileen: | We have two lists here.  Does anyone have any ideas what could happen to get a story going. |
| Jeanette: | Do you know how to spell "learn"? |
| Brian: | L-E-A-R-N. |
| Bill: | I have a suggestion. |
| Aileen: | Well, I wonder if Jeanette or Michael do because they are good at ideas. |
| Bill: | Well, just to start.  Just to start.  I think Brian should put his shoe on and sit up.  Brian ... |
| Michael: | A space, a space (helping Jeanette with computer functions). |
| Bill: | Probably putting your shoe on would help, and sitting up so you can be alert. |
| Brian: | (moaning) Ohhhhhh. |
| Bill: | Being in the lying position doesn't help you think. |
| Aileen: | Now, we aren't locking the door on Jeanette either, Brian... that's getting to be a little silliness there and you need to get thinking about this. Jeanette and Michael, what do you think Brian needs here? |
| Jeanette: | A title. |
| Aileen: | He has two lists here of the things that are fun and the things that are boring. |
| Michael: | A title. |
| Brian: | (moaning sounds) No. |
| Aileen: | Well, he doesn't need to put a title down first of all because you didn't have a title for yours, and then you might want to change it. |
| Jeanette: | I had a title. |
| Aileen: | You did have a title?  I didn't remember that. |
| Jeanette: | You didn't write it down. |
| Aileen: | Well, okey.  Sometimes you start with a title and then you change it part way through. But what's he going to do with the two lists?  Brian, what are you going to do with the two lists? |
| Brian: | I don't know. |
| Michael: | Throw them out and start over again. |
| Aileen: | Because writing them over again seems to me to be a waste of energy.  Re-writing them again.  Is there anything else he can do with the lists to make them into ... |
| Jeanette: | Yeah.  Put them on the computer. |
| Aileen: | Well, Michael is on that. |
| Brian: | On the computer. |
| Jeanette: | Take the lists and make it into a story.  Take some words and move them around. |
| Aileen: | Okey.  Jeanette said ... Brian, Jeanette said ... did you hear what Jeanette is suggesting? To take the lists and make them into a story.  Do you want to do that while I copy down the ideas.  That is what I did for Jeanette.  Brian, did you hear what Jeanette has suggested? |
| Brian: | Yes.  Make them into a story.  I don't want to do that. |
| Aileen: | You don't want to make them into a story?  Do you want to make another story with another topic? |
| Brian: | I just want them (indistinct). |
| Aileen: | So you want them in two separate lists? |
| Brian: | Yes. |
| Aileen: | Well, we can do it that way. |
| Bill: | Brian, could you sit up please.  That would really help you with doing this. |
| Aileen: | Bill is asking you to sit up. |
| Brian: | (shouting) Okey.  I'm sitting up. |
| Aileen: | Okey, now here's something ... look at this. |
| Bill: | You can sit up.  Are you getting upset? |

144

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| Brian: | I can do it like this. |
| Bill: | What I'm doing is asking you to sit up so you are more alert because you aren't getting much done right now. So sit up now. |
| Aileen: | So, in fact we could put it so we had a list of fun things and a list of boring things. We could put it like that and it doesn't need to be in a story at all because that's a different way of writing. |
| Jeanette: | Why do we have to do this? |
| Bill: | Because you are students and you don't know how to do it and you need to learn how to do it. |
| Jeanette: | I mean make this book. It's the dumbest idea I ever heard of. |
| Michael: | No, no, no. We're not making the book. She's making the book. |
| Aileen: | Well, I'm making a book for my school work. |
| Michael: | I know, but we're not making a book we are just giving some ideas. |
| Aileen: | They are all your ideas. |
| Jeanette: | You are making a book. You are writing something that is going into the book. |
| Aileen: | Yeah, it's your book. |
| Jeanette: | The stuff is going into the book. |
| Michael: | I know, but it's her book. |
| Aileen: | It's all you guys' book. I'm not writing anything in this book. It's all your good stories. |
| Bill: | Brian, no. |
| Aileen: | All right. Do you want to put anything else? If we make it in two columns, fun and boring, do you think there needs to be anything else in this. Brian? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | No? Just those two boring things there. |
| Bill: | Are you going to lie down again Brian? I've asked you three times now ... |
| Aileen: | You had the title there already, I didn't see it. So points are the only boring thing. Okey, that's fine. So when you type it up you will be able to make two lists of this. |
| Brian: | It's not very comfortable. |
| Aileen: | Yeah. Put that against it. Put the one against the other. Okey, what else? What are some more things that you want on here? |
| Brian: | Not having freetime. |
| Aileen: | Oh, yeah. Are people going to know about how that happens? |
| Brian: | You have to have enough points: |
| Aileen: | Okey, you see sometimes ... if I just heard, I would wonder how come you don't have free- time at this school? |
| Jennifer: | I want to do the story. |
| Bill: | You want to do the story? Sure. Do you need some help? |
| Jeanette: | Not really. |
| Bill: | How are you doing Michael? |
| Jeanette: | How do you spell "people?" |
| Brian: | P-O-P-L-E .... P-E-O-P-L-E. |
| Jeanette: | I ask somebody else and then you scream at me. |
| Aileen: | Well, who else did you ask? |
| Brian: | P-O ... P-E-O-P-L-E. |
| Aileen: | Brian is a terrific speller so he was helping you there. |
| Jeanette: | I asked YOU and then they scream at me. |
| Brian: | I did not scream at you. |
| Aileen: | What are you trying to do, Brian? |
| Brian: | Help. |
| Aileen: | Yeah. Good going. Good helping. |
| Jeanette: | (indistinct) too much of. |
| Brian: | Aileen - talking a lot. That's boring. |
| Aileen: | (groan) Well, this group, I'm not having to talk as much because you are helping each other. |
| Brian: | That's good. |

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| Jeanette: | You still haven't done your five to ten minutes |
| Aileen: | Thank you Brian, I need encouragement. So when you say "that's good" to me, that helps me remember. |
| Jeanette: | Five minutes starting now. No talking. |
| Aileen: | Okey ... |
| Jeanette: | You just blew it. |
| Jeanette: | Aileen. |
| Brian: | Not getting to do art. |
| Jeanette: | Aileen. |
| Aileen: | Just a minute. Is there something somebody else can help you with? |
| Jeanette: | (indistinct answer) |
| Brian: | What do you want? |
| Jeanette: | I was asking Aileen. |
| Aileen: | Okey, but if there is somebody else who can help you here while I'm writing, because I'm still writing here. |
| Jeanette: | Yeah, well I asked Aileen. |
| Brian: | I can spell. |
| Aileen: | You are a good speller. |
| Jeanette: | Write zero. |
| Aileen: | What's that about? Do you think that people will be interested in hearing about zero? |
| Michael: | Yeah. |
| Aileen: | You think they would? |
| Michael: | Because they have to learn what to do ... |
| Aileen: | Well there's one person here who's saying that if they were writing they would say (indistinct). |
| Brian: | Not watching T V. |
| Jeanette: | We don't watch T V here, we watch movies. |
| Bill: | Brian, how many times is it now that I've asked you? |
| Brian: | About five. |
| Bill: | Yeah, it's no good for you when you are working. It doesn't work. I can't do my homework or anything when I'm lying down. |
| Brian: | I can. |
| Bill: | Well I'm not seeing it. |

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| Aileen: | ... This one .. |
| Michael: | Pencil, please. |
| Aileen: | Right, you do need pencils. |
| Brian: | Pencil, please. |
| Jeanette: | Aileen wrote this. |
| Brian: | Pencil please. |
| Aileen: | Yes, hold on I've got them in here .. one two where is the third one? Have you got one already? |
| Brian: | I can't use this one. |
| Aileen: | What's the problem? |
| Brian: | Can't use this one. |
| Aileen: | Is it broken? Okey, there's the third one. Have you got a pencil now, Jeanette? Oh that, one is really broken, isn't it! |
| Brian: | Owww (crying) |
| Brian: | You're pushing farther than (indistinct) |
| Michael: | It's not my problem. |
| Brian: | It hurts. |
| Michael: | (Loud laughter as looks at Brian's story) Slocan it's spelled wrong. |
| Brian: | Aileen probably did that .. I did that. |
| Michael: | Hey, there is no space between "at" and "Slocan", which is not spelled right. |
| Aileen: | This is yours here, Michael ... you can set it right here so you can set it on the clipboard. Can you set it on the clipboard so it doesn't fall? So it says ... do you want to read it out, Brian, it's yours. |
| Michael: | But, look, it says (indistinct) at Slocan, at Slocan, at Slocan. |
| Aileen: | I know, but it was just a typing thing. Lucky on the computer you can fix things right up in a whiz. |
| Michael: | And Slocan is spelled wrong. |
| Jeanette: | No, it's not. |
| Aileen: | Okey, that's something that when you're editing ... let's read it through first. |
| Brian: | Who cares - it's a "l". I just.... |
| Aileen: | It's a little "l" instead of a capital, isn't it? |
| Aileen: | Brian, could you read it out for us first of all so we just hear it. Sometimes when I'm editing I just like to hear it because it gives me an idea of whether it flows. |
| Brian: | Ddddadoooo (musical introduction) |
| Aileen: | Okey, introducing *Brian's Personal Experiences At Slocan School.* |
| Jeanette and | |
| Michael: | Boo. Boo. |
| Aileen: | No, I'm interested. |
| Michael: | And why did you put speech marks? |
| Aileen: | Okey, hold on. Can you read it out Brian? |
| Brian: | (indistinct but negative response) |
| Michael: | I'll read it. |
| Aileen: | Do you want someone else to read it out for you? |
| Brian: | Me and Michael. |
| Michael: | Okey, I'll read it. |

*BRIAN'S PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AT SLOCAN SCHOOL*

When I first came here I was nervous. I did not expect to see Michael here. I did not expect to ever see him again. I thought I would never see him again. We were buddies in the hospital where we were making a business called the Bomb Business.

I didn't know it would take so long to get out. It took almost a year and a half to get out of this

place - Slocan School. You have to be really good to get out.

It took almost a month to get out of the hospital. It was quite fun there because we could go swimming on Tuesday and Thursday.

Some people take a pill called Ritalin. It helps them focus and slows you down so it makes you do your work. It's working for me and it might work for some of the other kids.

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| Aileen: | Okey, now remember when we are editing .... |
| Michael: | We use the periods and capitals. |
| Aileen: | Okey, but first what was the piece about? |
| Michael: | About Slocan School and the hospital. |
| Aileen: | O.K. We might want to consider that. |
| Michael: | Could I make a little suggestion? You know when you are talking about the hospital down here - why don't you join it up with down there? Because you are going hospital Slocan. |
| Brian: | Aileen did that. I only wrote to there, that's all. |
| Aileen: | I was writing down what you were dictating. Do you hear what Michael was suggesting? |
| Michael: | So where it says about the hospital right here why don't you put it up there? |
| Jeanette: | Instead of Slocan School ... the hospital here (indistinct) |
| Aileen: | So you're suggesting to change the order of some of the sentences so they join together? |
| Michael: | Yeah. |
| Aileen: | Okey. Yes, so it joins together and has a bit more.. |
| Michael: | A paragraph. |
| Aileen: | A paragraph about meeting you in the hospital and then going on to Slocan School and what it was like here. |
| Michael: | And blah, blah, blah. |
| Aileen: | Okey, so that's one idea. What you can do with that Brian is - Michael will put his on here - let me see - you can put a little thing around here and make an arrow and that means that with this part we can take it out and move it up on the computer so that is talking about the hospital. |
| Michael: | I know I'm making a little bit of mess on your paper, but... |
| Aileen: | That's Okey. These papers are for editing. |
| Michael: | I'm circling it. |
| Aileen: | Sure, circling works. So the piece you feel was about the hospital and Slocan School - I agree it wasn't just about your experiences at Slocan School - it was sort of about how you got here. So maybe you need to say that after we were in the hospital I came here to the school. |
| Michael: | See, in this big space here? |
| Aileen: | Yes, but with the computer we can make a big space - as long as you have the idea. We can make a space and type it right in there. Brian, so sort of to join up the fact that you were in the hospital, think about, here, how did you get to, here ... to join up Brian.. |
| Brian: | The pencil is broken. |
| Aileen: | Yes, you have to hold the end in. Brian, do you think you could.. |
| Michael: | We have a little customer leaving without asking. |
| Aileen: | Brian, could you put a sentence in between about after I was in the hospital I came to Slocan School? Because otherwise you have, you have stuff about the hospital and stuff about Slocan School but you don't have anything in between to let us know how you got here. Is there anything you could say to join the two together? |
| Brian: | I could use the computer. |
| Aileen: | Yes, but what are you going to use the computer for? |
| Brian: | To change the ideas around. |
| Aileen: | Yes, and what are those ideas? What ideas would you use ... if you were going to join the idea of being in the hospital and then the idea about being in here, what would you use to join those two to make it sensible so people understand? |
| Brian: | You put that around it and you put it like this ... |
| Aileen: | Okey, so that will make that up here with the idea about that with the hospital ... now |

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|  | what sentence ... could you put a sentence in between to join up those two? The fact you were in hospital and the fact you were at Slocan Street what could you put to join up? What sort of thing could you say? |
| Brian: | I don't know. |
| Aileen: | How about something.... |
| Jeanette: | Well, after I was in the hospital I went to Slocan Street. |
| Aileen: | What do you think of that idea that she just said. That would be a joining idea. After you were in the hospital I went to Slocan School and then you talk about Slocan School. |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | Well what would you like to say? |
| Brian: | Nothing. |
| Aileen: | Nothing. You just want two separate sentences without it being joined up? Well, you can go with that, but listen to what people are editing - listen to what people are saying - they suggest some things when they are editing ... |
| Brian: | Jeanette won't use any of my ideas in her story, so why should I use any of her ideas in my story? |
| Michael: | Yes, but ... |
| Jeanette: | You never suggested anything else for mine. |
| Michael: | Brian, don't lower yourself... |
| Aileen: | And if it is a good idea, just accept it? Your story is really good. |
| Michael: | Don't be like her... don't lower yourself. |
| Jeanette: | You never made any suggestions about my story. |
| Aileen: | I wouldn't worry about whether it is lowering yourself or not, but if it is a good idea, I'd go for it. If it made the story better... |
| Michael: | I took some of Bill's ideas. |
| Aileen: | Right. You've gotten a lot better during this time about taking other peoples ideas. When you first started you said, "Well it's my story and I'm not going to change it. I don't want any ideas." Do you remember that? |
| Michael: | No. |
| Aileen: | I do, because for the first few times it was hard for everybody to take ideas from each other. Okey, well, you will have to consider that, Brian. You're getting some ideas from people and you will have to consider that. |
| Michael: | Do you need a cushion? |
| Aileen: | No, actually I'm Okey. I don't need to talk about cushions in this group. There's a lot more interesting things to talk about than cushions. You know, Brian, what I would be interested in - something to finish off this story. You were saying about the pills and something to finish off. I know Jeanette in her story the way she finished off was, I'm leaving this place and if anyone else is coming watch out. So she was sort of thinking about people who might be coming in. Is there anything that you might like to say for people who are coming in? |
| Michael: | Have fun. |
| Brian: | (indistinct) |
| Aileen: | Brian, for your story, not Michael's story. What could you say to finish off? Thinking about kids who might be coming in. Is there anything you could say about for the people who are coming in? Because I feel like your story is not quite finished yet. You said it's working for me and it might work for some other kids. What do you think about putting in another sentence? Is there anything more to help kids coming in? Is there anything worthwhile for them? ...... Think about what you have learned in this school that would be helpful for them coming in. |
| Brian: | I don't want any more ideas. |
| Michael: | Just don't hesitate ... |
| Aileen: | What happens when you get a lot of ideas from other people Brian? |
| Michael: | He gets grouchy. |
| Brian: | I told you I'm feeling upset today, so .... |
| Jeanette: | Maybe if you sat up .... |

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| Aileen: | Jeanette, I'm here and .... Brian is thinking today and he is not lying down right asleep so we will just leave it at that. (Brian sits up) |
| Brian: | I'm wide awake and not sleepy. |
| Aileen: | Great, that will be much better and not grouchy.  Are you worried about writing down these ideas, Brian?  What is it that when you hear these kids' ideas, what do you think about then? |
| Jeanette: | That isn't very nice. |
| Aileen: | Brian, what happens when you hear other peoples' ideas, because we can put them on the computer really fast if you have ideas and I can help you with that. |
| Jeanette: | You're so rude. |
| Michael: | All I said (indistinct argument about colours of pencils). |
| Aileen: | There's lots of colours here?  What colour did you want? |
| | Okey.  I'm editing here, and I'm saying use a joining sentence between the info about the hospital. |
| Brian: | Info? |
| Aileen: | Yes, that is just a short form.  Now there is one other thing.  It took almost a year and a half to get out of this place.  You have to be really good to get out.  If I was a kid coming in I would say .. |
| Michael: | Get out of what. |
| Aileen: | Yes, to get out of what, and I would say, what does really good mean?  Do you think it would be worthwhile to add a bit about what "really good" means?  Brian... |
| Michael: | I'm giving him ideas. |
| Aileen: | Do you think it would be worthwhile to say more about what "really good" means? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Aileen: | Why not?  If I was a kid coming in I would say I have to be really good to get out.  Brian is giving me a clue but I wonder what the clue is?  How do I have to be really good?  What does that mean?  You have given them part of a clue do you think they need more? |
| Brian: | They have a system called points ... |
| Aileen: | Are you dictating this? |
| Michael: | Wait he's not (indistinct) |
| Aileen: | It's okey, I got it .  We have a system called points |
| Brian: | And .... don't write "and" down. |
| Michael: | Brian is not even doing anything, Jeanette is not doing anything on Brian's story. |
| Aileen: | Are you editing Brian's story, Jeanette? |
| Jeanette: | No, but I am thinking about it. |
| Aileen: | But it isn't even finished yet. |
| Michael: | It's her story of go, go, go, go. |
| Jeanette: | It's none of your business about it, Michael |
| Michael: | Oh, do you have an attitude this morning! |
| Jeanette: | It's more like you that has the attitude. |
| Aileen: | So how can people be helpful when it looks like people are a bit grouchy? |
| Michael: | Ignore her. |
| Jeanette: | I'm ignoring you. |
| Aileen: | Well, not setting people up would be the best. |
| Aileen: | Brian, we have a system called points.  I got as far as that when you were dictating. |
| Brian: | You have to earn over seventy-five ... |
| Michael: | Not everybody. |
| Brian: | Or over to earn an outing .... or seventy or one hundred and ten. |
| Michael: | One hundred and twenty. |
| Brian: | Out of ten point, if you're not out of ten points you're a seven. |
| Aileen: | Do you want to put all that or you have to earn point to go on an outing?  Because it is different for different people ... Shane is different ... |
| Jeanette: | Shane is on ours. He has to earn seventy. |
| Michael: | No, not seventy, Jeanette. |

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| Jeanette: | He couldn't earn seventy in that time. |
| Aileen: | Okey, we were talking about points. You have to be really good to get out. We have a system called points. What about getting out of Slocan School? |
| Michael: | I'm leaving. |
| Jeanette: | I'm getting out, too. |
| Aileen: | Brian, what do you need to do? |
| Brian: | I don't know, I need help . |
| Aileen: | Maybe Michael has some clues because he is almost out. |
| Brian: | Do you have any clues? |
| Michael: | You mean in getting out? Um ... behave. |
| Brian: | Behave. |
| Aileen: | So do you want that in? What would you say then to help another kid? |
| Michael: | (to Jeanette) You're not leaving. That's cheating. |
| Jeanette: | I am not. It's not my fault that I'm moving. |
| Aileen: | Brian, what would you say about behaving, because that is what you say you have to do to get out? |
| Brian: | You have to be really good to get out. |
| Aileen: | You have to know about really good because you said you have to be really good. |
| Michael: | You have to earn your way out. |
| Aileen: | Michael is saying you have to behave and earn your way out, so how would you say that? Some may not know what that means. With writing you have to be really clear. |
| Brian: | I want my copy back Jeanette. I want my copy back. |
| Aileen: | I have a typed copy for you. |
| Jeanette: | No, thank you. |
| Brian: | I want my copy back. I want my original. |
| Jeanette: | What are you doing when you are taping? |
| Aileen: | That was a mistake because you were to have the typed copy. |
| Brian: | It is spaced, look (pointing to the words Slocan referring to the initial conversations in the group re spelling, etc.). |
| Michael: | I know, but ... |
| Brian: | I wasn't the one who did that. |
| Aileen: | It's okey, I make mistakes all the time on the computer . |
| Michael: | I have my original right on the bottom. |
| Jeanette: | (indistinct negative comment) |
| Aileen: | Jeanette, it sounds like you are choosing this morning to not be helpful. Too bad because you have really good writing ideas. |
| Jeanette: | (Quoting other children) No I'm not going to take any of her ideas because she didn't take any of mine. No, I'm not going to take any. Why do I even bother giving them? |
| Aileen: | I think because you are a good writer. You have a lot of good    ideas. |
| Jeanette: | He doesn't take any of them. |
| Aileen: | That was the other day. |
| Jeanette: | I've taken one of them. |
| Aileen: | Jeanette that was the other day. It doesn't have to be the same idea today. |
| Brian: | I don't have to take the ideas. |
| Aileen: | You don't have to. But we are writing down the ideas and editing, and then it is up to you, as an author, to decide what you want to put in. Brian I'm still wondering about this part about you have to be really good to get out. We have heard about that you have to behave ..... |
| Michael: | And you have to earn it - I've earned it. |
| Aileen: | And that you have to earn it, so how can you put that in your words, if you want that part in to help people? Do you want the kids to understand? |
| Brian: | Yes. |
| Aileen: | Okey, so it sounds like it needs to be a little bit clearer what that whole idea about behaviour needs to be about. So what would you say for that part. I'm writing it down here for you so you don't need to write it down. |

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| Brian: | Nothing (indistinct) I already said it. |
| Aileen: | Everybody is saying that is unclear. |
| Michael: | You have to earn it out. |
| Brian: | Can I have a piece of paper? |
| Aileen: | How do you think, for you ...what's your idea of what you have to do to get out? |
| Brian: | Earn your way. |
| Aileen: | In what way do you have to earn it? |
| Michael: | You have to be good. |
| Aileen: | We have that already - you have to be really good - but nobody knows what good is . |
| Michael: | You have to suckhole to the teachers. |
| Aileen: | So, do we want to put that in? |
| Jeanette: | You have to pretend that you are acting really nice, and that you are real good and then you can come back to a normal school. |
| Aileen: | Is that what we want to put in - |
| Jeanette and Michael: | No. |
| Aileen: | - that you have to suckhole - that you have to pretend that you are acting really nice - well maybe that's what you guys feel. |
| Michael: | It was a joke. |
| Aileen: | Well, maybe it is what you feel. |
| Jeanette: | It was just a joke. |
| Aileen: | So, what else should we put in to help these kids who are coming to the school? |
| Michael: | Don't come. |
| Aileen: | Well, a lot of kids will still be coming even after you kids go. So what do they need to know? |
| Michael: | What are the teachers like. |
| Brian: | Nice. |
| Michael: | Not all of them. |
| Brian: | Not all of them. |
| Michael: | Most of them. |
| Michael: | They can find out for themselves. |
| Aileen: | So not help them any more. |
| Michael, Brian and Jeanette: | Yeah, we did. |
| Aileen: | Well, that is one of the reasons - |
| Jeanette: | Yeah, give up the whole thing. |
| Aileen: | That's one of the reasons that I thought you guys could be helpful, because we didn't have anything like this. |
| Michael: | We didn't know what was going to happen. |
| Aileen: | I know we didn't have any booklet or anything. |
| Michael: | Well, yes we did, we had the brochure upstairs. |
| Aileen: | Yes, but that is more for adults. That is for the parents. |
| Michael: | I read it. |
| Aileen: | So do you think it would be useful then to have something like this for them, because you guys you are right, you just had to come, and you didn't know what it was about? |
| Brian: | No. |
| Jeanette: | We had to come and we didn't know what it was about or anything why don't we let them have that too? |
| Aileen: | So let them suffer like you guys did. |
| Jeanette: | Yeah. I didn't suffer. |
| Michael: | You two did, but I didn't. |
| Brian: | I didn't . |
| Aileen: | So be scared and be nervous like you said in your stories? |
| Michael: | I didn't say I was scared. |
| Aileen: | Yes, Brian said he was nervous, and you said you were scared. |

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| Michael: | Just a little bit. |
| Aileen: | Should we let the other kids be like that? |
| Brian: | Yeah. |
| Michael: | The little brats. |
| Aileen: | I sure wouldn't want to.  If I knew some stuff ... |
| Michael: | Why don't we let them write their own story? |
| Aileen: | Because it will take them - look how long it took you guys. |
| Michael: | But we weren't doing this - the school's property has nothing to do with this. |
| Aileen: | Your personal experiences have a lot to do with what happens in this school. |
| Jeanette: | It's really disgusting to (indistinct) |
| Michael: | Good for you. |
| Aileen: | It sounds like all you kids are saying, that even though I have had personalexperiences that might help the kids, just let them suffer, let them be nervous, let them ... |
| Brian: | Sure. |
| Aileen: | Let them be scared.  How come? |
| Jeanette: | Because we had to. |
| Aileen: | And so is there any way that you could help them instead of letting them do that? |
| Brian: | We're not telling them any more. |
| Aileen: | Well, are you okey with sharing the information that you have so far? |
| Michael, Brian and Jeanette: | Yes. |
| Brian: | Yes, we've got this and .. |
| Jeanette: | We are not doing any more. |
| Aileen: | Why not? |
| Jeanette: | We've got enough. |
| Aileen: | You do have a lot of information.  We do have a lot of really good information.  So are you okey with sharing that? |
| Michael: | Tell them who works here. |
| Aileen: | Yeah, we do have, I think, in some of the different things.  There's Gene's name and Bill's name. |
| Michael: | I know, but like Miss ... |
| Jeanette: | But we don't really talk to them. |
| Michael: | I do.  Every morning I talk to them for about ten minutes. |
| Aileen: | I'm wondering about how you kids will feel about other kids coming into this school. Jeanette, you will be leaving soon .... |
| Jeanette: | Yeah! |
| Aileen: | How are you going to feel about that person coming in? |
| Aileen: | Jeanette? ..... I guess Jeanette is not able to answer that yet ... What about you Michael? |
| Michael: | I feel sorry for them. |
| Aileen: | But I hear you saying to just let them suffer. |
| Michael: | I know, but I still feel sorry for them. |
| Aileen: | Is there any way you could help that person out? |
| Michael: | Show them around. |
| Aileen: | Sure you could, if they came before you left.  Do you think this booklet might be a little help? |
| Michael, Brian and Jeanette: | No, not really. |
| Aileen: | Not really?  Why not? |
| Michael: | Well, maybe. |
| Aileen: | I think once it gets done ....  Do you know what we can do next week ... I'll bring my camera and we are going to take some pictures of the place so people will have an idea ... |
| Michael: | They don't need an idea. |
| Aileen: | Yeah, people can take pictures.  Well, what about that?  We talked about that earlier but |

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| | we don't have to have pictures in it. |
| Michael: | We don't need pictures in it. |
| Aileen: | We don't need to have pictures in it. What do you think Brian, do you think we should have pictures in it? |
| Brian: | I don't want any pictures. |
| Aileen: | What about you, Jeanette, should we have pictures in it? |
| Jeanette: | Yeah, because then they aren't just walking in a strange place and they won't think it is so strange. |
| Aileen: | Okey, then you can have pictures for your pages. I'll bring the camera and you can have pictures to illustrate ... I'll see if I can get the colour xeroxing. |
| Jeanette: | You guys are (indistinct) smoking cigarettes. (Boys were using rolled up paper to pretend they were smoking). |
| Aileen: | Okey, it's time for the group to end ... (conversation related to gathering up papers) |