THE IMPACT OF FOUR TYPES OF PRE-WRITING STRATEGIES

ON THE WRITING PERFORMANCE OF

SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS

By

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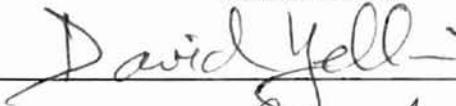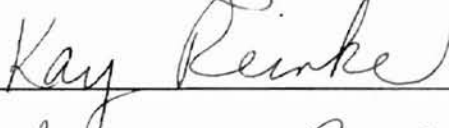Bachelor of Business Administration
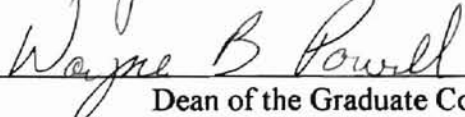
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Criticisms of how and if learning is achieved in our American schools has been voiced during the past decades in books such as, <u>Why Johnny Still Can't Read</u> (Flesch, 1981), <u>What Are Schools For</u>? (Miller, 1990) and <u>Dumbing Us Down</u> (Gatto, 1992). Mainstream news magazine articles, such as the <u>Newsweek</u> "Why Johnny Can't Write," interviewed educators, such as Dr. Carlos Baker, who claimed that writing is by far the most difficult thing for a child to do, while at the same time it is the most important ("Why," 1975). Writing is essential to collecting and organizing information. "The writer becomes a presence, existing in a way that he or she does not when silent" (Murray, 1996, p.3).

Many noted writing instructors (Calkins, 1994; Atwell, 1990; Murray, 1987; Graves, 1983) have found that not only is writing a difficult task for students but that teachers need as much guidance in learning how to teach writing as the students need in order to learn how to write. Graves (1978) saw that many students found writing assignments a punishment. This, he believes, is due to mechanics being given more weight and attention than the content of the writing. By inappropriately attending to these necessary but peripheral features of writing, educators may neglect more important aspects of writing such as content and organization (Graves 1978).

National writing test results are not promising. The results of the 1992 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Writing Portfolio Study (Gentile, Martin-Rehrmann, & Kennedy, 1995) showed that creative and narrative writing is inadequate.

The assessment writing samples came from actual student portfolios. The NAEP Writing Portfolio Study had the following writing objectives:

a) "Write for a variety of purposes: informative, persuasive and narrative; b) write on a variety of tasks and for many different audiences; c) write from a variety of stimulus materials and within different time constraints; d) generate, draft, evaluate, revise, and edit ideas and forms of expression in their writing; e) display effective choices in the organization of their writing, including detail to illustrate and elaborate their ideas and use of appropriate conventions of written English; and f) value writing as a communicative activity" (Gentile, et. al., 1995, p. 172).

In this study, students submitted what they considered their best writing samples. The results for narrative papers showed that only 1% of personally selected best papers of fourth graders were developed stories while the eighth graders had a showing of 12% developed stories and 1% elaborated stories (Gentile, et. al., 1995, p. 30-31). Results for informative papers were lower. Eight percent of fourth graders wrote at the discussion level and 1% had a developed discussion; the remaining 91% had at or below undeveloped discussion. The eigth graders led slightly. They showed 23% for a discussion or developed discussion level (Gentile, et. al., 1995, p. 48-49).

The same study found only two focal points from the study survey that explain what better writers do that other writers do not. First, the survey found that students who write better write more (frequency and length) both at home and at school than their peers. The second finding was that these same students used process writing strategies. This implied that poor writing could be due to lack of opportunity to write

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and poor understanding of writing strategies.

Other statistics cause concern. A 1991 survey revealed that 88% of employers and 82% of educators found the writing skills of high school graduates poor ("What's wrong," 1993). A 1997 survey revealed that 80% of employers found the writing skills of high school graduates poor (Woodhead, 1997). This strongly contrasts with the students' perception of their own writing. Over 2/3 of the high school graduates felt that they did have acceptable writing skills. This might be due to a lack of school writing assignments. Seventy-five percent of grade twelve students in an NAEP survey claimed that they were given no writing assignments in their history or social studies classes ("What's wrong," 1993). When asked how many papers they wrote in the last six weeks for *any* class, less than half of the students reported one to two while 11% reported none. More recent results have shown no improvement in writing performance in the 1996 NAEP writing assessment (Campbell, Voelkl & Donahue, 1997).

The expectation of acceptable to good writing performance overflows into the workplace. Writing is the basis for most formal business communications. Employers need employees who have good writing skills. However, those who cannot write at an acceptable level in school cannot be expected to suddenly become good writers when they leave school. Finding capable employees continues to be problematic for companies. Applicants submit application forms which contain writing deficiencies. One third of job applicants are routinely rejected due to obvious poor reading and writing skills ("How Businesses," 1992). Businesses lose more than $30 billion annually due to weak reading and writing skills of employees. The same amount is spent training employees (Gatto, 1992).

A study conducted by the Society of Professional Journalists found that the main criticism of news directors was that the new graduate hires had an inability to write well (Guernsey, 1996). This complaint overshadowed the poor knowledge base necessary to write intelligently about events. George Washington University economist John Kendrick believes the connection between productivity/competition and employee skills/employee adaptability is attributed to the weakened condition of public education (in Gatto, 1992).

The last few decades, in response to the cautionary forecasts, have seen more schools offer an opportunity for writing activities as an effort to improve the low writing scores. As a result, many educators now know about the writing process, student author development and the relationship of writing to learning (Chew, 1985). Response journals have a daily place in many content classrooms (Gunderson & Shapiro, 1988). The writing workshop was introduced by Graves (1983). Murray (1987), Graves (1983) and Calkins (1994) wrote several books about the writing process. Atwell (1990) explained how writing assists students in their problem solving skills in every content area. From a student's viewpoint, this means that writing has more potential than simply writing a story or review. Atwell (1990) and Elbow (1973) have explained writing in a simple way implying that anyone can be a writer. Murray's (1987) book about writing to learn is an encouraging resource for teachers writing. The above authors describe writing as easy to teach as well as fun. However, theory put into practice requires continuous effort.

Although a more recent survey (Applebee, 1995) shows that many teachers recognize the writing process as an appropriate writing approach, they have not

necessarily applied this approach in their classes. Most still adhere to the traditional writing instruction and grading.

Perhaps a flaw lies in the inadequate teacher training (Silberman, 1989). If a teacher is not a writer, then it is very difficult to teach writing. Many teachers are not competent or do not feel competent to teach writing (Silberman, 1989; Graves, 1983). Bowie (1996) asked 226 student teachers in Tennessee to complete a questionnaire about to how those pre-service teachers saw themselves as writers. He found that they did not feel confident to evaluate writing samples. In addition, Bowie found that the pre-service teachers felt they should have had more writing instruction, as well as more instruction on their role as a writing instructor (Bowie, 1996). Additionally, more than 2/3 of the 60 surveyed teacher educators felt that teaching pre-service teachers how to write and training pre-service teachers how to teach writing was not an instructional goal; only 1 teacher educator felt it necessary to train pre-service teachers to write (Bowie, 1996). The national and state writing programs are set up so that teachers teach other teachers to write (Silberman, 1989). Today, every state in the US can offer a writing project to teachers either after school or during summer vacation. Many teachers participate, but many others have obligations elsewhere and cannot attend (Silberman, 1989).

The lack of writing skills among beginning teachers has also been documented by several researchers. For instance, Melton (1998) reported that only 65% of the students seeking admission to Virginia's teacher education programs passed the writing portion of the Praxis Series Tests. Praxis (Professional Assessment for Beginning Teachers) is a series of tests administered by Educational Testing Service. These results are awkward

for the state of Virginia to explain while at the same time it emphasizes a need for more instruction in writing; a $38 million budget expenditure is proposed for new teachers. The apparent lack of writing skills in recent high school graduates who propose to be future teachers indicates that the writing problem continues.

Children, as developing learners, have been studied by numerous researchers; among them are Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Maria Montessori, Jerome Bruner, Erik Erikson, Noam Chomsky and Howard Gardner. Educators have studied their theories and those of others; their works influence educational philosophy and curriculum. Still, it seems that curriculum specialists do not consider all they should consider when grooming students to be writers and scholars.

Since the 1960's there has been a movement towards a more student-centered approach, collaboration and team teaching (Atwell, 1990). Rief's (1991) student centered approach described in Seeking Diversity: Language Arts with Adolescents is exemplary of this type of change. Students receive value and validation; teacher lecture is minimized to mini-lessons. Process writing is used in the classroom.

The writing process apparently has become a part of many classrooms. Fifty-nine percent of the teachers in NAEP's 1988 teacher survey claimed to use process writing in their classes. By 1992, this figure jumped to 71%. So, although surveys show a noticeable shift to a writing approach, students still are not performing at acceptable levels nor experiencing writing awareness. When only 15 to 45% of students can perform writing activities above the minimal level and do not understand what to do to be successful, educators should be concerned (Applebee, 1994). The figures were not noticeably improved in the 1996 assessment (Campbell, et. al., 1997). Of course,

not all classrooms adhere to the writing process approach and even in those that do, many students still do not know how to write (Goldstein & Carr, 1996).

Another concern regarding writing is the lack of encouragement for creativity. Many students write to please the teacher rather than themselves. Students are socialized to accept the beliefs and skills considered necessary for their society and after they have internalized them, they become inflexible and rule-bound (Wolf, 1988). Consequently, a student would not feel safe to deviate from this programmed thinking, finding it difficult to think and to write creatively (Gentile, et. al., 1995). The implication seems to be that students who want to succeed in school must conform.

If students do not understand the criteria the teacher is using, they completely rely upon teacher feedback to let them know if their writing is adequate (Gentile, et. al., 1995). Approximately one-half of the fourth graders surveyed about process writing were not clear about the writing goals in their classrooms (Gentile, et. al., 1995). One reviewer found that self-awareness and metacognative skills seem to be a missing part of student performance (Gentile, et. al., 1995). Good writing is hard to achieve when both the goal and process are unclear. When students' writing indicates that their evaluation and reward come only from their teacher, educators should be concerned.

Another concern is the equity of opportunity to write. The biggest loss in writing potential may be from the low-achievers and the at-risk students. Parnell (1991) states in his book that the neglected majority of at-risk students exceeds 60% of many high school populations due to labeling and tracking. This means that classifying a student is self-fulfilling and permanent. If a student is labeled at-risk or assigned to general track, he would expect shorter and more simple assignments, and corresponding

performance is anticipated (Miller, 1990). Comprehension questions, reading logs and summary writings were found to be the favored writing assignments by teachers for the nonacademic track students while college bound students were given more text-based writing assignments (Applebee, 1995). Lower performance is expected from the at risk students -- and they in turn accommodate this expectation by performing less in quality and quantity. In many instances, when a student is treated equitably, the "dumb" student blossoms (Miller, 1990, p. 146). When award-winning schools were observed, differences that put them apart from other public and parochial schools were detected. Notably, a difference was in the amount of written work assigned and performed as well as a focus upon literature. The award-winning schools gave students more opportunity to write (Applebee, 1995).

Another area of concern is the pre-writing stage of process writing. Historically, it is the most neglected area (Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1987). This planning phase of writing requires the largest proportion of writing time (Murray, 1987; Graves, 1983), but many teachers do not consider it an important part of the writing process. A major portion of students reported being given up to three minutes before beginning their writing samples (Applebee, 1981). A pre-writing strategy was used by 29% of fourth graders, 35% by eighth graders and 46% by twelfth graders, as shown by one survey interested in the frequency of the use of process writing by teachers and students (Goldstein & Carr, 1996). This information suggests that pre-writing is not given the time nor importance that it should have, as suggested by Murray (1987).

The pre-writing strategy of listening to music while thinking has been overlooked for its benefit to the classroom. Some studies focusing upon the academic

advantage of music in the academic settings have not been successful (Oliver, 1996) although some educators found music helpful for learning (Fitzgerald, 1994; Botwinick, 1997), reading (McGuire, 1992; Wright, 1977; Rietz, 1976), and writing (Olson, 1992).

The visual arts have historically been neglected in the writing classroom. Writing evolved from drawings (Platt, 1978). Cave drawings tell of hunting and of visiting tribes. Drawing, outside of the art lab, has been considered a stage (scribbling and drawing stage) in childrens' writing development, used as an alternate form of written expression (Reutzel & Cooter, 1992), or it has been used at any grade level as an illustration after writing, if time permits (Stein & Power, 1996). Calkins (1994) found that young children employed drawing as a preliminary to their writing and sometimes alternated between writing and drawing. Art educator Janet Olson (1992) believes that moving back and forth between creative drawing and creative writing could help some poor writers access their ideas. Because a drawing corresponds to written symbols, and because symbols contain intensely personal meaning to a student, writing and drawing are particularly helpful to each other for achieving meaning (Platt, 1978).

Several prewriting strategies that have been used include discussion, journaling and webbing (Atwell, 1990; Calkins, 1994). Background knowledge acquisition is stressed. Two prewriting strategies which appear to be underutilized are: a) first listening to music while thinking about the topic prior to writing (Scott, 1996), and b) drawing prior to writing to help pull out underlying ideas (Norris, Reichard & Mokhtari, 1997; Olson, 1992).

Statement of the Problem

Writing performance is suffering in the US despite the use of process writing.

The pre-writing segment of process writing appears to be the most neglected. There is not enough research to determine which are the best pre-writing strategies. There is limited research on the pre-writing strategies of music and drawing.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of four different pre-writing strategies of 'only-write,' 'think-write,' 'music-write,' and 'draw-write' have upon the writing achievement of sixth grade students as measured by 'content,' 'organization,' 'mechanics' and 'overall writing quality.' In an effort to capitalize upon the writing process and allow students more opportunity to express themselves on topics known by them, this study addressed the pre-writing segment of the writing process.

Significance of the Study

Prior research in the area of developmental writing (Murray, 1987; Graves, 1983) has shown that effective writers take time to plan, write, and revise what they write. These pre-writing strategies are tremendously helpful for developing writers who are often unaware of the importance of such strategies. In addition, researchers have also found that pre-writing strategies such as drawing (e.g., Norris, Reichard and Mokhtari, 1997; Hubbard & Ernst, 1996; Diaz-Camacho, Foley & Petty, 1995; Calkins, 1994; Olson, 1992; Graves, 1983) or listening to music prior to writing (e.g., Botwinick, 1997; Fitzgerald, 1994; McGuire, 1992) have a positive impact on writing.

The present study seeks to examine the effects of four pre-writing strategies on the writing performance of sixth grade students. The findings of this study will add further evidence to the existing body of research relative to the importance of pre-

writing strategies on the writing skills of developing writers. Especially important in this study are the potential effects of these strategies on a population of students which has not been studied previously (i.e., sixth grade students).

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations apply to this study:

1. This study was limited to one middle school in Oklahoma that accommodated all students in the town and surrounding country area. The results of the study may only be generalizable to comparable groups.

2. The sixth grade students who were participants in this study were primarily Caucasian.

3. All classes performed the same pre-writing strategies on the same day and in the same order. Counterbalancing the pre-writing strategies may have led to different results.

Definitions

Content - Refers to the generation, development and clarity of ideas in written material.

Mechanics - Refers to the conventions of writing which include spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Organization - Refers to the arrangement and fluency of ideas and their coherency throughout the written material.

Overall Writing Quality - Refers to the overall quality of written product as measured by content, organization and mechanics.

Pre-Writing Strategy - Anything which is appropriate in preparing to write. This is

the "getting ready" step. (Reutzel & Cooter, 1992). It could include drawing, using graphic organizers, brainstorming, listening to music and many other thought-provoking activities.

Hypotheses

This study explored the following five hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in writing performance among the subjects, as measured by a 'content' score, after using any of the four pre-writing strategies of 'only-write,' 'think-write,' 'music-write' and 'draw-write.'

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in writing performance among the subjects, as measured by an 'organization' score, after using any of the four pre-writing strategies of 'only-write,' 'think-write,' 'music-write' and 'draw-write.'

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in writing performance among the subjects, as measured by a 'mechanics' score, after using any of the four pre-writing strategies of 'only-write,' 'think-write,' 'music-write' and 'draw-write.'

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in writing performance among the subjects, as measured by an 'overall writing quality' score, after using any of the pre-writing strategies of 'only-write,' 'think-write,' 'music-write' and 'draw-write.'

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant difference in writing performance

between males and females after using any of the four pre-

writing strategies of 'only-write,' 'think-write,' 'music-write'

and 'draw-write.'

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

This study seeks to find the impact of four pre-writing strategies on sixth grade students' writing performance. Therefore, it is appropriate to review literature on writing under the following headings: Student Writing, Creativity, Music and Drawing.

<u>Student Writing</u>

Atwell (1990) and Calkins (1994) have written books about students as writers. They believe that the writing process and writing workshops help students find the author that lives inside them. Also, they want to impress upon educators and teachers the importance of helping students be authors and to believe in students as authors as well as holders of important information. This attitude directly affects the performance of students' writing.

Students' current attitudes towards writing is directly related to past successes with writing experiences (Mlynarczyk & Haber, 1991) and teacher reaction (D'Arcy, 1989). Not only will past successes affect the students' writing attitude and performance in school, but a teacher's writing assignments and responses to the students' writing could influence them throughout their lives in their approach to all their writing tasks (D'Arcy, 1989). The influence could be positive or negative.

The attitude of the teacher is a powerful influence on a student's writing attitude (Reutzel & Cooter, 1992). Students who are provided a positive environment and are not rushed through the writing process, who receive encouragement, engagement and tools necessary for nurturing creativity and production, can feel safe (van Manen, 1991).

Sometimes adults are so overwhelmed with preparation, coordinating and paperwork that they neglect the nurturing and connection that students need. The interactive process is essential. Even a well-planned day led by an enthusiastic teacher is less effective if the teacher does not constantly consider the students' perspective, schema and voice (van Manen, 1991). When students need to feel safe to invent and create, the environment is ideal for them to perform at their best level.

The impulse to express oneself is an instinct, and writing satisfies the need to do this (Temple, Nathan, Burris & Temple, 1988). In this study, before starting kindergarten, students wrote on many types of surfaces with various markers, and they look forward to writing in class on the first day of school (Graves, 1983). Writing is one way of confirming oneself, of stating to others that this is what I think and this is who I am (Graves, 1983). Farnsworth (1990) stated that students write not as a cultural survival tool, but because they need to write. The focusing and information processing necessary for writing helps them learn in content areas and learn how to solve problems. In this way, learning and writing seem to be mutually beneficial.

Students need for others to validate what they write, making writing a developmental need as well as a vehicle for communication (Graves, 1978). Graves is a proponent for making time for all types of writing in a classroom, justifying it by the position that all voices must be heard in a democracy, even those with poor communication skills. He believed that writing is more than a social communication tool, it contributes to the intellectual and emotional growth of everyone, regardless of background or talent (Graves, 1978, p. 62). People are impelled to communicate. Students are intensely driven to explain their experience in writing. They can achieve this

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by writing, fulfilling the need to make sense of their lives and to validate their thoughts (Calkins, 1994).

Students hold a great deal of knowledge and experiences that they do not realize are interesting to other people. Teachers should remember that students do not see themselves as carriers of information; teachers must help the student tap into his or her schema in order to detect and utilize their background knowledge (Murray, 1987). When students write about ideas originating from their own schema, their writing performance results are good; when students are told what and how to write, their writing performance results are bad (Murray, 1987). Holt (1972) stated that "people, and above all, students may not only have much greater learning powers than we suspect, but . . . may be able to teach us, if we are not always busy teaching them" (pp. 77-78). He felt that students not only held creativity in their schema as thinkers and writers, but that they also were the sources we should seek when contemplating environments and choices to give our students. It is essential to allow students an opportunity to select and access their own experiences when they write so that they can develop their writing to the level at which writing instructors and content area teachers are expecting.

The basis of good writing is pre-writing (Thompson, 1991). Pre-writing is part of the writing process when students retrieve information and plan (Calkins, 1994; Murray, 1987; Graves, 1983). The planning is necessarily contingent upon the type of paper, or writing, which the students expect to do. The students may outline, discuss, write in their learning journals, draw, or use other options available to them. These provide a means to access the information already in their heads that they might not

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otherwise find, to acquire new data, to decide what they want to write, and to organize the material. Students must be able to access their background information in order to place genuine thoughts upon paper.

Murray (1987) believes that in order to make sense and write well, a person must understand his topic, purpose and audience. Until this occurs, others cannot understand his writing. A brief description of Murray's process writing model would be: Collecting material, focusing on the goal, ordering the material logically, developing the story line, theory or characters, and clarifying information. This model, if one could classify collecting material, focusing on the goal and ordering of material as 3/5 of total process writing time, would justify Murray's claim that 60 percent of his time is used for planning. The writing process is based upon the strategies good writers use (Harrington, 1994). Weaker writers have been found to spend little time planning and good writers spend more time than average planning. Although not all students benefit from the process writing approach, those who used it were better writers, particularly if they used pre-writing activities (Goldstein & Carr, 1996).

One professional writer (Hart, 1997) finds it fascinating that in the entire list of writing problems, there is a singular problem that occurs when someone is in the act of actually writing, this being grammar and style deficiency. Absolutely everything else is a result of "decisions" made prior to writing the words on paper. This means that pre-writing is essential. This preliminary work, sometimes called rehearsal, meaning it is performed prior to writing, gives a student confidence. It also prevents the meandering, disconnected thoughts as well as unfocused, circular writing (Hart, 1997).

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Murray (1987) believes that in order to make sense and write well, a person must understand his topic, purpose and audience. Until this occurs, others cannot understand his writing. A brief description of Murray's process writing model would be: Collecting material, focusing on the goal, ordering the material logically, developing the story line, theory or characters, and clarifying information. This model, if one could classify collecting material, focusing on the goal and ordering of material as 3/5 of total process writing time, would justify Murray's claim that 60 percent of his time is used for planning. The writing process is based upon the strategies good writers use (Harrington, 1994). Weaker writers have been found to spend little time planning and good writers spend more time than average planning. Although not all students benefit from the process writing approach, those who used it were better writers, particularly if they used pre-writing activities (Goldstein & Carr, 1996).

One professional writer (Hart, 1997) finds it fascinating that in the entire list of writing problems, there is a singular problem that occurs when someone is in the act of actually writing, this being grammar and style deficiency. Absolutely everything else is a result of "decisions" made prior to writing the words on paper. This means that pre-writing is essential. This preliminary work, sometimes called rehearsal, meaning it is performed prior to writing, gives a student confidence. It also prevents the meandering, disconnected thoughts as well as unfocused, circular writing (Hart, 1997).

We cannot "learn kids" (Calkins, 1994, p. 265). Kids need, as learners, not to wait for information to come to them. As active learners, students must first observe and predict; then they confirm and re-question; next they build hypothetical answers. Finally, they confirm or reject their hypothesis. It is all part of learning (Calkins, 1994). Calkins uses the writing workshop model to help her students achieve writing ownership and achievement. The model includes: Sharing, Mini-Lesson, State-of-the-Class, Writing/Conferencing/ Editing/Revising/Publishing/Sharing. Some of her suggestions for mini-lessons are appropriate for preparation for the writing process, as well as for use during the actual writing. Teachers can model strategies that authors use: a) A writer decides on what particular idea he must focus; b) Writers note what they see and remember or write it down; c). Writers "know the value of closing one's eyes and making a mental picture of one's subject, then writing" down who, what, when and why (Calkins, 1994, p. 218).

Teachers must periodically talk to their class about the specific and important issues that affect students' personal lives. When they do this, then they recognize that they know quite a lot about issues that affect their own lives and therefore can write about these issues. Then they can start connecting what they learn to their own lives (Atwell, 1990). With proper encouragement and stimulation, students become confident and are then ready to express what is in their imagination (Rubin, 1990) and those who are confident enough to know what they want to write and who understand their audience will produce good writing (Fulwiler, 1987).

Time is a crucial but precious commodity in classrooms. The instructional concept of giving time to students helps them form ideas and story angle; it is a basic

requirement (Giacobbe, 1986). Interruptions occur throughout the day. Preparing, listening, organizing, questioning, discussing and confirming require time. One segment of process writing may require more time than allotted. Confused students waste their time. Some seventh grade students have been found to sit in their seats for days, producing nothing that could be subject to grading (Phenix, 1994). Talking with students to help them come up with possibilities from their own background knowledge takes time. Fulwiler (1987) encourages educators to make time for writing; educators generally do not recognize that "writing is basic to thinking about, and learning, knowledge in all fields as well as communicating that knowledge" (p. 1).

Teachers need to make the time not only for students to have the time to collect information, focus, order and organize, but they need to take some time to teach and model how to do this as well. When teachers ensure this occurs in their classes, they will note rapid improvement in students' overall writing performance (Power, 1996). Elbow (1973) uses one method that he believes directly and powerfully accesses information; he calls this exercise the freewrite. This gathering of information consists of writing, as quickly as one can, without worry about mechanics, about whatever one can pull from his mind in ten minutes. This unjudged, rush performance is one kind of rehearsal for creativity in writing or written response. The power of the freewrite is that students do not need direction from a teacher, they can use this tool whenever they feel they need topic clarity, focus or exploration.

Finally, incorporating a long prewriting phase is important in securing a writing product that someone wants to read (Bright, 1995). Pre-writing can be messy and it often does not look like writing. The difference between professional writers and

novices is that professional writers know that before they have a finished product that they will first produce messy, frustrating writing (Fulwiler, 1987). Pre-writing may appear to lead nowhere, but it is preparation necessary for a writing product. Students must know what to do with the information they access from their background knowledge, research and imagination. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) states that the writing process is difficult in that one must focus upon two conflicting goals: a) Listen to hear the story or information in one's unconscious; and b) at the same time force the message into a suitable form. The first requires openness; the second requires critical judgment. These two goals must be constantly balanced, shifting first to one and then to the other. The writer must balance this process or process stops (Csikszentmihalyi,1996).

Considering that students need time to write (Murray, 1987), that the process must be balanced (Csikszentmihalyi,1996) and that a writer slides between the parts of process writing (Murray, 1987; Fulwiler, 1987), Flower and Hayes (1981) used protocol analysis to detect how good writers write. They found that once ideas emerge, good writers continue to consider the audience, task and goals. Not only do writers pause to find and synthesize ideas and make the ideas or knowledge into understandable text, but they continuously pause to reconsider how their subsequent text will be structured and logically connected to the original goal. This also means that students should not focus solely upon sentence-level planning. Planning must also attend to the overall organization, coherence and focus of the written performance.

Thinking and Creativity

Goldberg (1992) allows that creativity requires stimulus from any appropriate

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arena. All students and teachers come from different backgrounds and carry with them into the classroom a variety of experiences. They also have acquired a variety of ways to express themselves. Students need to be able to express themselves in a form that helps them access their knowledge. Allowing various modes of expression gives more freedom to learn. Without this freedom, some students may be stifled.

Gatto (1992) has written that students need to have the freedom to say and write what they feel they need to express. He believes classroom teachers today give messages to students that schools expect students to be compliant and dependent. If this is true, it stymies creativity as well as motivation. This blocks the process of cognition; it turns students off; it repels possibilities. Wolf (1988) and Gatto (1992) explain that from these rules, students form their ideology, as dictated by their teachers. This is accepting another person's value for one's own as a means of solving problems (Corey, 1986). Students' own thoughts, individuality, metaphors, ideas and divergent thinking are, as a result, "fugitives of [their] unconscious" (Torrey, 1989, p. 65).

Teachers expecting the right answer or the one great piece of writing are encouraging dogmatism and discouraging independent or creative thinking. Students, in order to take risks, must feel safe enough to take risks (van Manen, 1991). Rules must be flexible in order for students to be inventive and thoughtful (Duckworth, 1987). Fear of being heard and fear of the reprisal of what one writes prevents good writing (Calkins, 1994).

When students write for the approval of their teacher, there is but one audience to consider (Gatto, 1992). Holt (1964) condemns the schools for creating an

atmosphere that is not intended for creative thought, experimentation and discovery, but for students to concentrate on teacher-pleasing tactics. This design sends the message that critical skills and individuality are undesirable. The combination of compliance plus the mandated reward system of grades sets up a system of dependency. This is exploitative of a student's inexperience (Gatto, 1992). Students want to please the teacher more than they want the integrity of writing from the heart. They trade creativity for a grade.

Graves (1978) has stated that the low skill level in writing could be the result of the change in paradigm: What once was considered an enjoyable skill or discipline at a younger age evolves, during the intermediate years, into a competitive, ranked, ruled punishment. In the intermediate grades, the mechanics of writing takes much more class time and is graded more heavily than the actual content of the writing. Graves finds that students feel that teachers and parents consider mechanics more important than content. Regimentation of this type and the writing process are incompatible (Carney, 1996).

Following Gardner's (1983) findings about individual learning styles, educators (Glasgow, 1996; Moje, 1995; Clyde, 1994) found what appeals to at-risk students and what motivates them to write. A classroom that accommodates every mode of learning enables student enjoyment and a safe learning environment. Many low-achievers and at-risk students are not traditional learners. Students are people with a variety of learning styles.

It is important that we know the needs and writing abilities of individual students but it is equally important to provide the right environment. Environment is

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an elementary, but basic need for students to be able to perform their best. Providing an appropriate environment at the needed times allows the students the opportunity to wonder, to pose questions, to pursue possible answers or to hypothesize, to discuss and to come to some type of conclusions (Giacobbe, 1986).

Providing opportunity and environment to wonder is important. Writing helps a person find and solve problems (Atwell, 1990). Some educators believe that few people are problem-finders and many are passive receptors (Sacks, 1997; Calkins 1994). Rather than purposefully inventing, creating, or discovering -- many students just sit back, waiting to be entertained. They absorb stimulation at a shallow level and are quickly bored. There is no capacity for sustained interest. The attention span is short. A teacher's enthusiasm for creativity and appropriate environment (this includes time to contemplate) are crucial provisions for active participation and for learning. Repeatedly, studies find that creative types of people observe what other people do not; they not only perceive problems that others do not, but are absorbed in the process of finding solutions (Murray, 1987). This is crucial for student writing (Graves, 1983). The causes for this impassivity may stem from many sources, including living in the age of Internet chat rooms and satellite television. A teacher has no control over what a students does after he leaves school but she can, however, have control over her own appreciation for creativity and how she models and encourages creativity for her students. The environment, enthusiasm and writing activities she provides her students directly affects their writing production.

To achieve creativity, which is necessary for success, solving problems, invention and discovery (in short, the future), changes must occur within the

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classrooms. Changes must occur so that communication arts peaks, or at least reaches an acceptable level of skill. Various modes of idea acquisition should be considered within these changes. Students were creative pre-schoolers. "Creativity is something that can be relearned, exhumed from the slag heap of institutional thinking and brought back to life, with careful nurturing" (Broedling, 1997, p. 8).

"Literature, art and music spring from the deep human need for transcendence and connection" (Mestel, 1995, p. 28). Young children are encouraged to use any medium in order to express themselves; their brilliance is subsequently noted. The joy, fun and stimulation of music and art are part of the early school years. However, at some point, these tools which are purposeful in creative writing are removed from the curriculum (Carroll, 1991). Those very tools, conduits to creativity and authentic narrative writing, are neglected after the primary school years. Furthermore, as students ascend through the levels of school, they are expected to pass beyond concrete thinking to use higher-level, analytical thinking.

Writers prefer using intuitive and perceptive skills over their judging and analytical skills (Piirto, 1992). In other words, writers utilize the right hemisphere of their brain (Edwards, 1989). This differentiation between the left and right hemispheres is important in writing because the right hemisphere is known as the visual-spatial, or experiential specialist (as opposed to the left hemisphere being the analytical, symbolic specialist). Symbolic learning is acquired from traditional schooling, but experiential learning is necessary for symbolic achievement (Williams, 1977). The use of both hemispheres enhances the brain's ability to release creativity (Edwards, 1986).

<u>Music</u>

Music has been played to soothe the soul, subdue burnout and energize people (Frazee, 1996). Because of music's supposed healing and conductive powers, doctors and organizations use patient care known as music therapy (Goldberg, 1994). The American Music Therapy Association works with people of all ages, of varying intelligence levels, in various settings, and with a wide range of emotional and physical disabilities. Music therapists use music as the basis for communication to build a relationship between therapist and client in intervention. Proof of music aiding stroke recovery was found when measures of timing and gait were more improved in patients who listened daily to self-selected music for 30 minutes for three weeks than in those patients who had not -- and the effects are lasting (Marwick, 1996). The music was used not so much for its motivational or imaging purposes, but for muscle control. The music enhances the stroke-damaged mechanisms in the brain. Because the organization of the brain requires several areas to work in tandem, improving one area improves the whole brain.

Music therapy is also used to motivate people. Many music therapy clients, because of their condition, feel isolated, depressed, or withdrawn, some have low-esteem and may be inactive. Music, for most clients, improved their psychological state and behavior (Marwick, 1996). The rhythmic auditory stimulation seems helpful for physical and emotional recovery. As for use as a pain reliever, music seemingly stimulates release of endorphins (which acts as a natural morphine), serves as a diversion from pain, and soothes pain anxiety (Marwick, 1996). Music may relieve

anxiety and assist in information processing. Hall (1952) found that the eighth and ninth graders who studied in study hall with background music displayed more reading comprehension improvement than did their peers who did not listen to background music while they studied in study hall.

Mueske (1994) found that music can relieve performance anxiety. The study focused upon college biology labs and their assigned lab students. The experimental group listened to continuous subdued soft rock music during lab. The control group had no music during lab. The experimental "music" group was found to spend much more time both in the lab and in performing their assigned lab work. The control group spent considerably less time in the lab and did not perform their work as effectively. The environment in the music lab was positive; it invited learning experiences.

Music has been connected to intelligence and literacy. Although there are few studies along these lines, the results are significant enough to consider. Several educators believe that music has a place in the reading classroom. Smith (1984) uses folksongs for a language experience approach. Students change the lyrics to the songs to fit the music. Children find that they learn syntactical patterns by arranging their own words to fit the rhythm of the song. Other researchers (Wright, 1977; Rietz, 1976) have found success in using folksongs to help children read.

Klink (1976) and Newsom (1979) found that songs, including those by the Beatles, helped his reading students with vocabulary and comprehension. Students read the lyrics, then they listened to the tapes. After the students practiced reading the lyric sheets, they worked on vocabulary and comprehension work sheets.

Douglas & Willatts (1994) found that rhythmic stimulation of music assisted in reading intervention. In their study the subjects, ranging in age from 8 to 10, participated in varying games of rhythm and pitch, frequently moving between auditory and visual processes, or used both. In this study, rhythm assisted in learning basic math functions such as fractions and multiplication. Pitch assisted in sound discrimination. The conclusion was made that: Reading problems may have some connection to poor rhythm and pitch perception, reading requires sound discrimination, music helps students develop multisensory awareness and that multisensory instruction is effective in helping some students learn to read.

In a study by Rauscher, Shaw and Ky (1993), college age students listened to Mozart (Sonata for two pianos in D minor) ten minutes prior to taking the spatial reasoning Stanford-Binet test. Results showed that students scored 8-9 points above comparable students who received ten minutes of either a condition of silence or a relaxation instructional tape designed to lower blood pressure (Rauscher, Shaw & Ky, 1993). Conclusions were that not just any music is sufficient to stimulate spatial reasoning, but that Mozart (1785) has a significant effect (Rauscher et. al., 1993).

The same team found that eight months of piano lessons helped their 34 subject pre-school experimental group. Their reasoning skills score (abstract skills used in mathematics, science and chess) for this group was 34 percent above the children who received eight months of computer lessons or singing lessons, or had no lessons (Rauscher, Shaw, Levine, & Ky, 1994). Additionally, the improvement is believed to be long-lasting.

Wiley-Khaaliq (1990) found that music assisted reading comprehension.

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Learning disabled students in the experimental group who listened to background music performed significantly better than the control group who did not. The results show that background music has an effect upon information processing.

Koppelman and Imig (1995) found that classical and jazz background music helps writing performance more than no music or popular music with lyrics. The classical music sessions resulted in students writing more words.

In a study by McGuire (1982) the effects of music and visual arts upon reading achievement were considered. Twenty-eight third grade students at one Hawthorne, California elementary school served as the experimental group. For eight months, the experimental group received music instruction two to three times a week and art instruction at least once a week. After testing, no change was found in listening skills but the study did find a positive correlation between reading growth rate, as compared to the district, and music instruction.

Weingrod (1995) believed that creative blocks require attention. In this study, baroque string quartet music helped artists pass beyond the writer's block. Weingrod believes that a person does not face an empty canvas in order to bring forth an image but that he paints a response from the music he hears. He indicated that writing is a reaction to music; the music stimulation assists in image-making.

Scott (1996) found an increase in creativity, imagination and writing performance in a fourth-grade class when they wrote to music. The soft, instrumental background music produced the effect of curiosity, calmness and quiet. Scott has used music for discussion, story writing, brainstorming, and class story writing. The result, Scott claims, is inspired student writing. Listening to selected classical music was the

conduit to inspiration. Their project opened their eyes to music as a new medium to bring forth emotion, and as a base from which to draw out lyrics (Scott, 1996).

Olson (1992) played non-lyrical music in the classroom while the students listened in order to help students visually imagine action as well as the sequence of its occurrence. The music evoked emotion because at times it played slow and peaceful notes, rapid and threatening notes, or other image-evoking tempos and tones. Because music is sequential in that definitive tones and tempos can be detected as the music is played, Olson's logic is that it parallels the visual-narrative sequence. The sequencing of the tempo and tones of the music helped students create characterization and action for their samples. Unlike what Scott (1996) did, Olson (1992) instructed her students to draw a triptych, which are three frames of sequential pictures, to indicate their individual interpretation of the arrangement. In this way, music helped the students produce a writing product.

Drawing

Scores of books and journal articles have been written about the importance of drawing and the role it plays in the stages of early-childhood writing. Writing is recording a thought or feelings on paper in a form that other people can understand (Reutzel & Cooter, 1992). The system, however, does not recognize the "cognitive economy" (Bruner, 1971, p. 14) of drawings and doodles made by older students and adults. One drawing can reveal many relationships (Ernst, 1996). Traditionally teachers allow students to draw only after the real work is complete. Drawing, prior to completion of written work, is considered inappropriate and childish. Students

learn that drawing is for little kids (Carroll, 1991). For some students the end of first grade is the signal that art is not encouraged when engaging in writing. This could be due, in part, to teachers feeling that art in the classroom is esthetic, and appropriate only when time permits (Stein & Power, 1996). The point is that, after the primary grades, drawing is necessary only to fill empty time.

Drawing has been found to assist thinking and writing. Olson (1992) suggests that when students cannot think of a writing topic, run out of ideas or fall short in story development, teachers can help stimulate ideas by having students make a series of drawings. Because many teachers have not valued this part of the writing process, the visual portion has historically been the last part -- illustration or decoration (Olson, 1992).

Fulwiler and Petersen (1981) do not agree that drawing should be performed last. This team sees doodling as a prescribed form of pre-writing. Not only that, but they have identified three types of doodling. Their reasoning is that doodling helps synthesize material that otherwise would not be complete enough to use -- rather like materializing a shadow.

The use of both drawing and writing can be a powerful combination. Olson's (1992) approach in her classes demonstrated that the combination of creative drawing and creative writing are effective for some students. However, for some students it went far beyond expectations. Stories were born from the drawings made during the pre-writing stage. The drawings depicted an event, told a story or described something. These scenes, therefore, acted as visual narratives for the students (Wilson & Wilson, 1979).

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The left-brain vs. right-brain research explains the dilemma of perceptions and how the brain screens them. Verbal categorization is a function of the analytical left brain. The holistic right brain minimizes words and instigates a non-judgmental awareness of how things are (Edwards, 1989). Several educators claim that activities which require the engagement of the right brain actually helps the performance of the left brain (Olson, 1992; Edwards 1989; Broudy, 1987). Activities (and curriculum) which effectively do this educate the total person (Olson, 1992).

Hubbard and Ernst (1996) report that numerous successful classes and workshops of educator-researchers use drawing as a complementary tool of writing. Their research contributors found that writing helps drawing and drawing helps learning. One study by Skupa (as cited in Norris, 1995) showed that those students who both drew as a pre-writing experience (perceptual skills) and looked at the drawing during their writing experience (thinking skills) performed better than the control group. Betty Edwards (1989) explained:

> "Learning to see and draw is a very efficient way to train the visual system, just as learning to read and write can efficiently train the verbal system ... And when trained as equal partners, one mode of thinking enhances the other, and together the two modes can release human creativity" (p. 8).

Idea generation can stop short if students have not acquired a strategy to tap into their ideas (Skupa, as cited in Norris, 1995). Drawing, one form of pre-writing, can help access ideas. Drawing contributes in multiple ways towards early writing growth of kindergarten and first graders (Calkins, 1994). At this stage of development, meaning is usually embedded more deeply into drawing. However, the

latest NAEP writing scores suggest that perhaps many students in higher grades have not yet surpassed this stage. Some students still perform better when assisted with concrete representation. By understanding Vygotsky's scaffolding, teachers should realize many students still need the support used by early learners until they reach the level at which they can find the meaning embedded in words. Evidence suggests (Gentile, et al, 1995) that students may not reach this level, for various reasons, until later grades.

Art may help some children begin reading. When children can understand how they convert ideas into drawings, or symbols, they can begin to understand how talk and ideas are converted into writing or drawings (Platt, 1978). This helps children see how speech and ideas are encoded into symbols (pictures or words), then decoded to make sense of the symbol. The child learns to symbolize her conceptualization -- to represent something which is not actually present. Along this line, helping develop the graphic ability of children helps them understand the concept of reading. Children discover that something that can be seen or thought can have a naming sound-image and that this naming sound-image also has a written name-image. In reverse, they learn that the written name-image has a sound-image and a name-image, like "house." In this way, children associate anything which can be labeled with its appropriate written name (Platt, 1978).

Drawing and art are clearly a benefit to writing, as determined by Montessori (1973), who believed that the hands and mind work together as the hand stimulates the mind. Her observations revealed that art activities counteracted fatigue and aided knowledge reception. She concluded that a higher level of intelligence is more

enhanced with the hand-art connection than without it.

Logical ordering of events is, initially, confusing for students (Olson, 1992). Drawing assists students in sequencing, as well as action, setting, tension and characterization. The visual mode assists the verbal mode; the verbal mode informs the visual mode (Olson, 1992). Learners can slide back and forth between the writing and drawing just as they do in process writing stages. One of Olson's students wrote:

> "I feel good. It's the longest story I've ever written. The pictures helped a lot. They helped me to remember the story. Planning a picture story was easier because drawing is easier for me. It takes a long time to learn how to write, but I've been drawing as long as I can remember" (1992, p. 71).

This student's comment reinforces the idea that drawing is a familiar, reliable and comfortable tool when one needs help in conceptualizing. This tool assists those students who are highly visual and lack underdeveloped or deficient verbal aptitudes (Olson, 1992). Other students who were assisted by drawing made comments to Olson. They claimed that drawing helped because: a) they could look at the drawing and say what they thought; b) it gave them ideas; c) they could be more descriptive; d) it allowed them to visually see the character, which helped them know the character; e) it helped them remember detail; f) it let them see the action and relationships; g) it brings out the answers from their heads -- when they see it, they can say it; h) they see what they are thinking, making it easy to write it on paper (Olson, 1992). Sometimes even imaging (seeing the adventure in one's head) needs to be on paper to assist students in their writing.

Harrington (1994), in taking a lead from the traditional story-board approach,

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found that one effective technique for fifth graders was to design story panels prior to writing their stories. Participating students found that this technique, used by many authors, empowered them as writers. They saw their sequenced story in a concrete way.

Sometimes, without a story behind them, drawings are visions of no particular importance. Thacker (1996) believes that many images require a story in order to drive the images. In addition, Thacker believes that writing uses drawings to detect the nature of the story. He calls this a distillation whereby "a story propels an image, an image suggests words, these words may drive a new image" (Thacker, p. 46).

Ernst (1996) asked her students to keep a sketch journal, sketching whatever they find interesting, as a list of possibilities for future writing topics. In her workshop, the students write, using simile about being there, in the setting chosen from the sketch journal. Their sketches are painted, not by using acrylics and brushes, but by words. Ernst believes using art for learning and writing enlarges the frame in the picture of learning.

A six-day writing project revolving around the Halloween theme of "If I Could Carve My Face" was a success with middle school students (Campbell, 1996). Their self-descriptive writing project included a two day art project prior to beginning to write. They "carved" their faces on paper pumpkins in a way they wanted their peers to perceive them. A single day for drafting was followed by two days of revision and editing. They later shared their work. The teacher/researcher felt that this art/writing activity assisted students in reaching into themselves to detect concepts about themselves. The activity motivated them to write.

Moore & Caldwell's (1993) study found that traditional discussion is not the best pre-writing strategy for second and third graders in one school. Their writing quality was significantly better when drama or drawing was used as a pre-writing strategy.

One study of third grade students found that when students drew prior to writing their story quality was better than those who did not draw prior to writing (Norris, et. al., 1997). Students who were allowed to draw also produced more words, more sentences and more idea units. Additionally, those students who had the opportunity to complete their drawings prior to beginning writing appeared to have a higher level of enthusiasm. Still another study of second grade students in Guam found that they favored drawing as a pre-writing strategy over imagery and dialogue (Diaz-Camacho, et. al., 1995). These primary grade students found drawing their choice of pre-writing strategies.

For those students who have been influenced to write to please the teacher, drawing may grant independence and self-revelation. Drawing, particularly timed, quick sketches, will release spontaneous ideas which have been concealed in the unconscious, and preconceived standards fade back into the recesses (Thacker, 1996).

In summary, the research shows that students need time to write (Murray, 1987; Giacobbe, 1986; Graves 1978), that pre-writing is essential in process writing in order to produce good writing (Murray, 1987), that music helps sequencing (Olson, 1992) and inspires (Scott, 1996) and that drawing, as a visual narrative (Wilson & Wilson, 1979), can produce a better writing product (Norris, et. al., 1997). This study includes these as pre-writing strategies.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Subjects

The subject population used in the study consisted of 41 sixth grade students (21 males and 20 females) selected from five intact sixth grade classrooms of 116 students. Of the total number of subjects who originally elected to participate in the study (n = 78), 37 were excluded from all analyses due either to incomplete data, attrition, or other related reasons. All the subjects attended a middle school located in a small Midwestern community of approximately 40,000. All sixth and seventh graders in the school district, which included the town and its adjacent countryside, attended this school. None of the subjects was identified as having any known specific learning problems or handicapping conditions at the time of the study. A description of the subjects is presented in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Description of Subjects by Age, Gender, and Ethnicity

	Male	Female	Total
	21	20	41
Mean Age = 12.1 years			
Ethnicity			
Caucasian	17	16	33
Native American	0	0	0
African American	3	0	3
Hispanic	1	4	5
Total	21	20	41

Instructional Setting

The subjects were drawn from five self-contained sixth grade classrooms of one teacher where instruction followed a balanced approach to literacy instruction. The

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characteristics of the instructional approach used were documented through classroom observations and interviews with the teacher. On a typical day, the teacher would provide direct instruction of specific reading and writing skills using a state-adopted basal series which complies with state mandated reading and writing competencies. In addition, the teacher used trade books and other literature materials in which the reading and writing skills were taught in the context of their use. The classroom provided a print-rich environment which invited a lively discussion and collaboration among the students and the teacher.

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the school board, the school principal's office and the Institutional Review Board (Appendix E). Prior to conducting this study, a letter of information was distributed by the researcher to the parents/guardians of each subject. The letter contained information about the purpose of the study, an explanation of the method of data collection, assurances of confidentiality and the parents'/guardians' rights to deny their children's participation in the study. Two copies of a consent form were sent to the subjects' parents/guardians. This information was also provided to the subjects during a visit to each classroom by the researcher prior to conducting the study. The subjects were briefed about the purpose for the study. They were also told that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they were free to withdraw without penalty at any time during the course of the study. The subjects seemed enthusiastic about participating in the study as indicated by their final signed consent.

Data Collection

The data collected for this study consisted of a measure of writing achievement

(a state-mandated Criterion-Referenced Writing Test) and a set of four writing samples, collected approximately two weeks apart during the course of one regular school semester.

Measure of Writing Performance: In keeping with established research and instructional guidelines, a measure of past writing performance was used in an attempt to control for initial variation in writing ability among the subjects. This measure consisted of writing achievement scores obtained from a state-mandated Criterion-Referenced Test (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1996) which is routinely administered to students near the end of fifth grade as an indicator of writing achievement. The test is a part of a series of criterion-referenced tests designed to measure public school students' academic skills in Oklahoma's core curriculum, the Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS). The writing test consists of an essay composed by the students and graded by a group of two or more judges on a 12-point scale. The scale ranges from an unsatisfactory low range performance of 2-4 points to a satisfactory high range performance of 11-12 points. The overall score obtained reflects how well the characteristics of good writing are used together. These characteristics include such factors as attention to topic, content development, organization and language usage.

Writing Samples: This study was conducted over a period of one 16-week semester. The subjects were instructed to write four individual samples during four separate thirty-minute sessions approximately two weeks apart following a set of four pre-writing strategies (explained below). During each of the sessions the subjects were given 4-5 choices of topics to write about. The topics provided were drawn from material considered familiar to the subjects and included such things as pets, hobbies,

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sports, trips and favorite things. Consistent with prior research (e.g., Calkins, 1994; Atwell, 1990), which has shown the impact of prior knowledge on developing writers, the subjects were also given the option of selecting their own topics if they did not feel comfortable writing about any of the topics provided (See Appendix B for a listing of these topics). The subjects were told that their written samples would not be graded by the teacher, and that these samples will be used for research purposes only. As mentioned earlier, even though all students participated in the study, only the samples from those with a signed parental consent were used in the analyses. The remaining student written samples were kept by the subjects' teacher.

The subjects generated four writing samples following four different pre-writing strategies as instructed by the researcher. The following procedures were followed in obtaining the writing samples:

Session 1   **Only-Write:** During this session, the subjects did not use any pre-writing strategy. They were simply instructed to select a topic from the available topics written on the board, and to write a story about their selected topic for approximately thirty minutes.

Session 2   **Think-Write:** During this session, the subjects were instructed to select a topic, spend about ten minutes thinking about their self-selected topic, and spend twenty minutes writing about that topic.

Session 3   **Music-Write:** During this session, subjects were instructed to select a topic to write about, spend ten minutes listening to music while thinking about their self-selected topic, and twenty minutes writing about that topic. The music used for this session was classical music played in the

background during the first ten minutes of this session. The specific

selection used was Sonata in D for two Pianos (Mozart, 1785) and Piano

Concerto No. 21 in C (Mozart, 1785). This choice was inspired by a

University of Irvine study which has shown that such music has a positive

impact on college students in a biology class (Rauscher, Shaw &

Ky,1993).

Session 4   **Draw-Write:** During this session, subjects were instructed to spend ten

minutes drawing a sketch of their self-selected topic and the last twenty

minutes writing about that topic.

After each of the four sessions, the researcher collected the writing samples from

the subjects and coded them for easy identification. In keeping with established research-

based practices (e.g., Atwell, 1995; Calkins, 1994; Graves 1983) and recognizing that

the first draft may not accurately reflect students' writing ability, the subjects were

allowed the opportunity to revise their narratives the following day. Therefore, the

following day the classroom teacher redistributed the samples to the subjects and

allowed up to 30 minutes for revision and editing. Consequently, the subjects' revised

written samples were coded and used for analyzing the differences in writing

performance among the subjects following the four pre-writing activities.

Data Analysis

Four dependent variables were selected as measures of the subjects' writing

performance. These variables included: 'Content', 'organization', 'mechanics', and

'overall writing quality.' The 'content' variable focused upon the development of the

topic; 'organization' focused upon the arrangement of ideas and their coherence

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throughout the sample; the 'mechanics' variable focused on writing conventions including spelling, punctuation, and grammar; the 'overall writing quality' variable referred to the composite score of all three measures of 'content', 'organization' and 'mechanics'.

The quality of the subjects' written products was evaluated using a modified composition scale (in Norris, 1995) developed by Hughey, Wormuth, Hartfiel, & Jacobs (1983) which was used in evaluating the writing samples. The Writing Evaluation Profile may be found in Appendix C. The scale directs the judges' attention to specific aspects of the piece of writing and suggests relative point values for each aspect. The 100 point scale weighs the dependent variables as follows: 'Content' 50%, 'organization' 30%, and 'mechanics' 20%. The score for 'overall writing quality,' which could range between 0 to 100, is obtained by summing the scores of the three subparts of the scale.

The written samples were independently scored by three judges who were selected based on their academic preparation and experience relative to writing instruction in the middle grades. The first judge had a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction and had extensive teaching experience at the middle school level. The second judge is a retired school principal and Language Arts teacher with extensive teaching and administrative experience at the elementary and middle school level. The third judge is the researcher who was completing a masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction with specialization in reading education.

Prior to judging the writing samples, the three judges met and discussed the criteria for judging the written products using two or three samples for practice. After everyone felt comfortable with the process, the judges received copies of all written

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samples and began their independent evaluations of the samples using the criteria

outlined in the Writing Evaluation Profile. The final judges' independent ratings of the

written samples were averaged and the obtained score was used for purposes of analysis.

The judges ratings were examined for the level of agreement among the three

concerning their independent evaluation. The inter-rater reliability coefficient obtained

from the three ratings was .81 indicating a reasonable amount of concordance among the

three judges.

CHAPTER IV

Results

The data obtained were analyzed using repeated measures ANCOVAs, with gender (male or female) as an independent variable, the prewriting strategy as a repeated measures variable (each subject wrote four samples using a different pre-writing strategy), and the writing Criterion-Referenced Test score as a covariate. This Criterion-Referenced Test score, explained in Chapter III, was used to control for any pre-existing differences in writing ability.

The primary variable of interest was the pre-writing strategy: Did the use of any of the four different pre-writing strategies lead to better writing as measured by a score on 'content,' 'organization,' 'mechanics,' and 'overall writing quality?' As a check for any possible interactions, gender was added: Did the use of any of the four pre-writing strategies make a difference for females but not males? The expected outcome was that there would be a significant difference in writing performance with one or more of the four different pre-writing strategies. Because there were four dependent variables, the alpha level for each result was set at .0125. This was obtained by using a modified Bonferroni adjustment (Keppel, 1991), determined by dividing the desired alpha level of .05 for the whole experiment by the number of dependent variables. The results obtained are presented in Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.

The results revealed no statistically significant differences among the subjects in writing performance as a result of using any of the four different prewriting strategies. Specifically, no statistically significant differences were found for 'content' [$F_{(3,114)}$ =

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.90, p = .44], 'organization' [F (3,114) = .34, p = .79], 'mechanics' [F (3,114) = .73, p =

.53], or 'overall writing quality' [F (3,114) = .26, p = .85].

Table 4.1. Summary Table with F-Values for Prewriting Strategy, Gender and Gender by Strategy

Variables	df	SS	MS	F	pr > F
Prewriting Strategy					
Content	3	66.72	22.24	0.90	0.4426
Organization	3	7.77	2.59	0.34	0.7985
Mechanics	3	6.32	2.10	0.73	0.5362
Overall Writing Quality	3	54.61	18.20	0.26	0.8569
Gender					
Content	1	152.70	152.70	2.26	0.1412
Organization	1	47.65	47.65	2.03	0.1620
Mechanics	1	16.19	16.19	1.13	0.2940
Overall Writing Quality	1	450.09	450.09	1.85	0.1815
Gender by Prewriting Strategy$^\epsilon$					
Content	3	117.28	39.09	1.59	0.1968
Organization	3	17.27	5.75	0.75	0.5252
Mechanics	3	2.76	0.92	0.32	0.8117
Overall Writing Quality	3	149.93	49.97	0.70	0.3770

ϵ Values adjusted by Huynh-Feldt epsilon correction.

Dependent variable: Content

As shown in Table 4.2, the subjects' average performance scores for the

dependent variable 'content' were fairly similar when no prewriting strategy preceded

writing (Only-Write) (M = 39.80; SD = 4.82), following Think-Write (M=39.88;

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SD=5.23), Music-Write (M=40.03; SD=5.54), and Draw-Write (M = 33.29; SD = 7.98). Although the difference in average performance was relatively large (especially in the case of the Draw-Write strategy in relation to the other pre-writing strategies), it was not found to be statistically significant. This lack of significance appears to be due, in part, to the wide spread of the 'content' scores across the subjects as indicated by the associated standard deviation.

Table 4.2. Dependent Variable Means and Standard Deviations

GROUP (n = 41)		
Dep. Variables	M	SD
Content (out of a possible 50)		
Only-Write	39.80	4.82
Think-Write	39.88	5.23
Music-Write	40.03	5.54
Draw-Write	33.29	7.98
Organization (out of a possible 30)		
Only-Write	24.02	2.37
Think-Write	23.64	2.71
Music-Write	23.73	3.57
Draw-Write	20.77	4.56
Mechanics (out of a possible 20)		
Only-Write	14.86	1.86
Think-Write	13.65	2.59
Music-Write	13.99	2.20
Draw-Write	13.32	2.70
Overall Writing Quality (out of a possible 100)		
Only-Write	78.52	8.19
Think-Write	77.34	9.58
Music-Write	78.00	9.20
Draw-Write	67.46	14.52

Dependent variable: Organization

An examination of Table 4.2 shows that the subjects' average performance scores for the dependent variable 'Organization' were fairly similar using no pre-writing

strategy (Only-Write) (M=24.02; SD=2.37), using the Think-Write strategy (M=23.64; SD=2.71), the Music-Write strategy (M=23.73; SD=3.57) and the Draw-Write strategy (M=20.77; SD=4.56). Again, the differences in mean scores were not found to be statistically significant indicating that the pre-writing strategies used did not have an effect on the subjects' writing performance.

Dependent variable: Mechanics

The means reported in Table 4.2 show that the subjects' average performance scores for the dependent variable 'Mechanics' were similar using no pre-writing strategy (Only-Write) (M=14.86; SD=1.86), the Think-Write strategy (M=13.65; SD=2.59), the Music-Write strategy (M=13.99; SD 2.20), and the Draw-Write strategy (M=13.32; SD=2.70). The differences were not found to be statistically significant indicating that the pre-writing strategies used did not have an effect on the subjects' writing performance.

Dependent variable: Overall Writing Quality

An examination of the data presented in Table 4.2 shows that the subjects' average performance scores for 'Overall Writing Quality' score were similar using no pre-writing strategy (Only-Write) (M=78.52; SD=8.19), the Think-Write strategy (M=77.34; SD=9.58), and the Music-Write strategy (M=78.00; SD 9.20). In addition, while the mean score for the strategy Draw-Write was over 10 points lower than any of the other pre-writing strategies (M=67.46; SD=14.52), performance following this strategy was not found to be statistically worse than any of the other the strategies.

Such lack of significance indicates that the pre-writing strategies used did not have a positive effect on the subjects' writing performance.

Dependent Variables by Gender

When analyzed by gender, the results showed no statistically significant differences among males and females with respect to any of the dependent variables, including 'Content' [F (1, 38) = 2.26, p = .14], 'Organization' [F(1,38)=2.03, p=16], 'Mechanics' [F(1,38)=1.13, p=.29], and 'Overall Writing Quality' [F(1,38)=1.85, p=.81]. As table 4.3 shows, the average mean writing performance of females and males was comparable on 'content,' 'organization,' 'mechanics,'and 'overall writing quality' as a result of using any of the four pre-writing strategies. Finally, there were no significant interactions between gender and any of the strategies used. These results were consistent for all four dependent variables and across gender (See Table 4.1).

Table 4.3. Dependent Variable Means and Standard Deviations by Gender

Dep. Variables	Males (n = 21) M	SD	Females (n = 20) M	SD
Content (out of a possible 50)				
Only-Write	30.69	4.44	39.91	5.31
Think-Write	38.90	5.27	40.91	5.11
Music-Write	39.99	5.52	40.08	5.70
Draw-Write	32.06	7.12	34.58	8.78
Organization (out of a possible 30)				
Only-Write	24.00	2.30	24.05	2.50
Think-Write	32.25	2.65	24.05	2.78
Music-Write	23.34	4.19	24.15	2.83
Draw-Write	20.22	4.41	21.35	4.77
Mechanics (out of a possible 20)				
Only-Write	20.22	4.41	21.35	4.77
Think-Write	13.58	2.49	13.71	2.75
Music-Write	13.68	2.01	14.33	2.38
Draw-Write	12.85	2.76	13.81	2.62
Overall Writing Quality (Out of a possible 100)				
Only-Write	78.06	7.84	78.99	8.71
Think-Write	76.04	9.35	78.69	9.86
Music-Write	77.22	9.75	78.83	8.77
Draw-Write	65.57	13.11	69.45	15.96

CHAPTER V

Discussion

The findings of this study have shown that none of the pre-writing strategies led to improvement in writing performance among the sixth grade subjects used in the present study. The subjects' average writing performance, though generally adequate as indicated by the scores obtained, did not significantly change as a result of using the pre-writing strategies of drawing (Draw-Write), listening to music (Music-Write), or thinking prior to writing (Think-Write). These results are somewhat puzzling in light of the fact that prior research has established that drawing enhances third graders' writing performance (e. g., Olson, 1992; Norris, et. al., 1997), and that music relaxes and inspires some writers to be more creative (e. g., Olson, 1992; Scott, 1996). This research suggests that music and drawing help developing writers generate ideas, organize those ideas, and ultimately produce higher quality writing.

An analysis of the written samples obtained from the subjects as well as observations of this researcher throughout the various stages of this study provide some possible interpretations as to why the pre-writing strategies attempted failed to have a positive impact on the subjects' writing performance. First, the writing products of the subjects in the study appear to be quite similar to what one typically encounters among middle school students. Some examples are in Appendix D. In an examination of the writing samples available, and keeping in mind the criteria used for evaluating the subjects' writing performance, one can easily see that there are those subjects whose writing abilities are quite well developed (see Excerpt # 1), those who have average

writing ability developed (see Excerpt # 2), and those who have mediocre writing skills developed (see Excerpt # 3). The following three excerpts, extracted from actual subject writing samples, illustrate this diversity of writing abilities among the subjects. Complete samples are found in Appendix D.

Excerpt #1

"I think humans have some wolf instincts. First, like wolves, most humans divide themselves into groups or packs. If you took a look around you, you will notice this 'packs' all over the world, but most people call them villages, towns, cities, etc. Also, If someone is in trouble then the group members will protect or defend the person of the group, like a real pack of wolves would have done. Third, most groups have territory or an specific place were they stay or go to."

Excerpt #2

"If I were a bird, I'd crawl out of my nest and into the sunlit meadow. I would chirp a little tune, as I fly above the white misty clouds. I would soar above them like a plane. I would swoop down and grab a worm for my lunch. I would go to a barn and visit the owls that are living there."

Excerpt #3

"When I threw my away accident I allmost never got it back. I had to jump in dump truck. then I had dig in carbage at the dump for a one dollar bill. when I got home I had to take ten showers I will never jump in dump truck again."

Second, for most of the subjects, using pre-writing strategies such as drawing or listening to music is new and different. Indeed, they were unaccustomed to using the pre-writing strategies used in the study, as pointed out by the their teacher after completion of the writing tasks. The subjects' inexperience in using the target pre-

writing strategies may have hindered rather than helped them produce better writing samples. In other words, it may take repeated exposure and training in the use of these pre-writing strategies before one can see an effect. For instance, it was apparent to this researcher, especially during the Draw-Write session of the study, that a majority of the subjects felt rather uncomfortable with the act of drawing before writing, even after it was explained to them that the purpose of drawing was not to see how well students can draw, but rather to use the drawing as a planning strategy prior to writing. Some subjects initially refused to draw, became tense in the process of drawing, and one stated: "I can't draw." Others tried to make their drawings look as good as possible as illustrated by the following example:

"My pet, Rocky, is just the funniest pet in the world. First of all, He drags his buttocks across the carpet and whimpers all at the same just to get my attention. When ever he wants to go to the bathroom he'd just come to me and sit on my lap and start barking. It's hard to figure whether he wants me to open the back dor for him or just being friendly, and sometimes when I thought he was just being friendly instead of wanting to go to the bathroom, the result is

pretty obvious. Though he's always getting into trouble, he is still my favorite pet."

Third, it is conceivable that pre-writing strategies such as thinking before writing, listening to music, and drawing may work more effectively with lower grade students, during the earlier stages of writing development. In a study by Norris, et. al., (1997), it was shown that the use of drawing prior to writing had a highly significant positive impact on third graders' writing performance. Third grade students who drew before writing wrote more words, more sentences, and more idea units and produced generally better samples than did those who did not draw before writing. Other researchers (e.g., Hubbard & Ernst, 1996; Olson, 1992) have found that, for students of all ages, drawing enhances writing. However, whether drawing or music has an impact on middle level, secondary, and higher grade level students' writing is not very clear and needs to be researched more systematically.

Fourth, the subjects in the study may have felt psychologically 'unsafe' working with the researcher who is not their regular teacher. Although the researcher made an effort to get acquainted with the subjects, and did spend some time visiting all the classrooms a few weeks prior to the study, some subjects may not have felt "safe" with the researcher and her intentions. Studies have found that students cannot perform as well, nor are they able to take risks when they do not feel safe (van Manen, 1991).

Finally, it is difficult to determine the effect of the pre-writing strategies upon writing performance of sixth grade students or students in other grades simply by using a single sample. To establish effect, the study may have to be replicated with the same subjects two or more times. In addition, it should be conducted with multiple subject

samples in a variety of classrooms

Conclusions and Implications

The findings of this study have implications for teachers and researchers interested in student writing. Prior research has shown that competent writers spend time planning before writing (Atwell, 1990; Murray, 1987; Graves, 1983). Good writers also spend time revising and refining what they write. The strategies used for planning include drawing, taking notes, outlining, making lists of ideas to write about, etc. These strategies are important for enhancing student writing skills. The fact that the present study did not find any direct link between the strategies used and the subjects' writing performance does not necessarily mean that teachers should discourage their students from using these strategies. On the contrary, students should learn these strategies and use them to improve their writing skills.

Writing can be very difficult for inexperienced writers, especially for elementary and middle level students. These developing writers need guided assistance while learning to write. Proven pre-writing strategies, which have been shown to enhance writing, should be explicitly taught to students in the classroom. They also need consistent practice using these strategies. Oftentimes, these students are not aware that such strategies are important for their writing skills, and therefore cannot take advantage of such strategies.

The findings of this study cannot be generalized beyond the subject population used due to sample size and non-random sampling. To achieve more definitive results about the effects of the pre-writing strategies used in this study, more research should

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be conducted. In addition, more significant results could have been achieved had the study been counterbalanced whereby no one group would use the same pre-writing strategies on the same day and in the same order. Because of the inconsistency between the findings of the present study and prior related research studies, it is suggested that more research be conducted to investigate the effects of a variety of pre-writing strategies such as drawing and music on students' writing performance as well their attitudes towards writing. This research should be conducted with students at different grade levels. It should be replicated with higher numbers of students in a number of geographical areas, school settings, and diverse socioeconomic and ethnic settings.

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Appendix A
Letter of Information

(Date)

Subject: LETTER OF INFORMATION

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am a graduate student at Oklahoma State University and I am currently conducting my thesis research which is designed to study the beneficial effects of pre-writing strategies on the writing performance of sixth grade students. I am interested in working with your child's classroom where I can demonstrate the use of pre-writing strategies to sixth-grade students.

The study in which your child is being asked to participate will be used to determine beneficial approaches to writing. Your child will be asked to select a topic and write four samples on four separate occasions approximately two weeks apart. During each session your child will use a different pre-writing strategy prior to writing his or her story. The day following each of the four sessions, your child will, in keeping with the requirements of process writing, have the opportunity to revise and edit the story with his or her teacher.

It is my hope that you will allow your child to be a part of this beneficial study. Your child's participation will enable me to demonstrate the beneficial effect of pre-writing strategies as a way of improving writing performance among sixth grade students.

I would like to assure you that special arrangements will be made to ensure the learning objectives in your child's classroom will not be adversely affected in any way. Please feel free to call me with any questions or concerns regarding your child's involvement in the proposed study.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mona Marble
(405) 669-2717

Appendix A (Continued)
CONSENT FORM

I, _____ hereby authorize or direct Mona Marble to conduct the study described in the attached letter.

This study is being conducted as part of an investigation entitled, The Impact of Four Types of Pre-Writing Strategies on the Writing Performance of Sixth Grade Students. It's purpose of the study is to determine beneficial effects of pre-writing strategies on sixth grade students' writing performance.

I understand that my child's participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withhold my consent and participation in this project at any time.

I also understand that my child will write four samples using self-selected topics on four separate occasions of thirty minutes each, approximately two weeks apart. I understand that my child will be able to revise and keep his/her samples and that his/her Criterion-Referenced Test writing score may be used for initial writing analysis. Permission to get such information will be obtained from the school board. No one but the teacher and the researcher will k now the identity of the child.

I understand that after my child has written the story, the researcher will collect it and copy it in the afternoon in order to return the original to the teacher that evening so that my child can have his/her paper the following day. I understand that the researcher will keep the copy of the story, but will immediately assign a numerical code to replace and eliminate my child's name, and that the code list, maintained and kept confidential by the researcher and essential for anonymity, will be erased immediately upon completion of this study. I further understand that information gained from this study will be strictly confidential, that the identity of my child will remain anonymous, and that there will be no cost to me. I realize I will receive a copy of this form to keep and that my child will be verbally advised of the study.

Regarding questions about this study, I may call Mona Marble at (405) 669-2717 or (405) 744-7119. I may also call Gay Clarkson, IRB Executive Secretary, at (405) 744-5700 or contact her at 305 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078.

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date_____   Time_____(a.m./p.m.)

_____   _____
Name of Child   Parent's or Guardian's Signature

Witnesses (If necessary):   _____

                                       _____

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject or his/her representative parent or guardian before requesting the subject or his/her representative to sign it.

_____
Mona Marble, Project Investigator

Appendix A (Continued)
Statement to be Made by Researcher to
Prospective Subjects

You are invited to take part in a research project which could assist teachers in knowing how to help students improve their writing performance.

If you choose to participate in this study, I will visit soon and you will write a story on a topic of your choice, approximately once every two weeks. You will have the opportunity to revise your writing the following day with your teacher and will write a total of four samples.

You will not receive any grades for any of the work you do for me, and you can stop participating any time you wish. I hope you will want to help your teachers and me understand a little more about what helps students when they write. Do you have any questions to ask me about this project?

Appendix A (Continued)

STUDENT ASSENT FORM

I, _____, (student's name), agree to help

Mrs. Marble with her project. I will write a total of four samples, called compositions.

I understand that I will not get grades on any of my work and I know that I can drop

out of the project at any time if I decide to do so. I also know that my name will not be

used for any purpose in connection with the study, and my work will not be seen by

anyone other than my teacher, Mrs. Marble, who have agreed to keep my work

confidential.

_____
(Student's signature)

_____
(Date)

_____
(Mona Marble, Project Investigator)

I, _____, hereby agree to participate in the proposed study entitled: The Impact of four Types of Pre-Writing Strategies on the Writing Performance of Sixth Grade Students. Its purpose is to determine beneficial effects of pre-writing strategies on sixth grade students' writing performance.

I understand that I will review a set of four anonymous compositions written by sixth grade students enrolled in a middle school in Stillwater, that I will be trained to evaluate the student products by the researcher(s), that I will keep the written products and my evaluations in strict confidence, and that I will not receive any compensation for my work.

I may contact Mona Marble at 744-7119 if I have any questions or need additional information about any aspect of this assignment.

I have fully read and understand the content of this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

_____   _____

Evaluator   Principle Investigator(s)

_____   _____

Date   Date

Appendix B
Study Material
Session Topics
Break-Down by Session

Session I Only-Write:

If I Were (Animal or Person)

My Ambition (Vacation/Sports Page)

What (Image) Means to Me
(quilts, flag, fire, Grampa's cane)

Select your own topic

How To (Catch a Fish/
Write a Play/Detect
Poisonous Animals) For Fun

Session II Think-Write:

The Most Incredible Thing About _____

If A Quilt Could Talk

Select your own topic

The Best Pet

My Favorite Sport

Session III Music-Write:

My Travel On The Underground Railroad

My Favorite Hobby

Select your own topic

The Best Sports Event

Why _____ Is Important To Me

Session IV Draw-Write:

My Best Trip, Ever

The Most Exciting Game
(or event you played or watched)

Select your own topic

My Favorite Place To Visit
        (story book place, relative's tree)

Grandma's Kitchen

Sample Session Directions and Conversation Prior to Writing

(Approximately 10 minutes) I have written four (or five) topics on the board to help

you start thinking. These are just ideas. You will probably have a much better topic

idea than these. Some of you have come to class with something on your mind and do

not need these suggestions. However, for those of you who feel you need a little

boost, look over these topics.

For instance (pointing to My Best Trip, Ever), who has taken a trip either with

your family, club, church, school or friends? (Hands rise. Call on someone. "I went

to Six Flags." "We went to Washington, DC"). What made your trip better than the

rest? (Let someone answer). Most of you have made even local trips to a skating

party or lake that was special. Just describe it the way you want. (Continue through

the other suggested topics -- try to keep the pace, but appear as if we have plenty of

time. This will keep the students from feeling rushed and tense. Call on).

Remember, if it happened to you, you know about it. If you want to

fictionalize your experiences, or write a story, that is great, too. If you want to write

about what you have studied in school, like a country -- I know you are studying

various world countries now -- do that.

Remember, you are not being judged, nor compared to anyone else, so please

do not feel that you will be ranked. You are not competing with anyone else but

yourself. You are the expert. You understand about planning what you write before

you write about it. We are simply writing about what you know, using different pre-

writing strategies.

Today, you will (use your own pre-writing strategy and have up to 30 minutes to complete your paper) (have 10 minutes of [silence] [music] [drawing about your topic], then I will ask you to begin your writing). Please do not begin your writing until I ask you to start. Remember, no one will see your paper except your teacher and me. No one will judge your paper until your name is removed and the paper is coded. So, feel free write. Let's get ready to begin.

Appendix C

WRITING EVALUATION PROFILE

Component	Point Range	Criteria
	10-9	EXCELLENT - VERY GOOD: Thorough development of topic.
CONTENT	8-6	GOOD - AVERAGE: Adequate development of topic.
	5-0	FAIR-POOR: Inadequate development of topic, or too little written to evaluate.
	10-9	EXCELLENT - VERY GOOD: Fluent expression; coherence; unity; logically sequenced.
ORGANIZATION	8-6	GOOD - AVERAGE: Adequate expression; somewhat disconnected or out of logical order.
	5-0	FAIR-POOR: Non-fluent; ideas confused or disconnected; or, too little written to evaluate.
	10-9	EXCELLENT - VERY GOOD: Effective Use of conventions; few or no errors in grammar, etc.
MECHANICS	8-6	GOOD - AVERAGE: Limited use of conventions;occasional errors in grammar, etc.
	5-0	FAIR-POOR: Little or no use of standard conventions; frequent errors in grammar, etc.;or, too little written to evaluate.

Content Score _____ X 5 = _____

Organization Score _____ X 3 = _____

Mechanics Score _____ X 2 = _____

OVERALL WRITING QUALITY (100 possible)   =   _____

Appendix D

Writing Samples

Draw-Write

My pet, Rocky, is just the funniest pet in the world. First of all, He drags he's buttocks across the carpet and whimpers all at the saine just to get iny attention. When ever he wants to go to the bathroom whe'd just come to me and sit on my lap and start barking. It'sin... Hard to figure weither he wants me to open the back door for him or just being friendly and sometimes when I thought he was just being friendly instead of wanting to go to the bathroom the result is pretty obvious. Though he's always getting into trouble he is still my favorite pet.

Draw-Write

Draw-Write

The Tree that Grows

The tree that grows always flows with mistic poison in its vains. It eats evil sorcerers, warlocks, wizards, and magician to get nutrition. Every day less evil is in the world because of this wonderful tree. One problem about the tree though is that people are cutting down more every day, and that lets all the evil get free agin. The people do it naively fore they have no clue that they're leting out evil, becase the evil disguise it self like saw dust. So I give a warning to all who cut down tree before you cut make sure it is not one of these. You will regret it if you do.

I think humans have some wolf instincts. First, like wolves, most humans divide themselves into groups or packs. If you took a look around you, you will notice this "packs① Also if someone is in trouble then the group members will protect or defend the person of the grp, like a real pack of wolves would have done. Third, most groups have territory or an specific place were they stay or go to. Wolves also have territory which is their hunting, roming playing, etc area. If a wolf pack would move somewere else, they would take the place of another pack which would result to a fight. That sometimes happens to people, thats why most of the time they fight. Most people wonder how could people learn from animal, but if you took back the years you will see that humans actually learned how to hunt, live in groups, and learned how to fight from wolves -- the real hunters in the first place.

① all over the world, but most people call them villiges, towns, cities, etc.

Only-Write

If I were a bird...

If I were a bird, I'd crawl out of my nest and into the sunlit meadow. I would chirp a little tune, as I fly above the white misty clouds. I would soar above them like a plane. I would swoop down and grab a worm for my lunch. I would go to a barn and visit the owls that are living there. Then when the night comes, I will watch the beautiful stars fall to the ground. After that I would crawl back into my nest, and wait for another wonderful day.

Only-Write

When I threw my away
accident I allmost never got
it back. I had to jump in dump
truck. then I had dig in carbage
at the dump for a one dollar
bill. When I got home I had
to take ten showers. I will never
jump in dump truck again. I really
don't ever throw away money.

Draw-Write

Piogones non Piosones Posones non Piosones

To defect if a snake is piosonos you can look at its eyes, head, or color. If you look at there eyes and see a dot for a puple it is not piosonos. If you see a line for a puole its piosonos. If ther head puffs out on the sides it is piosonos. If it dosn't puff out on the sides it isn't piosonos. Somelimes if it has bright colors it is piosonos.

Only-Write

My best friend moved to St. Louis, mo. After she moved I felt very sad. Sometimes I would even think she still lived in her old house. We would write to each other constantly. It just didn't seem the same. Every once in a while she would call me but her voice sounded so grown up and mature. I felt strange talking to her. One day I got a letter that her big sister who still lives in Stillwater, was getting married and that she was coming. When she arrived we made plans that she could come to my house. At first we were acting kind of different, but after a while we were ourselves again. It was just like old times. I tried to make that time last forever.

WHY MY MOM IS IMPORTANT TO ME

My mom is important to me because she is a loving mother. She takes care of me. She's always there when I need her. Also she tries her best to be a great mother after what happened in the past, and she is doing a great job. She's like a role model for me. Because she's a great mother she doesn't let anything bother her. She goes to school with two other kids in school which amazes me. She also shows me that having kids before graduating from school is hard. That is my reason why my mom is the most important person in my life.

Music-Write

Now the Stars on the flag was made.

It was May 20, 1908. The USA was ahead in science. If you haven't figured it out yet Im Zorp from planet zoomin. Next to planet X. They were planing to go to the moon for their first time ever. We just gotdunn making zArm block. (A powerful weapon.) They were only getting into space, when we tryied out our invention. Something went wrong. It hit the cow that USA launched. The Cow went off course and hit a star the Star fell hitting OKlahoma. Then 49 stars fell hitting all the states in USA. Then Matthew made a flag with 50 stars repasinting that day.

Think-Write

83

If I were a cat, I would be happy. I would just sit around all day and be lazy. I wouldn't have to do any work. I would be fed, petted, watered, washed, and combed by someone else. I would go outside and frolick in the tall grass. Go on top of the house and trample on the roof all night. In the mornings I would go inside and sit by my masters. He/she would pet me and give me a lot of attention. I would sit on a soft cushion, or on a soft bed. I would sleep night and days. And eventually get up sometimes to play or eat. So if I were a cat I would be lazy, but playfull. I would roam around the house all day and find a nice place to lay down and sleep for the rest of the days. In I wanted to, I could be any color I wanted. I could would be light gray and white, be long haired, and not flat faced.

My Future

In the near future I want to be a cheerleader. I think that it's fun and I like to dance. Later on though in life I want to have a family. The job I would most like to do is to be a profetional singer. I love to sing and to proform. I love all kinds of music and so it would be easer to become a singer. Of all the profetions in the world this is my all time favorite. Well for right now! Even though only a few people out of hundreds can be a singer I'll still try!

Music-Write

My travel to the Rain forest

The sun looked like a big red
ball of fire as it came over the
great big trees of the rain forest. The
flocks of birds came flying over our
head with greace and bevty. "Come on,"
said my father. "I am coming." I
answerd. As I began walking faster
I noticed that all of the plants
seem to up toward the sky. The
mudy road seemed to give a
wet atmosphire. The road lead to
what seemed to me as houses,
but turned out to be shops. There
were shops for bevty and for buying.
Just then a wonan gave me
water in a "leaf-cup" and said her
drink the pures water in the
world. I dranked it. It was
good and she said I could keep
the cup. This was my travel to
the rain forest

Think-Write

My favorite animal is
a white tiger. Because it is
graceful and elegent. It walks
with pride. It keeps its head high
When it is sad. The white tiger is
full of love and compassion. No other
animal could be as calm and loving
as the white tiger. The white tiger
has two Brillint colors that hide it
from other animals and preditors. It
has a smart mind like other
wild and domestic cats. It has
a home in the brilliant snow. That
is why my favorite animal
is the white tiger!

Think-Write

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW**

Date: 03-26-97   **IRB#:** ED-97-089

Proposal Title: THE IMPACT OF FOUR TYPES OF PRE-WRITING
STRATEGIES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS

Principal Investigator(s): Kouider Mokhtari, Mona Marble

Reviewed and Processed as: Expedited

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
AT NEXT MEETING, AS WELL AS ARE SUBJECT TO MONITORING AT ANY TIME DURING
THE APPROVAL PERIOD.
APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR A ONE CALENDAR YEAR
PERIOD AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE
SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.
ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR
APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature: _____   Date: March 28, 1997

Chair of Institutional Review Board
cc: Mona Marble

VITA

Ramona Marble

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: THE IMPACT OF FOUR TYPES OF PRE-WRITING STRATEGIES ON THE WRITING PERFORMANCE OF SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Stillwater, Oklahoma in 1952.

Education: Graduated from Stillwater High School, Stillwater, Oklahoma in 1970; received Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Business Education from the University of Texas, Austin, Texas in 1982. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree with a major in Reading Education from the School of Curriculum and Educational Leadership at Oklahoma State University in May, 1998.

Experience: Banking assistant, 1974 to 1977. Employed by Texas Real Estate Commission 1977 to 1979. Bookkeeper for All Air Sea Travel 1979. Substitute teacher for Austin Independent School District 1982 to 1983. Weekly columnist, Austin-American Statesman, Austin, Texas, 1982 to 1983. Real estate sales and lending 1983 to 1987. Instructor, Heald Business College, Walnut Creek, California, 1987. Employed by Oklahoma State University, Computer Information Services 1994 to 1996 and Oklahoma State University, Department of Education, School of Curriculum and Educational Development as a graduate assistant, 1996 to 1998.

Professional Memberships: Phi Kappa Phi, Kappa Delta Pi, Pi Omega Pi.