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THE EVALUATION OF STUDENT TEXTS BY SECOND, THIRD,
AND FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS AND THEIR TEACHERS

A Dissertation Presented

by

Susan Benedict

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

September 1987

School of Education

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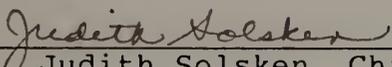
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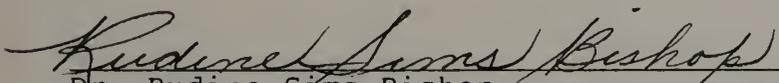
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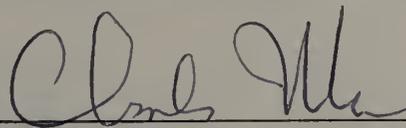
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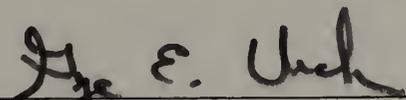
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To Larry
who said,
"Do it."

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It is not easy to determine when the journey that culminated with this work really began; there are numerous individuals who have helped and inspired me along the way. Thanks and appreciation are due to many people.

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ABSTRACT

THE EVALUATION OF STUDENT TEXTS BY SECOND, THIRD, AND
FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS AND THEIR TEACHERS

SEPTEMBER 1987

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This study examines seven students' and four teachers' evaluations of student-authored texts. The study seeks to answer the following questions: What criteria do second, third, and fourth graders use to evaluate student-authored texts? How do students' social worlds affect their evaluations of student texts? Do elementary students and their teachers use the same criteria to evaluate student-authored texts? This is a longitudinal, qualitative study. Data includes interviews, evaluations of students' own and other student texts, audio tape recordings of discussions, participant observation notes, and photo copies of students' writing.

The main findings are: 1) children use a wide range of criteria to evaluate their written texts; 2) the criteria used vary from child to child; 3) a child may use

the same criteria in different ways across time; 4) children's criteria change over time; 5) children's evaluative criteria are affected in part by the social environment in which they work; 4) there are differences among the criteria employed by children and their teachers; 7) the evaluative criteria teachers hold may influence their students' evaluative criteria.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In the late seventies and early eighties research which built on Emig's (1971) seminal study of twelfth graders' composing processes was reported (Graves, 1983, 1984; Calkins, 1980, 1983, 1985; Sowers, 1982, 1985; Newkirk 1982; Bissex 1980). One of the effects of the research reports was that more teachers began to teach writing as a process. One reason this may have occurred was that researchers began to write not only for other researchers but for teachers as well. Murray (1968), perhaps, describes the process best:

In the writing process approach the teacher and student find the task of making meaning together. The task is ever new, for they share the blank page and an ignorance of purpose and of outcome. They start on a trip of exploration together. They find where they are going as they get there (p. 13).

Moreover, in classrooms where writing began to be taught as a process, changes in classroom practices were necessarily made. Roles were reversed. No longer were the adults the sole teachers and the children the only learners. These classrooms became environments where everyone was a learner and everyone had expertise to teach. Outcomes were no longer predetermined but discovered.

Teachers let go of comfortable practices and tried on new behaviors. They needed to consider data that previously was inconsistent with their teaching styles.

Later writing process teachers not only taught by a process approach, but became researchers in their own classrooms (Atwell, 1982, 1985, 1986; Giacobbe, 1982; Blackburn, 1985). The writing research not only paved the way for teachers to rethink and restructure their teaching practices, but opened the door to the "research club" as well. As a result theory and practice came together. The new research questions began to reflect the questions and concerns of the practitioners (Giacobbe 1982; Blackburn 1984; Boutwell, 1983). Like many teachers across the country, I, too, became first a teacher interested in writing process and secondly a researcher in my own classroom.

In the fall of 1981 Judith Solsken (then Gourley) began a longitudinal ethnographic study of kindergarteners' and first graders' literacy development. The research began in my kindergarten classroom and Solsken invited me to join the research team as a teacher researcher. When I had the opportunity to teach second grade in the fall of 1983, Solsken's study was extended to a third year; and I again assumed the role of teacher-researcher. At that time the study had become more focused and individual members of the

research team were defining areas of investigation within the context of the larger study. Over the course of the study I had been particularly interested in the children's writing, and during this third year of the study initiated a pilot study to examine second graders' criteria when evaluating their own texts. It seemed to me that by gathering data concerning how the individual students in my classroom viewed their texts and interpreted and utilized the feedback they received from their peers in the course of their drafting, I might better be able to understand their thinking and decision-making while writing and rewriting. I felt this increased knowledge would point to structures within the classroom which were supporting and/or restricting my students' growth in writing.

At that time I knew of no studies other than Newkirk's (1982) which examined children's criteria for what made writing good. In the early summer following my pilot study two articles (Newkirk, 1984, and Hilgers, 1984) were published. They reported data relative to students' evaluative criteria. Although there had been a great deal of work done in the area of evaluation of student-authored texts (Lloyd-Jones, 1977; Odell, 1977, 1981, for example), until Newkirk's 1982 work and later the 1984 work by both Newkirk and Hilgers, there were no studies which examined how students themselves evaluate texts. The 1984 studies

emphasized the importance of gaining insight into how students view student texts. Both researchers stressed the importance of the students' perspectives. Hilgers argued that it is important to determine how students evaluate texts because they are constantly making evaluative decisions when they write. Insight into those decisions is necessary he said, "because neither revising nor generating is likely to occur except in response to evaluation" (p. 366). Newkirk pointed out that peer conferences and peers writing for the peer audience are encouraged in the literature, but no one until these studies had explored students' actual criteria for evaluating texts. Newkirk's work is important not only because he is one of the first to examine students' evaluative criteria, but in addition he compared students' criteria with that of their instructors. This comparison alerts educators to the fact that in all likelihood we and our students do not share the same evaluative criteria. (A fuller discussion of these studies can be found in Chapter 2.)

While these studies, in conjunction with Hilgers' (1986) later work, began to look at students' evaluative criteria, the results are by no means conclusive nor can they be generalized to all student writers. Newkirk's work was conducted with college freshmen and their instructors. While the study raises questions which may in fact be

relevant to younger students, additional research might enlighten educators in this quarter. Hilgers' 1986 study, an outgrowth of his 1984 work, followed four elementary students over three years. The size of the population followed suggests that there is room for further studies in this area.

Subsequent studies investigating children's literacy development (Dyson, 1985 and Gourley, now Solsken, 1983) have shed additional light on young children in the process of composing. Although their findings are not directly transferable to the area of evaluation, this research does suggest the importance of considering the total classroom environment, particularly the child's social interactions, when investigating questions of literacy development. Dyson advises that teachers and researchers cannot "ignore the fact that writing is a language-based process and cannot be viewed separately from a child's social interactions" (p. 191).

The research cited above helped further frame and refine my own investigations concerning the criteria children applied when evaluating student texts. I decided to continue to collect data related to the children's own criteria. Preliminary findings suggested that student's own criteria could not be examined without also investigating the effects of students' social worlds. Newkirk's 1984

study suggested the final research question concerning the possible differences between teachers' and students' evaluations of the same student-authored texts. The purpose of my study then became to find answers to the following questions:

- 1) What criteria do second, third, and fourth graders use to evaluate student-authored texts?
- 2) How do students' social worlds affect their evaluations of student texts?
- 3) Do elementary students and their teachers use the same criteria to evaluate student-authored texts?

This study seeks to replicate Hilgers' (1986) work, in part, by gathering similar data in a different setting. Dyson's (1983) work demonstrates the importance of the relationship between the social environment and learning, and so an additional purpose of this study is to examine the effect of children's social interactions on their evaluative criteria. Finally, this study attempts to collect data concerning elementary teachers' and students' evaluative criteria similar to Newkirk's (1984) work with college freshmen and their instructors.

The word "evaluation" conjures different images for different people. In the area of writing those images may include, for some, red ink spilling onto student papers with symbols like AWK, INC, SP, and the like. Others might envision a state-wide assessment test for which children

write on an assigned topic, their success or failure to perform this task resulting in special writing programs for individuals and good or poor reputations for a school or school system in general.

While there is little doubt in my mind that the practices which produce these images in some cases are real, they are not the only ways evaluation can be applied to writing. Since my view of evaluation in the context of this study is significantly different, it seems necessary to state how the term "evaluation" was used in this study.

Evaluation was treated as a decision-making process. As part of the data gathering, the participants were asked to make decisions concerning a variety of student-authored texts. I asked participants to rank texts from best to worst and to give reasons for their rankings. The purpose of these evaluative tasks was to ascertain what criteria the participants used to make their decisions, not how they ranked specific texts. A fuller description of all the data collection is outlined in Chapter 3.

Graves (1983) states, "If teachers are to help children control their writing, they need to know what children see and the process and order of their seeing" (p. 151). The "seeing" of which Graves writes has the potential to benefit not only teachers, but researchers and students as well. Children's responses to questions about

process and evaluation might benefit these three separate groups. First, these responses can provide valuable data to researchers regarding the differences between what we might intuitively surmise children's attitudes and perceptions may be and what they actually are. Secondly, this information can be useful in giving teachers insight into children's interpretations of their writing processes and success with individual pieces of writing. For example, this research could prove invaluable in planning instruction by alerting teachers to the kinds of writing evaluations and decisions children make; as they plan instruction teachers could then have the foreknowledge that their students' writing evaluations and decisions might differ from their own. This research might further provide teachers with a model for ascertaining how their own students evaluate student texts and make their own writing decisions. Finally, these responses have the potential to provide insights for the student writer as well by bringing her evaluative criteria to a conscious level.

In-depth interviews and discussions with elementary students over a three year period show how students, at least these seven, and their teachers evaluated student texts. Additionally their responses point to strengths and possible useful alternatives and considerations in writing classrooms.

While we look for patterns to make sense of our world, and in this case our students' classroom worlds, Dyson (1985), Gourley (1983), and Graves (1983) caution us that what is of most interest and value is the differences not the similarities among children. At the same time, I feel it is useful to recognize our students in the writing research. I anticipate that the statements made by the participants in this study, although not transferable across classrooms and children, will, in part, be recognizable to fellow teachers of writing. I further anticipate that the identified strengths and suggested alternatives in addressing the needs of these children may suggest similar and related considerations to other teachers of writing as well.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to examine current research concerning the evaluation of writing in elementary classrooms. Four areas of research seem important to this discussion:

- definitions of evaluation
- the way(s) students evaluate student texts
- evaluation in the writing classroom
- social interactions in relationship to evaluation.

Definitions of Evaluation

There is a large body of work in writing evaluation led by researchers such as Cooper (1977), Odell (1977, 1981), and Lloyd-Jones (1977) to name a few. While this research in holistic and primary trait scoring may be useful in some quarters, it is not what I refer to when I speak of writing evaluation in the classroom. Nor do I speak of the "you-turn-it-in, I'll-turn-it-back" (Shadiow, 1979, p. 66) mode of evaluation where the teacher is the exclusive reader and evaluator of students' texts. Although these methods are undoubtedly models for evaluation, the former are not designed for classroom use and the "assign-assess approach is based on the assumption that writing skills are best developed by a teacher

assigning a paper and after the paper is written, assessing the student's performance." (Stamford, 1979, p. xiii). Graves (1983) points out that writing for teachers is an unnatural communication. In most communication the sender has more information than the receiver, but when students write for, not to (Elbow, 1981) teachers, they write about something they are still trying to understand, to an audience that understands it even better. Even if the sender is better informed on the topic the "teacher's knowledge is still the standard for judging" (p. 219).

Other researchers suggest that evaluation in the writing classroom be viewed with a wider vision than that of assessment and grading. Judy and Judy (1981) state that evaluation is "an intrinsic part of the writing process" (p. 146). Hilgers (1984) goes further to say that writing does not take place without evaluation by the writer. He says that writing, regardless of the age of the writer, exists because evaluations and decisions are made and as a result of those evaluations the writer continues to write. With beginning writers those evaluations may be as basic as, "is this a 'T', yes: continue [or] no, a 'T' has a line across, add a line across: continue [or more sophisticated such as] yes, my reader will get the full sense of my intention: publish" (p. 367).

This notion of the pervasiveness of evaluation in the writing process assumes that the writer makes numerous evaluations in a piece of writing. If the writer, then, is constantly making judgments about her texts (and possibly asking readers to make judgments about her texts as well) it seems important for teachers to sort out the role that evaluation can play in helping writers write. Calkins (1985) says that students need to develop strategies for evaluating their texts. Evaluation, according to Hilgers, happens regardless of our involvement as teachers. It would seem that a more knowledgeable and active role on the part of teachers as "writing coaches" (Murray, 1968) would increase the value of students' evaluative decisions throughout the writing process.

Flower and Hayes (1981) note that "The sub-processes of revising and evaluating, along with generating share the special distinction of being able to interrupt any other process and occur at any time in the act of writing" (p. 374). Hilgers (1984) adds that "neither revising nor generating is likely to occur except in response to evaluation" (p. 366).

These researchers suggest that students are constantly making evaluations. Evaluation is not, then, only within the domain of what teachers do even in

"assign-assess" environments. It therefore seems fruitful to examine the evaluation criteria students employ.

Educators such as Moffett (1969) and Macrorie (1970) have encouraged teachers to conduct writing classrooms from a workshop approach and to give children's peers responsibility to evaluate written work. Newkirk (1984) states that "despite the widespread emphasis on the peer audience, no systematic investigations of the standards students use in evaluating the writing of their peers have been conducted" (p. 284). He cites research by Perry (1970) which "suggests that the evaluative standards used by students may be closely related to their intellectual and ethical development" (p. 284). Newkirk concludes that if this is true one would expect to find important systematic differences in the evaluations of students and teachers.

Hilgers (1984) states that due to the way evaluative skills are acquired, they are not easily observed. This may account, he says, for the lack of research in this area "despite the fact that their accurate employment is essential for success in writing" (p. 366). He adds that the "centrality of evaluation in the composing process suggests that until we have some notion of how the human capacity for evaluation emerges, we are operating in hit-or-miss fashion when we try to 'teach' writing"

(p. 367). Additionally, Elbow (1981) stresses the importance of "finding ways to learn what really happens in real readers when they read writing" (p. 21).

The Way(s) Students Evaluate Student Texts

Both Newkirk (1984) and Hilgers (1984, 1986) conducted studies to investigate students' evaluative statements about student writing. One of the important features of these studies is that they are the first to examine how students evaluate student texts. Dyson (1985) recognizes the importance of studies such as these. She says that sometimes our best information comes from an often-ignored source.

That source is the children themselves, especially the unofficial literacy curriculum THEY design outside of and within the cracks of the official curriculum. Observing how and why children write may cause us to think critically about even our most trusted instructional assumptions. Moreover it may cause us to think critically about individual children themselves, not just as readers and writers, but as social beings who have practical and playful reasons for using the literary tools our society offers them (p. 632).

Proto-Critical and Critical Judgments

Before discussing the three studies by Newkirk and Hilgers it is important to consider Newkirk's 1982 work, "Young Writers as Critical Readers," as a prologue to the

1984 and 1986 studies. Newkirk examined the "definable progression from proto-critical to critical judgments" (p. 107) among beginning written language users. His data base consisted of transcriptions of conferences and interviews from Graves' work at Atkinson Academy. To examine this progression he divided student evaluative statements into two broad groups: proto-critical judgments and critical judgments. He suggests that young writers' early evaluations have little if anything to do with the autonomous text, but rather that initially children evaluate text on what he refers to as embedded features like knowledge about the subject, the experience, the pictures, and the surface features of the text. "Often for young writers the experience is fused with the text and an evaluation of the text is an evaluation of the experience" (p. 108). Another trait that he finds indicative of this early stage is that frequently the writer feels he has communicated with the reader when the information is only in his head.

According to Newkirk, in order for the young writer to begin to make critical judgments about written text, she must begin to view a number of things differently. Some of these distinctions occur more easily and naturally than others. For example, the writer must see the text as something separate from the basic encoding skills. This

often occurs naturally when children develop facility with handwriting and spelling. Another distinction is to see the text as separate from the drawing. This, he says, becomes a little more complicated. Initially children can communicate much more fully through illustration than through written text. Even as their encoding skills develop they often don't see the necessity of recording in words what they already have communicated graphically. He suggests that only when youngsters begin to recognize the limitations of their drawing in communicating all their messages and see how words allow the writer to change directions without feeling limited by illustration does the shift from graphic to lexical interpretation begin to occur.

The advantage of children being able to look at a text as autonomous, he says, is that they can begin to examine the writing independently from themselves. Their judgments can then move from quantitative to qualitative in nature. For example, a student may move from thinking lots of information makes good writing--to magnifying selected parts of her text for emphasis to improve a piece of writing. Newkirk concludes that helping children to recognize and use their own critical judgments provides the student with "an insider's view of written language" (p. 113).

I find Newkirk's delineation of the kinds of judgments children make about texts very useful. As one talks with young children about their texts he can see in their proto-critical judgments the seeds of more sophisticated judgments to come. I do have concern, however, about his description of proto-critical judgments as based on embedded features of text and critical judgments as based on autonomous features of text. It seems to me that some writers might make critical judgments on aspects related to the text (or in Newkirk's terms embedded) while others may make proto-critical judgments about the text itself (or the autonomous text). For example, a child, or an adult for that matter, who judges text solely on the surface features of text, is making a text-based evaluation even though it is a proto-critical judgment. At the same time a child who evaluates a text on the basis of how it might be received by an audience is making critical judgments even though they are text-related rather than text-based evaluations.

College Students and Instructors Evaluate Student Texts

Newkirk's 1984 exploratory study, "How Students Read Student Papers," examined the differences between college freshmen's evaluations and graduate teaching assistants' evaluations of two freshman English papers. The

preferences of the two groups were significantly different.

Newkirk found that the students seemed to favor the paper which:

- they could strongly identify with
- had elevated vocabulary
- reiterated the theme
- presented an unbiased argument.

The instructors indicated a preference for:

- back and forth rather than linear organization
- high interest and humor
- the taking and defending of a position
- elevated vocabulary.

The results of the study suggest that both teachers and students are in a dilemma if teachers are urging students to write for peer audiences. If in fact a teacher urges his students to do just that, then the paper should be judged on its effectiveness with that audience. Newkirk points out that "the real danger is that the instructor will send mixed messages--on the one hand, urging students to meet the needs of their intended audience and, on the other, applying standards that the intended audience would not apply" (p. 246). Such inconsistency, he says, can only inform students that "writing quality cannot be judged reliably" (p. 246).

Newkirk further found that the students gave more favorable evaluations to the paper with which they could strongly identify. He points out the importance of writers having a variety of readers who are not all close to the same experiences. He adds that in freshman English classes (but it is true in classrooms kindergarten through college) that the teacher is often the only one in the room who is not eighteen years old (or in my case seven).

Second, Third, and Fourth Graders' Evaluations of Student-Authored Texts

Hilgers' 1984 study examined elementary students' evaluations of their own and other students' texts. His primary subjects were six second graders. Other subjects included six third graders and eight fifth and sixth graders. He presented each of the subjects three pieces of children's writing (in the cases of the second graders this was done four times spaced throughout the year) and asked them to evaluate the pieces by putting them in a pile from best to worst. He found that the children evaluated the texts in five different ways which were used either singly or in combination:

- 1) affective response to subject matter
- 2) learned response to surface features of texts with a sub-category of response to effort
- 3) response to text as processed/understood

- 4) response to craftsmanship/aesthetic qualities
- 5) response to the value of what the piece intends to do and how well it does it.

Hilgers hypothesized that not only are these the ways young writers respond to text, but he further placed these responses in a taxonomy. He says that "while evidence of potential for evaluation can emerge at about the same time in all five of the proposed categories the realization of potential in meaningful evaluation is likely to occur in the order in which the various categories have been described" (p. 380). He points out, however, that a good deal of further research is necessary to test his hypothesis. He contends that the essence of his hypothesis is in keeping with psychological studies of cognitive development and Applebee's (1978) findings on the development of children's concept of story.

Hilgers advises that teaching evaluation standards should not be left to chance. He suggests that although evaluative standards occur in sequence they are not genetically programmed, but rather may be transmitted not only through conscious and explicit learning experiences, but through subtle ones as well. He cautions that children should not be asked to use evaluative standards for which they are not developmentally prepared because "evaluation is initially a form of mimicry" (p. 382) and

asking students to mimic what they are unprepared to internalize could continue the practice of writing, or in this case evaluating, for the teacher and could impede real development.

In 1986 Hilgers reported on findings from a three year longitudinal study of four student writers in Hawaii. He followed these four children from their second through their fourth grade years. In the first two years of the study the children were together in the same classrooms in a laboratory school. Prior to their entrance into second grade they had had no experience with writing process instruction. He indicates that in their second and third grade years, their teachers were open to and learning about writing process. In addition he was able to limit the number of evaluative statements the teachers made to the children about their work. They received no grades on their writing except on science reports in their third grade year. In the fourth grade year (and final year of the study) the children all moved to the regular local elementary school and were placed in two different classrooms. Here they received grades on their writing and Hilgers had no control over the evaluative statements the teachers made. One teacher taught several approaches to invention and emphasized diction. The other centered writing instruction around a

classroom newspaper and stressed the "who, what, where, why" heuristic. The data consisted of:

six audio recorded interviews with each child, one in which the participants discussed the qualities of good writing and five subsequent interviews in which the children discussed the quality of their own texts, performed an evaluation task, and then talked about the evaluations they had made;

participant observation notes (one morning a week in the second and third grade years);

informal discussions with teachers about the students at the time of the interviews;

files of student writing.

In this study Hilgers continued to classify the students' evaluative statements with the same categories he used in the 1984 study. He used a sixth category to code all responses which didn't fit into the original five. He found "no clear support for the existence of the stages of evaluative development" (p. 48) he had found in his 1984 work.

He found that children do not spontaneously consider intended audience when making evaluative statements, although they could be prompted to do so. He also found what he calls a "liking response." Evaluations were often dependent on the evaluator's emotional response to the topic. This finding seems to parallel Newkirk's (1982) evidence that young children at what he calls the

proto-critical stage of evaluation often evaluate the text based on their experience of the events described in the text. Although evidence of students ranking texts according to their personal preferences and experiences with the topics was more pervasive in the second and even into the third grade year, it still existed in their fourth grade year.

Findings also indicate that "beginning writers seem to need some experience using a particular skill in their own composing before they begin to use that skill as a basis for evaluating compositions" (p. 48). However, as children mature they seem to be able, at least in some cases, to evaluate "things they cannot do or perhaps have never even tried" (p. 50).

Hilgers cautions that it is important to consider the role of evaluation in revision. Revision does not necessarily result in improving the quality of a piece of writing nor in improving the quality of writing in general. "Insofar as revision is guided by appropriate evaluation revised writing may be better" (p. 54).

The studies cited above have begun to reveal the criteria students use to evaluate student-authored texts. Newkirk suggests that there are differences between the ways college freshmen and their instructors evaluate texts. This raises the question of whether similar

findings emerge from data collected from younger students and their teachers. The increased age gap between younger students and their teachers suggests the possibility of significant differences between these two distinct populations.

Hilgers' two reports on second, third, and fourth graders' evaluative criteria open the door for further research in this area. He is among the first to examine young children's evaluative criteria. The small size of his population raises the need for additional studies which explore elementary students' evaluative criteria. Further research might serve to confirm Hilgers' findings or might suggest different or additional criteria students in different settings employ.

Evaluation in the Writing Classroom

Revision Strategies in Relationship to Evaluation

In addition to the three studies described above that examine evaluation exclusively, there has been work done by other researchers and educators which further illuminates students' evaluative strategies. One can infer evaluative categories and standards through students' revision strategies as well as through their evaluative statements.

Schwartz (1983) reports that revision is now "conceived as a complex creative act that everyone must master if one wants to write really well" (p. 549). She reports that although there is a taxonomy of revision strategies, there are no predictable patterns. She suggests that one way to develop guidelines for individual success is through the series of revision strategies outlined in Figure 1.

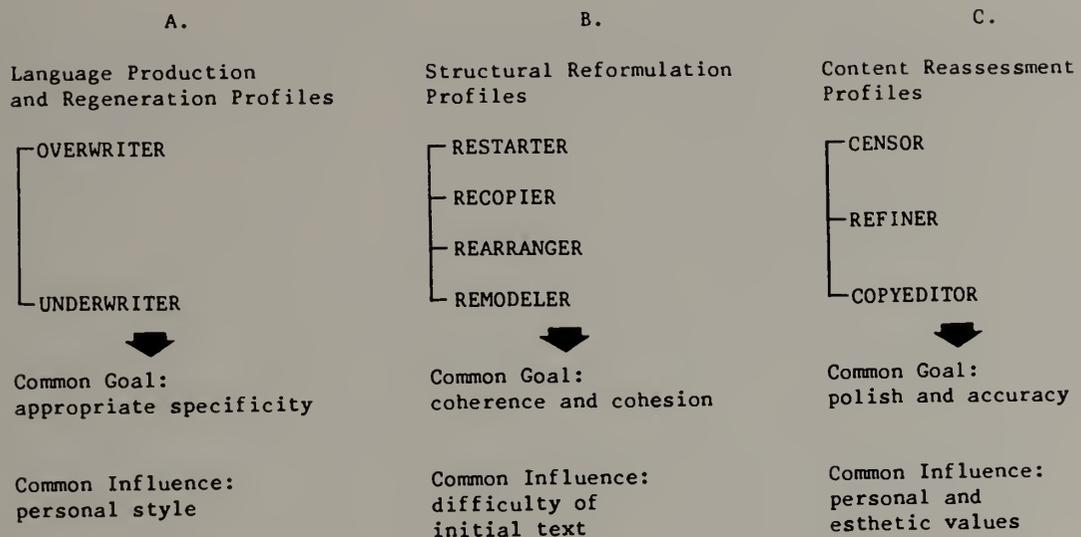


FIGURE 1
SCHWARTZ TAXONOMY OF REVISION STRATEGIES

Schwartz maintains that these profiles "provide a set of terms that empower writer, teacher, and researcher to talk more easily about individual revision patterns and needs" (p. 558). She suggests that explaining the profiles to student writers enables the students to then "uncover the process-shaping strategies" (p. 558) they use when they make decisions about their writing and revision. Therefore a teacher or responder can not only make suggestions concerning product but suggestions concerning process as well. She further feels that these profiles "reinforce a pedagogical framework that considers revision not as an isolated skill but instead as a complex creative act which [all writers] must weave [their] way through if [they] are to turn first words into full expression" (p. 558).

Calkins (1980) examined revision strategies of third graders as part of the Atkinson study. She found four kinds of revisers:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| random drafters: | children wrote successive drafts without referring to previous drafts and changes seemed arbitrary |
| refiners: | the writer's subject and voice were determined by the first draft and the revising was primarily a "mop-up" of spelling, handwriting, and punctuation |

- transition drafters: these writers seemed to move between random drafts and refining and showed dissatisfaction with their writing but a movement toward interacting
- interactors: for these children revision resulted from interaction between writer and draft, writer and internalized audience, and writer and evolving text

Calkins saw most of the study children progressing through these stages but states that "these are tentative groupings meant to be the groundwork for further research" (p. 334). Interactors, she says, "have a flexible and controlled perspective which allows them continually to shift between assessing and building, between looking back and looking forward" (p. 338).

This movement toward separation of writer and text meshes with Newkirk's sense of children moving from proto-critical to critical judgments. Calkins' research when combined with Schwartz's reinforces the work of Newkirk and Hilgers in emphasizing the importance of discovering how students evaluate texts. In addition Schwartz and Calkins alert teachers and researchers to possible revision profiles that may be present in classrooms. Hilgers' (1984) argument that no revision takes place without evaluation underscores the importance of developing profiles to help teachers recognize the

kinds of evaluative decisions students make when they write, and suggests the usefulness of other forms of data than children's expressed criteria.

Evaluation Practices in the Writing Classroom

In addition to research on evaluation in the writing classroom and ways students evaluate student texts, there are others who have described and prescribed ways of using both teacher and peer evaluations in the teaching of writing. Atwell (1982) points out that

as teachers' understandings of writing change so do our classroom processes. When we write, look closely at our own and our students' writing, and think about what we see, we begin to teach writing differently. We learn what writers do and need and we design programs that will meet, support, and extend the development of children's writing abilities (p. 137).

The following writers suggest some of the contexts in which children's evaluative strategies may develop.

Graves (1983) proposes that the most useful form of evaluation is a folder review during which time the student writer and the teacher sit down together and select the (say) four best pieces of writing. Evaluation of the student's writing performance will then be based on the shared evaluation of the student's best work. Murray (1968), Calkins (1985), and Atwell (1982) agree that evaluation should take place in conference. They further agree with Graves that the student leads the conference and the teacher follows. Brigham (1982) explains the

importance of the folder review for the writer, the teacher, and the parents. She says that it helps develop a sense of history of how far the writing has come.

Atwell (1982) elaborates on this theme.

Expectations for evaluation

grow from an understanding that writing isn't one ability, but a combination of many abilities: experimenting, planning, choosing, questioning, anticipating, organizing, reading, listening, reviewing, editing and on and on. We know too that one piece of writing can't provide an accurate picture of a writer's abilities but represents one step in a writer's slow growth toward control...Taken over time, over many drafts of many pieces [the steps students make] provide pictures of individual writers: where they've been, where they are, where they might go next. Teachers who save their students' writing know these pictures. We can see children's growth as writers--the topics they found, problems they encountered and ways they solved them, changes they made, and risks they took across the weeks and months that make a school year (pp. 137-38).

Beaven (1977) in her literature review lists six assumptions which underlie approaches to formative evaluation:

- 1) Growth in writing occurs slowly;
- 2) Through their evaluative comments and symbols teachers help to create an environment for writing;
- 3) Risk taking--trying new behaviors as one writes, and stretching one's use of language and toying with it are important for growth in writing;

- 4) Goal setting is an important process in the development of student writers;
- 5) Writing improvement does not occur in isolation;
- 6) We have a reasonably clear understanding of procedures that will permit effective formative evaluation (pp. 136-38).

Based on these assumptions Beaven suggests three ways to evaluate student writing:

- 1) individual goal setting
- 2) self evaluation
- 3) peer evaluation.

She stresses the importance of developing a climate of trust in students' "own powers to communicate through writing; and to find security in transactions with their audience of teachers, peers, or others" (p. 138).

She describes each of the ways to evaluate student writing, the rationale for each, and advantages and disadvantages of each method. She concludes that no one way is best. Individual goal setting relies heavily on the teacher as the exclusive audience and the one with the knowledge, but there is also the benefit of tapping the teacher's knowledge. Self evaluation is frequently a new and uncomfortable role for students who take on added responsibility and for teachers who often feel they abdicate their responsibilities and authority. However, self evaluation fosters "self-reliance, independence,

autonomy, and creativity" (p. 142). It allows students to develop their individual courses of action. Peer evaluation is time consuming and as Elbow (1985) points out, not always reliable. Berkenkotter (1984) concurs: "students who write for peer readers...might not necessarily reap the advantages we'd like to imagine" (p. 318). It does however relieve the teacher from long hours of "carrying home the bundle" (Halley, 1982) and provides more class time and energy to provide students with immediate feedback and individualized instruction. Peer evaluation also provides students with the opportunity to work together to solve writing problems. Beaven concludes that none of these methods is an answer in itself, but if they are worked in combination with each other "individual students become increasingly responsible for the direction and evaluation of their own growth in writing" (p. 138).

Calkins (1985) agrees with Beaven and recognizes the need for teachers to "put the responsibility for evaluation with the child. In that way students make evaluative decisions as they write and the quality of their writing improves" (p. 158). Newkirk (1982) also stresses the importance of evaluation. He says, "a student without the ability to make evaluative judgments is still only partially literate" (p. 113).

Elbow (1981) suggests a different way of looking at evaluation in his work with reader-based-feedback. He encourages writers to make "movies in their minds." More recently Elbow (1985) redefined his metaphor to "telling stories of our reading and writing." He says it is important to tell stories of our reading and writing because

peer feedback is what readers can give best. It doesn't depend on being an experienced expert. Evaluation, judgments, and advice of students is often bad if they are not skilled readers and evaluators. But if they're just plain readers and tell the truth--the true story that happens as they read--that's valuable feedback. This is actually what did happen to a reader. It's the kind of feedback writers most need to know no matter how expert [their] feedbackers are (1985).

Elbow (1981) says that this kind of reader-based-feedback "can lead to the fastest and most pervasive improvement [in writing]. It is most apt to speak to the root causes of strength and weakness in the writing--not just the surface effort" (p. 248). He does not rule out the benefit of criterion-based-feedback but feels that it can be restrictive if applied prior to reader-based-feedback. He suggests that content and organization, the effective use of language, and audience should be considered prior to addressing concerns about surface features and style.

In addition to suggesting contexts in which evaluative criteria may develop, these writers also suggest procedures for collecting additional data in the area of evaluative criteria. Graves' folder review and Elbow's reader-based-feedback seem to be particularly useful contexts in which to further the evaluation research. Atwell and Beaven point out that growth in writing occurs slowly and must be examined over time. The same, I would suggest, is true of evaluative criteria. This realization points to the importance of collecting data, as Hilgers' did in his 1986 study, of a longitudinal nature.

Social Interaction in Relationship to Evaluation

Dyson (1985) advises that there is an additional factor to consider. Teachers and researchers cannot "ignore the fact that writing is a language-based process and cannot be viewed separately from a child's social interactions" (p. 191). Gourley (1983) agrees that "written language is both highly personal and highly social" (p. 1)

Dyson suggests that writing research cannot be viewed separately from children's social worlds. She stresses the importance for further investigation of the differences between how teachers and students interpret

classroom events as well as looking at the differences among children. "Even though it may seem one event is occurring, several usually are (e.g. a teacher may be orchestrating an activity, but students may have different goals, tones, or interaction forms)" (p. 191). She and Newkirk (1984) recognize that the perspectives of both teachers and students are important.

All of these researchers would support using students as informants in our quest for knowledge. While we look for patterns to make sense of our world, and in this case our students' classroom worlds, Dyson (1985), Gourley (1983), and Graves (1983) caution us that what are of most interest and value are the differences not the similarities among children.

Although Newkirk and Hilgers have looked at evaluation criteria, there is no evidence that they have looked at those criteria in the context of the social environment within the classroom. Dyson and Gourley suggest that, since writing is a language-based process, any efforts to understand what is happening within the process must also take social influences into consideration. Therefore, it seems important not only to examine students' evaluative criteria, as Newkirk and Hilgers have done, but also to examine those criteria should be examined within the social contexts in which they develop.

Summary

In conclusion, Newkirk (1984) suggests that there is a dilemma. "The writing instructor must respond to two conflicting mandates: on the one hand, to teach students to write well and, on the other, to use writing as an activity to foster intellectual growth" (p. 298).

Newkirk (1984) and Hilgers (1984 and 1986) have found evidence that there are differences in the ways readers interpret and evaluate texts. Elbow (1981) seems to concur with Newkirk's (1984) research which suggests that in addition there are distinct differences between the ways students and teachers evaluate texts. This finding has direct bearing on the use of self evaluation and peer evaluation in classrooms. Newkirk says, "Teachers and students can be viewed as distinct evaluative communities" (p. 298). This distinction is important for the teacher, particularly early in the teacher/student relationship. "It suggests that differences in evaluations of papers are not caused by misreading or inferior reading on the part of the students...what we have instead are two equally plausible ways of viewing the texts" (p.298). By looking at these differences we come to respect our students' readings. This finding further suggests that educators need to recognize that student evaluations may not be the same as

teacher evaluations and therefore, may not foster the revisions in student texts which the teachers envisioned.

Hilgers (1986) by examining four students' evaluative criteria in their second, third and fourth grade years, has extended Newkirk's (1982) work. Additional longitudinal studies in different settings are essential to support or refute this research.

Dyson (1985) and Gourley (1983) remind educators that writing is a language-based process and therefore develops in social contexts. It seems a reasonable assumption that if writing develops in social contexts, then so too will evaluative criteria. In order to establish a more complete picture of students' evaluative criteria, researchers must not overlook the potential influence of the social environment on the individual.

Murray (1968), Elbow (1981), Graves (1983), and Calkins (1985) suggest classroom practices that are in addition useful tools to the researcher. Folder reviews and reader-based-feedback both have the potential to shed further light on the evaluative criteria young writers employ as well as possible social influences on those criteria.

Finally, the research reviewed here points out the value of students' insights. Students can offer researchers information about improving the quality of

student writing that is unavailable from any other source.

The present study extends previous research in addressing the following questions:

What criteria do second, third, and fourth graders in a setting different from Hilgers' study use to evaluate student-authored texts?

How do students' social worlds affect their evaluations of student texts?

Do elementary students and their teachers use the same criteria to evaluate student-authored texts?

CHAPTER 3
DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

This is a qualitative study of seven children's and four teachers' evaluative statements about student writing. The focus of the study was to identify criteria seven, eight, and nine year-old students and their teachers use when evaluating student writing. More specifically, The present study sought to:

- 1) identify criteria students used when evaluating student-authored texts;
- 2) determine if children's evaluations differed from their teachers';
- 3) determine if social interactions affected the evaluations students made.

Participants

The seven children in this study all attended a public K-6 elementary school in an academic community in the northeastern United States. There were four girls and three boys in the study. It was a racially mixed group, and the children demonstrated varying academic abilities. These children were chosen because they were all part of a larger three-year, longitudinal, ethnographic study exploring children's literacy development from kindergarten through second grade. Judith Solsken was the principal investigator (see Gourley, 1983 and Solsken, 1985).

Data for this present study was collected in the third year of Solsken's study and in the children's third and fourth grade years. In the first year of Solsken's study there were eighteen participants. When the children went into first grade the study became more focused and the children were also assigned to two separate classrooms. Therefore, the number of participants was reduced to six. It is these six participants who continued in the study through their second grade year. These six were then also participants in the present study. In the second year of the present study I decided to include Beverly, a participant from the kindergarten year of Solsken's study, because I felt she might provide additional criteria to those supplied by the other six.

These seven children were placed together in the same self-contained, writing process classrooms from kindergarten through grade two. I was their teacher in kindergarten and grade two. The present study began at the start of the children's second grade year.

In their second grade classroom the children wrote daily on topics of their own choosing and on topics involving units of study within the wider curriculum. The writing period consisted of about forty minutes of actual writing time and a fifteen minute share. During the writing time I conferred with individuals and small groups

about their writing. The children also frequently conferred informally with their peers. There were two kinds of shares. The large group share was called the authors' circle and convened at the end of the writing period each day. During that time two or three students had the opportunity to share their work in progress and request specific or general feedback from the group at large. Sharing was voluntary. About mid year I instituted conference groups which met two times a week in place of the authors' circle. Each group contained five students. The membership in these groups was determined by me and remained constant. The children were required to share their writing at least once a week in these groups. In their third grade year they were placed in two third grade classrooms whose teachers team taught. Writing process was a new way of teaching writing for these teachers. In fourth grade they were also working with teachers who teamed and who were fairly new to teaching writing as a process. I did not collect data within these classroom settings as I did in the dual role of teacher and researcher during the first year of the study. Therefore, the data do not include descriptions of the instructional practices in these classrooms.

Data Collection and Instruments

The following is a list of the data sources for this study. This list is followed by a narrative description which outlines the data collection procedure for each year of the study.

Second Grade Data

Photo copies of the six study children's second grade writing

Audio tape recordings and subsequent transcriptions of large group discussions at the authors' circle for the six study children's writing (audio tape recordings were made for all the children in the class, but transcriptions were only made for the study children)

Participant observation notes of small group discussions in the children's conference groups (these were my notes, and because of my dual role as teacher and researcher these discussions were somewhat different in flavor when I, instead of Solsken, observed and took notes)

Audio tape recordings of fall and spring interviews with each of the children (See Appendix A for interview questions)

Audio tape recordings of fall and spring interviews with me in which each of the children evaluated her writing

Third Grade Data

Photo copies of the seven study children's third grade writing

Audio tape recordings of a spring interview with each child (See Appendix B)

Audio tape recordings of a spring interview with me in which each child evaluated his writing

Audio tape recordings of small group meetings in which three of the seven children read and ranked six pieces of writing of one child not in the group followed by a discussion in which each child supported her rankings--following the discussion each child was given an opportunity to change his rankings (See Appendix C for sample)

Individual questionnaire in which each of the third grade teachers ranked and supported her rankings for her own students (Sample as above)

Fourth Grade Data

Photo copies of three pieces of the study children's fourth grade writing

Audio tape recordings of a spring interview with each child in which the children ranked three pieces of their own writing in the same genre and selected one of the three to work on further after benefit of reader-based-feedback from self-selected peers from among the study children

Audio tape recording of a reader-based-feedback session with each child which generally followed the outline in Appendix D

Audio tape recorded sessions in which each child resumed work on the piece of writing discussed with peers in the reader-based feedback session--each child was asked to articulate reasons for changes and decisions while working

Individual ranking of two pieces of student writing which were not familiar to the student (See Appendix E)

Individual response from each fourth grade teacher concerning how she might plan to confer with each of her students about the piece of writing he had selected to work on

All four teachers' individual rankings of the same two pieces of student writing which were unfamiliar to them (See Appendix E)

Procedures

First Year of the Study

In the first year of the study each child was invited in the late fall and late spring on two separate occasions to join me on a one-to-one basis during the school day but outside the regular classroom. During the first of each of the two sessions, the children answered the questions outlined in Appendix A. The conversations were informal and often included additional questions and discussions as a result of the information offered by the child. Each interview was audio recorded.

Several days later, each child brought all of her writing from the year to date and sorted it into three or four piles ranging from what they considered their very best writing to that they deemed less successful. Each child provided category names for his groupings. Following the sorting, each child discussed individual pieces of her work and offered reasons for evaluating the success of the piece as she did.

In addition, each child in the classroom had a cassette tape on which we recorded all discussions of his work at the authors' circle. The participants' tapes were transcribed. These tapes were at the children's disposal for further reference as well as mine for the purpose of data collection.

From mid-year the children participated in conference groups two times a week following writing time. I took participant observation notes on these discussions on a rotating basis among the groups. In addition, all of the children's written work was photocopied.

This data was collected in the context of Solsken's study. As such it was discussed at the weekly meeting she and I held to share observations on the two children whom we had focused on that week. We were joined by a student-teacher each semester and on a less regular basis by a second researcher and the first grade teacher who participated in the study. The purpose of these meetings was to share past observations and focus future observations and data collection. Additionally, over the summer Solsken and I compiled and examined data from the year and conferred to check and compare perceptions.

Second Year of the Study

In the second year of the study the data included a more extensive interview. Once again the children evaluated all of their writing. The interviews and evaluations were conducted in much the same way as described in the first year and took place in the spring. All of the students' writing was photocopied.

I selected six pieces from among their third grade writing that the children themselves evaluated generally as very successful, successful, and less successful. Two samples were selected from each of these ratings. All of the samples were typed and the surface features of spelling, punctuation and capitalization were put in standard form. The children then met in groups of three (the author was not among the group). They first followed along in the text as I read the pieces, and then they ranked the pieces. Next the participants discussed each piece supporting their individual rankings (see Appendix C). Following the discussion they had an opportunity to rerank the pieces if they wished to do so.

The groups were set up in the following way:

AUTHORS

Sarah

EVALUATORS

Beatrix

Luke

Jane

Luke	Jack Jane George
Jack	George Beverly Sarah
Beatrix	George Sarah Jane
Jane	Jack Beverly George
George	Luke Beverly Beatrix
Beverly	Luke Jane Beatrix

This structure was determined to ensure that each group represented the greatest possible diversity among the children as determined by their second grade profiles. The children's own classroom teachers were also asked to rank and support their rankings of the writing samples.

Third Year of the Study

The children again evaluated their own texts. I intended to select three pieces of their writing from as close to the same genre as possible prior to the evaluation. In reality I did this for Mrs. Barrett's students, but in the case of Mrs. Lerner's students she handed me three samples of writing for each of the participants. The evaluation was conducted in the same way as it was in the first and second years of the study. In addition, each child selected one of the three pieces of writing on which to work following a reader-based feedback discussion with her classmate(s). Each child determined from whom she would like to receive feedback from among the remaining study children.

On a subsequent day I led a discussion with the group based on the outline in Appendix D (Elbow 1981). Immediately following the discussion each child resumed work on the piece of writing discussed and articulated reasons for changes and decisions while working. All of the above exchanges were audio tape recorded and the writing was photo copied. In addition the child's teacher was asked to relate how she might plan to confer with each child concerning the piece selected.

In the third year, each child and each of the four teachers in the study also rated two pieces of student

writing unfamiliar to him. The rating form was modeled after that prepared by Newkirk (1984, see Appendix E).

Data Analysis

The data analysis accompanied data collection in the first year of the study. This analysis was performed by looking for commonalities within the data as described by Lofland (1971). The data were analyzed in process so that the categories that emerged could then be compared with similar categories from other data sources. In this way their validity could be determined. These categories then guided and in some cases channeled subsequent observations in a process similar to that described by Spradley (1980). For example, I audio tape recorded all of the discussions of the children's written work at the large group share which we called the authors' circle. Following each share I was particularly interested in the students' subsequent writing. When I saw what I felt were examples of children incorporating suggestions or addressing questions which were asked at the authors' circle, I informally interviewed both the writer and the feedbacker. The data that emerged concerning the feedbackers' perceptions seemed to shed little if any light on the effect of the feedback on the writer, so I made a decision to stop collecting that data, and

concentrated instead on the relationship between the recorded authors' circle discussion and the writer's subsequent texts. In this way I feel the data I collected was more related to the questions I had and better utilized the time devoted to data collection.

During the summer following the first and pilot year of the study, profiles of each of the children were constructed and each data source served as a cross check concerning the validity of emerging categories. These profiles not only illuminated the research questions, but served to help me make decisions concerning the collection of data in the second and third year of the study. In the subsequent years of the study the data was analyzed in a like manner. Each data source was analyzed separately for emerging categories, then similar findings were compared to determine if the categories were in fact viable. Those which appeared repeatedly and which transcended more than one data source were considered valid.

Following the collection of all of the data and the initial analysis, I once again examined the data, analyzing it in four steps. First, if it did not already exist, a profile related to evaluative criteria for a given year was created by identifying patterns for each child within each of the three years of the study. Each data source once again was used to corroborate or refute

hypotheses which I made based on the categories which emerged from the data. In this way the different data sources served as a cross check for each other. In addition to comparing categories within each profile, I also made comparisons across profiles to verify the usefulness of the emerging categories.

Next, I developed a longitudinal evaluation profile for each child across the three years of the study. These profiles document the constant and the changing aspects of each child's evaluation responses to written texts.

I then compared profiles across children to determine if there were similarities among the children in general and more specifically among the children at each grade level. That is to say: Does there seem to be a taxonomy or developmental sequence among these seven students as they evaluated written texts?

The data and the subsequent profiles from the first year of the study revealed that it was not sufficient to examine the children's evaluative criteria alone. The data suggested that there were social influences within the classroom which in some cases had a great deal of bearing on the evaluative criteria employed and the writing decisions that were made. For that reason I modified the research questions following the first year of the study. The result was a deliberate effort on my

part to collect not only data related to evaluative criteria but data related to the social influences on writing as well. The interviews in the second year of the study were designed to reveal information relative to these social influences as were the group evaluation tasks. In the third year of the study the group evaluation task was changed to elicit feedback rather than evaluative criteria. I placed the students in a social setting to receive feedback from peers. That session was immediately followed by a writing session in order to examine this question.

Like the data concerning evaluative criteria the data related to the children's social interactions was also examined over the three years of the study. I analyzed the data by once again examining each data source for patterns. I formed hypotheses and used each source to corroborate or refute those hypotheses and to identify change or consistency over time. It is important to note that I did not designate some data sources as revealing information only about evaluative criteria and others as sources for social influences. All of the data sources were examined for information which would shed light on either strand.

Finally, the teachers' evaluations of the student texts were analyzed by an identical process. Their

emerging criteria were then compared with the criteria their students used to evaluate the same texts.

The data collection and analysis seemed to dictate the method by which the data should be reported. The most complete picture concerning the students' evaluative criteria and the social influences on their writing decisions emerges when the data are reported in two parallel strands. Therefore, Chapter 4 begins with a discussion of the two strands in the first year of the study and this format is followed throughout the three years of the study.

Limitations of the Study

Although this study grew out of Solsken's three-year longitudinal study of children's literacy development, I did not begin to collect data concerning children's evaluative criteria until the fall of their second grade year. By that time several of the children were already showing a great deal of sophistication in evaluating texts. I find it somewhat regrettable that I have no documentation to determine evidence of less sophisticated responses which might have and probably did exist earlier in their educational careers.

Secondly, the fact that I was the children's teacher during one year of the study has its advantages and

disadvantages. My daily presence in the classroom during the first year of the study, as well as weekly visits by Solsken and less frequent visits by another researcher, provided me with quantities of data which were not collected in the two subsequent years of the study. However, although the children knew I was not only their teacher, but an interested observer as well, there was a greater distinction between these two roles in the second and third year of the study. That distinction produced, it seemed, more candid responses to my questions.

A further issue which can be interpreted as both a limitation and an advantage was that during the course of the study the children each worked with three different teachers. In their third and fourth grade years they did not all have the same teachers for their language arts instruction. In addition the five teachers, although they all provided opportunities for the children to write, did not all hold the same theoretical beliefs. While these circumstances do not provide consistency over the course of the study, they do open the possibility that a greater diversity of responses might well have surfaced from the students than if there had been greater consistency and control over the course of the study.

The small sample size is an additional limitation. The group of six children in the first year of the study

and seven children and four teachers in the second and third years of the study suggests that the results may not be transferable to other populations. Hilgers (1984), Bissex (1980), and Dyson (1985) have, however, conducted similar qualitative research with subjects numbering between one and four. Graves', Calkins', and Sowers' work at Atkinson Academy in Atkinson New Hampshire numbered 12 participants with three full-time researchers (see Graves, 1983; Calkins, 1983; and Sowers, 1982,1986). Although a larger sample size would be desirable, in order to conduct research of this nature one must limit the number of participants.

Finally, although these children form a diverse group, both socially and academically, they all live within a community that could be considered middle to upper-middle class. All of their parents are interested and invested in their educations and many of them hold undergraduate or in some cases graduate degrees. Although I feel these children may be recognizable to teachers in a wide variety of classrooms, to some teachers in very different settings they may seem unfamiliar.

CHAPTER 4

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter will be organized in the following manner: First, each of the children will be briefly introduced as second graders. My intention is to provide the reader with verbal photographs of each of the primary participants. Next, the data collected over the three years of the study will be reported. The students' evaluations revealed that they evaluated their own texts and other student-authored texts by employing text-related criteria. There were additional influences on their evaluative decisions which seemed to be of a social nature. Therefore, the student data will be reported on two parallel fronts as outlined in Chapter 3: text-related criteria and social influences on evaluation criteria. Each year will be reported cumulatively. Finally, the data offered by the children's classroom teachers will then be considered.

The Children

Sarah

Sarah was a socially mature second grader. She was one of the few children in the class who actively

cultivated friendships with both boys and girls. Her friends also included older children in the school community. Her social success seemed to come from her openness, her personal interests (most recently rock music, M-TV, break dancing and popping) and the fact that she held her own with her junior high aged sister and brother. She strove to present not only an accomplished social image but an accomplished academic image to the world as well. The latter sometimes seemed to leave her with feelings of consternation because she wished to convince people that there was nothing with which she was unable to cope.

Sarah was very astute in judging her classmates' capabilities. For example, in her kindergarten year she was quite comfortable performing dramatic story "readings" from pictures or memory. She was always careful, however, to read to children who she knew could not decode the text. She didn't perform if a known reader was among her audience. This trait at times interfered with Sarah's learning because she was hesitant to question what she didn't understand or to take academic risks. If Sarah took a risk and failed or was questioned, her response seemed to be to abandon this effort and play it safe in the future.

Although Sarah was a leader in her play and social interactions, she frequently sat back and let peers take the academic lead. She struggled to emulate their efforts, often writing on their topics in their genre instead of her own.

Luke

Luke was an active second grader who tried to turn all activities into play. He frequently, for example, turned academic exchanges with me into guessing games with me doing the guessing. In playground situations when many of the other second grade boys participated in an organized game, he and several others, among them his special and almost exclusive friend George, preferred to invent their own open-ended play which generally had a space or adventure theme.

Luke usually shied away from large group situations. He was seldom physically really part of the group but rather sat on the periphery. He almost never raised his hand. If he had something to say, he'd blurt it out or offer it as an aside. It seemed as if he wanted to get his ideas out on the floor before anyone had time to focus on him as the speaker. In small groups and one-to-one interactions, however, Luke was very verbal and inquisitive--often weighing the significance of what was said and asking clarifying questions or making judgments.

Jack

Jack was a personable seven year old who possessed a winning smile and boundless energy. He was the "me first" kid. He'd be the first in line to anywhere. Typically he'd watch the clock and, for example, have his writing folder away and be on his way to the authors' circle before writing time was even over. Jack was so intent to please and be well liked that he sometimes didn't realize how much his peers wanted to be his friend. Jack sought approval from his teachers as well.

He dealt with life concretely and in the here and now. He often found open-ended assignments difficult and would have preferred ditto sheets to blank paper. Jack wanted to do things right and come to closure quickly. "Do it fast; Get it done," seemed to be his motto.

Beatrix

Beatrix was a pint-sized child who more often than not could be seen with her thumb in her mouth. She shuttled between being very busy and engaged in activities of her own choosing and being quiet and seemingly uninvolved in the world around her. She was at these times like Frederick, taking in the world and storing up images for another day (Lionni, 1967). She'd typically be found curled up in a corner with a bolster pillow and Dr.

Seuss or some other literary friend. She sighed deeply at teacher assignments and preferred to restructure assignments to make her work her own. In her kindergarten year, for example, when tracing washers to illustrate an addition equation, she personalized each tracing with a hat and a face.

Beatrice was often a loner. Although she'd choose to sit with peers, she'd often participate as an observer rather than as an active member of the group. Yet, she was feisty and able to handle herself with the total group.

Jane

Jane was a child a classroom visitor would not immediately notice. Generally she was quiet, seldom volunteering in group settings. She pursued her work conscientiously. She was a listener and a watcher. Although Jane was an avid reader at home, at school she'd typically sit observing her classmates over a copy of an A. A. Milne or C. S. Lewis book. At school she wanted to figure out the rules in a given situation and play by them. She avoided academic and social risk taking. It was difficult to observe Jane doing things in process because she generally avoided activities until she felt she had figured them out sufficiently to be proficient.

Jane, like Luke, did not want attention focused on

her. She therefore volunteered to read only once at the authors' circle and seldom asked a question or offered a comment to a peer. The few times she did speak up in the large group were usually preceded by a comment to the group on my part like, "We all just heard Lindsay's story so you should be able to reflect what you heard." Jane, in order to meet the expectation, would force herself to volunteer on these occasions.

George

George usually operated on his own agenda. His priorities and time schedules often did not match mine. Frequently he'd arrive late to class meetings and often was at a loss concerning the location of his belongings. He, it seemed, had more important things on his mind--he was a writer. If schedule problems or classroom projects interfered with George's daily writing, he became almost ornery. He came to school each day knowing that he would write. Like Beatrix, he found teacher assignments to write in specific genre or on topics related to classroom activities confining. He would ask, "When are we going to do 'real' writing?"

George and Luke were special friends. George frequently welcomed others to "their" writing table. Usually this resulted in yelling matches because Luke

refused to share George. In his unconcerned way, George would pursue his activities for the day as peers would move in and out of his circle.

Beverly

Even though I will not report data on Beverly until the second year of the study, I will take this opportunity to introduce her here along with the other primary participants.

Beverly approached everything about school very seriously. Academic accomplishments came so easily to Beverly that she often found it difficult to take risks when she encountered a challenge. Many of her classmates viewed her academic endeavors as models for their own learning. She either didn't notice or took their emulation in stride with typical modesty.

Beverly had been an avid reader when she came to kindergarten. In second grade she began to make very definite reading and writing connections and strove to fashion her writing after her literary models. Typically, she read books that were either not of interest to some of her classmates or whose texts were too difficult for them to follow. And so her written texts became difficult to parallel.

She was an active participant in all classroom

activities. She wanted to do right and be right. Pleasing the significant adults in her life was of utmost importance.

The First Year of the Study

Text-Related Criteria: Second Grade

The children applied a number of text-related criteria in the first year of the study. Several of these criteria were used by a number of the participants, while other criteria were applied by just one or two of the participants. This section will discuss many of the text-related criteria the children used. The criteria used with the most frequency will be discussed first. Those criteria will be followed by a description of the remaining criteria which seemed to be unique to specific individuals within the study.

Most Frequently Applied Criteria

Experience

In the December interviews George, Jack, Luke and Beatrix each evaluated at least one of their texts by the experience depicted.

Luke used things he liked (school, arcades,

energizer battery advertisements, swimming at the local pool) in his writing. In December when he talked about THE ENERGIZER, he evaluated it as one of his best pieces of writing. When I asked him why he said, "Well, I like how they advertise it."

Benedict: You mean the batteries they advertise on TV? Is that what you're talking about?

Luke: Yeah, well this [character] is a battery too, but it's a live battery. I wanted to write a piece about it, and I really like it.

Benedict: Is there a part in here you really like?

Luke: Yeah (reads) 'One day the energizer had a problem. He had nothing to do. He was bored. Then he had an idea. He would go swimming at War Memorial Pool. He swam into the afternoon.'

Benedict: What do you like about that part? What's good about it?

Luke: I like when he was swimming. I also like swimming in the afternoon and doing a lot of swimming.

Luke closely linked his evaluation of real life experience with the success of his text. If the experience was pleasurable, he used it in some way in his writing. Since the experience was pleasurable, he determined that the writing was good as well. He said, "I think up stories from what I like to do."

Benedict: It sounds like you have your characters do the things you like to do.

Luke: Umhum.

Benedict: Is there any part of this (TIME TURTLE) that you think is really good?

Luke: (reads) 'Now it is time to go to bed. Mom, I'm scared because of the thunder.'

Benedict: What makes that part really good?

Luke: Well, I like the picture, and you know I like hearing the thunder.

(See Figure 2.)

As he had in the first example, Luke once again demonstrated how he first included things he particularly liked in his texts and then evaluated the texts on the basis of his enjoyment of the original experiences.

Jack liked to amuse and to laugh. He was constantly straddling the fence between writing far-reaching, sometimes violent adventure stories which appealed to his friends, and those stories that were comfortably close to home. He said if someone suggested he add something like, "I was walking at a park and we got kidnapped," he wouldn't add it. "I don't like kidnapping. Kidnapping doesn't make them good." Like Luke, he thought his writing was good when it told about an experience he found pleasurable.

In December he said that MY DAD was his very best piece of writing.



NOW I+ IS T²N TO GO TO BAD.
 MOM I AM SCARED BECS OF THE T²N THONNA.

FIGURE 2
 TIME TURTLE

Jack: He goes to California. We didn't get to see him for a couple of days. When he comes home he gives us presents and then we go to Papa Gino's to get our supper.

Benedict: It sounds to me like one of the things you really like about this piece is what happened.

Jack: Yes, it's good because it's about me.

Then he talked about MY VACATION.

Jack: I never been on a car boat before. That was my first time, and I like it because I could get peanut brittle and go swimming. When I went there it was fun and I like the way I wrote it.

Experience was closely linked with Jack's evaluation of his writing. In December he counted no fictional writing among his best. The best pieces were those that told about warm, happy family times. By spring Jack was beginning to separate himself from his experience and evaluate his writing from his reader's perspective. Interestingly enough, Jack only did this with what he considered his best work. When he talked about writing he considered less successful, the lack of success was attributed to his limited enjoyment of his original experience. When Jack brought CLEANUP DAY to the authors' circle, his audience was very interested. They laughed and empathized with him when he read about roller skating into a huge piece of glass his father used in his printing business. Even though his audience reacted enthusiastically to this piece, Jack did not consider it

among his best. He said, "I didn't really like it that much. It was kind of hard for me to clean up [the glass]."

Beatrix was moving from evaluating her work on the basis of the experience to evaluating the text itself. In December she did, however, evaluate her story about tagging her Christmas tree as one of her best because "I like Christmas time...It's what happened when I was tagging my tree. It was really fun."

Benedict: Am I understanding correctly? One of the reasons you think this is a really good piece is because you wrote about something that was fun?

Beatrix: Yeah...I can still remember when I stepped in that brook (laughs).

Likewise, in December George evaluated his personal narrative by evaluating the experience. He decided that MICHIGAN was his very best non-fiction writing of the term. He said, "We saw the Niagara Falls, my brother learned to swim, he was three. Let's see, we had a birthday party for me and my friend, John, and we went camping...We really did all this. It was something really fun that I did."

Benedict: Is there something about the way you wrote this that makes it your best piece?

George: Yes, but I haven't wrote about it yet. It's the part where we went camping. It has some of the most exciting things. All the excitement was there.

George responded to the piece primarily affectively. He reported, "This was the most fun I've ever had in my life." The experience, he said, is what made the writing good.

For these four children the evaluations of their texts were rooted in their own experiences. In many cases they wrote from what they knew, and the success of the text was determined for them by the positive nature of the original experiences.

Length

In their second grade year the physical act of writing became more automatic for the children. Beatrix, George, Jack and Luke all used the criterion of length to evaluate texts. Their use of this criterion is characterized by Luke's comments. He said that writing was better when it was longer, because he found it hard to understand stories if they were too short. In addition he qualified his application of this criterion by stating that writing should be, "kind of long and kind of short." Writing should, he felt, be long enough to be exciting but not so long that it became boring. He credited one of his classmates as writing good pieces because, "she writes pieces that are kind of short and kind of not that long."

Less Frequently Applied Criteria

Illustrations

George and Luke both used illustrations as a criterion for evaluating writing. However, Luke was the only one of the six children who still relied heavily on illustrations to make his meaning. During his first interview in December, he frequently identified the best parts of his stories as those where he liked his illustrations. In the case of the following illustration, he felt no need to add text because he'd already told it all in his drawing. (See Figure 3.) In May when I interviewed him, his evaluation of this same piece changed.

Luke: It barely has anything.

Benedict: You have lots of detailed pictures.

Luke: There's not that much words in it.

Benedict: Do you have to have words to make it good?

Luke: Yeah.

Benedict: Why is that?

Luke: 'Cause it tells it better that way. 'Cause if you have no words and say somebody's in the building taking a drink--you'll probably think someone's brushing their teeth in the building.

Benedict: Someone might misinterpret your picture if you don't tell what's happening in the words?

Luke: Yeah.



FIGURE 3
THE TURTLE: THE DREAM

As the year progressed, Luke talked about the changed relationship between his drawing and writing. In the May interview he said, "I do the writing [first]. If I did the pictures [first] then it wouldn't make sense. If I just drew the picture I wouldn't know what's happening in the picture. I only make the picture first on the ones that are very easy." He said he got his ideas for the text before he drew pictures. Observation revealed that Luke actually drew prior to writing, but his description indicated that his process had changed. At this time he was beginning to determine story line before drawing rather than as a result of drawing as he had consistently done in the past.

Newkirk (1982) suggests that:

Drawing comes to have less importance in the composing process as the writer learns to plan internally. And, in part, the writer, as he becomes more fluent, comes up against the limitations of drawing as a mode of communication. Words can be used more quickly than pictures. They allow the child to write about events that would be difficult to draw, and they allow the writer to change directions without feeling limited by a picture that has been drawn (p. 109).

For Luke this transfer had begun to take place intellectually, but in practice he still relied heavily on his illustrations to carry his meaning.

In a similar way George showed evidence of relying on his illustrations to carry his meaning. He evaluated

pieces of writing on the basis of the success of his drawings. A good example of his use of this criterion is his evaluation of THE SCIENCE FAIR. (See Figure 4.) When he spoke about the strengths of this piece he pointed out all of the things that were happening in the pictures. In December he felt this was his best piece of writing. The pictures, he said, "were really cute." The importance of the illustrations became even more apparent when George discussed the importance of humor to this piece of writing. The humor he described in this piece is predominantly found in the illustrations not in the text itself.

Humor

Beatrice and George both evaluated texts using the criterion of humor. Beatrice's appreciation and application of humor seemed to grow out of the models she saw around her in the classroom. She found George's writing particularly funny and strove to emulate him in order, it seemed, to gain the same positive audience response he enjoyed. Since her application of this criterion was evidently precipitated by the social influences on her writing, I will discuss it in more detail under social influences.

George identified humor as one of the components that made his writing good. He used this criterion to

One day
 GEORGE
 WENT HOME
 HE TALKED
 ABOUT THE
 PROJECT
 TO LUKE
 THE NEXT DAY
 HE SHOWED
 HIS PROJECT
 TO LUKE

One day
 when George
 was walking
 home all
 excited
 about the
 next day
 the science
 fair. He
 showed his project
 to Luke



LATER THE
 ROBOT GOT
 HOLD OF
 THE CAR
 HE DROVE
 IT INTO
 THE
 BLOCK
 AREA
 BAM
 I WAS
 THROWN
 FOR
 T.O.G.



Later the
 robot
 got hold
 of the
 car.
 He drove
 it into
 me and
 right in to
 the
 block area.
 BAM
 I was
 thrown.
 Look for
 Part Two.

FIGURE 4
 THE SCIENCE FAIR

determine which were his very best pieces. In December he said THE SCIENCE FAIR was his best piece of fiction. The piece was about a car a child invented for his science project. The car was no ordinary car. The following are excerpts of what George considered the funny parts:

"Wow! said Luke, when he saw the scientific car. "How does it work?"

"Well you see..."

"Yes, I see it very clearly," interrupted Luke.

He also found the following excerpts humorous:

George dreamed about the science fair. Next morning he was surprised when the car woke him up! He was shocked!

...

He was amazed at all the projects in the school yard, but none seemed better than his.

Later the robot got hold of the car. He drove it into me and right into the block area. BAM!

I was...

Look for Part 2

He said,

It's funny. There's this car that's helping him. The car actually helps him--like over here when he's asleep the car wakes him up HONK! (he laughs)...There's another really funny part that I really like. It's when the robot gets a hold of the car and he drives the car and he drives it into George and George is in front of the robot when the robot can't see him and he drives into the block area.

Several points can be made about this example. First, the reader can see the importance of illustrations to George's

story telling. Secondly he was actually trying to write a funny story and in his mind he succeeded. His inclusion of humor made him evaluate this story as a good one. Finally this is, it seems, a good example to substantiate Newkirk's (1982) observation that young writers frequently feel they have communicated in words what is only in their illustrations or perhaps still in their own minds. On the other hand one could question whether this might not be the beginning of George's more complex application of illustration. It seems in this case he may intentionally have used text in combination with illustrations to create fuller meaning for the reader.

Genre

Luke, Beatrix, George and Sarah all evaluated pieces of writing or suggested additions to pieces by determining if the piece or suggestion adhered to what they felt were the conventions of genre. In late winter Luke exhibited rule-oriented behavior in his conference group. He seemed to have determined rules for what he felt were appropriate responses to specific genre. For example, he greeted George's giggled suggestion to Beverly for her MISSING DIAMOND MYSTERY, with, "It's not supposed to be funny, George. It's a detective story."

Beatrix was also concerned about genre. When she

wrote a fictional piece that sounded "real," she felt that was not good. She seemed to feel fiction had some very specific rules. Not only was it not good if it sounded like it had really happened to you, but neither should it be completely unbelievable. For example, she evaluated one of her pieces as poor because, in her own words, "I think this one got too outrageous!" The best pieces, she said, were fictional ones in which there were "funny characters like elves and elephants who talk and have funny adventures." In these there would be no need for confusion. The reader would know she was writing fiction.

In the fall Sarah had written a number of mystery stories patterned after those her peers had written. In May she judged her mystery stories as poor, explaining, "I guess I didn't know what mysteries were." She evidently felt a writer needed to have an understanding of the conventions of genre before attempting to write in a specific genre.

When George pulled his FROM FROGS TO POLYWOGS from his folder, he stated, "I think this is my third best because it's interesting. It showed true things about frogs. If people wanted to learn about frogs they could look in here. I wrote it so people could understand it. They're all true things."

Benedict: Is it important not to make things up for a piece if you're trying to teach people about frogs?

George: Yeah, if you were teaching somebody then put in something pretend some people might think frogs climb trees and jump off into the grass or that frogs can stick themselves to grass so hard that sometimes they can't get off.

George seemed to have a beginning understanding of the necessity of including only facts in a piece his readers would read as nonfiction. Evidently he felt he would violate the conventions of genre if he mixed fact and fiction and misinformed a reader.

George not only evaluated writing according to its adherence to what he considered rules of a specific genre. When he sorted through his writing, he had difficulty comparing his fiction and nonfiction writing. He was the only child interviewed who separated the two. He ranked his writing within each of these subgroups. He didn't feel he could, for example, compare fast-moving adventure stories with the description of resurfacing of his driveway. To him these were two distinct types of writing and he applied different criteria for evaluating each.

Although these evaluative criteria related to genre are rudimentary, it is, I think, interesting to see how these children applied these criteria. The children were neither taught nor encouraged to write in specific genre, and yet, through their reading and exposure to their

peers' texts, they were beginning to form and apply some rules related to genre when they constructed and evaluated their own texts.

Sense

George and Jack both evaluated writing and/or made writing decisions based on whether their texts made sense. For both of them this evolved over several drafts of many stories. It seems this criterion developed out of an increased sense of audience. They both became concerned when their peers did not see their texts in the same way they did. For George this realization was more startling. He became truly shocked when his friends did not understand his meaning. Since this criterion seemed to be so influenced by the social influences within the classroom it will be discussed in greater detail within that context.

Individually Applied Criteria

Luke

In the May interview Luke was beginning to be concerned about the need to sequence his writing. When talking about his story TIME TURTLE he stated that it wasn't good because, "first it's on something then it skips to something else."

Benedict: What could you do about that?

Luke: I would write a part that is first and then something in the middle and then write the part that skips on.

Luke indicated additional criteria for evaluating his writing during that same May interview. He evaluated work read at the authors' circle on the basis of the author's ability to capture and hold his interest with her title and lead. He said that he listened to only some of the selections read by his peers.

Benedict: How do you decide which ones you're going to listen to?

Luke: By the beginning like and the title. Like if it's a good title or a bad title. It might be good [even] if it's a bad title. I'll listen to some of it to see if it's good.

Benedict: If you don't think the story's good, you'll stop listening?

Luke: Yeah.

If a writer wished to capture Luke's attention a provocative title and a strong lead were necessary to hook him. Luke didn't listen to everything shared, waiting for a redeeming sentence or phrase. At seven, he already seemed to agree with Zinsser (1980). "The most important sentence in any article is the first one. If it doesn't induce the reader to proceed to the second sentence, your article is dead. And if the second sentence doesn't

induce him to continue to the third, it is equally dead. Of such a progression of sentences, each tugging the reader forward until he is safely hooked a writer constructs that fateful unit: the 'lead'" (p. 59).

Sarah

When Sarah evaluated her writing in May she said FOOTBALL, I WENT TO THE MOVIES, and ELVIS PRESLEY SCREAMS were her best pieces of second grade writing. The last two were personal narratives based on Sarah's personal experiences. She said these were good "because they really happened. If they really happened I can tell more information in my piece." According to Sarah a lot of information on the part of the writer contributed to a good piece of writing.

Sarah included a fictional piece among her best writing. She stated that FOOTBALL was a good piece "because I like how I have people talking in it. I like the piece because I think it has a lot of dialogue in it. If someone at the authors' circle had a question, and if it had a lot of dialogue, I would usually put that suggestion in because I might want to have a lot of dialogue in my piece." This comment suggests that Sarah found it easier to write dialogue than narrative. It might further be explained by the fact that Sarah was an

active user of her own rich oral language. Dialogue might well have brought writing to life for Sarah.

Jane

Jane decided that when her writing resembled the fantasy and poetry she savored, it was successful. Use of language was critical. Jane explained why one small part of her SARAH AND THE ANIMALS was good writing:

Jane: The part I really like is this part. I like it because it's describing what the woods were like. (She reads) 'One day a little girl was walking through the woods.. There were big, leafy, overgrown trees, flowers colored pink, red, light purple and white. There was also a big tumbly, rumbly, squirmly brook.' I like that part--the way I described the brook.

Benedict: Where did you get the idea to write that way?

Jane: Like from poems--Aileen Fisher--she used a lot of those kinds of words.

Benedict: Do you like her poetry?

Jane: I like Eugene Field's too. Like "Winken, Blinken, and Nod." I like that. I have a book of poetry and it has a lot of Eugene Field's poetry.

One day, before Jane demonstrated applying this criterion to her own writing, I included her in a group activity which focused on finding examples of how different authors described settings. Each child looked for a description they felt was successful. Jane offered

the following from Kenneth Grahame's (1908) WIND IN THE WILLOWS;

All was a-shake and a-shiver--glints and gleams and sparkles, rustle and swirl, chatter and bubble (p. 4).

Summary

These children used a wide range of criteria to evaluate texts. Most of the criteria they used have been discussed above. In several cases the criteria were used only in passing, or only concerned one piece of writing, so it seems sufficient to say a child used the criterion. Those criteria included effort, surface features and purpose. Jane used the criterion of effort to evaluate a writing in relationship to how hard she had worked on a piece. Beatrix used the criterion of surface features to comment on her spelling and handwriting. George related that one of his texts was successful because he had accomplished what he had set out to do.

Table 1 summarizes the text-related criteria these children used during the first year of the study.

Table 1. The Use of Text-Related
Criteria in Grade Two

	Beatrix	Beverly	George	Jack	Jane	Luke	Sarah
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Experience	■	□	■	■	□	■	□
Length	■	□	■	■	□	■	□
Genre	■	□	■	□	□	□	■
Illustrations	□	□	■	□	□	■	□
Humor	■	□	■	□	□	□	□
Sense	□	□	■	□	□	■	□
Sequence	□	□	□	□	□	■	□
Leads/Endings	□	□	□	□	□	■	□
Titles	□	□	□	□	□	■	□
Information	□	□	□	□	□	□	■
Dialogue	□	□	□	□	□	□	■
Effort	□	□	□	□	■	□	□
Language	□	□	□	□	■	□	□
Surface Features	■	□	□	□	□	□	□
Purpose	□	□	■	□	□	□	□

Social Influences on Writing: Second Grade

Examining the social contexts which affected the children's evaluative decisions was more complicated than examining their evaluative statements concerning text-related criteria. First, the importance of the relationship between evaluation and social interactions was not apparent until I began to organize and analyze the second grade data at the end of the first and pilot year of the study. I did not consciously collect data concerning the children's social worlds; however, the social influences were so pervasive for some children that they could not be overlooked.

The data fell into three categories. The categories are as follows:

- 1) Relationship with Peers Related to Writing;
- 2) Peer Feedback Related to Writing;
- 3) Sense of Audience Related to Writing.

During the course of the study the children seemed to interpret social interactions and make decisions related to their writing in various ways within each of the categories outlined above. During the first year of the study the relationship with peers seemed to be most frequently characterized by individuals' reliance on their peers as models. Peer feedback appeared to result in either a decision by the writer that peers were judging

her work or as a departure point for revision. Audience was viewed by some as a means to gain increased social status while others made writing decisions based on how they felt their audience would interpret their texts. The following section explores the apparent social influences on the children's second grade writing decisions.

Relationship with Peers Related to Writing

Sarah seemed to rely on her peers as models when she, as we will see more clearly in the section on peer feedback, determined that her personal narrative accounts did not receive the same recognition that some of the fiction her peers were writing did. It was at this point that Sarah for a time stopped writing about things she knew and was connected to and tried to model her writing after peers' whose drafts she felt received the most positive feedback. She seemed to look for someone to emulate.

She found her model in Beverly. In the fall Beverly was reading Nancy Drew books with a voracious appetite and began to write her own mystery stories. Sarah followed her lead. She became completely entangled in webs of unrelated details, and found herself unable to successfully replicate the model. The feedback she received on these pieces will be discussed in the next section.

The spring was a time when Sarah spent a good deal of her time socializing. She became very friendly with three boys (Jack being one of them) with whom she shared a keen interest in contemporary rock music, break dancing, and popping. She was the catalyst in the group and the one with the most accurate information. She initiated topics. She inspired her peers to write about break dancing, popping, and Michael Jackson as well as writing on these topics herself.

Sarah read magazines and other recently published material about Michael Jackson in particular. When Keith brought an autographed photograph of Michael Jackson to school, Sarah became very excited. Sixth graders would come in to borrow her Walkman and tapes at recess time. All of this interest erupted in short pieces of writing including a Michael Jackson report and a letter to Kevin Bacon. Sarah's content was still being influenced by her social interactions, but now she had more control and knowledge. It was only when Sarah's writing became the model for others that she not only seemed able to breathe her own voice back into her writing, but gained renewed self confidence as well.

Jack, like Sarah, had experiences which provided him with material for personal writing, but he too perceived

that fiction was more highly valued by his peers. Peer approval was more important to him than ownership. While some children turned to their reading or television for models, long or frequent sessions with books were not part of his experience. Nor did he go home and watch hours of television. Jack was on the go. In order to write fiction that rivaled what his peers wrote, he relied on their experiences. Information for his fictional writing came from informal conferences with peers and the authors' circle. And so listening and watching became important. He needed the authors' circle to generate ideas for his writing. He would most specifically mimic the form rather than the content of his peers.

Like Sarah and Jack, Luke also looked for topics and story ideas in his peers' writing. He most frequently relied on George, his constant writing buddy. Their social interaction directly affected whether Luke reached closure on his texts. Because Luke depended on George, it seems they would make a decision to write on the same topic and generate ideas together. Somehow Luke repeatedly got left writing about George's topics while George's imagination took him off on different tangents. Luke explained, "Somehow every time he goes, 'OK, you can write with me.' He goes, 'Oh, yeah [to my idea].' I say,

'you said I was right.' Then he keeps on forgetting about [my idea]...He wanted me to help him so I helped him then he forgot ALL about me helping him."

Listening was important to both Beatrix and Jane. Through their listening, they harvested ideas for their own writing. While Jack and Sarah evaluated their peers' work from a social point of view, trying to emulate the writing to achieve acceptance and recognition, Beatrix and Jane listened to their peers for ideas to make their own writing highly personal. The following examples illustrate how both girls used the listening to extract topics, language, and forms for their own texts. Jane and Beatrix both identified Elizabeth, Beverly and George as classmates' whose writing they liked to hear. Jane valued the ideas, language, and creativity of the writing and stored it away to use when generating her own work. She used the work of others to provide the structure and form of her own writing.

Jane: George is a good writer. The stories he makes up--I would never think up those kind of stories. Beverly's I don't know, I just like Beverly's. I think hers are good too--the way she writes them--the way she puts things into words.

Benedict: It seems it's George's ideas you like and you said you like the way Beverly puts things into words. What kinds of things does she do?

Jane: Like in EMILY THE GREAT I like how she described all the things in the room. I like how she pretended to be Emily Dickinson's spirit. I like how she thought up the idea.

Benedict: Would you ever write a piece like that where you as the author pretended to be someone else?

Jane: I don't know. I never thought about that.

Benedict: Is there anyone else you'd consider a good writer?

Jane: Elizabeth, because in one of her choose-your-own-adventure stories she added more information than the other kids do when they write them. I liked her topic too.

Their writing gave Beatrix ideas too. She found Elizabeth's work filled with fantasy. Beverly's work was helpful "because lots of times she wrote true stories and sometimes I decide to write about that."

On November 16, for example, Beverly read THANKSGIVING at the authors' circle. On November 18 Beatrix began her Christmas piece which was an account of tagging her Christmas tree. Who should show up in the woods as well as in the draft but Beverly. The tree tagging had taken place prior to Beverly's authors' circle visit. Perhaps Beverly's personal narrative inspired Beatrix to write a personal narrative amidst a long string of fictional writing she had been doing. Late in the year Beatrix credited Beverly for ideas. Beverly never wrote a Christmas story, but Beatrix stated, "Beverly lots of

times she writes true stories like about Christmas, and sometimes I decide to write about that too."

George's stories were helpful too. His "stories are mostly crazy, and I like to write pretend stories with a little bit of craziness in them." Beatrix evaluated George's THE TRIP as a "very funny story." At the authors' circle she also heard his other zany stories. She attempted fictional pieces, like LITTLE JENNY AND HER NAILS, with "a little bit of craziness in them." (See Figure 5.)

Like Jane and Beatrix, George maintained strict ownership of his work, so strict, it seemed, that it did not even occur to him to use his peers as models. He was apparently so caught up in his own work and, as Luke reported, going off on new topics as quickly as his mind generated ideas, that he often seemed unaware of what was going on around him. Therefore, there was little if any evidence that George used his peers as models.

Peer Feedback Related to Writing

Although all of the children had a least two social worlds (the school world and the home world) Sarah seemed to separate and be affected by the two most consciously. This was particularly noticeable because Sarah found topics about her own experiences a good source for her

Little
Jenny
and her
nails

LITTLE JENNY
AND HER
NAILS

One day
little
jennys
mom said
~~time to a.~~
clip your nails

One day
Little
Jenny's
Mom said,
"Time to
clip your nails."

NO!
shouted
Jenny.
and took
off

"NO!"
shouted
Jenny
and took
off.

and that
happend
all week
on sunday

And that
happened
all week.
On Sunday

FIGURE 5
LITTLE JENNY AND HER NAILS

got to school
 to school
 her. her ~~teach~~
 teacher said
 go home.
 and don't
 come back

got to school
 to school
 her
 teacher said,
 "Go Home and don't
 come

back until ~~you~~
 your nails
 are cut.
 so little
 o jenny
 went back
 home. her

back until
 your nails
 are cut."
 So Little
 Jenny
 went back
 home. Her

Mother
~~she~~ said
 why are
 you home
 so early?
 Jenny said
 my teacher
 said I need

mother said,
 "Why are
 you home so
 early?"
 Jenny said,
 "My teacher
 said I need

My nails
 clipped, will
 you clip them?
~~she~~ said
 her mother
 mother
 and she did

my nails
 clipped. Will
 you clip them?"
 "Of course," said
 her mother,
 and she did.
 The End

the end

writing, but she had an added burden of personal and family censorship when it came to topic selection and inclusion of information in her writing. In first grade Sarah wrote a story about a food fight at the family dinner table. While the story delighted her school audience, her home audience was less than pleased (Solsken's unpublished field notes). She had drawn from her experience to make the story sound like real siblings interacting over the evening meal, but she had fabricated the food fight. The result was a story that sounded like personal narrative, but was in reality realistic fiction. From that point on Sarah's writing changed.

Sarah lived in a close family that was filled with varied experiences, but she was not always sure, at seven, what the safe topics were and tended to write about less controversial ones. For example, during our first interview she pulled a booklet out of her folder entitled THE DAY I GOT DRUNK. The title was not accompanied by any text. She said, "I decided not to write that one."

Sarah wrote a number of personal narrative accounts in her second grade year. Among these pieces only THE FIRE, a narrative about her sister starting a fire while cooking hamburgers when Mom was at work, involved any significant risk at home. The piece began when her friend Beverly wrote on the topic too. Interestingly enough

neither piece was ever considered for publication by the authors. Beverly said she didn't think she'd publish hers because "maybe Sarah's mother wouldn't like me to."

Sarah, it seems, might have censored not only her own writing, but in this instance, Beverly's as well.

The home audience was not the only audience that Sarah felt judged her writing. Although her voice rang true in leads like "Now Sarah and Beverly do not like dogs, period,", I will present an example of how Sarah interpreted lack of feedback from her peers as an unfavorable judgment of her writing.

Sarah read this piece at the authors' circle with all the drama, fun and concern that accompanied the actual event. It was well received by her peers but not with the intense interest granted fiction. Sarah was trying to please two social worlds which seemed for her to be in conflict. The social world at school as it applied to writing was changing. Now that she and her peers had learned to read, they showed evidence of wanting their own texts and those of their classmates to match in action and excitement the texts they borrowed from the library. Sarah seemed to feel that if she could make her own experiences sound as exciting and funny as Carolyn Keene and Judy Blume did, her peers would appreciate her writing. In order to accomplish this goal she had to

embellish her personal experiences, which got her in trouble at home. It appeared that to Sarah there was only one solution--abandon her stories and write the stories she perceived her peers wanted to hear. That's exactly what she did.

Because Sarah's overriding social goal for the authors' circle was to win approval, she interpreted questions and suggestions as negative criticism. Instead of using her peers' responses as a point of departure for revision, she abandoned her work or declared her texts complete. She came to the authors' circle with a basketball mystery story, for example. When I asked her purpose for coming she said, "I want people to think my piece is done." Sarah read her draft and the following discussion ensued.

Elizabeth: I think you should go a bit further to add that little conversation they were having.

Sarah: Well, that's how far I wanted to go. That's where I wanted to stop.

Lindsay: (tries a less direct approach) I really don't understand, Oh, no, you're not!" "Oh, yes, I am!" and then your story stops.

Sarah: It's like that's really, um--it ends right there.

Sarah made no changes in her draft. Her original purpose in sharing was not met, nor was her broader social goal. She correctly interpreted her peers' feedback as

"this piece is not done." Her goal was in conflict with theirs. They wanted to help her improve her writing; she wanted their approval. Neither recognized the other's goal. The result was that she neither reworked her writing nor tried something new. Instead, she began another sports mystery.

Jack also looked to his audience for approval and recognition. Although he was as concerned about peer approval as Sarah, Jack found his home and school social worlds in harmony. Like Sarah, his voice resonated when he wrote personal narrative. Unlike Sarah, he was not burdened by personal censorship. Jack's life was as open as the expression he wore on his face. He unabashedly wrote about his mom betting on the horses (and winning) at the three county fair. He also wrote about his dad passing out presents to the whole family when returning from a trip to California. He quoted his mom as saying, "We all got presents, and all you got was a suitcase full of dirty underwear." These stories delighted his audiences at home and at school.

As I discussed in the previous section, Jack, like Sarah, stopped writing on topics close to home and wrote instead far reaching adventure stories modeled after those his peers wrote. He, like Sarah, found that it was

difficult to reproduce the forms his peers used. Likewise, when peers questioned his text he interpreted the questioning as negative feedback rather than as a departure point for revision.

George, introduced "choose-your-own-adventure" stories into the classroom in early January (see Appendix F for an example of one of George's choose-your-own-adventure stories). He was churning them out one after another and getting a great deal of positive response from his classmates. They wanted to hear each new entry, and they wanted to emulate his style. Jack was no exception.

Jack brought THE MILITARY SCHOOL (a choose-your-own-adventure story) to the authors' circle in early February. George's was the only hand raised. Jack called on George.

George: You could add that if you don't bury him you start to get hungry and...

Jack: I already wrote that.

George: Well, um...

Jack: I wrote bury them.

Then Keith's hand went up.

Keith: You could add that when you don't bury them...(accompanied by a long involved series of events).

George: I want to ask you something. You said if you don't bury him--you let Keith tell his idea and...

Jack: That was when he already buried him. I mean when he already left him in the road. I wrote all that.

George: It's just--why can Keith tell you a suggestion and I can't?

Jack: I let you tell a suggestion.

George: (voice rising) Well, how come Keith can give you a suggestion?

Jack: Because he left him on the road.

Keith had as much difficulty as Jack in weaving these stories. A suggestion from him was acceptable, it seemed. But George already had three or four under his belt. The resident expert, by making a suggestion, had, it appeared, in Jack's eyes evaluated his piece as inferior.

While Sarah and Jack abandoned pieces that were questioned or for which suggestions were offered, Luke tried to change his text to please his audience. Luke was reluctant to read his work to anyone but George. He did, however, make four trips to the authors' chair and by my design had to read weekly in his conference group. Luke credited his peers with having a significant effect on his writing. I asked him:

Benedict: When [your classmates] ask you questions you said you answer them. Do you ever do anything to your writing because of those questions?

Luke: Yeah, like if they don't like it or if it doesn't make sense I'll erase it.

Luke was more concerned about his audience reaction than his ownership. The following example is illustrative of the effect of peers on his writing. He brought THE BATTLE OF THE TURTLE to the authors' circle. Keith suggested, "You could pretend the turtle was curious and found a space craft and he got in it and by accident he pushed the button to go up in space." Even though the interjection of the spaceship had no bearing on the rest of Luke's story, the following day he wrote, "And they found a spaceship and got in it and pressed a button and blasted off." The piece never went beyond Keith's suggestion.

Beatrix seemed to use feedback to create writing that was highly personal. Here is an example of how she used feedback from her peers to add to her writing while at the same time maintaining ownership. She came to share at the authors' circle one day. She was stuck and needed ideas from her classmates. She began to read. (See Figure 6). She finished reading. She sat on the edge of the chair, her feet entwined in the rungs. Although at other times she kept a low profile, in the authors' chair she orchestrated a dialogue with her classmates. First she answered questions:

Beverly: Is it like a regular typewriter or does it have titles on the keys?

there was, once the longest
 car on earth. It was 10
 miles long and it is easy
 to drive. Even a kid
 could drive it if they
 had how to write. You
 have to know how to write
 because in the car there
 is a typewriter. All you
 have to do is you have to
 type the title of the

There was once the longest
 car on earth. It was ten
 miles long, and it is easy
 to drive. Even a kid
 could drive it if they
 knew how to write. You
 have to know how to write
 because in the car there
 is a typewriter. All you
 have to do is you have to
 type the title of the

PLEASE YOU WANT to Go to
 the PAISE THE PAISE
 Get-OUT AND YOUR
 THERE. BUT IF YOU tip the
 WORD the ROMY WAY YOU
 GO to the PLAS YOU COME
 WANT WANT WANT to Go to

place you want to go to.
 Then press the pedals, get
 out, and you're
 there, but if you type the
 word the wrong way, you
 go to the place you don't
 want to go to.

FIGURE 6
 Lead of THE LONGEST CAR

Beatrix: It's like a regular typewriter.

Soda: Is this a true story?

Beatrix: (immediately and a little surprised) No!

Then the suggestions came:

Keith: You could add that you were in it and that you by accident typed the wrong place and you went up-side-down and you fell out of the car.

Beatrix (now seeks to clarify) At the wrong place?

Benedict: I wondered if you had any plans to put characters in your story.

Beatrix: Well, I have an idea of a little kid came along and he got in and started to play and he got into the little car and started to fool around with the buttons and by accident it typed THE FAIR and the car went to the fair.

Jack: Did he have a good time?

A few seconds later Keith sees her theme and is building an adventure. The boy's father enters the story:

Keith: ...and the father starts to type and he types a story and he goes into that land and all those things happen.

Beatrix: (amid the group laughter) I will add that--I think.

During this authors' circle discussion there were other suggestions:

--the car couldn't get around corners

--the car could end up in a swimming pool

--the driver of the car wanted to go to a restaurant named the Roon but by mistake ends up on the moon.

The following day Beatrix listened to a tape recording of her authors' circle discussion and then resumed work on her draft. It was her decision to accept or reject the suggestions she received. "I read my piece with the suggestions and if it works sometimes I put them in and sometimes I don't," she stated of her strategy. She rejected most. On this day she went with her idea about the fair. The father's voice, an "I'm the expert," adult voice, was a result of a suggestion from Keith. She included it. Her additions include instructions on how to drive a car from Beatrix's perspective. (See FIGURE 7.)

She used Keith's idea, but she made it her own. The dialogue at the authors' circle helped Beatrix clarify her own ideas as well as consider suggestions from peers. Beatrix, because of her comfort in the social setting of the authors' circle, was able to use information she received there for her own writing purposes.

Jane also used feedback from peers to create writing that was highly personal. This became apparent when she spoke about her conference group. She referred to this group as a helpful support group. She said, "They listen to my piece more [than at the authors' circle]. Mostly it's the questions they ask that help me." The two most helpful members of her conference group were Mark and

ONE DAY A LITTLE KID GOT
 INTO THE CAR AND
 HIS FATHER SAID NOW LOOK
 HERE SON I'LL LET ME
 SHOW YOU THE WAY TO
 DRIVE A CAR. YOU SEE
 WHAT YOU DO IS YOU TAKE THE
 STEERING WHEEL LIKE THIS

One day a little kid got
 into the car and
 his father said, "Now look
 here, Son, let me
 show you the way to
 drive a car. You see,
 what you do is you take the
 steering wheel like this

WELL, WHERE'S THE
 STEERING WHEEL? OW!
 WELL, WHAT YOU
 PUT THE KEYS IN
 THE ~~KEY~~
 HOLE. MY, WHERE'S

Hey, where's the
 steering wheel! Well, oh
 well. When you
 put the keys in
 the key
 hole. Hey, where's

THE KEY HOLE!
 OW, WHAT ABOUT
 THIS CAR IS
 GOING TO
 UP, OW, THERE'S
 EVEN A TYPEWRITER
 IN THE

the key hole?
 Oh, well, I guess
 this car is
 just messed
 up. Oh, there's
 even a typewriter.
 I think I'll type...

FIGURE 7
 Additions to THE LONGEST CAR

Lindsay she said, "because they ask a lot of questions and then I can clear it up in my piece so that they can understand it." These children focused on her draft rather than getting caught up in the direction they felt the story should go. They left the ownership with Jane. They were helpful because, "if they don't understand something I can go back to my piece and clear that up and that's sort of like a suggestion. It will add more information."

While Jane found feedback useful, she wanted to receive it on her terms. She indicated that it was of utmost importance that she make the final writing decisions. She was best supported, she said, by readers asking questions. The questions helped her to discover where she might need to make revisions.

While Jane and Beatrix seemed to anticipate and even orchestrate situations where they might receive feedback, George at times was surprised by his audience. He would share what he considered a particularly funny story and be flabbergasted if someone didn't understand. His story THE TRIP is a good example. The story was written in the first person singular. Lines of text accompanied the eleven illustrations. The main character talked to himself until the conclusion when he had a brief exchange with the clerk. The story reads:

I think I'll take a trip to the fashion store. Hum, I'll try that one. No too big! No. No. Naw Hum, well, I'll try them, No way! Definitely not. I'll try this. Strange. I'll try shoes. Whoa! Stop! Ouch! Help! Crash! Bang! Smash! Bonk! Bump! I think I made a boo boo. You sure did. Ouch. Don't mention it. Will you take these? Now split. Sure. Bye. I'm glad that's over.

When George brought his draft to the authors' circle, Beatrix indicated that she didn't really know what happened in the story. George responded, "You don't know?!"

George was not at this time able to make what Newkirk (1982) calls critical judgments. To do so he needed to see the text "as distinct from the oral commentary that a student offers to fill in gaps of information. The text must be seen as distinct from the child's knowledge about the subject; without this separation the writer assumes something has been communicated when the information is only in the writer's head" (p. 108).

Early in his second grade year George seemed to unconsciously evaluate peer and teacher comments, questions and suggestions and tailor them to meet his needs. The result was generally pleasing to him during the composing process. He lived his stories as he wrote them. His writing was typically like THE TRIP. His frustration arose when he failed to recognize the fact that his audience was unable to add the details that he

unconsciously filled in in his mind. When George began to really listen to external input and consciously weigh suggestions as Beatrix did, his texts became more cohesive. He did not show evidence of revising a piece of writing as a result of receiving feedback, however. He seemed instead to make changes internally before writing his next piece.

Sense of Audience Related to Writing

Both Jack and Sarah seemed to view the sharing of their writing as a social experience. They read their work to their peers to gain social acceptance. This seems to explain why peer feedback was not helpful to them; they were both more concerned with the social quality of large and small group shares. They evidently interpreted positive feedback as social acceptance and recognition and questions as personal affronts. (See the examples in the feedback section for examples of their use of audience.)

Beatrix, Jane and Luke showed very little sense of audience. Beatrix and Jane seemed most concerned with crafting their texts to meet their own writing goals. Luke was just beginning to demonstrate an understanding that other people might read his texts and be either entertained or confused. Most of his need to make his

messages clear for a potential reader was rooted in his movement from telling all of his story through illustration to a shared communication via writing and drawing. (See the discussion of illustration in the previous section.)

George, on the other hand, seemed to have developed a sense of the importance not to mislead or confuse a reader when he was writing factual pieces. He, as was discussed earlier under genre, felt the importance of including only known or researched facts in his non-fiction writing. He was just beginning, at this point, to be concerned when his reader was confused about events or threads in his fictional writing. He seemed to internalize his listeners' concerns and in his subsequent pieces of writing to strive to avoid what had been confusing in the past.

For example, his story THE TRIP was very confusing to his peers. On several occasions I either conferred with him or pointed out to the class how some writers enter their story and narrate the events between the dialogue. George did nothing to revise his story THE TRIP. However, a short time later he wrote the lead found in FIGURE 8. His attention to the need of his readers to know what went on in his mind as his stories unfolded became characteristic of George's writing.

TOMOR
 SCHOOL
 EXPLAINED
 CROSS
 IT CAN PLAIN
 BED CALLED
 TOMMY
 IN HIS
 AND
 TOP
 NEXT
 HE
 SNOFFY
 DAD

THERE'S
 MR
 TOMMY
 TOMMY
 WALKS
 CROSS
 WALKS
 TO
 ROOM
 WANT
 BED
 MORNING
 WOKUP
 HIS
 ING

"Tomorrow there's school, explained Mr. Cross. "It is!" complained Tommy. "Bedtime," called Mrs. Cross. Tommy walked into his room and went to bed. Next morning he woke up. Snoffy, his dog...

FIGURE 8
 TOMMY IS CRAZY

Summary

The way the children functioned in relationship to the three strands outlined at the beginning of this section seemed unique to each child. However, there seemed to be patterns among the strands, and as we will see in the subsequent years of the study those patterns seemed increasingly characteristic of individual children. The relationship with peers seemed to be characterized by the ways the students interacted with their peers during the prewriting and drafting stages. In this first year of the study most children relied on each other as models. There seemed to be a greater difference among the children related to peer feedback. Individuals seemed to either infer that peers were judging their work or that they were being offered suggestions to consider when revising or writing subsequent drafts. The sense of audience strand relates to what appeared to motivate the children to share their writing. There seemed to be a relationship between the way the children interpreted peer feedback and their reasons for sharing. This was particularly true in Jack's and Sarah's cases.

Table 2 summarizes the nature of the social interactions which influenced each of the participants' writing decisions. The primary way each child functioned within each of the categories is indicated.

Table 2. Social Interactions Which Influenced
the Students' Writing Decisions
Grade Two

	Beatrix	Beverly	George	Jack	Jane	Luke	Sarah
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Relationship with peers							
reliance on models	■	□	□	■	■	■	■
no evidence	□	□	■	□	□	□	□
personal ownership	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Peer Feedback							
judgment	□	□	□	■	□	□	■
no evidence	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
revision	■	□	■	□	■	■	□
Sense of Audience							
socially oriented	□	□	□	■	□	□	■
little evidence	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
text-related	■	□	■	□	■	■	□

The reader will notice that there are empty categories. These categories are used in subsequent years of the study. I have included them here to provide a preview of what is to come as well as to remain consistent in reporting the data over the course of the study.

Second Year of the Study

Text-Related Criteria: Third Grade

In the second year of the study the children continued to make text-related evaluations and be socially motivated when making writing decisions. Although in some cases there seemed to be a finer line between the source of the writing decisions, a clearer picture of how each of the children made evaluations seems to emerge if the two categories continue to be separated for the purposes of discussion. Therefore, this section will first address the text-related criteria the children used, and that will be followed by a discussion of how their social interactions and the social environment seemed to influence the writers' decisions. In order to be consistent when discussing the two strands, I have assigned categories to either the text-related or socially motivated strand on the basis of how the majority of the children used the category. The result is that the reader may find in the case of Luke and to a lesser degree Beverly, limited data in the text-related section. This is due to the fact that they, and he in particular, used text-related criteria under the guise of audience. Most of these criteria seemed to be important to him in terms of how successful his text was in relationship to his

audience, and so, many of the text-related criteria he utilized are addressed there.

I have again divided the criteria into three categories based on the frequency with which children applied the criteria.

Most Frequently Applied Criteria

Excitement/Action

Sarah frequently applied the criterion of excitement or action when evaluating student texts. This love of excitement and risk flowed over from her living, and she seemed proud of it. We talked about books she liked to read:

Sarah: I usually like to read mysteries...They're exciting. They're adventurous. I learned that because [my friend] Lucy's parents think I'm daring. I love being daring. See, I told Lucy about the Cyclone, a ride at Lakeview. My mom wouldn't take me on it 'cause she was scared. I went on other rides, and then I told Lucy about this other ride, the Wildcat. I went on with my brother and his friend--we all sat in the row and I was like not scared at all. My brother and his friend were almost throwing up and I went--'What's so wrong about this ride?' 'Sarah, it's terrible.' Lucy actually came up to me and said, 'Sarah, I can't go with you to Lakeview because my parents think you're too daring to go across the street with.'

She went on to say:

Sarah: I like a book because it's scary, it's exciting. It's not--she played in her mother's fancy little gown that's pink and silk and everything like that. I hate those kind of books. I like things that sometimes girls would hate and boys would love. I'm actually the kind of girl who says OK you want to play Cabbage Patch Kids--and I'm out playing kickball and like [they say] 'You want to play kickball with the boys!' And I'm 'So what's so bad about that?' I actually went up to my friend and said, 'You actually want to play dollies with the girls?' And that totally changed them. Next thing I knew they were all playing kickball down with the boys.

One of Sarah's criteria for evaluating the quality of her life seemed to be based on the amount of excitement, daring and risk-taking she experienced. In a similar way she looked for excitement in the books and stories she read, and tried to include excitement and adventure in her writing as well.

Luke applied the criterion of including action and excitement for the readers' benefit rather than his own. For this reason the discussion of his application of this criterion is included in the social influences at the end of the next section.

Jack, too, saw a need to include action in a piece of writing to make it good. At this time he, like Luke and Sarah, felt that the inclusion of action or excitement was sufficient to make the writing good. He characterized

some of his third grade pieces as unsuccessful "because they didn't really have any action in them." He applied this criterion not only to his own writing, but to his peers' writing as well. He liked, for example, Luke's story, THE MISSING SQUADRON, because "it was an exciting story. I liked how he lifted up from the earth and he landed when he was dizzy, and he landed on the Milky Way."

Beatrix evaluated her own writing on the basis of whether or not she had made it exciting.

Beatrix: THE DRAGON THAT LOST ITS TAIL is boring. It isn't very exciting. But, like at the beginning of THE BEST BAKERY IN BOSTON someone who says a line of honking horns going across the street isn't exciting must have bad taste.

The inclusion of excitement seemed to be one of the most significant criteria Beatrix used to evaluate writing at this stage. THE BEST BAKERY IN BOSTON she said was her very best piece of writing due to the excitement. She also repeatedly used this criterion to evaluate her peers' work. Beatrix said, "Beverly's GREENWOODS was exciting when Deanie Deer was running as fast as her legs would carry her. Plus when all the animals got panicky." Likewise ACOLYTING by the same author held no excitement.

Beatrix: It doesn't really have any adventure. There's no adventure in acolyting! (then she laughs).

For George there was a toss-up concerning which was more significant--adventure and excitement or humor. Both of these criteria were important to him. If a piece didn't have both adventure and humor, he said he'd have to decide by weighing them against each other.

George: Usually I read over them both and I think which one of these is the better--the more exciting piece or the funnier piece. When I figure that out I usually publish the one that is more exciting OR more funny.

Additionally, he, like Luke (see sense of audience in the second year of the study), felt the inclusion of too much action didn't give the reader time to wonder about what might happen next.

George: It wouldn't be good if something happened and something happened and something happened except it's all the same.

Benedict: If you took the same situation what would it look like if it were good writing?

George: If a bear popped out and you got scared and you ran and you turned around and it was gone--that would be better...[In Jane's story, for instance,] it was boring. Nothing happened. They got into a time machine. As usual (bored voice) they did something that the button said they weren't supposed to do. You could tell everything. There was no real action.

All of these children's evaluations were dictated in part by whether they or another author had included action or excitement in the piece of writing. Both positive and negative evaluations occurred as a result of how in the evaluator's view the writer had met the criterion.

Topics and Appropriate Details

At this point in time the children began to apply the criterion of topics when evaluating student texts. This seemed for some children to mark the beginning of plot as a criterion. (Please note, however, that for most of the children any sense of plot was in an embryonic stage.) In addition the children also began to recognize a need to include appropriate details in writing and frequently applied this criterion when evaluating texts. The children's evaluative statements indicated that first the writer needs to have a good idea for her writing and then must include sufficient details to completely tell the story but not so many that the piece becomes tedious.

Jane, for example said the following about Beatrix's story THE BEST BAKERY IN BOSTON:

Jane: Well, I thought it was a really good idea. I never would have thought of writing a mystery about a bakery. I thought it was neat.

Beatrix also talked about the importance of ideas. She said she really began to be a good writer in second grade.

Benedict: What happened in second grade that made you a better writer?

Beatrix: I think then I got better ideas.

Jack applied the criterion of good content only to his own writing. His sense of what made his content good was a little different from his peers'. He felt that his content was good if he had been imaginative. Imagination for him seemed to translate into how successfully he had changed his peers' ideas to make them his own (see peer modeling in next section for a discussion of how Jack relied on his peers for content). He felt if he wrote about things no one else had written about that his writing would be successful. He further felt that good content to be fresh only needed to be a slight variation on something a peer had done .

Jack: I like these stories because nobody's heard of Inspector Frog (he got the idea from Arnie who was writing about Inspector Cat) I make it imaginative--like dogs can never fly and I put like a dog could fly and like a dog wouldn't play karate or drive a Porsche.

He seemed to apply this criterion only to his own writing. When speaking about his peers' texts, he more often mentioned the already discussed criterion of action.

The general consensus among these children was that writing should include interesting content. They all applied this criterion to what was of interest to them personally, but as the discussion of audience in the social influences section indicates, there was for some an ever increasing sense of not only the writer's needs but of the reader's needs as well.

Other criteria under this category which the participants felt contributed to whether a piece of writing was good, were clarity and relevance of details. Jack, for example rated LUKE IN MAINE very favorably because "it told a lot about the story. He told like how his sister got five minnows and that he did, too." Similarly, he was critical of Luke's report of Author's Day.

Jack: He said 'Today is Authors' Day' and he said 'Tom Leamon and Julius Lester are coming in.' We don't know who these people are. I wanted him to tell about the people.

Jane: I know who they are.

Jack: Well if you never knew about the people you'd want to know who they are too.

Although in the previous example Jane seemed undisturbed about Luke's lack of explanation about the two authors because she already knew who they were, she did apply this criterion. She was equally critical of herself and her peers. For instance, when she evaluated her published piece HAUNTED HOUSE she was critical on two counts. First she had included too much detail about how the characters searched for a missing book, and secondly, she felt if she were to revise this she would add that the boy who haunted the house did so because he wanted the house for a club house.

She reacted similarly when her peers committed comparable "sins". She felt Sarah had just thrown in an extraneous line in her story NANTUCKET. Jane questioned, "What does that have to do with anything?" Likewise she and Sarah were concerned about Beatrix's lack of details in her story THE LITTLE LOST FAIRY.

Jane: I wanted to find out how she got lost 'cause of the title.

Benedict: What would make that a better story?

Sarah: I forgot that they were fairies.

Jane: So did I.

Sarah: She said they went to the wheelbarrow and started eating their breakfast. I'm like, 'OK, what's going on here.'

Benedict: Oh, so it didn't read like they were fairies, and that was startling?

Sarah: Yeah, it just says a boy walked in and lots of boys walk in on their sisters. It doesn't say that they're fairies.

Jane: The only thing that says it is the title. If the title wasn't there, she'd be thinking that those were fairies, but we wouldn't know.

Benedict: So she didn't communicate that they were fairies in any way?

Jane: No, that would have made it better.

The lack of details concerning what Sarah and Jane assumed Beatrix had in her mind resulted, they thought, in a story that was confusing. More explanation on the part of the writer would, they felt, have enhanced and improved the story.

Luke's feelings about the inclusion of details related to slowing down the action to create suspense and fill the reader in on what was happening in his own mind. Examples of how he applied this criterion are once again discussed in the social influences section under audience.

George indirectly related details with audience. For example, he found that he had included lots of "cute" things in his stories THE US FAMILY and HELPING HANDS INC. The implication was that his reader, too, might think they were cute.

Beverly explained how she felt a writer ought to determine what details were important to a piece of writing and which were extraneous and perhaps interfered with the story.

Beverly: ...Like if you wanted to tell about an old lady who lived in a house. If the lady wasn't in the house a lot, if she was mostly out in her garden, you wouldn't describe the house, but you wouldn't also describe the whole garden. You'd think about the garden--what parts she was working in most or were most important to the story and you might put in a lot of detail about that.

Benedict: Why is it important to do that?

Beverly: You might want to put the house was a medium-sized house--just enough for the old lady 'cause it won't have a lot to do with the story. It's not the setting that the old lady's in the most or anything.

The need to write on good topics and include sufficient and in some cases the most significant details seemed to develop parallel to the increased sense of audience on the part of some of these young writers. Evidence concerning audience is presented under social influences.

Leads and Endings

Their criteria concerning leads and endings also seemed to parallel the development of the participants' sense of audience. It's interesting to note that Jane, Beverly, George, Beatrix and Luke were the ones who applied criteria concerning leads and endings. They all demonstrated to some degree, as will be discussed under audience, an awareness of the needs of readers. Neither Sarah nor Jack mentioned leads or endings and they were the two who were least likely to take their audience into account.

Jane reported that she felt leads were important. She said she works on her leads because, "I'm trying to make people read the rest of the story. And also for some reason [working on my lead] helps me get ideas for the story." She explained that often she liked to use dialogue to get the story started. She felt that was better than beginning "Once upon a time." She continued,

"I introduce the characters and then I start telling the story."

Beverly agreed with Jane. She tried not to take too long to get to her story.

Beverly: I've read a lot of books that start in the very beginning and just keep on at the very beginning and little by little go into the middle. I don't like that much so I try to start the story right in the story. I try to really tell about the people. I don't want to still be describing the people little by little in the middle of the story.

George thought the lead should get right to the action. He applauded himself for the way he began HELPING HANDS INC.

George: I like the starting (reads) 'Ring! Ring!' I think I started it at a good place. I started it right where they were to deliver it and what they had to deliver. I guess I started it at the starting of the adventure.

While Jane and Beverly were concerned with getting their characters introduced quickly, and George thought stories should start with the adventure, Beatrix didn't like stories that started with dialogue. She said she felt it was important for the writer to place a story in a setting

Beatrix: I like the lead to describe where it is. Like there could be a story, and it could be on the moon and nobody knows it.

Hence, the reader knew Beatrix's story THE LITTLE LOST FAIRY took place in a wheelbarrow but no one knew they were fairies.

Although they each had different ideas about what might be included in a good lead, each of these four writers nonetheless evaluated writing on the basis of how effective they felt the lead to be.

This group of four and Luke also evaluated writing on the basis of endings. They all seemed to agree that happy endings were preferable and that the writer should make a piece feel finished. Luke, for example, was dissatisfied with Beverly's ending of SEBEROCK which read:

Gradually, the volcano stopped and the flies came, millions of them. Seberock and Soke went down to a piece of undamaged land and ate plants and slapped flies and became best of friends.

Jane, however thought this felt finished and tried to explain to Luke why it was a good ending.

He saved the guy's life and dried the food off and then they went down to the other part that was far from the lava. I thought that was a good ending. How else could you end it?

Even though these five sometimes evaluated endings differently they used the same criteria: happy and complete.

Surface Features

The final criterion in this section relates to surface features of text. All of the children addressed surface features when they evaluated texts. While Luke struggled with his feelings about the importance of

surface features of text, Sarah seemed to try to ignore them altogether (see the section concerning teacher expectations), and Jack found surface features very important. Perhaps one of the reasons this was such an important criterion, which he applied to his own writing, was that it was an area in which he was basically successful. He prided himself on his spelling, neat handwriting and meticulously drawn illustrations. He said, "It's easy to edit." He also described how he copied over whole texts "because it was messy writing." The look of the page was very important to Jack. He said one of his Inspector Frog stories was good, for instance, because he liked the paper he used. Sarah and Luke knew that they probably didn't always measure up in the language mechanics department, but Jack took the time to make sure this aspect of his writing was attended to.

While Sarah avoided what she found so difficult to do, George was relatively unconcerned and viewed language mechanics as something his teacher felt was important, and he let her assume the responsibility for seeing to it that his final drafts were in standard form. The following example is his description of a publishing conference.

George: I start reading the story to her and she looks at the words and letters and sometimes she goes 'Ump, Ump.' and bonks me when I need a period or something like that.

Benedict: Who decides where the punctuation is needed?

George: The teacher decides...for instance one time I wrote a whole page with no periods. Sometimes I just write a whole page and I forget all about the periods and I just start writing and writing.

When Jane and Beverly drafted, their spelling, punctuation, and grammar were generally in fairly standard form. Therefore, this wasn't an area which was difficult for them. Jane reported using editing as an activity to perform while she was pre-writing a new piece. Beverly seemed to feel more committed to editing. She talked about how punctuation had improved her writing.

Beverly: (talking about one of her journal entries) This one was good because I remembered everything and I found a way to put it all in. Like I would put 'today was the last day of school' and I'd put a comma and write, 'and it was my brother's birthday.'

Beatrix seemed to feel like Luke did about having to attend to language mechanics. She saw editing as an interruption to her writing.

Beatrix: [If I want to publish a story] then I have to do the thing I hate. I have to correct it. I have to check for spelling, capitalization, periods, question marks--all that junk. And that's something I hate doing.

Benedict: Why is that?

Beatrix: I just like to write more.

However, she, like Luke, saw that if the mechanics were

too deviant from the standard form that might present a problem.

Beatrix: If all or something like half the words are spelled wrong then it really isn't a great story. If you can't read it, it's not too great because you won't know what the story is about.

Although this was a criterion mentioned by all of the participants, it was by no means the most important criterion by which they evaluated texts. Some of the children talked about attending to surface features of text as something they knew was part of the writing process but felt it had little relevance to the overall quality of their texts; they rather felt, it seems, that what their texts meant and how they read were more important than how they looked.

Frequently Applied Criteria

Experience

Beverly, Beatrix and George all evaluated at least one piece of writing on the basis of the experience depicted in the writing. Beatrix said that Beverly's ACOLYTING wasn't very good because, "I hate church." She also used this liking criterion to point out the strengths in a piece. Her own LITTLE JENNY RABBIT had a good beginning she said, because "it's usually what I would do on a Saturday afternoon. I'm always bored unless I have

either a book or a television." Beverly's GREENWOODS she said was good when the deer raced out to warn everybody that the hunters were coming. "I used to have to do that to get everybody up in the morning."

George liked how rereading his NEWTS brought back the experience of how he got his newts. "It talks about some of the things I really liked about it. I was looking for a newt and then two of them showed up and started nibbling at my fingers."

Beverly said she thought her piece PUMPKINMAN was good because:

Beverly: The name Theresa. I wrote that in 'cause if my dad's secretary read this, since she knows me, she'd know I was writing with her in mind. She's kind of like the Theresa in the story. [The Theresa in the story] cared because she took her sister down to the deserted farm down the road. She knew it was haunted and she didn't want her sister going down there [alone]. The Theresa I know is special like that....While writing this I was thinking about how the girls must feel 'cause if that happened to me I don't know what I would do. Faint. I would try to faint. I got myself scared writing this.

These three seemed to bring their own experiences to their reading and writing. The degree to which they could identify with the text, be it theirs or someone else's, had some bearing on their evaluations. Their ability to bring their own experiences to texts influenced their evaluations: the more positive the association, the more highly they evaluated the text.

Language

Jane, Beverly and George applied the criterion of language to evaluate texts. All three of these children, along with Luke and Beatrix, were in Mrs. Court's classroom during language arts instruction. The flavor of their comments suggests that the topic of interesting words was often a point of instruction. Jane had been the only one to apply this criterion the previous year, and she continued to be concerned about her choice of words regardless of the source of that concern. The following comments by Jane sum up how all three children used this criterion to evaluate texts:

Benedict: When you write or read something and you think 'gee this is really good,' what makes you feel that way about it?

Jane: Usually the way it's worded. [Like] Emily wrote a piece about a clock club and I love the way she described their clubhouse and the words she used to describe everything.

She went on to describe when writing was not good.

Jane: [When] I don't put in any words that are exciting or that sound good. Like instead of said we have a list in the room of different words to use. I like to use a lot of those instead of said--like blamed and everything 'cause if you say 'said' all the time it gets boring...If you just say said and you meant for the person to yell then the person who is reading it wouldn't know that.

The evaluations these children made concerning language, indicated that they were beginning to look more closely at

the nuances of writing and not limiting themselves to the broad effect of texts on readers.

Purpose

Beatrice in speaking about the purposes for which she writes said,

Actually, I usually [decide my purpose] before I start to write or else it would be like going on a trip without knowing where you're going.

Jane, Beverly and George could be prompted to consider purpose when evaluating texts but did not generate explanations of why they thought texts were good or bad due to purpose of their own volition. For example, when I asked Jane what she thought THE KLUTZAPOD was successful in doing for the reader, she responded, "I never really thought about that. It gives them an adventure." The newspaper she and Beverly wrote was successful she judged, "because it informs on what happened."

Beverly evaluated Jack's DIAMONDS as good because she said, "I learned about diamonds from the story." In her opinion Jack had achieved what she supposed his purpose to be because, after reading, she felt better informed.

George said he wrote for different purposes and that his writing was successful when he achieved the purpose for which he wrote.

George: One of the things I try to do when I write is surprise people.

Benedict: What else do you try to do?

George: Sometimes I try to make my writing exciting. I try to make it interesting. [My purposes] change. Like when I try to write a choose-your-own-adventure I try to make it very adventuresome and if I try to write a funny story, I try to make it funny.

Benedict: How do you know if you have achieved your purpose?

George: If I write something funny and I imagined it to be really funny and somebody reads it and pictured something that wasn't as funny as I planned it to be, then I didn't achieve my purpose.

As I discussed earlier when I considered the children's evaluative criteria relative to content, language and experience, these criteria continued to move in the direction of the writer separating himself increasingly from his text and taking his audience into account.

Genre

Luke was conscious of specific genres and had developed an awareness of the writer's need to attend to the conventions of genre. When I speak of genre in relation to Luke the reader must understand the very specific genres in which Luke had interest: comic books, choose-your-own-adventure stories, and mysteries. For

example, Luke felt a piece needed to be long enough to fulfill the conventions of genre and be recognizable as belonging to a specific genre. You can't, he said, just rush through a mystery. He felt Sarah's story THE RUBY STEALER was good because it was recognizable as belonging to the "mystery" genre. He said, "It sounds like a mystery." Likewise George's BACKPACK MAN was good because it observed the conventions of the "comic book" genre.

Choose-your-own-adventure stories were among Luke's favorites. He said his UNDERWATER ADVENTURE was his very best piece. One of the criteria he used to evaluate this piece was the fact that it was a choose-your-own-adventure story.

While some of his peers were becoming very conscious of genre and developing criteria concerning the need to attend to the conventions of specific genre, Jack seemed to view all writing as basically the same. For example, he didn't feel he had to think about anything in particular if he was writing a mystery, and a squirrel report was the same as an adventure story or a mystery. He relayed that his book report on a hot rod book he had read would have been better if he could have made up some action about hot rods that wasn't in the book.

Both Jane and Beverly explained that the newspaper they collaborated on was good due to their ability to adhere to what they perceived were the conventions of that genre. Jane explained that the newspaper was good because it read like a newspaper.

Jane: We saw the SCHOLASTIC NEWS and saw what they had and then we decided to do something like they did, but we made up new stories. We looked in a variety of newspapers before we found the SCHOLASTIC NEWS. The others weren't very helpful.

Beverly talked about one article in particular.

Beverly: It's good because of the names. I saw THE BRADY BUNCH once and he was a newspaper reporter, and he mentioned a lot of names and people liked that. So I mentioned a lot of names. That's important to do if you're a reporter.

The genre in which George seemed most versed was the choose-your-own-adventure story. As much as he liked these stories, Beatrix really disliked them. She complained that, "Pick-a-Paths (a synonym) aren't good because I always end up dead."

Benedict: What do you have to do to write a good one?

Beatrix: I don't know because I certainly haven't. George, though, continued to be the resident expert in this genre as he had been the previous year.

Benedict: In order to write a choose-your-own-adventure and have it be a really good story, what kinds of things do you have to do?

George: Make it long. It has to have adventure. It has to have choices, of course, and not choices like you blow your nose. The choices have to fit the story you're writing. I try to give it a lot of adventure.

Benedict: Were you successful in this one?

George: Not very. It's like you walk down the hall. You see a laser gun. You blast it, or you walk down the hall. You see them. You stun them. The End. It would have been better if I'd written: 'You walk down the hall. Finally, you see lots of guns. You have to avoid them. If you do this turn to page something. If you do this turn to page something else.' It has to be a good story.

Luke, Beatrix, Beverly, Jane and George seemed to be developing a sense of genre. They saw the need to write differently dependent on the genre. If the writer conformed to their idea of the conventions of a specific genre, she received praise from her peers. If they or a peer violated what they felt were the conventions of a specific genre, they felt it detracted from the overall effect of the writing.

Less Frequently Applied Criteria

I plan to address the criteria of illustration, effort and plot or story development in this section. These criteria seem important either because they were of particular relevance to individual children or several of the children applied them. The additional criteria of

surprise, titles, humor, dialogue, and realism and plausibility were also evident, but because their application was either so specific to an individual piece of writing or was mentioned only in passing, it seems unnecessary to cite all the examples. It seems, rather, sufficient to say that these were criteria that some of the children applied. The chart at the end of this section indicates which of the children used each of the criteria.

Illustrations

Luke was still grappling with the need for the author to use words to accurately tell his story, but on the other hand he still relied heavily on illustrations and felt that writers should use illustrations to support the written text. Luke was a visually oriented child. Stories developed out of graphic images in his mind's eye, and yet he increasingly felt the need to communicate his ideas in written text. He evaluated one of his pieces as poor because it was a comic book.

Luke: People will understand if you write. If you just draw, people will say, 'What's happening?' Like I think books are better [than comics] 'cause they can tell more about things. With comics you don't have that much room to put anything in.

Although Luke was willing to allow that the words were more important in a story, he was not willing to

eliminate illustrations altogether. For him they played a crucial role. He and I were chatting about his favorite television programs. I asked him if they would be as good if they were on radio rather than on television.

Luke: No, because you'd have to make pictures up in your mind and if you listened you might make up a weird picture and then you'd turn it off.

Not only were pictures important on the television screen, but they were also important in the books Luke read.

Benedict: When you read do you usually read books with pictures or without?

Luke: Pictures.

Benedict: Do they help you to read?

Luke: No, I look at the pictures when I read. It kind of makes sense like if you write, 'The dog went to the city.' they would like to see what the city looked like and what the dog looked like.

Benedict: Is it better to show that in a picture or with words?

Luke: Both because people can understand it better when you put the two together.

Since Luke was visually oriented, pictures continued to play an important role in his writing. While his judgments were becoming increasingly critical in nature, and he felt the need to include text or story as well as pictures, for him writing was more complete if illustration and text worked together in an almost multi-media approach.

George also evaluated writing using the criterion of how text and illustration worked together. Like Luke he felt that often illustrations were needed to make his writing complete.

George: I think IRON MAN (a choose-your-own adventure story) isn't very good because there's one picture I haven't put in yet and without the picture the story makes no sense. Without the picture you don't know whether to go to A or B.

He found the lack of illustrations sometimes interfered with his understanding of the text. I had intentionally transcribed the students' third grade writing prior to the group evaluations (see Chapter 3 for a description of the data collection) so that the evaluators would be more likely to attend to the text itself instead of the surface features of the text or the illustrations. After reading Luke's DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS George said, "I wish this [transcription] had pictures 'cause I couldn't understand it 'cause there were no pictures. The original story had a picture of the maze, but this just said you got through the maze."

George seemed frequently to work the text and the illustrations together so they would complement each other. Neither really told the whole story on its own. Additionally, he was aware that he did this and used this criterion when evaluating a number of his texts. For

example, in his story BACKPACK MAN his characters are pictured as little "pacmen" wearing backpacks. The play on words and the full intent of his meaning is only apparent through the illustrations. I view George's use and understanding of the potential relationship between pictures and text not as a beginning awareness but in fact a very sophisticated evaluation. This example demonstrates the need to modify Newkirk's (1982) categories for some children as they begin to use what he calls "proto-critical" judgments in more sophisticated ways than the scope of his definition includes.

I would suggest that the reason Luke and George continued to use the criterion of illustration when evaluating writing into their third, and even their fourth grade year in Luke's case, is due not to their inability to make more sophisticated evaluations but rather because they were both so visually oriented. It is interesting to note that Jack, who really enjoyed drawing and received a great deal of praise and recognition from his peers in this quarter, did not use this criterion. I would guess that is due to the fact that he did not see his drawing as part of his text nor as part of the process of generating his text. Drawing as it related to writing was for him merely an illustration of something he had already told in the writing.

Effort

Jane applied a criterion of effort to evaluate several pieces of her writing. Jane described her prewriting as an important part of her process. She often worked her piece out in her head prior to writing. This prewriting would often take on the appearance of just sitting. In third grade she and Beverly collaborated on a newspaper. She evaluated this writing as very good because she and Beverly had worked hard and "it took [us] a while to figure out how to start." She had included a poem in the newspaper. This she said was not very good because "I've done better haiku. I did [this one] up in a couple of minutes and I didn't really change anything. I've changed some other ones that I did. This one I didn't put much effort in on."

Beverly also used this criterion, but she used it in two ways. In some cases pieces seemed to almost write themselves. She felt those were good because they felt right since they were so easy to write. At other times, however, she had to struggle. "If I have to struggle with them, but I like what I come up with, I like them because I had to struggle very, very hard and it's a better piece of work. Some stories if they come very easily to me they're not very good because they just came to me and I didn't really have to think about them."

Plot/Story Development

The final criterion I will discuss in this section relates to plot or story development. Beverly was the only participant who applied this criterion, but she discussed it at length. The following includes excerpts from what she had to say on this topic.

Stories are good when the writer has the characters think in their heads and has them meet new characters in the story--not in the beginning having them all together, but having them meet little by little...Sometimes what makes good writing changes because of the things people are writing about. If they're writing about some people on a desert island with no food, good writing would be one person on this side [of the island] meets that person [on the other side of the island.] That would be good writing, having characters meet....You should have something that you want to write about and not start a story and have no idea...My writing is better recently because I've learned more things about what would go best in the story and really don't go. I realize that sometimes things really don't fit even if I want to keep them in there. Sometimes I write the ideas that don't go in the story down and if I REALLY like the idea and I HAVE to use it somewhere I think of another story that can surround it.

Three points seem to surface from what Beverly had to say. First she seems to be talking about the need to weave a story together. The writer, she feels, needs to introduce characters as they come into the story rather than having them all go around in a big group throughout the story. Secondly she indicated a need for the writer to include some kind of tension and the possibility for

problem-solving in the story. She refers to this in her description of the desert island story. Finally, she recognizes that a writer may have terrific ideas that just don't work in a particular story. At such a time, she says, the writer must be prepared to cut the idea or save it for another piece of writing.

Summary

Table 3 summarizes the children's use of text-related criteria in the second year of the study and further compares it with the first year findings. The criteria are listed in decending order based on the frequency with which they were applied during the second year of the study.

Table 3. The Use of Text-Related Criteria
in Grades Two and Three

	Beatrix		Beverly		George		Jack		Jane		Luke		Sarah	
	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3
Excitement/Action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Surface Features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leads/Endings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Genre	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Humor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Experience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surprise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effort	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plot/Story Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dialogue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Titles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Realism/ Plausibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sense	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sequence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Length	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Social Influences on Writing: Third Grade

In the second section of this chapter I discussed how the children's writing decisions were influenced by the social context of the classroom during the first year of the study. The children's evaluative criteria continued to be socially influenced in the second year of the study. These influences, although not significantly different for any of the participants from what had occurred in the first year of the study, seemed to take on greater and lesser importance for the individual participants. In addition one new influence emerged. The influences at this point seemed to fall primarily into four categories:

- 1) Relationship with Peers Related to Writing;
- 2) Teachers' Expectations Related to Writing;
- 3) Peer Feedback Related to Writing;
- 4) Sense of Audience Related to Writing.

Category number two was a new one. I believe this category emerged since I was no longer the children's teacher, and they felt this was information I did not already have and therefore were forthcoming with it.

To some degree all of the participants' evaluative criteria were socially influenced. These influences became apparent during the interviews and text evaluation tasks. Sarah, Luke and Jack, as they had in the first

year of the study, seemed to be influenced by the social environment to a greater degree than did George, Jane, Beatrix, or now Beverly. In the section that follows examples of these social influences and their effect on the students' writing decisions will be discussed.

Relationship with Peers Related to Writing

The following discussion provides examples of how each of the participants reported they interacted with their peers during the writing process. Sarah seemed to doubt her own capabilities and shied away from taking risks in her writing. As she had used Beverly and others as models during the first year of the study, she once again, or perhaps continued, to turn to her peers as a resource for topics, form and genre. She relied on what they willingly revealed, being careful not to expose herself to what she considered rejection. Just as Beverly had been her second grade model, Lucy became Sarah's third grade model and support. She judged Lucy as the best writer in the class. Sarah and Lucy were also friends--this was the first year they had been grouped together since they were in kindergarten, and she and Beverly were no longer grouped together for language arts--and so Lucy became Sarah's writing support system, as Sarah explained in this excerpt from my interview with her:

Sarah: Well, my friend Lucy, she was writing about Tom and Martha and I asked her if I could just write another story about them--so I just started writing. I just made my way through instead of thinking about it 'cause if I think about it then try putting it down on paper all the words just fumble out and that's not supposed to be there and this is not the right place and everything like that... If I get stuck usually I go and ask Lucy what she's writing about and if I should go and put this character in here at this part or if I should not put that character in at all and that really helps me because I was stuck and I asked Lucy if I should put Draculet in my story and then I got moving again..

Although Sarah was a risk-taker in other parts of her life, academically she was a follower. She did demonstrate an ability for selecting models from among the students who seemed to meet her, her teacher's and her classmates' criteria for good writers. She appeared to use what she considered Lucy's expertise as a model for her own writing. All the while she tried to be careful not to deviate too far from the model. We'll see later in the section on feedback how defeated Sarah became when she felt she had successfully copied the model, but received feedback which would indicate otherwise.

In addition to Lucy, she identified her sister as an accomplished writer. Sarah apparently felt that writing came very easily to people like Lucy and her sister.

Sarah: The thing I don't like about [writing letters] is how I write. If I could get through a letter like my sister does--da-da-da-da--it would be funner, but sometimes you have to go da-da-da and then you stop and say what do I put now and stuff. If I was my sister I think I'd have a great time writing letters. She can write wonderful letters. When it comes to writing ideas they pop in my head, but when it comes to letters forget it--they pop out of my head.

Sarah seemed to have models around her who could, in her mind, write successfully, but she seemed unable to use those models as a means for meeting her own writing goals. The caliber of the texts these models wrote seemed unattainable to Sarah, and she evaluated her own efforts as falling considerably short of her own goals. This evaluative decision appeared then to affect her self-esteem as a writer and make the writing task even more difficult, frustrating and impossible for her.

Jack, like Sarah, relied on his peers to determine the content and form of his writing. Unlike Sarah, who reported she relied only on Lucy, Jack came to the peers at his conference group early in the drafting process and genuinely hoped that they would provide direction. In speaking about his own writing he explained that the hardest thing about writing was "getting it all together. Like what should I do next and how should I end the story or how should I start the story." His perception was that

his peers had "it all together" and that they were really not that helpful to him.

Benedict: Do you get help from other people when you write?

Jack: Not a lot--just from the conference group. I don't really get a lot of thoughts. Like they'll give me one or two [ideas] and I'll think them over.

Benedict: What kind of help would you like?

Jack: Well, I would kind of like it if they would give me a little more ideas so I could think about more of them...I guess they don't [give me more ideas] because they think I should figure out something too.

Jack seemed to feel as Sarah did that writing was easier for his peers than for him. He needed, he felt, to work hard while his peers had the answers but felt "he should figure out something, too."

Although Jack and Sarah relied on their peers as models, neither Luke nor Beatrix reported seeking peer assistance directly. I expect listening continued to play a dominant role in Beatrix's writing process, but she maintained that she continued to refrain from asking peers for help. As a last resort she said if she really got stuck, "Then I think that it should be time that I should have a conference [with my teacher, Mrs. Court.]"

Jane, Beverly and George on the other hand indicated that they generally only relied on their peers for confirming their own evaluations of their writing, and further made it clear that ownership was paramount and could not be sacrificed for peer assistance. For example, Jane reported putting her writing away to gain distance from it rather than ask for suggestions about what she might do next. She said, "If I'm really stuck I'll see if someone has a question not a suggestion."

George described how if a friend "walked up and said write this, I would want to know why he couldn't write it [in his piece]." Like Jane, he found it more useful when someone asked questions that helped him to discover what was needed in his writing. He said he usually tried to confer with Mrs. Court first.

George: She asks me to read it and she asks questions and I put in parts to answer her questions and then she says you have a whole mess of ideas and I realize it and then I start writing that whole mess of ideas...Sometimes my friends' questions aren't as important.

Likewise, Beverly at times found peer assistance intrusive.

Beverly: Usually the teacher is more helpful. She asks questions and then from the answers I can usually get an idea for my piece...[but] with a friend I get some

ideas that I don't really want to put in the story that might not keep the story like I want it to be.

She said she likes to make all the decisions about the content of her writing.

Beverly: The story doesn't seem as good to me if somebody else has part of their story in it. 'Cause then it doesn't seem like I've written all of it.

There seemed to be three distinct ways these children made decisions relating to peer assistance. On the one hand Sarah and Jack found peer assistance almost imperative if they were going to write. Luke and Beatrix seemed to take a more middle ground. Luke's profile indicated no reliance on peers nor did it show that he held a strong sense of ownership toward his writing. Beatrix's responses seemed to parallel her profile from the previous year in that she reported that she did not seek direct assistance from peers on a one-to-one basis. Jane, George and Beverly were all very definite about the importance of maintaining ownership of their writing. They saw that best accomplished by conferring with their teacher when needed, because she asked questions which helped them discover their meaning. Their peers, they felt, either asked insignificant questions or made suggestions that moved their text in directions they chose not to go.

Teachers' Expectations Related to Writing

In addition to the children's peers, their teachers were also an intricate part of the classroom environment. The teachers, like the peers, influenced the participants' writing decisions. For example, Sarah seemed unable, in her mind, to satisfy her teacher, Mrs. Greene. A great deal of the difficulty was rooted, apparently, in Sarah's inability to let her teacher know there were things she really did not understand. The following example illustrates Sarah's guesswork with her teacher. Sarah begins by describing how she writes a draft.

Sarah: I just write it, and if Mrs. Greene says that's bad I do it over again, If she keeps on saying it's bad I keep on doing it over again. Sometimes I do it over five times unless she says, 'That's great. I just want it like that.'

Benedict: If she was asking you to change things, what kinds of things would she be asking you to change?

Sarah: The dialogue usually. Sometimes she'd come up to me and say, 'Sarah to tell you the truth I think that's bad and you need more dialogue in it.' Although I don't know what dialogue means.

Benedict: So what do you do if you don't know what dialogue means?

Sarah: (Laughs) I don't put any dialogue in my story.

Sarah's evaluative decisions seemed to be guided by a strong desire to be viewed by her peers and her teacher

as an accomplished writer. Sarah was very aware of the social and academic standings within her classroom structure. Since she was unwilling or unable to ask for help, she developed several coping strategies. They included the already mentioned peer modeling; and when the writing really wasn't going well, she took to hiding in the bathroom. She seemed to be afraid that people would discover that there were things she didn't know. Consequently, she began to evaluate her writing as less and less successful.

Sarah: Usually when people are around I hate asking Mrs. Greene questions. I hate asking her dumb questions because a lot of people are in higher reading groups than I am and they can write better than I can. If people are around I usually just sit down and wait for them to go away and leave her alone, and when she's alone I go up to her and if someone comes along I go 'Oh, she can go first.'

Benedict: Why's that?

Sarah: I just feel embarrassed when I go up and ask stupid questions.

Benedict: What do you do if there's information you feel you need and you don't have it?

Sarah: Just sometimes I go to a friend or to the intern. Sometimes I go to Mrs. Greene, but not often.

Sarah's comments indicate that she was reluctant to openly ask for help. She did not want her teacher or her peers to realize that, at times, she really was seriously

confused and had many questions. Her strategy was to muddle through as best she could. She continually seemed to find herself looking to meet others' needs and expectations at the expense of her own. This evaluative decision, which Sarah made about her writing in general, seemed to influence her other evaluative decisions as well.

Luke was also influenced by what he perceived his teacher's expectations were. Based on his perceptions he made writing decisions. These decisions were manifested in two ways:

- 1) creating personal meaning for teacher assignments, and
- 2) trying to reconcile differences of values between himself and his teacher.

Unlike some of his peers who seemed to look at assignments as "the teacher told me to do it so I did it," Luke either found meaning and purpose within the assignment or he would establish one for himself. For example, the book report was a new kind of writing activity for Luke and his peers. While some of the other participants talked about these assignments as tasks to be accomplished, Luke was able to derive a real purpose for writing these reports.

Luke: Well, if we read a book for our book report, we have to write about the book. Then we turn it into a book report so other people might read our book reports and think, 'Oh, that sounds like a good book,' and then go out and look for it...I put in the good parts [of the book]. I don't put in the bad parts, the very boring parts. [I only put in] the exciting parts because I want people to read the book. If I put in the boring parts they might not want to read it.

While this example was motivated by his need to meet his teacher's expectation that he write a book report, it further demonstrated Luke's need to have or create real reasons for doing assignments. In this case he decided to write the report to interest others in the book. That being his purpose, he intentionally avoided talking about any of the boring parts of the book.

There were other concessions Luke made in the interest of meeting his teacher's expectations. One of those was to leave, for a time, his action-packed adventure stories and write on topics closer to home. It was not his choice, but he seemed to make the best of it.

Benedict: What kinds of things do you like to write?

Luke: Adventure stories (and then almost as an aside and as if it was expected) and about myself. They like us to write about ourselves. I used to write choose-your-own-adventure stories, but Mrs. Court said write about yourself so I did write about myself...She says describe if you're doing something about yourself. She won't help you on the other stuff. She doesn't want you to write choose-your-own-adventure stories.

This decision appeared to be coupled with an intermittent need on Luke's part to attend to surface features of text. He seemed to be concerned about these decisions because on the one hand he wanted to meet teacher expectations, but on the other he saw little reason for wasting energy on things like spelling, punctuation and capitalization if no one else but he was going to read his text. The thread that ties this desire to meet teacher expectations into attending to surface features of text is revealed in comments like:

Luke: In first grade they teach you what a sentence is. In second grade you forget what a sentence is. In third grade they'll help you. In third grade if you forget what a sentence is they'll remind you. [I've done my] best writing in third grade because I know how to write in cursive better and know better the sentences and things. 'Cause in first grade if you learn you forget it, but in third grade you don't forget it. They remind you.

Although he understood that his teacher was concerned about the surface features of texts, Luke said he didn't take the time to attend to the surface features of text as he drafts. He explained his process as follows:

Luke: If I want to publish it, then you put in quotation marks. You don't have to bother if you don't want to read it again. I think that you shouldn't [bother] 'cause it's going through a lot of trouble while you could be writing a very good story and publish that. It's easier to figure out where the punctuation goes after you finish writing it.

Luke saw publication as a valid reason to attend to the language mechanics in his texts. In addition he showed concern if the surface features of the text interfered with communicating with his audience.

Luke: It's not good if the spelling isn't correct because then you can't read it [at the authors' circle] and you stop and the class is getting bored while you're trying to figure out what it says.

Although Luke said that the surface features are only important in the final draft or if inaccurate spelling interferes with communicating with his audience, he evaluated a number of pieces as good because of the surface features of the text. I would guess that these evaluations are related to his desire to successfully meet his teacher's expectations, and his perception that she was concerned with spelling, punctuation and handwriting.

Jack, like Luke, strove to meet what he perceived to be his teacher's expectations. I was struck by the detailed descriptions that Jack, more than any other participant, made about the classroom structure and expectations. He, even more than Luke and Sarah, seemed to think he knew just what was expected. Like them he was not always successful in his own mind in meeting the expectations. He spoke, for example, about a book he was supposed to read for a book report. Apparently, he erroneously thought he was also supposed to write the

report outside of class. When he discovered his mistake, he said he felt "kind of really shocked." He reported that he thought his report was good when he thought he had to write it, but when he discovered his error his evaluation of the text changed because he had misinterpreted the directions and therefore had not met his teacher's expectations. Likewise he evaluated another piece of assigned writing as "not good" because he "really didn't like it 'cause it was really hard to describe the animal, I didn't know a lot about it...It took me about two days and it was supposed to take me a day." Once again, the fact that he didn't meet what he perceived to be his teacher's expectation directly affected his evaluation of a piece of writing.

Jack's profile seems to parallel Sarah's in this area. They were both aware of teacher expectations and yet often found themselves not meeting them. Each reacted to not meeting the expectations differently, however. While Sarah knew at times that she was unclear about the expectations or unable to meet them, Jack felt he really knew what to do and in his own words was "shocked" to find he had somehow not been successful. Sarah's reaction seemed to be to maintain an even lower profile. Jack, on the other hand, tackled the next activity trying a little harder to do what was expected. For example, apparently

many of the students were writing stories which contained a great deal of violence. When we were talking about revising texts Jack said, "I haven't changed anything [in any of my writing] yet."

Benedict: Do other people change things?

Jack: Yeah.

Benedict: Why do you suppose they change things?

Jack: Well, 'cause there's a lot of violence in it and our teacher doesn't like it and that's why they have to change stuff...She just said the rule today so I'll be careful not to use it.

Jack revealed not only his sense that it's best to write it right in the first place, but also his sense that it is important to meet the teacher's expectations.

It is interesting to note how Jack approached assignments. He seemed to get the sense of what the surface features of the product were supposed to look like, but showed little if any sense of the gestalt of the project. The following is his description of how he approached an assignment to write a biography.

Jack: We just had to write like eight paragraphs. We had to draw a picture of him, like I did. I forget what his name was but he was an olympic athlete. I put him jumping over a high jump and landing...I decided I wanted to do a biography on him because I never knew about him...I just picked a book in the library. I knew his name, but I didn't know he was an athlete, but it said Jessie James [Owens]. And then I looked at it and I saw he was an athlete, and I like athletes so I decided to write about him.

The example above illustrates how acutely aware Jack was of the surface features of the assignment and yet how unaware he seemed to be of the teacher's goals and objectives. Sarah seemed to realize that there were goals beyond her ability to meet, and Luke, when he didn't see the teacher's goals, created his own purposes. Even though all three of these children were striving to meet the teacher's expectations, they each evaluated the task differently and made different decisions on how best to meet the expectations.

Among the remaining participants only Jane and Beatrix offered comments related to this category. Both girls suggested the possible tension that can exist between teacher expectations and the writer's ownership of her work. Beatrix, for instance, echoed a comment she'd made the previous year.

Benedict: Would you write if you didn't have to write?

Beatrix: Yeah, I like writing as long as I don't have to do it.

She still demonstrated that if the writing, the content, and the genre were her idea she'd invest her energy. If she was working to meet someone else's expectations and goals it was likely that her investment might be limited.

Jane explained that she became concerned when her teacher gave her specific information and she'd want Jane to change certain things. She said she was happier with feedback from friends, "they give [me] a lot of ideas and then I'd have to pick one that I think is best."

Sarah, Jane, Luke and Beatrix seemed to find teacher expectations limiting. Only Jack, who really seemed to like to know where he stood, strove to meet what he thought the expectations were. His ability to at least in part meet the expectations seemed to enhance his evaluation of his writing. Meanwhile, Luke made teacher assignments somehow his own and also wrestled with the difference in values that he and his teacher held regarding surface features of text. Sarah avoided meeting the expectation. Beatrix and Jane bristled to a certain extent when asked to conform, preferring to create their own agendas.

Peer Feedback Related to Writing

This section is concerned with how the participants evaluated the feedback they received from their peers. Sarah's and Jack's evaluations of their writing sometimes changed as a result of responses they received. Sarah, as she had in the first year of the study, continued to read her work to others to receive praise. When that was not

forthcoming, she sometimes changed her evaluation but did not use the feedback as a basis for revision. Evidently one criterion she used to evaluate her texts was peer approval.

Sarah: They liked it. A lot of people said, 'What do you mean when it goes meanwhile Martha had found the rubies then she had to find Tom.' And they didn't get the part where it said they're outside the black limo. People asked, 'Who was in the black limo? What was the black limo doing there?' I didn't want to answer: I just wanted to put that there.

Benedict: When people ask you questions like that how does it make you feel about your writing.

Sarah: I don't like it when they ask me those kinds of questions because they make me feel like I did something wrong in my writing.

She said she liked to read her writing to people but didn't like it when they asked questions. This put her in a bind. She didn't want her peers to ask questions, but she wanted them to listen to her writing and give her positive feedback.

Benedict: When you shared this story, had you already written the ending?

Sarah: Nods.

Benedict: How did you feel about the ending before you read it?

Sarah: Fine. I felt good.

Benedict: And how did you feel about it after you read it.

Sarah: Not that good.

Benedict: When people questioned you about the ending, it made you change your mind about the piece?

Sarah: It does--it (heavy breathing) I mean--I don't like changing things in my pieces.

Benedict: Oh, why's that?

Sarah: Cause I just--if it's bad, it's bad. If it's good, it's good.

Before Sarah read her piece to the class she felt successful. Because her classmates questioned her about her story, she changed her evaluation of the piece. The ending that had been fine, now, in her mind, had serious problems. Her classmates' questions only served to point out her lack of success; they did not point the way for her to make changes that would remove doubt and questions from her readers' minds. Sarah shared her writing to win academic and social approval as she had in her second grade year. If in her mind that was not forthcoming she changed her evaluation. I expect her decision not to revise was determined by her inability to actually make changes. This was, I would conjecture, further exacerbated by her inability to ask for help, lest she appear "stupid."

Since Jack often shared unfinished drafts, looking for content suggestions, he didn't find himself in a position similar to Sarah's. He seemed, though, to be the

'perfect' kind of responder for a child like Sarah. Although I have no data concerning their classroom interaction at this time, Jack's comments indicate that he viewed texts written by others as good.

Benedict: Have you ever read something and thought, 'That's not very good?'

Jack: Well, I haven't seen anything like that. 'cause I always think that writing is good.

He therefore found it difficult to offer negative criticism about others' texts. It seems that this evaluation was rooted in his need to be liked rather than due to lack of evaluative criteria because, as I discussed earlier in this chapter, Jack did in fact apply criteria such as the inclusion of action and detail, choosing good topics, and the importance of surface features of texts when he evaluated writing.

In addition, Jack demonstrated a reliance on his peers related to feedback. While Sarah changed her opinion of her text after receiving feedback, Jack in some cases relied on his peers for criteria on which to evaluate text in the first place. Jack's reliance on his peers for criteria for evaluating texts was most apparent when the children, as part of the data collection during the second year of the study, met in small groups to evaluate their peers' texts. Most of the children when given an opportunity to change their original evaluations

following the group discussion, chose to maintain their original rankings. Jack, on the other hand, seemed to want to match his evaluations with the group's. Although his peers used criteria that apparently hadn't occurred to him, he didn't offer the new criteria as reasons for changing his evaluations, but rather said he'd changed his mind. Jack evidently changed his evaluation specifically to get the right answer or the same answer that his peers had.

Jack and Sarah, who both looked to their peers for the content and form for their writing, as I discussed earlier, were the only two of the participants who visibly used criteria related to feedback when evaluating texts. George, Jane and Beverly were so adamant about ownership that it wouldn't have occurred to them to base their evaluations on others' criteria. Beatrix, it seemed, preferred to put writing away and let it lie dormant until she could come back to it with new ideas. Luke was moving toward a separation of emotional ties with his texts. Instead of looking at his drafts solely as a writer, he was gaining enough distance to view them as a reader as well. (This shift becomes more apparent in the third year of the study.)

Sense of Audience Related to Writing

The final influence on the children's evaluative criteria related to their sense of audience. These influences were either of a social nature or were based on the text and how it, rather than the writer, might be received by the reader. Luke's and Beverly's sense of audience could just as appropriately have been addressed in the previous section concerning text-related evaluations because their evaluations, although concerned with audience response, were primarily grounded in their critical judgments of their texts.

While Sarah and Jack used their peer audience as models and as a resource for content and form respectively, Luke seemed to feel a tremendous responsibility to write his texts so that they pleased his audience. In the first year of the study Luke's sense of audience appeared to be primarily socially motivated. He had made changes and additions in texts to win classmates' approval and constantly found himself writing to please George. In third grade his sense of audience and his sense of the needs of the reader increased, but the criteria he applied to this area were rooted in more critical judgments about not only his texts but his peers' texts as well. These criteria included: good topics, good endings, action and sequence.

When he described his writing process to me, he said he had opportunities to read his text to his classmates. He continued to explain how at that point a decision was made whether to publish the piece or not. He saw that decision as a collaborative one made by him and his classmates. He said, "if all the people like it a lot and if you like it, then you should publish it."

Additionally, he felt it was the writer's responsibility to write on good topics. He evaluated his DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS as only "medium good."

Luke: It wasn't a good topic. I think if it isn't a good topic people probably wouldn't like to read it.

He continued to explain how writers have a further responsibility to write good endings. Looking at his MISSING SQUADRON he said,

Luke: Let's see, is this one good? It doesn't have a good ending. I just felt like writing about that one thing so I just stopped it with 'The End'. [That's not a good way to end a piece] because people will wonder about what's happening next.

He was critical of his own writing in this regard, but he made allowances for his peers. For instance, when he evaluated Sarah's THE MAGIC BOOK he allowed that leaving the reader guessing was acceptable and could even be considered admirable.

Luke: It really gets you curious 'cause you really don't know what's inside the book. They never tell you either. It was good because then it makes the reader curious

While he was concerned about topics and endings, he was further concerned about the importance of including action in his writing. In his opinion it was the action that kept the reader interested.

Luke: After you've written a piece you need to look through it again to see if it's a boring piece or an exciting piece. You need action to make excitement...If you keep throwing in action in between the boring parts you can keep you reader reading.

Finally, the writer, he says, must sequence properly so that the reader won't become confused. It's not good he says, "when it just goes from one thing to another and then goes back to the first thing and then to the middle and then the last." He talked specifically about LUKE IN MAINE:

Luke: Like here's one that I screwed up about Maine..First I was writing about it and it didn't make sense. I said first I went to the part about catching fish and catching fish. I then go to the house and then catching fish and then to the house and then catching fish and back and forth. It is confusing. [The way] I described it people could of got mixed up and got confused..

Just as sequence can create difficulties for the reader so, too, says Luke, can lack of details. He observed that his MISSING SQUADRON didn't make sense.

Luke: I don't know, it goes too fast. Like it goes from one thing to another thing to another thing. I think it should tell about one thing and then go to the next thing.

These additional criteria, good topics, good endings, action, proper sequence, and details seem to support his notion that the author had responsibility toward his reader. Writing was good when the writer met the needs of the audience. Those needs were met through the inclusion of the criteria listed above. There was a very different flavor to Luke's comments as a third grader. While as a second grader he spoke of adding to or changing his texts to make the reader happy, these more recent responses indicate critical thinking and an increasing ability to step back from his texts and view them as a reader.

Jack also seemed to write with an increased sense of audience. That audience included his peers, his teacher, his mom and his unborn children.

Benedict: Do you have anybody in mind who you want to read your work?

Jack: Yeah, my friends and my teacher. Probably my friends [mostly]. They like how I put in the pictures and the detail...I write for my friends. I think kind of about [which friends] I'm going to put in it and who's going to do what. I put my friends in the story 'cause I think there will be people who will understand it more. Sometimes that's a problem because they have other ideas [about how the story should develop]

Benedict: Who do you want to like your stories?

Jack: Probably my mom.

Benedict: What kinds of things do you do so your mom will like your stories.

Jack: I put in my mom. Sometimes I put in my brothers.

Benedict: Is it most often your Mom that you write for?

Jack: No, usually I write for myself. Like I write pieces for me that I'll keep. Like I won't publish them. I may give them to my kids if I have any. I'm going to show them like what they can write about. I'm going to tell them about how they can get ideas and all that other stuff.

The dialogue above demonstrates a number of ways that Jack relied on and courted his readers and also illuminates the kinds of assistance he wished his audience gave him. First of all, he evidently liked the recognition he received for his pictures and for the details he included in his writing from his peers. He then went on to explain one of the ways he, unconsciously I would guess, tried to ensure that the recognition would be forthcoming--namely he put his friends and his family into his stories in order to pique their interest. Unfortunately, he found this sometimes backfired because his friends then felt their presence in the story gave them license to dictate the course of action and often this was either not what Jack had originally planned or was beyond his capability to execute.

The theme of liking topics and stories to remain close to home, which appeared in the first year of the study,

repeated itself when he spoke of his mom as one of his important readers. Finally, Jack revealed not only his own difficulties as a writer, but also his concern that others, especially his own kids, should be able to benefit from his experiences. This latter discussion, which on the surface concerns audience response in the future, had a more immediate meaning--namely, indicating the kind of assistance Jack, as a third grader, wanted and felt he needed in his writing.

Beatrix's sense of audience at this point could be summed up in about three words from her:

Benedict: When you write do you think about people reading your work?

Beatrix: No.

Benedict: For whom do you write?

Beatrix: Mostly me.

If Beatrix had able to recognize her readers' needs and responses at this time, she might have found them a valuable resource for her writing. She seemed to have moved away from the confident exchanges with her classmates which characterized her visits to the author's chair the previous year. The data in the third year of the study will show that when she listened to her readers tell the stories of their reading, those stories proved invaluable in eliciting

responses Beatrix had never thought of as well as dredging up ideas she had forgotten.

Jane, George and Beverly all took their readers into account as they drafted and revised. Jane, for instance, explained why she sometimes deleted information from her stories, "There was too much information. The reader could realize what was happening without it." In a similar vein she sometimes felt the need to add information for the benefit of the reader.

Benedcit: Why would adding why he haunted the house make it better?

Jane: Well, then he would have a reason for haunting and I think a reader would want to know why he was haunting it.

George explained how when he reread his writing he sometimes discovered that it really was only clear to him because he had written it. To another reader his text might have proved confusing or incomplete. He was, as Newkirk (1982) suggests, seeing himself as separate from his text and was not assuming that the reader had the same information concerning the meaning as he did.

George: Sometimes I write something and as the person who wrote it I know why something's happening or what's happening, and then I realize if I hadn't written this I wouldn't understand what's happening...I just think of it as if I'm starting a new book and I start reading it. If I come to a part that I really don't think I understand as if I really hadn't written it, I fix it...I think it's important other people understand it...When I write I write a story I think most people will like....I think writing is good when most people like it.

Evaluating his text on the basis of how his audience would respond was a new criterion for George. Previously he had been surprised when his readers did not understand his text in the same way he did. By third grade, although he still maintained a strict ownership of his work, he recognized that he wrote so that others would read and enjoy his writing. He saw a close connection in the relationship between the reader and the writer.

George: When I wrote BACKPACK MAN I was hoping Timmy could hear it 'cause I think he'd like it.

Benedict: Do you often do that when you write?

George: No, That's the first time I had anybody in mind in particular--Well in second grade I really wanted my mom and dad to read my choose-your-own-adventure because I was wondering what choices they would make.

...

Benedict: Is it more important for you to like it or for your audience to like it?

George: Well, I'd say for the audience to like it 'cause I wouldn't want just me to like it 'cause the audience would be sitting there, 'Man, oh man.'

George hinted that he had taken a larger more impersonal audience into account when he wrote, but when he spoke specifically about readers he knew and his desire for them to receive his stories, it becomes clear that audience was a real and viable criterion for him.

For Beverly, as I mentioned earlier, there seemed to be a fine line in determining if her sense of audience was more related to social influences or critical judgments. Although her decisions were primarily based on the text itself, I will report the data here, as I did with Luke, to be consistent with the other participants.

Beverly made a distinction between pieces that she considered ready for publication and others she wouldn't publish.

Beverly: In pieces that I do want to get published I read over it again and really look for things that affect really how good it is for a published book.

Benedict: What kinds of things do you look for?

Beverly: Well, this one here is a mystery, so I look for things to make sure it's not being given away and to make sure I don't say one word too much in a sentence or paragraph. I look for things like spelling and capitalization and stuff, and I change things that I don't like in my writing.

Benedict: What makes you decide if you're going to work a piece through to publication?

Beverly: If when I read it I feel what I want the [reader] to feel then I know I'm achieving [my purpose]. Sometimes I either read it to someone else--well usually I have them read it 'cause they can feel it better than if I'm reading it, I think. I ask them what they thought of it and, then I know if I'm achieving my purpose.

Beverly's comments indicate how she evaluated her writing during the process of drafting and through the revising and editing stages on the basis of her criterion of meeting the readers' needs. She demonstrated a keen sense of what she felt was necessary for her to do to take a piece to publication or in essence to make it public. The following example illustrates how Beverly not only judged her writing but also depended on the reader to bring knowledge to the text as well. She was speaking about her story THE SWINGING DOOR regarding how she as the writer wanted the reader to read her story.

Beverly: When I have Adam talking, I think it's pretty clear to a reader how to read that.

Benedict: What did you do to make it clear to the reader?

Beverly: I just put in what a real kid might say...It makes it plainer. If he had said 'Mother, Father, I'm all together old enough' you might put a different voice on than if you wrote, 'Aw, Mom, Dad, I'm plenty old enough.'

Jack and Sarah depended on their audience to provide models and resources for their writing. Rather than take into account any needs their readers might have, they evaluated their writing on the basis of how helpful or, in Sarah's case, how positive the feedback was. Beatrix seemed to regress in some ways from her second grade use of audience by practically ignoring response altogether. Luke was gradually seeing a need to consider his audience when he drafted. Jane and George showed an increased awareness of the relationship between readers and writers than they had in their second grade profiles. Beverly, it seemed was acutely aware of her readers' needs regarding not only the surface features of her text but of the more content related and subtle qualities of her texts as well.

Summary

Table 4 summarizes the social influences which guided and in some cases directed the writing decisions and the evaluative criteria each of the participants employed. In addition the table also indicates the similarities and differences in the ways the children functioned within the social context of their classrooms related to writing between the first and second year of the study. The primary way each child functioned within each of the categories is indicated.

Table 4. Social Interactions Which Influenced the Students' Writing Decisions in Grades Two and Three

	Beatrix		Beverly		George		Jack		Jane		Luke		Sarah	
	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3
Relationship with peers														
reliance on models	■	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	□	■	□	■	■
no evidence	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□
personal ownership	□	□	□	■	□	■	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□
Teacher Expectations														
limiting	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	■	□	■	□	■
no evidence	□	□	□	■	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
expanding	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	■	□	□
Peer Feedback														
judgment	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	□	□	□	□	■	■
no evidence	□	■	□	■	□	■	□	□	□	■	□	■	□	□
revision	■	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	■	□	■	□	□	□
Sense of Audience														
socially oriented	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	□	□	□	□	■	■
little evidence	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
text-related	■	□	□	■	■	■	□	□	■	■	■	□	□	□

Third Year of the Study

Text-Related Criteria

The children did not apply as many criteria in the third year of the study as they had previously. Possible explanations for this reduction are discussed at the beginning of Chapter 5 under Discussion. Those criteria which were most frequently employed were not used with the same frequency that similar criteria were used the year before. In order to maintain consistency in reporting the data among the years, I will break the fourth grade data into only two, rather than three categories: frequently applied criteria and less frequently applied criteria, eliminating the most frequently applied criteria altogether.

Frequently Applied Criteria

The three criteria I will discuss in this section include: language, personal experience, and surface features of text. In some instances the way the children used these criteria changed subtly during the course of the study. In other cases their use of the criteria became more refined.

Language

Beatrix applied the language criterion as a reader rather than as a writer. She indicated that Beverly's use

of words was important and pleased her. Luke, Jane, Beverly and George applied the criterion of language when evaluating their own writing. They all had slightly different ways of expressing what they felt they had accomplished or were trying to accomplish through the language in their texts.

Luke showed evidence of applying this criterion when he tried out alternatives to reach his desired meaning. Following the reader-based-feedback session Luke worked for about ten minutes trying to make his text clearer. I asked him if he thought he had been successful.

Luke: Well, a little bit. It's not all bla-bla-bla and you can understand it. (he read silently to himself.) Actually, right here (Let's get Ironhide.) it sounds like it's going too fast.

Benedict: What could you do to slow it down if you wanted?

Luke: I could write 'He just noticed that Ironside's cornered or something like that, and I could put who's saying stuff and slow it down. [Or I could] tell the story, like pretend I'm telling the story. (Rereads his text) Actually, it should be 'they're going to crush us' SAYS somebody-- 'Hurry up. Look Rumble and Shockwave have Ironhide in a corner'--not , 'Oh, no!' (He stopped and appeared to be thinking. Then he began to write.) 'Let's see, says Whirl'--because he's not doing anything.

Then he tried different ways to word his text:

Luke: Let's block that laser.
 Let's reflect--(says to me, 'I'm
 thinking of words to fit.')

Let's (erases get)
 Let's get him.
 Let's save him.
 Let's reflect the laser--no.
 Let's knock Shockwave out of the
 way--no...
 I guess 'Let's get him' will be OK.
 I'm going to put like--'Let's get
 him. Yeah'

Beverly, like Luke, grappled with words in order to convey her precise meaning. The following is an example of her rationale for changing her text following her reader-based-feedback session.

That doesn't sound right either, "Suzy weakly climbed back into her bed and just in time too--she fainted." That sounds like just in time she fainted. She fainted at the right time. I think I'm going to change it somehow, but it's hard to word it because I want the person who is reading to know she climbed back into bed and then she fainted.

Jane, on the other hand, responded to getting voice into her writing. She said she chose her words carefully to make her characters sound real and to speak for themselves. She gave the following example of an instance when she had successfully used the language of her character to speak to her audience:

(Reads) 'I'm a widow of a window salesman and I always lock my windows.' I like that. I really got her to sound like I wanted her to.

George also reported that he made deliberate choices of words. He said, "I really think about the words, and I put in the ones I really like." He went on to give examples of his successful use of words:

Let's see--Ah, here's one part I like.
'We'd been walking for a half hour when you hear a low growl.' I like it when it says 'low growl.' I think I like the way those words are put together...Or like right here instead of he jumps on you I put in pounces...I used jumps before and I think pounce is more interesting.

The comments that these children made indicate that they were attending to subtle aspects of text. Their success in choosing what they considered the best words to convey their messages they felt significantly affected the success of their texts. The effort it took to craft and mold the text was, from their points of view, necessary and expected to achieve their desired results.

Experience

Beatrix, Beverly and George all continued to evaluate text based on their personal experiences. There was at this point a difference in the way the criterion was applied. Previously those who used this criterion typically evaluated text based on their prior experience with the subject depicted in the text. These three evaluated the success or failure of the text based on the writing or reading experience.

Beatrice, for example, observed that she didn't find anything good or important about George's choose-your-own-adventure story because she really didn't like the path she chose to take. Since her reading experience had not been pleasurable, she evaluated the text as having no redeeming qualities.

George and Beverly evaluated their writing experiences. George felt a monster story his teacher had assigned the class to write was good because he had had lots of prior experience writing monster stories and therefore felt he knew just what to include. Beverly attributed some of the success of her SIGHT FROM THE WINDOW to the conditions under which she wrote the piece.

I had nothing else on my mind when I wrote [SIGHT FROM THE WINDOW] because I wrote it at home, but this one I wrote in school so I had tons of things going through my mind. So in SIGHT FROM THE WINDOW I put in better language, for instance. I might go back and put in better language in this other one.

George and Beverly's comments indicate an awareness of their writing processes. George, for example, indicates that he is likely to have success when he writes familiar forms. The prior and repeated experience it seems gave him confidence to approach the task with ease. Beverly, as she grew older, indicated that for her a quiet place with no interruptions, is conducive to writing. Beatrice, on the other hand, sent a message to writers: Writing won't be

well received if the experience of reading the writing is not pleasurable.

Surface Features

Jack more than any of the others was quick to notice when the surface features of text were not in standard form. I asked Luke, Beatrix and him to imagine a very different reader reading George's text. He said that if a teacher saw George's spellings that the teacher "would probably say [George] had to do it over." Beatrix only mentioned surface features of text when she imagined her mother reading George's text.

My mother probably wouldn't like it. She would probably say the spelling is bad and that the person should write neatly because she's also [in addition to being a mother] a teacher.

Jack, however, not only noticed non-standard forms in other's work, but when writing himself he quickly noticed non-standard spelling and punctuation and corrected those errors, even when he was struggling to make content decisions. It is possible that by focusing on the surface features, Jack found he could avoid or delay the more difficult task of attending to what his text or a text he was reading meant.

George only indicated concern about the surface features of a text when he was unable to read it. For

example, he let Luke know that Luke's handwriting and spelling interfered with his reading of the text. Due to Luke's concern for his audience, when given the time to write, this was one of the changes Luke made in his text.

Less Frequently Applied Criteria

Realism/Plausibility

The most significant of the remaining criteria the children used seem to be: realism or plausibility, plot or story development, and illustrations. The first two criteria were used by more than one child, while the third, illustrations, continued to be an important consideration for Luke.

Both Jane and Beverly were concerned about the importance of establishing a credible reality within the context of a given text. They seemed to see a variety of options available to the writer, but they felt they did not want the reader to be saying to herself, "Now how can that be?"

Jane, for example, related how she had felt the need to change one of her texts. The text read :

Kim walked in, quietly closing the door behind him. He could hear voices coming from the kitchen...He crept toward the kitchen door so he could hear better. Suddenly the door flew open and hit him in the face. He looked up to see his father staring at him. 'Trying to spy, huh?' his father said in a joking voice. 'Well you didn't need to go to all the trouble to come in quietly...'

She commented:

It didn't sound very realistic. 'Cause how did the father know he came in quietly if he couldn't even hear him? So I changed that to eavesdropping.

Beverly said that she felt it was important for her to be accurate about action she might want to include in her text. She explained that sometimes she had characters do things that are not possible in terms of the reality she has created. In cases when she did this she said she had to change her text. She gave an example of having one of her characters jump up out of a sick bed and run down the hall for her mother. She explained that since she had been sick recently, she realized that this was not plausible. She said she needed to revise her text.

Plot/Story Development

Beatrix and Beverly both seemed to know that no matter how good all other aspects of a piece of writing were, if the story wasn't a good one the piece of writing would not be good. Beatrix explained:

I think I would like my teenage piece a lot more if I had a plot...I got this far and everything went blank 'cause I didn't know what I was going to write about. I didn't have the main idea of the story.

Beverly found that she too sometimes had a story that didn't develop well. She felt that her inability to come up

with an appropriate course of action for her main character at the climax of SUSIE JACOBS made the story unsuccessful.

She explained her dilemma:

I'm not communicating to the reader or to myself. Whenever I read it I say 'Wait a second. This doesn't sound good.' I want Suzy to do something like a vow of silence or something like that to show she's really mourning [due to the death of her soldier brother], but I don't know if it should be that. It will end up she was a very determined girl and her mother and father knew it when she wrote it down. Then the story will end because I don't know what the vow of silence will do to her because there will be nothing more for her to do. I'll just put she did that for the rest of her life. It won't be any fun...I have to change that somehow.

Beverly continued to apply and refine this criterion which surfaced the year before. For Beatrix it was a new criterion. She seemed to have some sense of what didn't work but along with Beverly was at a bit of a loss to determine how to craft stories that would measure up to her criterion.

Illustration

The final criterion examined will be a discussion of Luke's evaluation of his use of illustrations. The balance between writing and drawing continued to be a source of concern for Luke. Although he felt the need to tell his story with text, the freewheeling adventure stories he liked to write still developed from the illustrations he drew.

Drawing was one of his major sources for topic selection and development of story. There continued to be the problem, which surfaced in his second grade year, of his already having told his story through illustration and therefore his text was limited. However, the reason for the limited text had changed. In second grade Luke seemed to feel he had already told the story through the illustrations and saw little need to repeat in writing what he'd already done with his drawing. In fourth grade Luke seemed to continue to need the drawing for prewriting and planning, but by then his stories had become so involved and his pictures so expansive that the stories seemed almost impossible to write. Although his illustrations aided his prewriting, it seemed that when he came to the drafting stage of his writing their existence inhibited and overwhelmed him.

The pictures make it so there's not enough room for the writing...Then you can't put the whole thing down...I wouldn't get more paper because it would just be wasted paper 'cause there's only three sentences and the rest is pictures.

He found it difficult to match his draft with the images he held in his mind.

Summary

The fourth grade data indicate that for some children, like Luke, there was a uniting thread within some of the evaluative criteria across the three years of the study.

His use of evaluative criteria in relation to illustration, for example, showed up consistently in each year of the study, but at the same time he seemed to be continually refining his use of the criterion. Other children used new criteria, in some cases either eliminating or internalizing previously employed criteria. Except for Jack, who seemed to change the least in terms of the criteria he applied in the second and third year of the study, and Sarah, who used fewer and fewer text-related criteria over the course of the study, the children increasingly applied criteria which they felt were important considerations for their readers. The data concerning social interaction from the first two years of the study coupled with the social interaction data in the next section have shown and will show the developing and varied sense of audience among these seven students.

Table 5 summarizes the text-related data from the third and final year of the study. Once again I have included the summary of the data from the previous years of the study to show the differences and similarities of the children's evaluative criteria.

Table 5. The Use of Text-Related Criteria
in Grades Two, Three and Four

	Beatrix			Beverly			George			Jack			Jane			Luke			Sarah		
	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4
Language	□	□	■	□	■	■	□	■	■	□	□	□	■	■	■	□	□	■	□	□	□
Experience	■	■	■	□	■	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□
Surface Features	■	■	■	□	■	□	□	■	■	□	■	■	□	■	□	□	■	■	□	■	□
Realism	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	□	□	□	□	□	□
Plot	□	□	■	□	■	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Illustrations	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	□	□	□
Action	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	■	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□
Content	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	□	■	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	□	□
Dialogue	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	■	■	□
Effort	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	□	□	□	■	□	□	□
Genre	■	■	□	□	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	■	□	□
Humor	■	■	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□
Leads/Endings	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	■	□	■	□	■	■	■	■	□	□
Point of View	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Purpose	□	■	□	□	■	□	■	■	■	□	□	□	■	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Sense	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	■	□	□	□	□	□
Show not Tell	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□
Surprise	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Suspense	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□
Titles	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□

Note: Sarah has no criteria listed for the fourth grade year. This is due to the fact that no text-related criteria were apparent or inferrable from the fourth grade data.

Social Influences on Writing: Fourth Grade

This section will follow a similar format to those in which I previously discussed the social influences on the participants' writing. The data falls into categories similar to the second and third grade data. Those categories were as follows:

- 1) Relationship with Peers Related to Writing;
- 2) Peer Feedback Related to Writing;
- 3) Sense of Audience Related to Writing.

The teacher expectations related to writing category, which was significant in the second year of the study, is conspicuous by its absence. No child revealed any information which fit in this category in the third year of the study. Four explanations for the absence of this category seem possible. First, it may be that the structure of the writing time was different from the year before, and therefore the teachers' expectations weren't as significant in the children's minds. Second, perhaps as the children matured and gained skills they didn't find that their own expectations and their teachers' were that dramatically different. Third, the nature of the data collection might not have encouraged the children to talk about the classroom structure as the interviews from the year before had. Finally, information concerning teacher expectations was

also inferable from the group evaluation task the year before, while the reader-based-feedback did not lend itself to evaluation but rather encouraged the participants to tell the stories of their reading.

The degree to which each of the children was influenced by social interactions continued to vary. In the section that follows I will offer examples of how the children's writing decisions continued to be socially influenced.

Relationship with Peers Related to Writing

Sarah's dependence on her peers became even more pronounced in her fourth grade year. When I reviewed her writing folder to find samples of writing from within the same genre, I was able to find only three pieces, all poems, that Sarah had written alone. Sarah continued the practice of relying on her peers for content and form, but the dependence had become even more pronounced. Instead of looking to her peers for support, she now seemed almost incapable of writing unless she was constantly supported by another classroom author. She spent her fourth grade writing time doing collaborative writing almost exclusively. Because I was looking for writing that she had authored herself, the choice was very limited. This put Sarah at a disadvantage to perform the evaluation tasks I

requested because I feel she had a greater investment in some of her collaborative writing. Due to this lack of investment in the writing samples, and the fact that we were talking about three four to six line poems, Sarah's fourth grade evaluative criteria were limited.

Jack, like Sarah, continued to look for suggestions from his peers for the content of his writing. He seemed to continue to want feedback early in the drafting process as he had during his third grade year. Jack was at this time specifically writing for his peer audience. It further seems that he had little if any experience on which to draw in creating the kinds of stories he felt would be attractive to that audience, and therefore he actively sought help directly from that audience regarding content and form.

Although he had only the lead written, Jack decided that his MISSING TURKEY MYSTERY was his best piece of writing among the three adventure stories he evaluated

Jack: When I went to the authors' circle I got a lot of good ideas so I started to write 'em down, and I think this is going to be a good story...I think it's going to be my best story.

Benedict: If I were inside your head when you were getting all the suggestions, what would I hear your mind doing or saying?

Jack: First of all I'd say 'I hope they're writing these down or the teacher is....

Benedict: When someone suggests something what does your mind say?

Jack: Oh, that's a good idea, and then when another one says [something] I say oh, that's a good idea. I keep on going 'that's a good idea, and I keep on saying that.

In a similar vein Jack offered the following comment to explain why THE WORST DAY OF SCHOOL wasn't among his best pieces:

Jack: I think it's kind of a weak piece because when I brought it to the authors' circle I really didn't get a lot of suggestions.

These exchanges illustrate Jack's dependence on his peers in the drafting stage of his writing. He seemed to feel he had little input and relied heavily on his peers for the content of his writing, even to the point where he hoped someone was writing down suggestions he received from his audience so that he might more easily integrate those suggestions into his piece. He felt that other writers shared this same need. During George's reader-based-feedback session I asked Jack and Luke how they understood the relationship between the reader and the writer. Jack misunderstood the question and responded that "George should feel pretty good because we've given him lots of good ideas."

Following the reader-based-feedback discussion (see Chapter 3 for a complete description) Jack was in a quandary about how to proceed because his readers had in Elbow's (1985) words, told him "stories of their reading" rather

than given him specific suggestions about additions he could make to his text. The result was that he found it difficult to return to work on his text. Since he had no specific suggestions from his peers, he spent most of the writing time trying to generate ideas of his own and repeatedly seemed dissatisfied with them. He said, "This is kind of a hard story to think about." He seemed to have no idea how to even begin to add to his story to make it one his peers would like.

Beverly and Jane on the other hand had a very different response to the reader-based-feedback sessions. They were both quick to say how much they enjoyed looking at their own writing through the eyes of other readers. They reported that many of the questions I had asked were new ways for them to look at writing. They further wanted to know when I was going to return so they could once again hear and tell stories of theirs and others' reading.

George, Luke and Beatrix showed little evidence of using peers as models or as partners.

Peer Feedback in Relation to Writing

All of the participants listened to and interpreted the peer feedback in their own personal ways. For some of them the feedback provided a needed impetus for revision or

confirmation of what they had written. For Sarah it was an uncomfortable and unpleasant experience. Jack, although he did not seem to be helped a great deal because the feedback was not the direct help he was looking for, seemed to enjoy the social interaction and the group experience. The others all seemed to take their peers' feedback seriously and used the information they received when they returned to their writing. The discussion that follows will give examples of how the children received the feedback as a judgment of their writing, saw it as a confirmation that what they had written worked for their readers, and/or used the feedback as a departure point for revision or redirection.

Sarah continued to make very astute observations regarding her peers' responses to her texts. She knew when one of her texts was well received and when fellow students remained politely silent rather than criticize. She said,

When I shared [this poem] with the people who liked the other one, they liked the other ones better than this one. They didn't actually like tell me that or anything, but I could just tell. They sort of looked, 'Oh this is boring. I don't really like this.' When I shared the other one they went, 'Oh nice, great.'

Her evaluation of her writing still seemed to be guided by how her peers reacted. She wrote for her audience, and became frustrated if they didn't see her writing as she intended them to see it. Following the

reader-based-feedback discussion, she expressed frustration and dissatisfaction with her peers. She had chosen one of her poems to share with Beverly, Jane, Jack and Luke. When I asked her why she chose these four she said, "I like them. They're my friends. Before when I talked to them about my writing, they enjoyed it." It's interesting that Sarah chose more people to come and listen and respond to her writing than any of the other participants. She seemed to remain consistent. Her purpose for sharing was to receive recognition from her peers, not help to revise her writing. She had chosen to bring the poem "From the Eyes of a Whale" to bring because she said, "I thought it needed more work." I asked her what kind of work she thought it needed.

Sarah: I don't know. I just really didn't care for it and then all these people [in my class] would read my poem and say 'Oh, that's really, really good. And then I changed my mind. I sort of realized that it was OK. But then when I came here I thought people were going to give me good ideas but they didn't. Their suggestions were that I should tell what it is, but I don't like their suggestions. I just want to keep it like it is. They all thought it was fuzzy, and that's the way I wanted it to be.

Sarah still relied on her peers' judgments in evaluating her own writing. She originally wasn't sure her poem was good. Her peers reacted favorably and so she

changed her evaluation. In the reader response group she interpreted her peers' responses as negative evaluations and therefore her evaluation changed once again. Her comment, "When I came here I thought people were going to give me good ideas, but they didn't," suggests that she brought this poem not because she felt it needed work, but rather because she had already received positive peer feedback for it and was looking for more. Sarah's reaction to what she perceived as negative reaction resulted not in a renewed effort to change the problematic passages but rather in totally abandoning the work. Sarah was the only child who did not work on her text following the feedback from peers.

Jack continued to move from viewing his peers' responses as judgments about his writing towards viewing his peers' responses as useful to him as a writer. He had difficulty in making this transition, however, due to his overwhelming reliance on his peers concerning the form and content of his writing. Since he relied on his peers prior to drafting, and due to the fact that he resisted revision, even though he no longer seemed to view feedback solely from the standpoint of personal acceptance or rejection as Sarah did, he was not yet able to see the power of feedback in relationship to revision.

Luke, more than any other participant, demonstrated the importance of feedback to him as a writer. During Luke's fourth grade evaluation conference we looked at three adventure stories. He chose to bring TRANSFORMERS to the reader-based-feedback session because he judged,

TRANSFORMERS has like too much action. Every single sentence has something like they're shooting or they're running or something...[I want to] make it so people will say, 'what's going to happen?'

Luke saw the session as a way to get help in improving his writing. Many of the decisions he made concerning changes in his writing were dictated by his concern to make the writing clearer and more exciting for his readers.

After receiving reader-based-feedback from George and Sarah on TRANSFORMERS, Luke once again began to work on this piece. As he worked on a new draft he weighed each word and phrase, trying out additions, substitutions and deletions. He frequently referred to his first draft and reread his new text. Luke used the feedback session as a resource for his writing. He said, "I'm going to try to make sense for people. I'm going to rewrite it in a way you can understand it."

Luke worked on his piece for about ten minutes. He verbalized what he was thinking (as I had asked him to) as he worked. He continued to scrutinize each word and line in his text. He considered his peers' responses when he

revised. Luke said, "I could put who's saying stuff and slow it down." This idea was rooted in a concern of George's that he wasn't always sure what was happening. Luke chose to add Whirl to the story to satisfy George's difficulties as a reader. Sarah had suggested that Luke might tell the story himself; he considered this suggestion as well, although he chose not to use it. Then he tried out different ways to word his text, verbalizing and evaluating each of his ideas until he was finally satisfied before moving on to the next trouble spot.

Luke saw many possibilities and alternatives. He further realized that he as the writer of this story had decision-making power. Although one might agree or disagree with his decisions, what is important here is Luke's process. He weighed each possibility, crafting his story to fit first his needs and ultimately to meet what he considered his readers' needs to be. He used feedback from George and Sarah to determine his readers' needs. (See Figures 9 and 10 for copies of the original and revised texts.)

The remaining participants all used suggestions from their peer audience as either a means to confirm in their own minds what they had already written or as a departure point for revision. Most often the participants utilized the former course. Jane and Beverly, for example decided

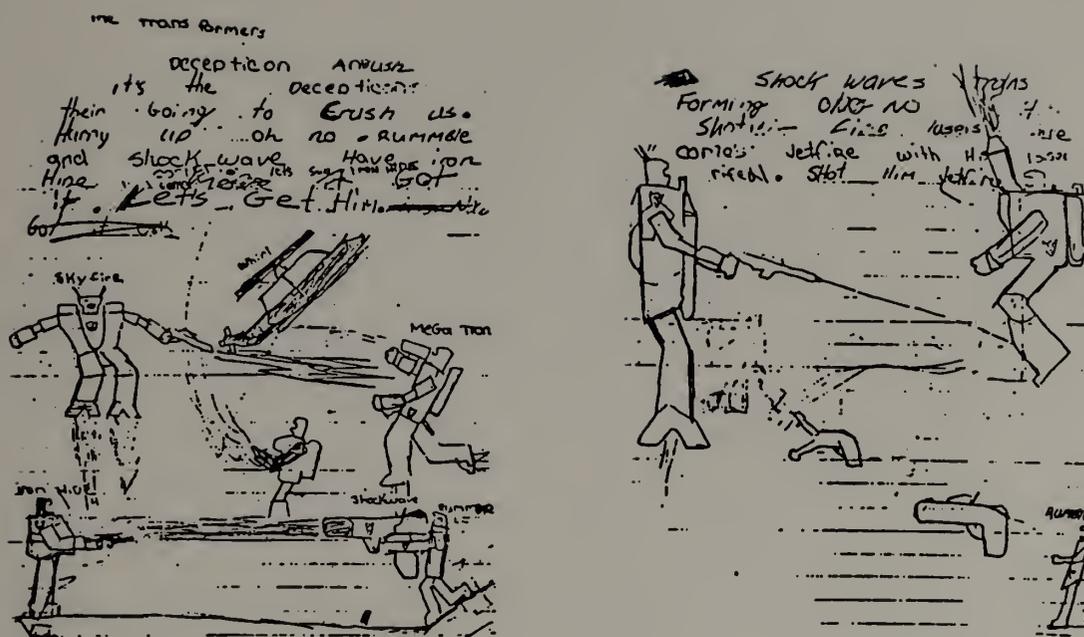


FIGURE 9
Original Text: THE TRANSFORMERS

Its the Decepticons thier going to crush us skywings
 both rumble and shockwave have iron hide in a corner lets
 . get ^{back} nightrider shockwave is traw forming to his robot form
 ya to Jetfires here shoot him down Jetfire now its an
 even... battle... says twin twist to bad megatron says to twin twist
 your Jetfire is losing why dont you send out for
 wheel jacks new invention say Jetfire to twin twist
 our airbots form superior

FIGURE 10
 Revised Text: THE TRANSFORMERS

that the incomplete stories they had brought were off to good starts and continued to generate their own ideas.

Beatrix found that the mystery she was beginning to weave was headed on too predictable a course, so she decided to make changes in her original planning. The following exchange illustrates how Beatrix first used the criterion of peer feedback as a means for confirming her original text and secondly used the feedback to revise her planning.

Beatrix: I'm not really going to make any changes.

Benedict: Why is that?

Beatrix: Well, they said how they liked it and stuff so I decided to leave it.

Benedict: That sounds sensible.

...

Beatrix: While they were talking I thought of the whole thing...They kept on talking. I had planned it out once a long time ago and how they kept talking about the robber and stuff--I remembered.

Benedict: So you're not going to change what you worked out before you're just remembering it?

Beatrix: Well, I am changing it really. Before [when Jane and Beverly were talking] they had everything right. They'd gotten the whole thing planned out it seemed, so I decided to change it.

As I mentioned when discussing the third grade data, it seemed unfortunate at that time that Beatrix was unable or unwilling to talk more openly with her peers about her writing. During this reader-based-feedback session she seemed first of all to have a good time. She seemed, as she had when she sat in the authors' chair in second grade, to orchestrate the proceedings, using her audience to help her weave her story. She listened to their suggestions, but more often than not twisted them to make them uniquely hers. In this case her audience made it clear that her plot was too transparent, and so she invented alternatives to try to captivate her readers.

George, like Sarah, brought a completed piece to the feedback session. He listened to his peers' comments and considered each one. He seemed to view the writing time as an opportunity to mop up any concerns his readers had. He did not use the time to make any major revisions. He was particularly interested in how Beatrix, Jack and Luke had marked copies of his text with squiggly lines (see Appendix D for reader-based feedback questions). He felt a need to read each underlined section which indicated confusion and consider whether or not to make changes in his text. He said, "I want to see every one that has a squiggly line." His revisions resulted in minor changes to his text.

The most interesting outcome of this session was that George seemed to come to realize something about his writing process that I had only guessed was occurring during his second grade year. At that time I felt the data suggested that George seldom revised an individual piece of writing as a result of feedback he received. It was my feeling that instead, he revised the way he wrote, and often used the feedback to revise subsequent pieces of writing as he drafted.

When George brought his piece THE PLANET OF ETERNAL DAY to the group for feedback, one of his major concerns was the words he had used, and yet he did nothing to change the language in his draft. I asked him about that:

Benedict: I'm curious. You don't want to go back and change the words in this one even though that was what you wanted to do originally.

George: I think I'm taking care of it in another story I'm writing.

Benedict: Let me check this out. I've noticed that when you get feedback...you don't tend to do a lot of changing of the piece you got the information about, but you tend to use that information the next time you write and change not a piece of writing but the way you write.

George. Yeah, yeah. You're right. I think you're right. I think that's what I do.

Benedict: Do you consciously do that or is that a new idea to you?

George: Well, actually I sort of knew I did it, but I never really thought about it.

It's interesting to note how individual and how lasting strategies that work for students can be.

Sense of Audience Related to Writing

All of the participants had by this time developed a rather keen sense of audience. They judged their work based on how they thought their audience would receive it in two primary ways. The decisions were for the most part either socially oriented or text-based. Jack seemed to be in transition between the two.

Sarah's sense of audience continued to be socially motivated. As the example on p176?? indicates, the reason Sarah brought "Through the Eyes of a Whale" to share was because she had already received positive feedback for it and seemed to be looking for more. Her inability to continue to work on the text following the feedback indicates that she shared her written work looking for positive social responses; she had no concern for improving the text for the reader's benefit.

Jack, although he had difficulty meeting what he perceived were his readers' needs, demonstrated an increased sense of audience. He seemed to be struggling between satisfying his audience for gained social acceptance and recognizing the genuine needs of readers. The following two examples illustrate Jack's struggle.

Jack: This piece is mixed up and weird...When David dies--like when he dies someplace in here--the real David in the other class like he goes, 'Why did you have to make me die in there?' Now I have to go back into the story and do other stuff.

...

Jack: I tried to make UNDERWATER ADVENTURE kind of scary, and I did and people reacted to it and they said like here they said it was disgusting and I have to agree. When they said that, I didn't know what to say, so I just don't know.

The first comment indicates Jack's continued need to gain social acceptance for his writing. Because one of his peers didn't like the fact that a character with his name died in the story, he insisted Jack change it. Jack evaluated his writing as unpleasing to his peer audience, and therefore decided to make the revision. In the second example Jack was trying to include scary things in his story because he determined that the inclusion of frightening events improved a story. Unfortunately, when he read his work to his peers they judged his writing as disgusting rather than scary.

Even though Jack was moving toward including elements he felt would make his story more enjoyable for his reader, at this point he still seemed unable to take the initiative to risk using his own content or to separate himself from how his peers viewed his texts.

The profiles of Beverly, Beatrix, Jane, Luke and George concerning audience remained consistent with their third grade profiles. They all continued to be more concerned with their texts than how their texts might gain them social acceptance. Their sense of audience seems best represented by Luke.

Luke used the feedback session as a resource for his writing. He said, "I'm going to try to make sense for people. I'm going to rewrite it in a way you can understand it." Luke didn't seem to develop any new evaluative criteria in his fourth grade year; he seemed instead to refine those criteria he was already using to evaluate text. His concern for his reader's ability to understand his intended message and to be entertained continued to be of utmost importance to him. The decisions he made concerning evaluation and revision were precipitated by what he judged his audience's needs to be.

Summary

Table 6 summarizes the social influences in the third year of the study. In addition the table also indicates the similarities and differences in the data among the first, second, and third years of the study.

Table 6. Social Interactions Which Influenced
the Students' Writing Decisions
Grades Two, Three and Four

	Beatrix			Beverly			George			Jack			Jane			Luke			Sarah		
	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4
Relationship with peers																					
reliance on models	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	■	■
no evidence	□	■	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□
personal ownership	□	□	■	□	■	■	□	■	■	□	□	□	□	■	■	□	□	■	□	□	□
Teacher Expectations																					
limiting	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□
no evidence	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	■	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■
expanding	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	□	□
Peer Feedback																					
judgment	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	■
no evidence	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	□	□
revision	■	□	■	□	□	■	■	□	■	□	□	■	■	□	■	■	□	■	□	□	□
Sense of Audience																					
socially oriented	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	■	■
little evidence	□	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	□	□	□
text-related	■	□	■	□	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	■	□	■	■	□	■	■	□	□	□

Note: Jack's sense of audience seemed to be both socially oriented and text related. The data suggested that at this time he further appeared to be moving from viewing feedback as a judgment of his writing to viewing it as useful in making decisions about his texts.

The Teachers' Evaluative Criteria

The teachers' evaluative criteria were revealed through their ranking and offering of reasons for their ranking of student texts and in the case of the fourth grade teachers through their "next step" plans for individual children concerning individual pieces of writing. For a more complete description the outline of the data collection, Chapter 3 for outlines of the evaluation tasks that the teachers performed. The following section will examine the criteria the teachers used. I will first discuss the text-related criteria applied by all of the teachers followed by more individual application of evaluative criteria. This section will only be concerned with the teachers' text-related criteria. I collected no data nor will I report on any social influences on the teachers' evaluative criteria. What will be reported and discussed here are the criteria the children's third and fourth grade teachers used to evaluate student-authored texts.

Table 7 indicates the language arts placements for each of the children in each of the years of the study.

Most Frequently Applied Criteria

All of the teachers evaluated student texts on the basis of the development of the plot and theme of stories or

Table 7. Children's Language Arts Placements

	First Year Grade 2	Second Year Grade 3		Third Year Grade 4	
	Benedict	Greene	Court	Lerner	Barrett
Beatrice	■	□	■	■	□
Beverly	■	□	■	■	□
George	■	□	■	■	□
Jack	■	□	■	□	■
Jane	■	□	■	■	□
Luke	■	□	■	□	■
Sarah	■	■	□	□	■

Note: Although I am listed here as the children's second grade teacher, my criteria for evaluating student texts will not be discussed.

the points in expository texts and the overall organization of individual papers. These criteria were used in evaluating both their own students' texts and the two student texts which all of the participants evaluated.

Mrs. Greene applied these criteria to nine pieces of writing. She said, for example, that Sarah's MY DRAGON NAMED SENO was "coherent, had a good plot, a flow of ideas and was clear." On the other hand, she evaluated THE RUBY STEALER by the same author as "somewhat involved--it has definite possibilities, but it needs work on development. It's typical of this author; it ends abruptly." Likewise Jack's DIAMONDS she felt was coherent, and his KARATE DOG included a "creative flow of ideas, [and had a] definite beginning, middle and ending."

She made similar evaluations about THE FROG and ENCOUNTER WITH AN OPOSSUM. She said, "The author of THE FROG needs to polish up the organization so that all related information is together." She reported that "The whole piece [ENCOUNTER WITH AN OPOSSUM] was clever." She liked the organization and felt the paper was well developed.

Mrs. Court applied the criteria of organization and development frequently. She said, "I'd have liked to see Luke expand LUKE IN MAINE," and "I would have liked to know more about how [Luke] felt about the move" in his NEW HOUSE piece. She felt that Beverly, Beatrix, George and Jane had

all written stories with good plots and had included good and in some cases clever solutions to story problems. On several occasions she evaluated pieces as having an unclear plot or story line and she found George's BACKPACK MAN and his OLYMPICS pointless. Beatrix's BEST BAKERY IN BOSTON was, she felt, a good departure from Beatrix's animal stories, but she sensed that Beatrix "didn't quite have control over the story." Finally, Mrs. Court applauded the organization of THE FROG. She said, "It's written in a clear, interesting and well organized manner."

Mrs. Barrett, on the other hand, felt that THE FROG had "no central thread to tie the paper together [even though] the facts were incorporated in an organized and interesting way." Mrs. Barrett's comment about how she might confer with Jack about his turkey piece further illustrates how she would apply her criteria of development and organization to assist a writer.

I'd suggest an outline of the major parts of the story. The main idea of the beginning, body, and end of the story. It's been a problem for this author to develop plots, so I might ask that he use personal narrative instead. If he chose not to, I might suggest he write the end first then set it aside and start his story again.

Mrs. Lerner reported that the writer of AN ENCOUNTER WITH AN OPOSSUM had an "interesting way to use research material. The writer had a nice way of going from the story to the information and then drawing it back into the

story." The writer of THE FROG she felt had not developed the paper well. Although the information was thorough and useful, the text was "too cut and dried."

These teachers all seemed to evaluate texts based on the total impact of the piece of writing before looking at components of the text itself. Although these were the primary criteria, the subsequent discussion will demonstrate that the teachers, like the children, had multiple and diverse criteria.

Frequently Applied Criteria

Description/Information

Mrs. Greene, Mrs. Court, and Mrs. Lerner all evaluated texts on the basis of the inclusion of or lack of description and information. Mrs. Court was most likely to use the criteria of details and information when she felt the writer had included sufficient description and details. Luke, Beverly, George, and Jane had, she felt, all written pieces which included either good descriptions or good information and details. Her comments, "It was completely filled out," about Beverly's GREENWOODS and that THE FROG was "well researched and included facts I hadn't known before," are indicative of her application of these criteria. Mrs. Lerner was more likely to apply these criteria when she felt information and description were

lacking. For example, George's THE PLANET OF ETERNAL DAY, she said, "Has an outline of what he wants to have happen, but he doesn't give enough description."

Leads and Endings

Mrs. Greene, Mrs. Court, and Mrs. Barrett all evaluated writing based on the success of the writer's lead and/or ending. Mrs. Court was the most vocal about these criteria. Her evaluations indicated that she felt her students had more success with leads than endings. She particularly liked George's lead in THE FAIR:

"Oh goody! The fair! The fair!" said Ralph. Ralph started to jump up and down.

Their dad said, "It's hot in here," and opened the sun roof. Ralph went flying out of the car. His brother reached for him but missed. Ralph went flying onto one of the rides at the fair.

"Follow that flying kid," said their dad. Jim and his dad ran onto the ride.

She felt that her students' endings were often either vague or were a "cop out." she said, for example, "I don't like 'wake up from a dream' endings."

Mrs. Barrett found that the leads to both THE FROG and ENCOUNTER WITH AN OPOSSUM contributed to the success of the pieces. She said, THE FROG had "a provocative introduction" and that ENCOUNTER had "a meaningful conclusion that reflects well on a gripping introduction."

Language

Mrs. Greene, Mrs. Court, and Mrs. Barrett, although not applying the criterion of language often, all noticed when a student's written language surprised or pleased them. Mrs. Green for example commented on Sarah's use of alternatives for "said" in THE RUBY STEALER. Mrs. Court was struck by the wordplay in George's BACKPACK MAN. Mrs. Barrett found the language in ENCOUNTER colorful and interesting. She said, "the author has incorporated language which evokes both pictures and feeling for the reader."

Although these criteria were not as significant to the teachers as the criteria in the previous section, they seemed to feel that inclusion of details, descriptions, captivating leads, satisfying endings, and fresh language contributed to a student's writing. Moreover, they said that they evaluated the success of the writing and framed conference foci on the basis of these criteria.

Less Frequently Applied Criteria

There were many additional criteria the teachers employed, but there were only three with which individual teachers seemed most concerned. Therefore, I will only

discuss those three. The remaining criteria are summarized in the chart at the end of this section.

Character Development

Mrs. Lerner was the only teacher to apply the criterion of character development. She felt that Beverly, Beatrix, and George's stories (THE SIGHT FROM THE WINDOW, Beatrix's teenage piece, and PLANET OF THE ETERNAL DAY respectively) lacked character development. "The reader needs to know more about little Suzy Greene," she said. Likewise, George needed "more description of the various characters" in his story. In the case of Beatrix's story she felt Beatrix needed to supply the reader with information about the characters that would explain what motivated them to act in the story the way they did.

Interesting/Intriguing Content or Style

Both Mrs. Greene and Mrs. Court judged writing good that intrigued or interested them. They both found ENCOUNTER intriguing. Mrs. Court related that "since this paper is written as a personal narrative there was suspense and immediacy present to get the reader involved. It made me have a positive emotional response to opossums...It affected me on a personal/emotional level as well as an intellectual one." In a similar vein Mrs. Greene reported,

"The style of writing in ENCOUNTER was a much more creative way of reporting information. It kept my interest, and I was intrigued with the ability the writer had in being able to use this style effectively."

Voice

Mrs. Barrett evaluated ENCOUNTER as superior to THE FROG because of the presence of what she referred to as the author's voice. She attributed that presence to the writer's choice of what she called style. She said, "Surely there is a place for technical writing in our literature; however, once the mechanics are mastered the author realizes there is no place for her voice." Apparently she felt that narrative provided the writer with more opportunity to include his voice and therefore found that genre a more desirable one for students to write.

Experience

Mrs. Court evaluated many of the pieces of writing based in part on her own personal responses to the content or value-related themes. In some cases she acknowledged the existence of her personal preferences but seemed to be able to see beyond her values to the content and form of the writing itself. In a number of cases her evaluations demonstrated that she read the students' work with a keen

sense for underlying personal themes. For example, she saw the theme of Beverly's THE SWINGING DOOR as a baby sitting issue. She felt that this was a third grade issue--a time when children are feeling more independent and wanting to take care of themselves, and yet at the same time being a little afraid. The presence of this theme in the writing contributed to her positive evaluation of this piece. Mrs. Court said, "The baby sitting theme intrigued me...I liked seeing it brought into the writing."

Mrs. Court did not like Beatrix's THE LITTLE FAIRIES. She felt the story demonstrated a negative attitude toward boys as well as being a bit mean. She noted in Jane's stories boys and girls seem to be able to do things together. George's story NEWTS elicited a favorable evaluation because "he treated the animals gently." Beverly's GREENWOODS was of interest because it told of hunters' needs at the expense of animals. Mrs. Court found it particularly interesting because it was told from the animals' perspective.

The previous evaluations are not exhaustive but rather indicative of many that Mrs. Court made. What I find of most interest is not that she made these kinds of evaluations and the others did not, but that she recognized her biases and openly discussed them. Mrs. Court's evaluations often seemed to be funneled through her value

system. The decisions she made were rooted in her beliefs not only about writing but about living. Her awareness of the significance of the relationship between personal values and decision-making highlights the importance of teachers' recognizing how our values and preferences come into play when we make decisions in our classrooms.

Summary

Table 8 summarizes the text-related criteria these four teachers employed in evaluating student-authored texts.

Table 8. Teachers' Text-Related Criteria
for Evaluating Writing

	Greene	Court	Lerner	Barrett
Development of story/paper	■	■	■	■
Organization	■	■	■	■
Description/Information	■	■	■	□
Leads and Endings	■	■	□	■
Language	■	■	□	■
Voice	□	□	□	■
Character Development	□	□	■	□
Intriguing Content	■	■	□	■
Sense	□	■	□	■
Realism/Plausibility	□	■	□	□
Literary Quality	□	■	□	□
Humor	□	■	□	■
Action	□	■	□	□
Illustrations	□	■	□	□
Titles	■	■	□	*
Theme	■	□	□	■
Surface Features	■	□	□	■
Dialogue	□	■	■	□

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Discussion

The following section will address the three questions which guided this study:

- 1) What criteria do second, third, and fourth graders use to evaluate student-authored texts?
- 2) How do students' social worlds affect their evaluations of student texts?
- 3) Do elementary students and their teachers use the same criteria to evaluate student-authored texts?

Students' Text-Related Criteria

During the course of the study, the criteria used by the students increased and changed. An exception is seen in the third year of the study. Although a similar range of criteria were employed during this time, the number of criteria employed by each child decreased. There are several possible explanations for the decrease in the number of evaluative criteria the children used. First, the change in the nature of the fourth grade evaluation tasks might have resulted in fewer criteria being employed. For example, the interview was eliminated and the group evaluation task used in the third grade year was changed to give reader-based feedback to the writers.

Additionally, when the children did evaluate two pieces of student text, they did so in writing rather than by writing and discussing. The elimination of the discussion may have limited the number of criteria each of the children reported using. Another related influence might have been that the fourth grade self-evaluation task involved only three pieces of writing and all of the same genre. An additional explanation may be that the children, as they matured, internalized and consolidated their evaluative criteria. Therefore, those criteria they verbalized might to them have been the most pertinent rather than all of the criteria they utilized. Finally, the volume of writing seemed to decline in the third year of the study. When I examined Mrs. Barrett's' students' folders for three pieces of writing from the same genre, I found roughly four or five pieces of writing in each folder. Mrs. Lerner did not give me the folders to examine, but rather gave me three writing samples from each child. I have no way of knowing what other writing the children were doing. My interactions with the students did not indicate that there were other pieces of writing which they would rather have discussed, nor did my discussions with them indicate the extent of conferring and actual time spent writing as the interviews of the previous year had. The possibility exists that the

students may have been relying on criteria they had established previously when writing was a more prominent classroom activity.

In many cases the children's evaluative criteria were specific to the piece of writing they were evaluating. Although they used multiple criteria when evaluating texts, the nature of the criteria were dependent on the text. The students' application of the criterion of humor is a good example. This criterion was applied almost exclusively to George's stories. He used it in all three years of the study; and except for Beatrix's application in the first year of the study, the criterion was used only when Jane, Luke and Sarah evaluated George's third grade writing. It was the nature of the texts that elicited the criterion. All of the children readily applied the criterion, but it was applied only to work that included humor. The evaluations, therefore, seemed in cases such as these to be a two step process. First, the child identified a criterion that was relevant to the text, in this case humor, and secondly evaluated the text on that criterion. Humor itself is not good or bad, how it is used is.

An additional finding reveals that what Newkirk (1982) labels "proto-critical judgments" were present up to and including the fourth grade year. This was

particularly true in the category of illustrations applied by Luke and George. While Newkirk's differentiation between critical and proto-critical judgments was to a certain extent useful and applicable in the first year of the study (see Chapter 2 for additional concerns with this model), by the second and third year of the study his categories could not be applied to the data. His differentiation seems to work for younger writers but it appears that as writers mature they sometimes apply criteria in more complex ways than earlier in their writing careers; therefore, the criteria are no longer beginning or "proto-critical" criteria. As with the criterion of humor above, the differentiation of whether the criterion is proto-critical or critical does not seem to be relevant. What does seem important is whether this is a relevant criterion to apply to a specific text and secondly how the text is then evaluated based on the criterion. When George, for example, used illustrations in *BACKPACK MAN* as an intricate part of the text, it seems not that he was unable to tell in writing what he had communicated through drawing, but rather that he chose drawing as a better way to inform his reader. Had he described his characters as looking like little pacmen carrying backpacks, he may have deprived his reader of discovering his subtle play on words through the

illustrations. Saying that a lexical rather than a graphic representation of this information was superior or more sophisticated would, it seems, be akin to suggesting that Sendak's WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE might better have been told through text alone than through an orchestrated integration of text and illustration.

Another interesting finding is that the students seemed to evaluate aspects of texts like language, leads, endings or adventure. They looked at aspects of the text that stood out either because they made the text successful or because they detracted from the text. It was not until the second year of the study that Beverly, alone, took a more global approach and evaluated texts on the basis of plot and story development. She was joined by Beatrix in employing this criterion in the third year of the study. It is interesting to wonder if developmental or instructional factors are at work in this area. Clearly the students had been exposed to literature conventions as evidenced by their application of criteria related to literature like genre, content, and language. In addition they were in many cases writing connected stories, but none but Beverly and later Beatrix applied this criterion.

The present study is similar in intent to Hilgers' (1986) study. Some of his findings were:

- children did not spontaneously consider audience;
- changes in evaluation criteria occurred over time;
- the ability to talk about criteria is an important factor in a child's development as an evaluator;
- non text-based evaluations figured prominently.

The findings of the present study indicate that although there were times when children did not consider audience, there were many instances when they did. The reader will find numerous examples of students' attention to audience in the social influence sections of the previous chapter. For example, when Luke discussed the need to include not only drawing but writing in his work as well, he explained the need from the reader's point of view, showing concern that a reader might not receive his intended message. Jack was concerned about audience to the extent that he included his potential readers in his texts to pique their interest. Jane found she needed to include details that she felt the reader might miss or question if they were lacking in her text. George explained that sometimes he read his work as he would read a new book, anticipating his readers' reactions and questions. All of the participants demonstrated considerations they made for the benefit of their readers.

The present study also found that the children's evaluations changed over time. In some cases they applied new criteria and in other instances they refined their criteria. As was previously mentioned, their criteria were further shaped by the texts they evaluated. The growing sophistication of their texts in some cases seemed to increase the sophistication of their evaluative criteria. This finding supports Hilgers' (1984) contention that children often employ elements in their own writing prior to applying criteria relevant to these elements. I would concur, however, that this is not always the case. Luke's evaluations concerning conventions of genre in the first year of the study demonstrates that children are capable of applying evaluative criteria to other texts prior to evidence of those same criteria appearing in their own texts.

Hilgers found that the ability to talk about criteria seems to be an important factor in a child's development as a writer. Not only does this ability to talk about criteria seem to be important but the opportunity to talk seems imperative and a consideration for teaching implications. Both Jane and Beverly, for example, remarked on how helpful the reader-based-feedback sessions were and asked when I would return to help them to continue to look at their writing in new ways. Luke

used the talk in the reader-based-feedback session to re-examine and rework his draft. Jack and George used the talk in the group evaluation tasks in the second year of the study to re-examine their own criteria and consider those offered by Jane. Sowers (1985) reports that sometimes research procedures seem to "generate the kind of talk about writing which the children later internalize to regulate their writing process" (p. 297).

In the present study, non text-based evaluations were also significant although not employed by all of the children. Among the most often or most prominently applied were evaluating text on the basis of experience or illustrations. There were also many factors in the social climate within the classroom that further influenced the children's evaluations and writing decisions. Hilgers seems to group all of these non text-based evaluations under the category of "other" and offers little discussion. I feel the social influences need to be considered in detail. The next section will address those influences.

Social Influences on Evaluative Criteria and Decision Making

It was clear from the data that the writing of each of the children was influenced by social factors within,

and in some cases outside of, the classroom structures in which they worked. This finding supports Dyson's (1985) contention that in spite of teachers' intentions and instruction, there is learning or there are influences within classrooms that are outside of those experiences which teachers consciously provide or in some cases of which they are even aware. The entire story of how social factors influence, enhance, guide or short circuit the writing is not completely apparent, but the data do provide some insights.

At the beginning of the study the children had all had two years of writing experience in school. During that time and possibly even before that time, they had begun to develop evaluative criteria. And so, evaluative criteria in the first year of the study were not only developed during their second grade year. In the same way the social environments in which they worked also had begun to shape their writing decisions. I do not think the social influences can be discussed without looking at those influences in relationship to the individual participants' text-related criteria.

The text-related criteria which the children applied were the criteria that at the time they held within themselves and used to measure the success of their own and their peers' writing. They then used the classroom

social environment as a barometer to measure the effectiveness and appropriateness of their application of these criteria. When the people in the social environment were saying, "Yes, we think that's good, too," the individual continued to apply his own criteria. If the group or individuals within the group indicated that the writing did not meet their criteria, the writer then seemed to examine her own criteria and make decisions based on her own evaluation criteria and the information coming from the environment. These decisions appeared to take two forms. In some cases, as in those of Sarah and Jack, the individuals questioned and abandoned their own criteria in exchange for what they perceived were either the group's or respected individuals'. Sarah did this to such an extreme that by the third and final year of the study it was impossible to glean what her own text-related criteria even were.

In other cases the participants apparently used the feedback from the social environment to reassess and reshape their own criteria. This was most apparent with George, who did not often revise individual pieces of writing, but rather used feedback from teachers and peers to revise his writing in general. He applied this writing strategy through all three years of the study. Beatrix and Jane internalized information from their social

environment much more slowly. They did not readily modify their own criteria, but rather looked and listened and picked and chose the changes they might make in their application of criteria. While Jane became ever more willing to receive feedback from peers, consistently avoiding teacher feedback whenever possible, Beatrix increasingly resisted any kind of feedback. Beverly admitted that she considered her peers' feedback cautiously. She, unlike Jane, seemed to trust the teacher feedback more. She found that peers often made suggestions she didn't like. Perhaps she found it difficult not to take the suggestions once they were offered. Jane, on the other hand, indicated that she tried to control the feedback by asking for questions. She felt readers' questions targeted places in her writing that she needed to address. Luke actively sought peer feedback and was acutely aware of his audience. Over the course of the study he increasingly sifted the feedback through his own evaluation criteria, making decisions based on how he felt he might improve his texts.

There is another way to examine the relationship between the students' individual criteria and the social influences within the classroom environment in the context of the present study. There are at least four ways students might respond to feedback:

- 1) receive feedback, make no change to current draft, change criteria held and/or process in general;
- 2) receive feedback, make changes in text based on feedback, make no changes in criteria or process;
- 3) receive feedback, make no change in text, make no changes in criteria or process;
- 4) receive feedback, make changes in text based on feedback, change criteria held and/or process in general.

George followed the course outlined in the first option. This happened repeatedly in the first year of the study, and it continued to happen during the third year as well. For example, George said he wished his peers to give him feedback related to language during the reader-based-feedback session. Although response and suggestions did come up during the session, George made no revisions of this nature in his text. When questioned regarding this he replied, "Oh, I'm writing another piece and I'm putting interesting words in that one."

Luke more often followed the second course of action. During the first year of the study he brought THE BATTLE OF THE TURTLE to the authors' circle. (See Chapter 4 for a description of the sharing.) After taking Keith's suggestion to add information to his story he abandoned the piece. This incident characterized Luke's response to feedback. He tried to incorporate the feedback he was

offered but the feedback did not seem to suggest to him changes in his criteria nor changes in his process that could be employed when constructing subsequent drafts.

The responses Sarah and Jack had to feedback seemed to be best described by the third option. Most often there were no changes in their texts as a result of feedback, nor was there any evidence of changes in criteria or process. What seemed to happen most frequently was that comments short of praise caused both Jack and Sarah to change their own evaluations of their writing from good or at least acceptable to poor. The result was that their self esteem rather than their writing or evaluative criteria was affected.

The fourth and final option on the surface seems to be the ideal. A student employing this option would hear feedback, revise, and then begin to modify and revise his criteria. Beatrix, Beverly, and Jane showed more evidence of employing this option than any of the other participants. However, when there was conflict between their own criteria and feedback offered from the group, they more often than not relied on their own criteria. They all seemed to devise their own strategies for controlling the feedback they received from the social environment. Both Jane and Beatrix were "watchers" and relied heavily on the watching, internalizing criteria

they found most acceptable. Jane sought feedback from peers, especially in her third and fourth grade years. She was always careful, however, to be sure the feedback was in the form of questions. Beverly reported that she found teacher feedback most useful. It is interesting to note that the inevitable conflict that exists when feedback is not in sync with individually held criteria can also provide a safeguard. If these three students did not check the feedback against their own criteria, the results might well have been that they learned to revise texts and adopt new criteria which did not end in improving their texts in particular and helped to undermine their writing in general. Revision of text and criteria do not necessarily result in improved texts nor better criteria. What seems most likely is that students' decisions are influenced by the interaction between their own criteria and personality and the social climate of the classroom in which they work.

Some children appeared to have been guided more by their own criteria while others more readily relied on cues from the environment. Although each of the participants seemed to make writing decisions by interpreting the relationship between their own criteria and what they perceived were the criteria employed within the social environment, the decisions they made appeared

to reflect not only their own criteria but their senses of themselves as writers as well. Those who recognized the potential of receiving text-related feedback from their readers and interpreted that feedback as information that might be useful while working on a current or on a subsequent draft, seemed better equipped to weigh the value of information and feedback from the social environment. They more often evaluated their writing and the feedback they received through the lens of their own evaluative criteria, making decisions to satisfy first themselves and secondly their readers. In the first year of the study, Beatrix received feedback from her peers relative to her story THE LONGEST CAR. Following the authors' circle, she listened to an audio recording of the discussion and made decisions about how the story would proceed. This strategy worked for Beatrix in her second grade year, and it is a strategy to which she returned in her fourth grade year during the reader-based-feedback session.

Those who generally used opportunities for feedback for purely social purposes, more often abandoned their own criteria and tried first to satisfy their readers' needs. Since they seemed relatively out of touch with their own criteria, the result, more often than not, was that their writing satisfied neither themselves nor their readers.

This happened most frequently to Sarah. She described at length the process she used to write THE RUBY STEALER in third grade. She relied heavily on Lucy for the content and form of this piece, not trusting her own judgments. When her peers questioned her about her ending, her evaluation of the piece changed and she abandoned the piece altogether. It is interesting to consider what enabled some students to respond to feedback and decide what they might do as a result of the feedback, while others tried only to meet the needs of their readers or to abandon the writing altogether. Clearly, the students' interpretations of and decisions concerning the events and structures of their classroom environments did not always coincide.

Comparison Between Students' and Teachers' Evaluative Criteria

This section will address the evaluations made by the students in the second and third year of the study and the evaluations made by their third and fourth grade teachers. Since I was the teacher in the first year of the study, and objectivity concerning my own evaluative criteria might be difficult to obtain, no comparison will be drawn between teacher and students for the students' second grade year.

Several findings emerged when the teacher and student data were compared. The findings were in keeping with Newkirk's (1984) finding that teachers and students do not always evaluate pieces of writing in the same way. When I examined texts that both teachers and students ranked, the results indicated that there were a great many similarities between the two evaluative groups. That is to say that when the students' rankings were averaged, the teacher and student rankings had many similarities. For example, the following chart shows how the students as a group and how Mrs. Court evaluated six of George's third grade texts.

STUDENT RANKING

The Us Family
 Newts
 Space Ace
 Backpackman
 The Fair
 Olympics

TEACHER RANKING

The Us Family
 Newts
 The Fair
 Space Ace
 Backpackman
 Olympics

The differences arise when one examines not how the group but rather how individual children ranked the same texts.

LUKE

Newts
 Backpackman
 The Us Family
 The Fair
 Space Ace
 Olympics

JANE

Space Ace
 The Us Family
 Backpackman
 Newts
 Olympics
 The Fair

BEATRIX

The Us Family
 The Fair
 Space Ace
 Newts
 Backpackman
 Olympics

Although he did not rank the texts numerically, George also ranked these texts:

BEST	MIDDLE	WORST
Backpackman	Newts	The Fair
The Us Family	Space Ace	Olympics

This example is typical of the similarities and differences among all of the rankings. While I was not specifically concerned with how the participants ranked individual texts, it is important to note that even though the teacher and student rankings resembled each other on the surface, when one examined how individuals ranked the texts, there was a great deal of variation among their judgments.

An additional finding reveals that the criteria which the students and the teachers used to make their evaluative decisions were, in many cases, also different. There were two differences that emerged. First, on the whole, the teachers used more criteria when evaluating a given text than the students did. However, when I examined the entire list of criteria used by both groups, the number of different criteria employed were similar. The fact that the participants wrote their responses may have contributed to this difference. Secondly, the actual criteria themselves were different. For example, the teachers' evaluations of THE FROG and AN ENCOUNTER WITH AN

OPOSSUM (see Appendix E) were characterized by comments like the following:

- It was an interesting way to use research material.
- I felt the whole piece was clever.
- No central thread to tie piece together.
- This piece is intriguing.

The following comments characterized the students comments:

- A major strength is the lead and ending
- Some of the frog story I didn't understand.
- It had no action in it.
- I like the way the beginning sounded like a story.

The most striking difference between the students' and the teachers' evaluative criteria was that the students more often cited criteria related to specific aspects of the texts to support their evaluations, and the teachers first offered criteria reflecting a more global reading of the texts. The teachers were concerned with the way the writers organized a paper, approached a topic, and included a central theme. Hilgers (1984) suggests that professionals most frequently evaluate texts using criteria which "require complex cognitive ability" (p. 381). He states that their evaluative statements include such descriptors as: "coherent, consistent, complete, creative, nicely paced, clever, moving, and it really worked" (p. 379). If this is true, and there are similarities between Hilgers' descriptors and those applied by the four teachers in the present study. The students may not yet have been able to apply criteria

their teachers applied. On the other hand, experience was a criterion already being employed by four of the children in the first year of the study. In the second year of the study all of Mrs. Court's students but Jane employed this criterion. In the following year the three students who continued to apply this criterion were all former students of Mrs. Court's. Mrs. Court was the only teacher who used this criterion. This example points to the possibility that there may be instructional as well as developmental factors to consider.

In the second year of the study the students most frequently evaluated texts on the basis of: inclusion of excitement and adventure, surface features of text, leads and endings, adhesion to what they considered rules of specific genre, and topics and supporting details. (This list is written in descending order on the basis of the frequency with which the criteria were applied.) The teachers, on the other hand, first evaluated texts on the basis of the development of the story or paper. That criterion was followed in descending order by: organization, description, leads and endings, language and, intriguing content.

The criteria most frequently applied by the students in the first year of the study, experience and length, were not within the most frequently applied criteria in

the second year. This finding indicates that the students' criteria were changing. The data suggests that the impetus for the changes came from several sources. First, several of the criteria from the students' list also appear on the teachers' list. This result, coupled with supporting data from the students concerning their perceptions of their teacher's expectations, points to the possibility of the teachers having influence on the students evaluative criteria. The criteria of leads and endings and supporting details or description are most apparent. The students also applied the criterion of surface features of text frequently. This criterion does not appear on the teachers' "most frequent" list. There seem to be three possible explanations for this.

First, the texts the teachers' own students wrote and they evaluated had all been transcribed and put into standard form. Secondly, the teachers may not have considered the surface features of the text important to their evaluation of the text. Third, the teachers may have tempered their evaluations because they felt they knew what my criteria might have been. I feel that a combination of the three possibilities probably most accurately accounts for the absence. For example, both Mrs. Court and Mrs. Greene attended an inservice writing course led by Solsken, Sullivan, and me during the first

semester these students arrived in their classrooms. The course modeled a process approach to writing and encouraged teachers to raise concerns about editing after students were satisfied with their content and form. Data offered by Sarah and Jack suggests that surface features of text were important to Mrs. Greene. In addition, Mrs. Court noted that the first paragraph of OPOSSUM needed editing. Her comment and the children's application of this criterion suggests that this was of some importance to Mrs. Court and further that she may have instilled the importance of the criterion of surface features of text in her students as well.

This finding would support Newkirk's (1984) finding that students' evaluations may, in part, be a result of previous schooling. In the case of the present study, the previous schooling included not only the kindergarten, and first grade years, but the current year under investigation as well, due to the fact that data was collected at the end of the school year. The data, therefore, reflected most specifically influences from the current year's experiences.

A second explanation for the students' changing criteria may be a result of growth and environmental influences. For example, it is interesting to note that all of the students applied the criterion of adventure or

excitement when evaluating student authored-texts. In addition five of the students applied the criterion of genre. Neither of the teachers applied these criteria, nor does the data indicate that the students felt their teachers valued these criteria. I would suggest that these criteria emerged as a result of a combination of models based on the students' reading, as well as reinforcement from the peer group that the best writing included excitement and adventure.

In the third year of the study the students' evaluative criteria were once again re-ordered. At this point language, experience and the surface features of text were the criteria most frequently employed. As previously mentioned, there were also fewer criteria applied by each individual. There were similarities between the criteria employed by the teachers and the students. For example, the language criterion was used by all but Mrs. Lerner. Mrs. Court had applied the experience criterion frequently the previous year. Mrs. Barrett applied the criterion of surface features in the fourth grade data. This finding seems to continue to support Newkirk's (1984) finding concerning the effects of previous schooling. He goes on to point out that this explanation is not conclusive, "Such an explanation does

not answer the question of why [a] particular injunction 'took' while others, did not" (p. 294).

It is interesting to look at Newkirk's statement in conjunction with the two criteria the teachers used most frequently: development of a piece of writing and organization. If these were criteria the teachers most valued, it is interesting to wonder why organization does not appear among the criteria the students employed at all; and development occurs in the second and third year of the study among Beverly's criteria alone and in the third year of the study is mentioned by Beatrix. It seems possible that one explanation for why some injunctions "take" and others do not may be a child's maturity and development.

These children and their teachers did not always use the same criteria to evaluate texts, nor did each group always place the same value on the criteria they employed. There does, however, seem to be a relationship between those criteria both groups applied. It appears that if the student is capable of employing a specific criterion his teacher may have some influence in the application of that criterion. On the other hand, there seem to be criteria which teachers hold that their students are not ready or able to apply. In other cases the teachers may have failed to communicate sufficient

information concerning the criteria they apply to their students. Once given the suggestion students may well be able to effectively apply these criteria themselves. In addition, there seem to be criteria which children apply and value that are not employed by the adults who teach them. The implications of these findings will be explored in the next section.

Implications for Teachers and Researchers

Implications for Teachers

The classrooms in which these seven children worked over the three years of the study varied, and yet similar findings seemed to emerge from each of the years. Among those findings are the following:

- 1) children use a wide range of criteria to evaluate their written texts;
- 2) the criteria children use can vary from child to child;
- 3) a child may use the same criteria in different ways across time;
- 4) children's criteria change over time;
- 5) children's evaluative criteria are affected in part by the social environment in which they work;
- 6) there are differences among the criteria employed by children and their teachers;
- 7) the evaluative criteria teachers hold may influence their students' evaluative criteria.

Since all children neither hold the same criteria nor work at their best within the same context, the teacher could take into consideration both the content of evaluative feedback and the context in which it is offered.

During the course of this study different children seemed to have their need for feedback met in different contexts. For some the large group authors' circle provided the wealth of ideas they needed for their writing. For others a small consistent conference group seemed to offer the comfort a child needed to re-examine his texts. And yet others seemed to profit most in a one-on-one interaction with another student or a teacher. No one way was best for all of the children. Teachers might consider a variety of contexts in which their students can receive feedback. By doing just that we can not only increase the likelihood of finding situations that are comfortable and productive for all of our students, but we can also expose students to forums they might not choose of their own volition.

The children in this study and the students in Hilgers' (1984, 1986) studies did not all use the same criteria to evaluate student-authored texts. The students in the present study and in Newkirk's (1984) study did not use the same criteria to evaluate texts as their teachers or instructors did. These findings suggest that teachers

could also consider the content of feedback sessions. Since the criteria individual children may employ may not be the same nor might they be consistent with criteria employed by the teacher, it seems important for the teacher to engineer feedback sessions so that a whole variety of criteria are examined. Bringing new criteria to students' attention may well help them consider elements in their writing that have never occurred to them before.

The reader-based-feedback sessions which were part of the data collected in the third year of the present study, seemed to be useful for some children. The children responded to writing in ways that were not apparent in other contexts. Therefore, it might be useful to apply some of Elbow's (1981) techniques in elementary classrooms. In addition we should continue to seek a variety of ways to help students view their texts.

Finally, the present study suggests teachers may in part influence and control the evaluative criteria children employ and later internalize. If this is true, it seems important for teachers not only to be aware of their own evaluative criteria, but further to make sure that these are criteria which they wish to foster in their students.

In addition it is important for teachers to recognize that when they move from a judging to a facilitating role in the writing classroom, some children may find themselves a bit "at sea" when the traditional role of the teacher as the formulator of the criteria by which writing will be judged is no longer practiced by the teacher, then that role may be turned over to the peer group by children like Sarah and Jack. Teachers must first recognize this transfer. Secondly, they must find strategies to help students like Jack and Sarah develop evaluative criteria and weigh feedback in relationship to their own criteria. These students need to be helped to see their way through what they view as the over-riding social influences and recognize their worth as writers and evaluators.

Implications for Researchers

The present study and the studies conducted by Newkirk and Hilgers focused predominantly on evaluation of written products. The present study suggests that teachers should approach evaluation from a variety of contexts or audience formats and encourage their students to consider a variety of evaluative criteria when evaluating their own texts. Although Hilgers (1984) suggests that writing does not take place without the

writer making evaluative decisions during every part of the writing process, he offers little if any evidence to support this claim. Intuitively I see merit in his statement. It seems that future research concerning children's evaluative criteria should move into classrooms and examine the evaluative decisions students make while they actually prewrite, draft, revise, and edit their texts. The effect of the social climate on students' writing and evaluative criteria should also be considered in these contexts.

An additional finding of the present study was that teachers most frequently employed criteria which applied to the whole text, for instance, development of a paper and organization. The students, on the other hand, more often used criteria which addressed parts of the texts, excitement, language, and surface features, for example. Further research might reveal whether: the same pattern would emerge with students and teachers in different settings, the difference was a result of instruction, or the difference was a result of development and maturity on the part of the students. Newkirk's work with college freshmen (1984) indicates that at that point students do address the whole text. He found, for example, that the category of "the role of order organization" (p. 290) received the highest number of total responses. The

findings from the present study coupled with Newkirk's seem to suggest that developmental issues may be important in this quarter.

The classroom teacher is an intricate part of the classroom social environment. The present study and Newkirk's (1984) study suggest that the teacher might influence the evaluative criteria students employ. Further findings indicate that there are probably criteria teachers value and possibly try to instill in their students which do not find their way into the individual student's repertoire of evaluative criteria. It would be interesting to explore the reasons some of the teacher's evaluative criteria are imparted to students and others are not. Findings from the present study and Hilgers (1984) suggest that one possibility may be that there are criteria which adults can and do apply which their students are not yet capable of applying.

Additional information concerning students' evaluative criteria may emerge through an examination of the social climate within writing classrooms. It seems important to examine not only how the students are affected by the social environment, as was addressed in the present study, but also to examine the social influences on the teacher's evaluative criteria and how

the relationship between teachers and students affects students' evaluative criteria.

Children, regardless of what happens as part of the instruction within the classroom, seem to make evaluative judgments about their written texts. It seems clear that educators will be better equipped to help students reach their writing potentials if they are aware of what criteria their students apply and the sources which guide those criteria. In addition the present study points to the need on the part of educators to help students see alternatives and evaluate the potential benefit of those alternatives to themselves as writers.

APPENDIX A
SECOND GRADE INTERVIEW

Name _____ Fall _____ Spring _____

1. How often would you come to the authors' circle if you could come as frequently as you wanted to?
2. At what point in you draft would you come?
3. Why do you come to authors' circle?
4. What do you like about authors' circle?
5. What don't you like about authors' circle?
6. Does the authors' circle help you with your writing? How? (or why don't you think it does?)
7. What do you do with the information you get at the authors' circle?
8. Do you ever add any of the suggestions you get to your pieces? Could you give an example?
9. Do you ever answer any of the questions in your pieces? Could you give an example?
10. Do you ever change anything because of the authors' circle? Could you give an example?
11. Do you usually listen to your authors' circle tape before going back to work on a piece?
12. How do you decide what to add and change in your pieces and what not to add or change?
13. What would you do if someone didn't understand your writing? Would you make any changes?
14. Do people ever use your ideas in their pieces? How do you know?
15. Do you listen to every piece shared or only to some of them? What makes you do that?

APPENDIX B
THIRD GRADE INTERVIEW

Name _____ Date _____

1. Do you have a writing time in your classroom? Tell me about it.
2. How often do you write?
3. Do you write at times other than writing time? Tell me about that.
4. What happens during writing time in your classroom?
5. What kinds of things do you write?
6. Can you describe how you write a piece from how you decide your topic 'til you reach final draft?
7. Is this process the same for everything you write? (How about if you were writing a poem, letter, a report...How about if you didn't like what you were writing, or if you got stuck?)
8. Do you get help from other people when you write? Tell me about that.
9. Do you ever change things when you write? After you write?
10. What kinds of things do you change?
11. What makes you decide to make those changes?
12. When you write for whom do you write? Who do you want to read your work? Who is your audience?
13. Is it always the same? Why/why not?
14. What makes a piece of writing good?
15. When is writing not good?
16. Is that different or the same for children and adult writers? Why/why not?
17. When you write a piece do you have a purpose in mind?
18. What are some of the purposes for which you write?

19. Do you usually achieve your purpose?
20. How do you know if you achieve your purpose?
21. Is the purpose always the same?
22. Do you read much? About how much each week? (In school/at home?)
23. What do you read?
24. Do you have a favorite author or favorite kinds of books you like to read?
25. What kinds of writing do you prefer to read?
26. Are there specific topics you like to read about?
27. Why are those your favorite?
28. Are the things you like to read well written?
29. What makes you say that?
30. Can you tell me about something you have read that you feel was well written?
31. Why do you think the author wrote that?
32. For whom do you think (s)he wrote it?
33. What does your teacher think makes writing good?
Not good?
34. Do you watch TV? About how much a day?
35. What do you watch? What is your favorite program?
36. Do you think it's well written? Why/why not?
37. Where do you get your ideas for your topics?
38. Are you a writer?
39. When did you become a writer?
40. When did you do your best writing?
41. Was there a time when you weren't a good writer?

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE THIRD GRADE GROUP/TEACHER EVALUATION
RESPONSE SHEET

Evaluator _____

GEORGE

Initial Ranking of Third Grade Writing

TITLE 1 _____

TITLE 2 _____

TITLE 3 _____

TITLE 4 _____

TITLE 5 _____

TITLE 6 _____

Ranking Following Discussion

TITLE 1 _____

TITLE 2 _____

TITLE 3 _____

TITLE 4 _____

TITLE 5 _____

TITLE 6 _____

APPENDIX D
READER-BASED-FEEDBACK QUESTIONS
FOURTH GRADE

1. What has this section just said?
2. What do you expect in what follows?
3. At this stage are you more WITH the writer or AGAINST him? Why? If you are fighting the writer what would it take to get you to be WITH him?
4. Continue reading. Make pencil marks to give a fuller record of how you are reacting to the words: put a straight line next to passages and underneath words and phrases that work or please you; a wiggly line in the same way for parts which don't work or bother you in some way.
5. What is the most important thing about this piece?
6. What do you like about the piece at this point?
7. Remain silent and reflective for a few moments. What is happening to you? What delayed reactions or second thoughts do you have? Which parts of the writing seem to have been written in invisible ink and to emerge only slowly as you hold it over a candle for example?
8. Summarize the piece.
9. Summarize what you feel the writer is TRYING but not quite managing to say?
10. Summarize what you WISH it were saying.
11. Tell how someone different from you might react. "If my MOTHER read this, she would think it was..."
12. Make up an image for the relationship between the writer and reader. Does the writer seem to have her arm draped familiarly over your shoulder? Is the writer shouting from a cliff to a crowd below? Reading to you from a stage? Sending a letter bomb? Speaking like a daddy to his family from the head of the dining room table? Shaking her fist at you?

13. Try conveying the voice or tone by mimicking it. For example, "Look buddy I'm in the know . I've seen it all."
14. Use camera metaphors for how the writer handles her material. Where does she move in close, where does she fade back? Where is it sharp or fuzzy? Is she using special effects or gimmicks? Do they work for you?

Adapted from Elbow, 1981

APPENDIX E
EVALUATION OF TEXTS BY UNIDENTIFIED
STUDENT-AUTHORS BY TEACHERS AND STUDENTS
(Third Year of the Study)

Name _____

I am conducting a study that deals with criteria students and teachers use to judge writing quality. Please evaluate these two papers, both written by elementary students. IN YOUR JUDGMENT which is the better paper?

1. Circle the title of the paper you consider better.

THE FROG

ENCOUNTER WITH AN OPOSSUM

2. Explain the reasons why you gave THE FROG the evaluation you did. What are the major strengths and weaknesses of the paper?

3. Explain the reasons why you gave ENCOUNTER WITH AN OPOSSUM the evaluation you did. What are the major strengths and weaknesses of the paper?

4. Summarize you reasons for giving one paper a more favorable evaluation than the other.

Adapted from Newkirk, 1984

BACKGROUND INFORMATION GIVEN TO EVALUATORS

Each student was assigned to research and write a paper about an animal of their own choosing which resides in the local area.

The students knew that their final drafts would be placed in their own personal collections of writing as well as into a group collection which would be circulated through the school library.

They each made personal decisions about how they would approach their topics and convey their information.

STORIES STUDENTS AND TEACHERS EVALUATED

(Transcribed as Written)

The Frog

A male frog clutches a female frog under water. As the female lets out her eggs, the male drops sperm on the now fertilized eggs. She may lay 1,000 to 20,000 eggs. They look like little black dots in a jelly-like coating. They are about the size of a match head. Fish will eat some of the eggs. They will hatch in about seven days into tadpoles, also called pollywogs (the real name for tadpoles is larva). They will eat a microscopic plant that grows in ponds and fish tanks called algae.

About a month goes by and the tadpoles become frogs and climb out of the water. They will return to the water because they are amphibians. Amphibian means "double-life". It will spend about half of its life in the water. Frogs are the best known amphibians.

Eons ago frogs were the first back-boned amphibians out of the water. Though the frog has a backbone, it does not have ribs. It also does not have a neck and it does not have a eye lid. What it does have is a clear covering which will come over the eye.

In the winter the frog goes under ground in mud and will hibernate for the winter. Frogs are cold blooded amphibians which means that the frog will be the same temperature as the air around him. In the summer the frog will find a place were a heat sorce will fall on him and sit there until the frog has become warm enough. Then it will move away from the heat sorce and cool down by doing swimming or somthing else.

Some of the frogs enemies are: raccoons, turtles, herons, snakes and large fish. The frog can swim away from an enemy or just for fun. As it goes faster it becomes more streamlined. It swims by pushing against the water with its back legs which once unfolded prove to be more than twice the frog's size.

Also the frog has an original way of camouflage. The top of the frog is usually green with brown spots. It's belly is white. This is the way it is camouflaged. The bottom of a pond in usually dark. When an enemy looks down it does not see the frog because the green and brown of the frog blend in with the bottem of the pond. When a

fish looks up from the bottem of a pond it usually sees white of the sun on the water. The frog's belly is white so the frog blends in with the top of the pond. This is one of the ways the frog can escape enemies. Another is that the frog can almost see in a circle. This also helps the frog capture its prey.

When the frog sees some prey right in front of it, it will whip out its tongue and capture its prey. Its tongue is attached to the front of the frog's mouth. After the frog catches the prey on its stickey tongue, it will bring the prey back to its mouth and hold it with its teeth. The frogs teeth are used for holding food only. The frog will not chew its prey but eat it whole. Two of the frogs favorite foods are flies and mosquitoes. Some others are insects that eat farmers' crops. This is why farmers like to have frogs around the field and in the barn. Farmers buy frogs and will let them lose in the field.

You can tell if the frog is male or female by the size of the ear located behind the eye. On the male the ear is bigger than the eye. Another way is that the male is smaller than the female. Frogs size ranges from one(1) to eight(8) inches in length.

A way to tell Frogs from toads is that frogs have smooth moist skin with no warts. They do not have to drink water. When they swim their skin absorbs the

water. They do not have gills. Their skin takes the oxygen and sends it to the lungs. A Toad has dry bumpy skin with warts. You will not get warts by touching it.

I picked frogs as an animal because they can be found almost all around the world, also because the resources were plentiful. Another reason was that we had tadpoles in a ditch very near our house.

Encounter With an Opossum

"Woof! Woof!" my dog barked. "Shhh!" I whispered stroking my dog's head. She was out there. The opossum I've been looking for, for months. I wouldn't have been out there unless my curiosity was very strong. I grabbed my flashlight and slid the glass door. "Stay!" I said to my dog as I squeezed out the door and turned on my flashlight. Suddenly something scurried in the bushes behind me. I twirled around my flashlight shone directly on her. The common opossum and her 12 babies stood frozen in their tracks. I was almost that they were going to fall over put their tongues out and close their eyes. That is what they do when they are faced with danger. They do not mean to do this, they are in a state of shock. Predators, such as the wildcat, fox and bear, think they are dead and leave them alone.

Just then she scurried of further away into the black of the night. I followed her into the forest.

Two months ago I saw the opossum for the first time. I was so interested the next day I went to the library to find out about them. Here's what I found out.

The common opossum is a marsupial animal. A marsupial is an animal born at an imperfect stage of development. They spend their first few weeks of life in their mother's pouch. When they are just born 24 of them can fit in a teaspoon. 170 of them weigh just an ounce.

At ten weeks the babies can run and climb. When they are 4 months old they are old enough to live on their own.

They are noturnal animals and when the mother goes hunting the babies cling on her back. They eat nuts, berries, frogs, mice, and small birds. They also eat birds eggs. They get them by climbing up a tree. Then they wrap their tail around a branch, lowering them down into the nest, grabbing the eggs and pulling themselves up again.

They have gray-black fur on top and white hair underneath to give them a silvery look. Their ears are black and have leathery feel. Their tail has scales instead of fur. They're about the same size as a domestic house cat, when they're full grown. Their also good at climbing trees.

They used to live the southeastern U.S. Within the last half century they have moved northwards. Into New York State, New England, Southern Canada, and westward.

That's what I learned but I want to find out more. So that's why I'm following her.

I walked stealthily behind her, about 15 feet away. All of a sudden she stopped abruptly. She looked around, and then pounced on a mouse. With the mouse in her, she walked up a hill. She found some leaves for her nest. With the leaves in her fore feet, she passed them under her body. The hind feet then took the leaves and passed them to a hook made by the tail, that's curved inward. The hind feet then packed the leaves in place in the hook so they wouldn't fall out. She walked on deeper into the woods with the leaves in her tail, the mouse in her mouth, and her 12 babies clinging to her back. Who could say this was not an intelligent animal?

Out of nowhere a hollow stump appeared. Daybreak was just coming, the opossum into it. I heard some rustling in there. Probably packing the leaves. A second later not a sound stirred. I stood looking at the stump, as if a trance had fixed me there. An early bird broke the trance. And with the thoughts of the nights events, I walked slowly back to my house, through the woods.

APPENDIX F

Excerpt from One of George's
Choose-Your-Own-Adventure Stories

p. 1

You are a secret wars superhero iron man. You have a job as a _____ and are disguised as a _____. You are in you apartment when the trouble alert comes on. You open your secret computer (creak). On your computer your commander tells you that the criminals, Doctor Doom and Brainyack, have escaped from Alcatras prison.

Go to page 2.

p.2

He tells you that they're either at the Tower of Doom or at the island of Hawaii, so you have a choice. They have used the Tower before but maybe not this time.

If you go to the island of Hawaii, go to page 3.

If you go to the Tower of Doom, go to page 4.

p.3

You start flying toward Hawaii. You are over the sea when you see Doctor Doom's airplane. You hear gunshots and ...

SPLAT!

THE END

p.4

You head for the tower of Doom. They must be inside if this is their fort. You can either enter through

the front door and blast out of the doom slammer or
blast through the wall.

If you go in the doom slammer, go to page 6.

If you go through the wall, go to page 5.

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