THE EFFECTS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

ON SELF-CONCEPT OF GIFTED AND

NONGIFTED STUDENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF TABLES

# LIST OF FIGURES

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Self-concept development is central to the basic goals of public education. As educators work with students, gifted or nongifted, they must provide experiences and relationships in which constructive self-concept development can occur (Bills, 1981). The reason is basic: a child's academic behavior is interrelated with self-concept. Dean (1977) demonstrated a significant relationship between overall self-concept and academic learning as measured by school grades. This research also reported no significant differences in self-concept needs of gifted and nongifted students.

Campbell (1979) suggests that educators today are concerned about the self-concept of gifted students. Tests and records indicate that these students have the potential for extraordinary achievement, but this potential may never be realized unless an adequate self-concept is nurtured and developed. The task of helping students develop a healthy self-concept is not easy. It is particularly difficult when working with gifted students because gifted students can be overly critical of themselves, making unrealistic demands upon their own abilities. Positive feedback and constant reinforcement can be the teacher's tools for providing an environment that will lead the students to a better understanding of their strengths and abilities.

However, the setting and the society of school pose risks to

1

self-concept. Too much formal evaluation can erode the student's self-concept as much as the teasing and insults of the peer group (Ciani, 1981). In the school setting, the teacher has the opportunity to create an atmosphere that facilitates growth and strengthens self-concept. Underlying the efforts for growth is a high regard for the individuality of each child. This regard will motivate teachers and students to show acceptance in all respects both through successes and even failures (Sebring, 1983).

Because self-concept is a product of social interactions with others, the school environment becomes just as important as the academic demands placed on the child. School environment is a powerful external stimulus that affects the child's values, social status, and achievements (Thompson, 1984). Because teachers have high expectations of the students, especially those students who are gifted, children may experience stress and doubt their own capabilities (Coleman & Fults, 1982). Educational systems providing good relationships with supportive models can contribute successfully to positive self-concept and good attitude about school.

Studies indicate that the direct approach to enhancing self-concept promotes a stronger self-concept level (Wagener, 1975). This calls for a specific, rather than haphazard, program aimed at fostering positive self-concept. Wagener believes for gifted children with high reading abilities, a program that involves children's literature has potential for fostering positive self-concept.

Books are valuable and effective tools in helping children solve their personal problems (Chambers, 1971). Frasier and McCannon (1981) believe that literature can change attitudes, values, thinking,

personality, and self-concept. Children's literature enables children to meet, enjoy, and understand each other.. Readers learn vicariously that there are similiarities and differences among all people. Literature leads to a better understanding of self and the surrounding world (Chambers, 1971). Books containing characters with similar problems, needs, and concerns introduce gifted readers to alternative approaches for meeting their special challenges. Taylor (1975) suggests some healthy self-concept ideas which can be nurtured in the educational setting through children's literature: "(1) I can make a difference, (2) Each of us has worth, (3) I am like, and yet different from, others, and (4) All of us have many feelings" (p. 26).

How can teachers best use children's literature to increase self-concept and attitude toward school? Chambers (1971) indicates that reading aloud by the teacher opens up new worlds to the students. But Chambers feels that oral reading by itself may not be enough. Oral reading may only be a starting point. He proposes that the book which is read, acted upon, and extended can be a potent and valuable tool in increasing positive self-concept and in developing positive attitudes about school.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of two specific children's literature programs on the self-concept as reported by gifted and nongifted students in the intermediate grades. One program consisted of specific literature units with extension activities, while the other was limited to listening to oral readings done by the teacher. The effects of the two self-concept literature programs were

compared to those of a control group experiencing the regular curriculum used in the classroom.

## Statement of the Problem

The development of positive self-concept is seen as an all important objective of the schools because self-concept is a motivational construct that guides and determines behavior (Johnson, 1976). If research could point out ways to significantly increase self-concept in all students, many benefits could be realized. Research that documents the relationship of self-concept to personal-social adjustment, as well as to academic achievement is discussed in Chapter II.

This study was designed to determine the answer to these problem statements:

1) Which is more effective in enhancing the self-concept of students in the intermediate grade: a structured self-concept children's literature program or a listening program with a self-concept focus?

2) Do gifted children react differently over time to specific children's literature programs than nongifted children in the intermediate grades?

## Hypotheses

Hypothesis I: Type of literature program, time of testing, and ability level do not interact to affect the self-concept of intermediate grade students.

Hypotheses II. Type of literature program and ability level do not interact to affect the self-concept of intermediate grade students when averaged across time.

## Definition of Terms

The following terms are used throughout this paper and must be understood for the reader to comprehend the main focus of the dissertation study.

### Gifted Student

The school district used in this study defines an elementary gifted student as such:

Intellectually gifted children and youth are those who have potential for outstanding performance by virtue of superior intellectual abilities. Both those who demonstrated achievement and those with minimal or low performance who gave evidence of high potential in general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitudes, and/or creative thinking abilities are included in the definition.

The operational definition used by the cooperating school district included an Intelligence Quotient (I. Q.) with a composite rank of not less than the 97th percentile on national or local norms and a score on a standardized test of achievement of not less than the 95th percentile on national norms.

### Nongifted Student

A nongifted student is any student not identified by the public school system as meeting the standard for being a gifted student in that district. For purposes of this study, nongifted students were those students receiving services provided in the regular classroom. This

excluded any student identified as mentally handicapped.

Listening Program

Listening program refers to student's exposure to children's books with a self-concept focus read orally by the teacher. Class discussion and extended activities did not supplement the listening experience.

Self-Concept

Self-concept is defined as the way in which a person sees themselves. Self-concept was operationally defined as the student's score on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale.

Structured Children's Literature Program

For the purpose of this study, the structured children's literature program was composed of three parts: (1) exposure to children's books written for the purpose of nurturing positive self-concept, (2) discussion of the book's plot structure and character development, and (3) extension activities to reinforce important concepts. All activities in this program focused on the self-concept.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the upper middle-class population represented by the samples drawn from specific geographic area.

Intact classrooms created by the public school district were used. No attempt was made to randomly assign students to research groups. However, classrooms were randomly assigned to treatments.

This study was limited by time. While the structured literature

program was intense, it only lasted for eleven weeks. It is possible that a different period would produce different results.

## Assumptions of the Study

For the purposes of the study, the following assumptions were made: (1) that the dependent variables were both normally distributed in the populations and had homogeneity of variance and (2) that students came from similar socioeconomic backgrounds. This assumption can be made because all treatment groups were in schools located in similar economically based neighborhoods (upper middle-class), and (3) all self-concept scores were indicative of the students' own perceptions about themselves and the school environment of which they are a part.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Even a cursory review of existing research reveals many studies to
identify relationships among self-concept, gifted students, and child-
ren's literature. Researchers have examined the relationship between
self-concept and children's literature, and the effects of children's
literature on gifted students have been detailed. A synthesis of
studies which draw on all three elements is notably absent.

Existing research about self-concept reveals both inconsistencies
and differences in the reported findings (Garrison, Cohen & Linden,
1977). The lack of conceptual clarity and differences in research
design could produce the discrepancies. The assessment of change in
affective behavior has become an important concern for educators. This
is particularly true when evidence is sought regarding the effects of
planned interventions on affective outcomes.

Self-perceptions are largely influenced by relationships with those
people who are seen as significant or important to the individual. Such
persons can affect change in the individual's self-concept (Quandt,
1972). When educators correctly understand the importance of signifi-
cant others, programs for self-concept development can be designed to
help schools achieve affective goals. Because the school experience

encompasses one-third of a child's life between ages 5 and 18, it is a significant part of the child's life. Educators control a major power to enhance or erode a child's self-concept. Positive self-concept is enhanced as the person is taught to feel capable and important.

As significant others in the child's life, educators can design planned interventions that will nurture self-concept. Wagener (1975) believes that a direct approach to building self-concept promotes a stronger self-concept than does an incidental approach. Thus, deliberately designed programs become important tools to educators who believe that the development of positive self-concept is a major objective of the educational process. Several studies point out the importance of positive self-concept as a motivational construct that guides and determines behavior (Johnson, 1976; Clark, 1983; Combs & Snygg, 1959).

This review of related literature explores four themes:

(1) self-concept and its influences on behavior and values,

(2) literature programs designed to enhance self-concept for all students,

(3) general literature programs for gifted students,

(4) the impact of self-concept oriented children's literature upon the special needs of gifted students.

## Research Concerning Self-Concept

Researchers studied in this review of the literature tend to agree on the importance of studying self-concept in the school setting. Bills (1981) discussed the importance of nurturing self-concept in students. A positive view of self, reinforced by experiences and relationships, Bills believes enables the student to achieve the cognitive goals

established by the school system. The importance of this insight for education calls for attention. To really understand why educators need to be concerned about self-concept, a look at the development and influence of the self-concept is needed.

A person's actions are consistent with the person's understanding of the world. The perceptions a person holds about self and his potential are the self-concept. This self-concept is central to all beliefs. A person's actions and statements, the data that the person hears, feels, sees, or otherwise receives is a function of self-concept. The self-concept, then, is a filter which screens out what each person does not want to hear or see, but allows to enter that which is acceptable to the perception of self (Bills, 1981).

The constructing ideas and data for the self-concept are based on experiences with other people. These encounters shape how a person sees himself, how he thinks others see him and how he wishes he could be seen (Quandt, 1972). Two correlates of self-concept are past experience and counter-reactions. When people who are significant to the person view him as incompetent, that person tries to counteract the appraisal. This may be accomplished in several ways. Denying the importance of the activity or making it clear that no effort has been extended are two such ways according to Quandt. School programs that seek to develop students' self-concept have been used to allow children to explore their impact on others and to better understand the elements of causality in human relationships (Summerlin, Hammett & Payne, 1983).

Negative self-concepts, attitudes of fear and incompetence, can be modified. But Combs and Snygg (1959) urge caution, however, by suggesting three considerations in altering self-concept. First, if the new

concept is not important to the individual, it will be easier to change. On the other hand, concepts which are more central or personal are harder to change. Secondly, the new concept must be seen as beneficial to the person's own needs. New concepts of self that maintain and enhance self-concept will be accepted more readily, especially in those situations that do not force the individual to self-defense. Finally, first hand experiences are more effective than are symbolic experiences. Combs and Snygg also note that changes in fundamental concepts of self usually occur slowly and gradually.

The role of teacher as facilitator in fostering these attitudes cannot be overlooked. Because children spend so much time in school, it can be an excellent environment in which to promote healthy self-concepts. This can be done by providing some students with new experiences. Students can be helped to become responsible for themselves and their learning through increased opportunities for participation in planning their own education. In helping the students to monitor their own behavior and learning, the teacher is teaching the children to believe in themselves. Self-concept is thereby enhanced (Bills, 1981).

In his doctoral dissertation, Roach (1975) conducted an investigation of self-concept by exposing fifth and sixth graders to realistic fiction in a reading guidance situation. He used 450 students in 18 preexisting groups randomly assigned to treatment and control. The teachers read five realistic fiction books to their classes in the two treatment groups. One of the treatment groups also discussed the books, and the control group had no exposure to the literature. Some significant differences ($p < .05$) were found on self-concept scores, but Roach's main conclusion was that the teacher makes the difference in

realizing effects from reading realistic fiction in classroom settings.

Literature Programs to Nurture

Self-Concept

Books have long been recognized as valuable, effective tools in helping children solve their personal problems. The real value of children's literature lies in the vicarious nature of its experiences. Through imagination, the reader explores without suffering the real life consequences, should a wrong decision be made (Frasier & McCannon, 1981).

Interaction with books happens in three ways. Identification with characters and plots comes first. Students believe that they know the person and the action of the book. Secondly, interaction with books can provide a type of catharsis. When students feel emotions vicariously, the plot can provide a means for release of tension. Thirdly, and perhaps most important to building self-concept, books provide insight. Insight causes the readers to see themselves in the behavior of a character, and to analyze their own motivations and needs (Weinstein, 1977).

These interactions are very important in that increased under-standing of self allows positive self-concepts to emerge. Hickman (1980) demonstrated that interactions with books increase the social ability of students: children like to talk about books together. The children share and learn from each other and thereby increase their feelings of worth. Adults who are aware of this can use books to prepare youngsters to learn to cope with feelings such as failure, shame, and competition, and recognize one's weaknesses as well as one's

strengths (Galen & Johns, 1976).

Taylor (1975) pointed out that literature can help children feel that they make a difference and are important. Literature demonstrates that all people are alike and yet different and that everyone has feelings. These concepts are important in fostering a level of self-esteem that helps the children do the best they can.

In the Dictionary of Education, Good (1960) defines the assignment of books to be read on various subjects to help a child or a parent understand a problem or help him see the problem in a different way as bibliotherapy (p. 90). This whole bibliotherapy process has been studied and researched for many years. Schrank (1980) further defines bibliotherapy as guided reading which helps individuals gain understanding of the self and environment, learn from others and find solutions to problems (p. vi). Bibliotherapy can be seen simply as guidance through reading. Shepherd & Iles (1976) concluded that when a teacher or librarian helps a pupil find a book that might help the pupil solve a personal problem, develop skills needed for living and/or bolster self-image, bibliotherapy has taken place (p. 569).

The purpose of exposing children to books is to elicit a response to the literature. To call for this response, the literature must offer something challenging to the child. The literature must be at the appropriate reading level and about children who are similar to the readers. Studies also show that if a time is not given to respond to the literature, the potential effects are wasted (Chambers, 1971; Koeller, 1977; Roser & Frith, 1983; Wagener, 1977).

Many researchers have explored ways to elicit the best response from the students involved in literature programs. Fisher (1965) found

that the attitudes toward American Indians in reading groups changed significantly more than attitudes in control groups and that reading in conjunction with discussion changed attitudes more than reading alone. Schneider (1978) also found that students participating in a literature program involving discussion after oral reading by the teacher did reveal a positive change in attitude toward the aged when compared to control groups.

Several methods have been advanced to extend the response to literature. Frasier and McCannon (1981) suggest that journal entries and diaries help the reader to identify and understand personal feelings and that bulletin boards and role playing can extend children's responses to literature. Dramatization (Wagener, 1975) and game playing (Canfield and Wells, 1976) also are proposed as means to promote meaningful follow-up to reading a book.

Puppets especially seem to have a good potential for exploring feelings (Burns, 1977). They can be symbols or they can be a communication channel. With puppets, a person can express feelings in an acceptable, nonthreatening manner. Success with puppets is easily internalized for improved feelings of self as well as interpersonal relationships.

The review of related literature concludes that books are powerful tools, but that they are only starting points. Books must be read, extended, and discussed to elicit maximum benefit for changing and enhancing self-concept. Shepherd and Iles (1976) maintain that

> Sensitive, constructive awareness of the potential word, a
> practical knowledge of children's literature and a creative,
> flexible mind that is empathetic to the needs of the pupil will

allow teachers and librarians to meet more of the needs of the pupils (p. 571).

## Needs of Gifted Children

Both the general public and educators have largely failed to see that gifted children have special needs and problems (Frasier & McCannon, 1981). Giftedness brings with it unique problems. If these problems are not dealt with, they can lead to feelings of inadequacy and negative self-concept, difficulties in social relationships, and under-achievement (Clark, 1983; Tannebaum, 1983; Whitmore, 1980).

Kaplan (1983) notes,

While gifted young people appear to have it all, they often make serious mistakes about themselves and their giftedness. With-out an accurate and realistic self-concept, many of these youths create emotional difficulties for themselves which prevent them from fully using their talents in constructive and satisfying ways (p. 73)

Many gifted youth set unrealistically high goals for themselves (Campbell, 1979). Parents and teachers frequently remind gifted child-ren about the amount of potential they have. As a result, gifted children may expect to perform outstandingly on a consistent basis. Problems may arise when the gifted student faces a task that is not easily accomplished. The student identifies less-than-perfect results for his effort, and feels himself less-than-perfect. Because self-identity is so integrally involved with exceptional performance and high ability, challenges to ability frequently are perceived as challenges to self-esteem (Clark, 1983). According to Campbell, gifted children need

to understand that they do not always have to be perfect.

Kaplan believes that gifted youth need to develop a clear and concrete definition of giftedness. She maintains that giftedness means the ability to learn faster, to build new understandings and to act as creative and resourceful problem solvers. Kaplan further asserts that gifted students need to understand what giftedness does not mean. Giftedness does not mean that the children's worth rests entirely upon their superior mental abilities, or that having fine minds is their only value. Giftedness does not mean only liking to study. Like their friends, gifted youth like to have fun and enjoy life. Giftedness does not mean that one already knows everything. One must learn to understand personal interests, values, and emotions. There is much to learn academically. Since gifted youth tend to learn quickly, they often do not have adequate study skills to meet demanding intellectual subjects. Kaplan (1983) concludes that giftedness does not mean these individuals can do all things well, or even do one thing well all of the time. Gifted students must recognize that they have limitations.

At times, gifted students deny or devalue intellectual talents in order to avoid rejection. Thompson (1984) reports that they must learn to be honest with themselves about their abilities. Like all young people, gifted youth need to build accurate and realistic self-concepts. These self-concepts should be built on more than academic capabilities. Gifted education, more than anything else, demands a holistic approach. As the student increases in regard for personal talents, the need to hide abilities diminishes. Subsequently, as gifted students learn to accept both their talents and their selves, they will become less vulnerable to societal pressures.

Ziv (1977) states that gifted children need assistance in developing social relationships. Their special ways of thinking and their actions can result in rejection by chronologically aged peers. Leese (1974) believes that gifted students regret their inclination to take exception, to offer proposals that others deem impossible, to desire progress, to dismantle the best but unsatisfying constructs of others and to be impatient with needed explanations. Their oblique thinking and actions sometimes cost alienation from desired friends. It is difficult for the gifted child to find true peers and that lack limits one's socialization (Colangelo & Zaffran, 1979).

One of the factors that contributes to any child's self-concept is the way in which he views his own capabilities. As a general rule, gifted children undervalue their own capabilities. They tend to under-assess their potential and, at times, deny their giftedness (Baskin & Harris, 1980). Denial of their giftedness usually results from peer or parental pressure. Many gifted children are rejected by their peers because of their special ways of thinking and dealing with a situation (Ziv, 1977).

In essence, one of the most prevalent myths about gifted students is the belief that no special considerations are needed in their personal and social development. The research on gifted is full of references to the unique personal and social needs of gifted students (Colangelo & Zaffran, 1979). On the whole, however, little attention seems to have been devoted to the nonacademic life of gifted students in the classroom (Ross & Parker). A comprehensive approach to differentiating instruction for the gifted must involve values, feelings, personal growth, and interpersonal relations (Treffinger, Borgers, Render &

Hoffman, 1976). To this end, these youth need help understanding their abilities, personalities, and limitations. Gifted youth need help developing realistic expectations for themselves. Feelings and emotions matter significantly and provide both direction and meaning in their lives. Learning to recognize, understand and accept their affective natures will assist them to make better sense out of their experiences. Accepting themselves as individuals with certain talents allows these special young people to use their gifts in more satisfying ways (Kaplan, 1983).

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Self-Concept Literature Programs

for Gifted Students

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A major mistake which characterizes curriculum for gifted readers is the assumption that more is better (Dresang, 1983). "Qualitatively different" is the term often used in reference to educating gifted young people. This indicates that added quantity alone is not sufficient to meet the needs of gifted students. Gifted young people, along with all other humans, have both cognitive and affective needs. Books for the gifted ought to bridge the gap between the cognitive and affective domain and stimulate the intellect. At the same time, they should satisfy the psyche in ways especially suitable for the exceptionally able reader. When gifted children are rejected by their peers, literature can demonstrate that that they are not alone in the situation. Literature can lead to greater acceptance and understanding of the particular nuances of human relationships (Berler & Young, 1982; Vida, 1978).

In designing literature programs for gifted children, the goal is

to offer a curriculum that challenges to the intellectual, social, and emotional parts of their being. Two things must occur, according to Roser and Frith (1983). A transaction between the reader and the book will be accomplished through the experiences that the children bring to the text. That will influence their interpretation. Later, there should be an opportunity for the child to draw something from the text that will enrich his life. This is where children's literature can be used to nurture and edify the gifted child's self-concept.

In order to be qualitatively different, a book for gifted readers should promote a challenging reading experience (Baskin & Harris, 1980). The book must encourage the higher thinking processes--analysis, synthesis, and evaluation--as identified in <u>Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain</u> (Bloom, 1956). Through fluent, flexible, original, and elaborate writing, a book can encourage the same qualities in a reader's thinking process. (Dresang, 1983)

The affective domain becomes important in the area of self-concept development. Krathwohl, Bloom and Massia (1964) developed the <u>Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Affective Domain</u>, which although not applied as universally as the cognitive taxonomy, is relevant to this study. Clendening and Davies (1980) speak of the importance of this taxonomy in considering the needs of the gifted. Not only do they need to be encouraged to use the higher cognitive thinking skills, but also the affective skills of organizing a value system and acting consistently in accordance with internalized values.

When constructing a literature program that requires an active response, educators can provide valuable experiences that will meet the needs of the gifted child. In a carefully developed program, both

cognitive and affective objectives can be met. Comprehension alone will not modify or change attitudes or behaviors so gifted students must be given the chance to integrate their abilities in social settings. It is through these experiences in which challenging literature is supplemented by extension activities that the gifted students learn more about themselves and their relationships with others. (Ross & Parker, 1980).

Literature for gifted students can serve as a high speed vehicle to realms far beyond and satisfy their need to accelerate (Clendening & Davies, 1980). High ability learners require more demanding fare. Books should leave them with questions to answer. The goal is to foster continual contemplation, analysis, and evaluation (Baskin & Harris, 1980). In choosing books for the gifted, selection should be made on the basis of ideas, rather than vocabulary (Clendening and Davies, 1980).

A structured literature program can be effectively used to challenge the students to examine their own value systems and to understand that they do not always have to be perfect. After vicariously experiencing the problems that children in books have, the gifted child becomes more willing to examine his own temptations and problems without having to violate his own personal privacy.

## Summary

This review of related literature includes experimental studies as well as opinions that define and propose modifications in self-concept, research about the effect of children's literature on gifted and non-gifted children, a summaary of special needs of gifted students, and studies demonstrating the relationship of self-concept to both behavior

and atttitudes toward school. Each reference examined was reviewed in an attempt to find relevance to the area of concern for this particular study: children's literature for self-concept development of gifted children.

A look into the history of education reveals little concern for self-concept development until the 1960's. That is when Krathwohl, Bloom and Massia (1964) developed their Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Affective Domain. This book came after Combs and Snygg (1959) developed a comprehensive theory of self-concept enhancement that has been the basis for many subsequent studies in education, counseling and psychology. Interest in educating and nurturing the affective needs of students has grown in the public schools increasingly in the past two decades. This can be attributed to the increase in research on the subject.

Self-concept research is, by its very nature, prone to severe constraints. Problems in measuring self-concept have always been present. Researchers tend to rely on three types of instrumentation. Many of the pieces reviewed in this study gathered data from clinical observations of one-on-one interactions by trained observers. Other researchers use teacher observation of children in classroom settings. Finally, experimental studies have increasingly relied on paper and pencil self-reporting scales. These paper and pencil measures allow for the testing of many students at one time. A more extensive discussion regarding instrumentation relevant to this particular study is found in Chapter III.

The purpose of this study was to expand on existing research. It was hoped that this experimental design would augment the literature by

testing effective ways to use children's literature to meet the affective needs of gifted children, especially in their self-concept. Because this is true, educators must not only be nurturing the cognitive abilities of gifted students, but also their affective needs.

Most of the experimental studies reviewed outlined the importance of a planned program with the systematic presentation of extension activities. Ross and Parker (1980) presented the concept that proactive literature programs with small group work enables the students to internalize the values projected in the books. Most of the literature reviewed concluded that unless the children act upon a concept, it will not become a part of them. This points to the development of a literature program that will involve the students in activities that will not only introduce them to new concepts and values, but will also help them to increase their social skills and self-concept.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The objective of this present study was to determine the effects of two specific children's literature programs on self-concept as reported by gifted and nongifted students in the intermediate grades. The study involved designing the two literature programs, identifying appropriate evaluation instruments, applying the instruments, and analyzing the data. This chapter presents the research design and will be divided into five sections: (1) a description of the population used, (2) a description of the research design and testing procedures, (3) description of a pilot study, (4) descriptions of the evaluation instruments, and (5) the statistical analysis employed.

Population

Intermediate grade students, gifted and nongifted, in a large midwest school district comprised the population for the present study. An attempt was made to limit the subjects to similar socioeconomic backgrounds by asking the school officials to designate schools in the same or similar neighborhoods. Designation as gifted or nongifted was based on school district criteria. The 96 students in the sample were enrolled in the fifth and sixth grade. Gifted students received instruction in special classrooms designed specifically to meet their needs. The grade level and participating classrooms were dictated by

the participating school district.  All subjects had parental permission
to participate in the study.

## Research Design and Testing
### Procedures

The design for this study was a modified quasi-experimental non-
equivalent control group design.  The modification came in the addition
of a second independent variable.  The research data consisting of a
pretest, treatment, and posttest was drawn from two treatment groups,
structured literature and oral reading; a pretest and posttest was
administered to the control groups.  The research paradigm is

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According to Campbell and Stanley (1963), this design controls five
factors which otherwise threaten the internal validity of the research:
history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, and mortality.  Campbell
and Stanley indicate the potential threats to the internal validity of
the nonequivalent control group design to be interaction of selection
with other factors such as maturation, testing, history, instrumentation
and mortality.  These potential threats must be viewed as limitations in
this study.  According to Campbell and Stanley, this research design has
questionable external validity.  This should also be viewed as a
weakness and limitation to this proposed study.

The study had three independent variables.  One independent vari-
able was type of student.  The two levels used in this study were gifted
students and nongifted students.  The second independent variable was

type of literature program: structured self-concept children's literature program, listening program, and, for the control group, the regularly used daily curriculum. The third independent variable was time of testing: both pretest and posttest. The dependent variable is self-concept.

Each structured self-concept literature program was used with one gifted group and one nongifted group instead of the regular literature program offered to the students. Each listening program was used with one gifted group and one nongifted group in addition to the regular literature program offered to the students. Control groups of gifted and nongifted students were included in this study. The control groups experienced the daily curriculum offered to them in their classrooms.

Each of the six groups had 16 members for the purpose of statistical analysis. Since unequal numbers appeared in the different groups, a method of randomly discarding scores was used to achieve equal cell sizes.

The teachers of the structured literature groups and the oral reading groups for both the gifted and nongifted students were requested to participate in the 30 sessions at approximately the same time each day. Each session lasted 30 to 45 minutes.

Pretests were administered by the researcher and her assistants on September 24, 1984. All students in each of the six groups completed the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale.

The day-to-day activities were outlined for the structured literature program and the oral reading program in Appendices A and B. In order to insure that both structured literature program participant groups received equivalent experiences as possible with different

teachers, the teachers were given the detailed lesson plans. The teach-
ers were instructed on how to implement the program and were thoroughly
briefed with the goals of the sessions by the researcher. The study
encompassed 32 sessions, i.e., 3 days a week plus two sessions for test-
ing, over an eleven week period from September 24 through December 7,
1984. The study concluded when researcher and assistants readministered
the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale on December 7, 1984.

## Pilot Study

A pilot study was run from March 19 to April 6, 1984 in a medium
size community. It involved 40 sixth graders: 30 who participated in
the structured literature program and 10 who comprised the control
group. The treatment group using the structured literature program
participated in 15 treatment sessions. The Piers-Harris Children's
Self-Concept Scale was used in the pilot study.

The analytic procedure used to test the hypothesis in the pilot
study involved comparing the treatment group and the control group on
the dependent variable of change in self-concept score between the pre-
test and posttest. The Mann-Whitney U test for small samples (Siegel,
1956) was used to test for significant differences in the ranks of the
two samples. An alpha level of .05 was chosen as the critical level of
significance. The value of U obtained for the treatment group versus
the control group was 79. A U of 41 or less would have been significant
at the .05 level for the comparison. Since the comparison was not sig-
nificant, the null hypotheses (that the control group and the treatment
group represented the same population distribution on self-concept
change) was not rejected.

The short time period placed many limitations on this pilot study. Yet, a look at the raw data indicated that some subjects in the treatment group made large positive gains in their self-concept scores. Also, verbal reactions to the pilot study by both the cooperating teacher and from the students were very favorable. The teacher noted that the students enjoyed the experience and looked forward to their reading class each day. This would seem to indicate that a further study utilizing more treatments over a longer period of time could yield significant results.

## Design of the Experimental
## Literature Programs

The structure of the two literature programs used in this study accommodates several objectives. The selected books were to be intellectually challenging, containing layers of meaning to be discovered through higher levels of questioning techniques (Bloom, 1956). Each of the books chosen illustrate the enhancement of self-concept through better understanding of self. The inclusion of animal stories, realistic fiction, modern fantasy and even a picture book and a multicultural legend in the selections achieved a balance among the genres of children's literature.

Although the total Piers-Harris score was the only one analyzed, the six cluster scales of that instrument influenced the books selected for both literature programs. The cluster scales (Piers, 1984) are these:

(1) Behavior refers to the child's ability to admit or deny problematic behavior.

(2) <u>Intellectual and school status</u> involves the child's assessment of his or her ability with respect to intellectual and academic tasks, including general satisfaction with school and future expectations.

(3) <u>Physical appearance and attributes</u> revolve around attitudes concerning physical characteristics, and attributes for leadership and expression of ideas.

(4) <u>Anxiety</u> reflects general emotional disturbances such as worry, nervousness, shyness, fear and the feeling of being left out.

(5) <u>Popularity</u> refers to the child's evaluation of his or her popularity with classmates, being chosen for games and ability to make friends.

(6) <u>Happiness and satisfaction</u> involves the general feeling of being a happy person, satisfied with life.  (pages 38-39).

## Structured Children's Literature Program

The structured children's literature program is composed of three parts:  (1) exposure to children's literature written for the purpose of nurturing positive self-concept; (2) discussion of the book's plot structure and character development; and (3) extension activities to reinforce important concepts.  All activities in this program focus on self-concept.

<u>The Books</u>.  Following is an annotated bibliography of the books selected for inclusion in this research study:

Cunningham, J. (1974).  <u>Maybe, a Mole</u>.

Gillespie (1978) in <u>Best Books for Children</u> describes this book as five stories of survival involving a mole who was ostracized by his own

kind because he could see. Maybe is different, and must learn to cope with his specialness.. This book fits into the Piers-Harris cluster scales of physical appearance and attributes, along with happiness and satisfaction.

Lionni, L. (1963). Swimmy

Smith and Foat (1981) identify this picture book for older children as having the key concepts of assertiveness, self-confidence and cooperation. The book stresses the importance of nurturing both individual cooperation and individual responsibility. These concepts are measured by the Piers-Harris cluster scales of physical appearance and attributes, and anxiety.

Estes, E. (1944). The Hundred Dresses.

The Hundred Dresses is a book about someone who is different. The story, according to Kircher (1966), deals with appreciation of others and with school classmates relationships. The book is a classic example of children's cruelty to others who are different and provides insight into motives of mistreatment (Huck, 1979). The Piers-Harris cluster scales of popularity and anxiety address the themes of this book.

Godden, R. (1956). The Fairy Doll.

Kircher (1966) cites this book as an example of a young child learning to accept herself as her self-reliance begins to grow. The main character realizes that artificial props are unnecessary for capability and performance. The Fairy Doll deals with the Piers-Harris cluster scales of behavior, intellectual and grade status, anxiety, popularity and happiness, and satisfaction.

Smith, D. B. (1981). Last Was Lloyd.

Glazer (1984) cites this book as suitable for middle year students

coping with feelings of insecurity and overprotection. The main character encounters failure and teasing at every level, eroding self-concept and pride. All six of the Piers-Harris cluster scales are addressed in this book.

The Discussion Questions. The objective of the discussion part of the literature program is to help children develop thinking strategies and effectively communicate their thoughts. The questions to be used are from Bloom's Taxonomy (1956). The only time that memory and translation level questions are used is to clarify the plot structure and to establish a firm knowledge base before moving to higher levels of processing that information.

Most of the questions are on the interpretation level (tell what you think, why it is called, explain why and what caused . . . ?), the application level (when might you, where could you, how could this affect . . . ?), the synthesis level (what would happen if, how can you explain . . . ?) and the evaluation level (was it wrong for, what is the most important, is . . . accurate?).

These kinds of questions involve the children in making predictions, identifying cause and effect relationships, comparing and contrasting situations, hypothesizing and arranging events in order. These questioning strategies will enable the children to not only enjoy the stories, but also to relate those stories to their own activities.

The Activities. The extension activities for the structured children's literature program focus on the development of positive self-concept. Two resources were used in selecting the activities for the study.

Guidance Activities for Counselors and Teachers by Thompson and
Poppen (1979) provided several activities and games. The learning
events and projects taken from Thompson and Poppen were chosen for their
emphasis on personal feelings and group relationships. Thompson and
Poppen work to enhance a student's successful relationship to the group
by building the student's knowledge of self.

The second major resource is 100 ways to Enhance Self-Concept in
the Classroom by Canfield and Wells (1976). This resource is a compila-
tion of self-concept activities. Starting with such concepts as "Who Am
I?" and "What Are My Strengths?" the authors work into "Relationships
With Others." It is the assumption of Canfield and Wells that students'
abilities to relate self to others must be preceded by fully understand-
ing the present self with all attendant strengths. The activities
chosen for this study are sequenced with that assumption in mind.

Thompson and Poppen (1979) and Canfield and Wells (1976) provided
all the activities used in this literature program. Both resources pre-
sented such comprehensive and sequential projects that this researcher
felt it would weaken the study to bring in too many other resources.
The line of thought proposed by these two pair of authors makes the
sequence of events more logical and meaningful.

Listening Program

The listening program exposes the students to children's books with
a self-concept focus read orally by the teacher. Class discussions and
extended activities do not supplement the listening experience.

A few more books are included in this program than in the struc-
tured self-concept children's literature program. Because listening was

the only activity, more books were needed to fill the allotted time.

Four of the books are also included in the structured self-concept children's literature program. These books are: The Hundred Dresses, Last Was Lloyd, Time Ago Tales of Jahdu, and The Fairy Doll. Three books have been added to complete the list.

Krumgold, J. (1969). Henry 3.

Henry 3 is mentioned by Reid (1972) and Tway (1980) as a book dealing with a child learning to cope with high intelligence. The book also provides a perceptive look into the effect upon relationships of false values. The theme of the book is addressed by the Piers-Harris cluster scales of intellectual and school status, anxiety, popularity and happiness and satisfaction.

Stolz, M. (1963). The Bully of Barkham Street.

Huck (1979) suggests that The Bully of Barkham Street provides an extraordinary insight into the mind of a bully. The main character deals with the struggle to find acceptance in family and peer settings. All six of the Piers-Harris cluster scales relate to the themes of this book.

Danziger, P. (1974). The Cat Ate My Gymsuit.

Berler and Young (1982) state that this book reflects a student's fight for self-respect and independence. Sutherland (1980) relates that the book handles the issues realistically and brings the struggle to a logical conclusion. Tway (1980) suggests that The Cat Ate My Gymsuit portrays a gifted child as different and learning to cope. The book is addressed by the Piers-Harris cluster scales of intellectial and school status, physical appearance and attributes, happiness and satisfaction, popularity, and anxiety.

## Instrumentation

Self-concept was measured using the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Piers-Harris) published by Western Psychological Services in 1969. The manual was revised in 1984. The Piers-Harris appears to be a reliable instrument. Test-retest reliability coefficients with a time interval of two months and four months between the testing periods range from .71 to .77. Internal consistency estimates for a total score range from .88 to .93. Changes in group means on a retest (up to five points) have been found to be consistently in the direction of a higher score (more positive self-concept) even if no treatment or manipulation had taken placed. It has been suggested that increasing familiarity with the items might account for the change, but in any case, it reemphasizes the importance of using a control group before making claims regarding any self-concept changes in a group receiving treatment (Piers, 1984).

Buros (1972) states that the Piers-Harris scale possesses sufficient reliability and validity to be used in research as recommended by the authors. It is further stated that the authors have produced a psychometrically adequate scale. The Piers-Harris is recommended for studies of change in self-concept.

According to Piers, estimates of the content, criterion-related, and content validity of the Piers-Harris test have been obtained from a number of empirical studies. The Piers-Harris has also been compared to other scales designed to measure similar constructs. When the Piers-Harris was being developed in the early 1960's, Cox (1966), using subjects in grades six through nine; found low, but significant

correlations between the Piers-Harris and teacher ratings ($r = .43$) and peer ratings ($r = .31$) of socially effective behavior. Piers reports correlations between the Piers-Harris total score and other measures of self-concept, such as the Children's Personality Questionnaire and the Coopersmith Self-Concept Scale range from .32 to .85.

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale was chosen because it has been shown to have acceptable reliability, along with evidence of validity for elementary age children. It was appropriate for this study and the sample to be used because it measures overall self-concept in intermediate grade children. It was easy to administer, score, and did not threaten students. The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale appeared often in the review of the related literature as a measure of self-concept of children.

## Statistical Analysis

The hypotheses that were tested in this study are as follows:

Hypothesis I: Type of literature program, time of testing and ability level do not interact to affect the self-concept of intermediate students.

Hypothesis II: Type of literature program and ability level do not interact to affect the self-concept of intermediate grade students when averaged across time.

Since this research design has one within subject factor (pretest/posttest) and two between subjects factors (literature program and level of student) a three-factor mixed design analysis of variance was used to test the hypotheses. Not only did this design permit examination of the effects of the between subjects factor but it also permitted examination

of change in performance shown by the subjects during the experimental sessions. Significant interactions and main effects were investigated using appropriate specific comparison tests.

## Summary

The design for this study is a modified quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group design. It involved 96 intermediate grade children. Three classes of gifted students and three classes of non-gifted students provided the sample needed to conduct the study. The structured literature program was used with one gifted class and one nongifted class as did the listening program. Finally, there was a control gifted group and a control nongifted group.

The literature programs were carefully designed. Detailed lesson plans were carefully developed in an attempt to control teacher presentation variables which could otherwise confound the results of the study. The teachers were briefed regarding the necessity of carefully implementing the lesson plans provided by the researcher.

The instrument, Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, chosen measure the dependent variable in this study, has been deemed acceptable by other researchers. Evidence of reliability and validity for the purposes of the study are present in the literature.

The three-factor mixed design analyses of variance was used to analyze the pretest and posttest measures of the gifted and nongifted students in the two treatment groups and the control group. An alpha level of .05 was used. Statistical analysis allowed the researcher to determine the effects of the two literature programs on both gifted and nongifted students' self-concepts to determine if the effect is more

than one could expect without any specialized literature program being
utilized.

The selected research design, while somewhat difficult to imple-
ment, yielded results very appropriate for answering the problem
statements. Attempts were made to insure that the two literature
programs, structured and listening, were distinctly different. This
aided in the interpretation of the effects of each literature program.
At the same time, controls of extraneous variables, such as time of day
and socioeconomic background were also considered. Controlling these
variables made the research groups as much alike as possible except in
respect to the two independent variables, gifted or nongifted, and type
of literature program.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Analysis of the Data

The major purpose of this study was to determine the effects over
time of two specific children's literature programs on the self-concepts
of gifted and nongifted fifth and sixth grade students. Analysis of the
data permitted examination of two between-subjects factors (literature
program and ability level of student) and one within-subjects factor
(time of testing). The results were analyzed by a three-way analysis of
variance (literature program by ability level of student by time of
testing) with repeated measures on the last factor.

The means and standard deviations of the scores on the pretest and
the posttest Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale for all six
groups involved in the study are presented in Table 1.

Testing the Hypotheses

A summary of the analysis of variance results calculated to test
hypotheses related to the major purpose of this study are reported in
Table 2. The following hypotheses were tested using an $\alpha$ level of .05.

Hypothesis one:

Type of literature program, time of testing, and ability level do
not interact to affect the self-concept of intermediate grade students.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Responses on the Piers-Harris
Children's Self-Concept Scale

| Group | Pretest | | Posttest | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | $\bar{x}$ | s | $\bar{x}$ | s |
| Literature Program | | | | |
| Gifted | 61.0 | 11.00 | 63.0 | 8.81 |
| Nongifted | 60.9 | 11.28 | 69.9 | 6.91 |
| Listening Program | | | | |
| Gifted | 68.2 | 5.77 | 72.1 | 6.74 |
| Nongifted | 58.1 | 11.95 | 66.5 | 8.38 |
| Control | | | | |
| Gifted | 60.9 | 10.90 | 62.9 | 8.62 |
| Nongifted | 63.5 | 10.05 | 65.8 | 11.21 |

Table 2

Summary Table:  Three-way ANOVA of Responses
on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale

| Source | df | SS | MS | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Program | 2 | 340.40 | 170.20 | 1.10 |
| Level | 1 | 13.54 | 13.54 | .08 |
| Program by Level | 2 | 1,296.09 | 648.04 | 4.20* |
| Error:  Between Subjects | 90 | 13,870.16 | 154.11 | |
| Time | 1 | 985.54 | 985.54 | 36.86* |
| Program by Time | 2 | 153.78 | 78.89 | 2.86 |
| Level by Time | 1 | 194.00 | 194.00 | 7.25* |
| Program by Level by Time | 2 | 84.26 | 42.13 | 1.57 |
| Error:  Within Subjects | 90 | 2,405.90 | 26.73 | |

*p < .05

The results of the analysis of the three-way interaction of type of literature program, time of testing, and ability level of students are presented in Table 2. The computed F value of 1.57 was not significant at the .05 level of confidence therefore, null hypotheses one was not rejected.

Hypotheses two:

Type of literature program and ability level do not interact to affect the self-concept of intermediate grade students when averaged across time.

The means and standard deviations of gifted and nongifted students in the three literature programs averaged across time are reported in Table 3.

The three-way ANOVA yielded a significant ($p < .05$) F value of 4.20 for the two-way interaction of ability level by type of literature program. This indicates that the difference in self-concepts of gifted and nongifted students is related to the type of literature program received. The interaction is graphed in Figure 1.

Although the three-factor ANOVA yielded a significant F, no significant pairwise comparisons were found using the Tukey's (a) Test for Unconfounded Means. The critical value yielded by the Tukey's (a) Test was 8.67. The failure to identify any significant pairwise difference is likely due to the conservative nature of the Tukey's (a) Test.

### Additional Findings

Additional results reported in Table 2 were not related to specific hypotheses serving as the basis for this study; however, the results reveal relationships among type of literature program, ability level of

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of Responses[a] to the Piers-Harris
Children's Self-Concept Scale:  Program by Level

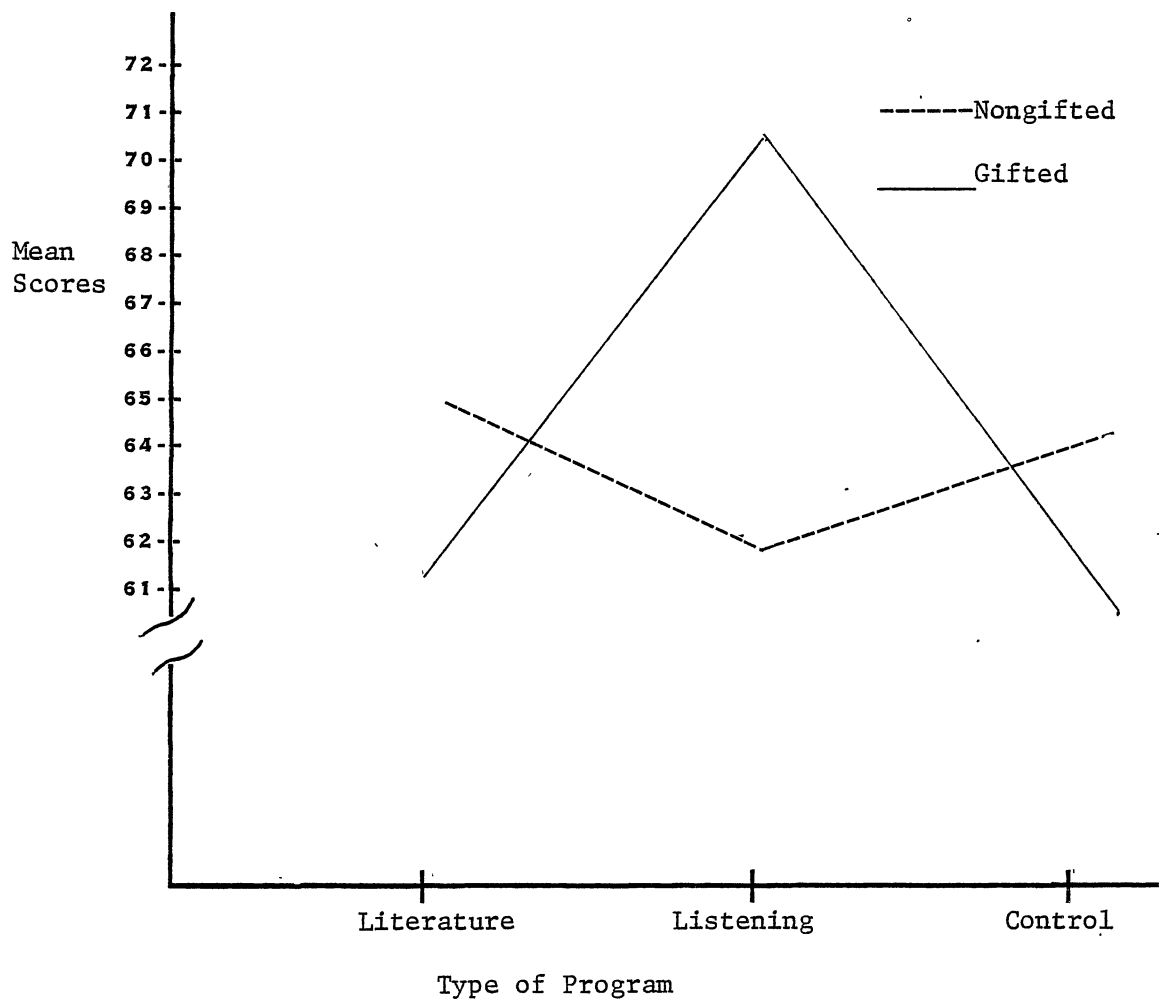| | Type of Program | | | | | |
| | Literature | | Listening | | Control | |
| Ability Level | $\bar{x}$ | s . | $\bar{x}$ | s | x | s |
| Gifted | 62.0 | 9.86 | 70.2 | 6.48 | 61.6 | 9.71 |
| Nongifted | 65.4 | 10.26 | 62.3 | 11.01 | 64.7 | 10.51 |

[a]Responses are collapsed across time

Figure 1. Mean self-concept responses as a function of type of program and ability level of students.

students, change over time, and self-concepts of students.

The two-way interaction involving the ability level of student and time of testing is found to have a significant (p < .05) F value of 7.25. The means and standard deviations for the gifted and nongifted students collapsed across the literature programs for the pretest and posttest administrations are reported in Table 4.

The results of pairwise comparisons using Tukey's (a) Test for Unconfounded Means which yielded a critical value of 2.54 indicated nongifted students scored significantly higher on the posttest than they did on the pretest. The same cannot be reported for the gifted as the difference between the pretest and the posttest was 2.5. The interaction is graphed in Figure 2.

Table 2 reveals a nonsignificant (p > .05) F value of 2.87 for the two-way interaction of type of literature program and time of testing. This indicates that the differences in self-concept are not related to the interaction of the type of literature program used and time of testing.

A significant (p < .05) F value of 36.86 for the main effect of time is indicated in Table 2. When all data associated with each literature program and ability level of students are combined, the responses have a pretest mean of 62.1 (s = 10.57) and a posttest mean of 66.6 (s = 9.02).

The two main effects of type of literature program and ability level of students were not significant (p > .05) as reported in Table 2. Therefore this study does not indicate a significant difference in self-concept due to type of literature program or the ability level of the students alone.

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations of Responses[a] to the Piers-Harris
Children's Self-Concept Scale:  Level by Time

| | Pretest | | Posttest | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ability Level | $\bar{x}$ | s | $\bar{x}$ | s |
| Gifted | 63.4 | 9.98 | 65.9 | 9.09 |
| Nongifted | 60.8 | 11.10 | 67.4 | 9.00 |

[a]Responses are collapsed across type of literature program.
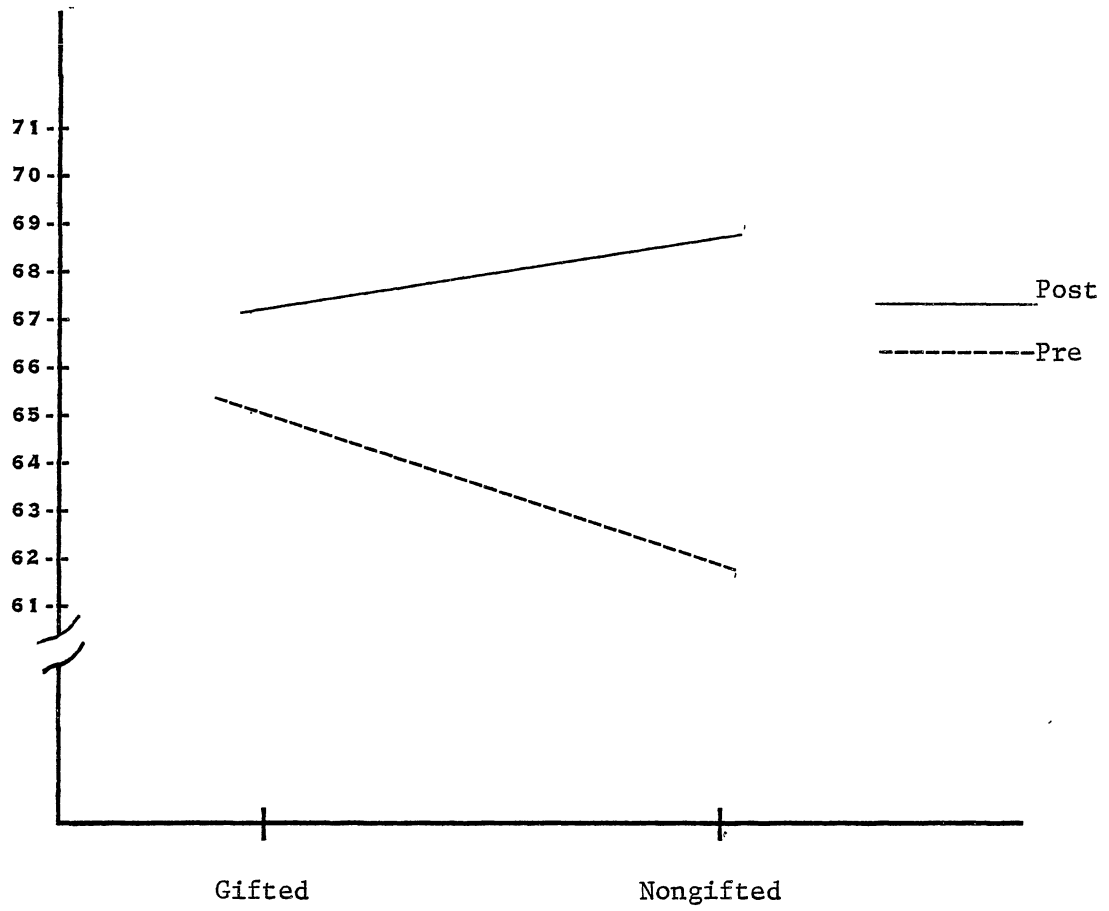
Figure 2. Mean self-concept responses as a function of ability level of students and time of testing.

## Summary

Several nonsignificant and significant differences were found as a result of the three-way ANOVA applied to the data collected in this study. Hypothesis one, which referred to the three-way interaction of type of literature program, time of testing, and ability level of students was not rejected. Hypothesis two, which referred to the interaction of type of literature program and ability level of students was rejected due to a significant F value yielded by the three-way ANOVA. This finding indicated that differences in self-concept of gifted and nongifted students are related to the type of literature program in which they participated. Additional findings revealed significant interactions involving the ability level of students and time of testing. The results of the Tukey's (a) Test for Unconfounded Means indicated that nongifted students scored significantly higher on the posttest than they did on the pretest. The interaction of type of literature program and time of testing and the main effects of ability level of students and type of literature program were not significant $(p > .05)$.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS,

AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Summary

This study was designed to investigate the effect of two specified children's literature programs on the self-concept of both gifted and nongifted students at the fifth and sixth grade levels. The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale was used as the measure of self-concept as reported by the students.

The review of the literature used in the study centered on two areas of concern: development of the self-concept and the importance of reading upon the self-concept. Roach (1975) reports that although it has been generally agreed that the effect of reading has had a signifi-cant impact upon the individual, the evidence from research has been unclear about the effects of particular types of literature or activi-ties on individual children. The present study was designed to add to the general body of knowledge concerning the effects of bibliotherapy. The statement that bibliotherapy is grounded in the theory that there is a relationship between personality development and vicarious experiences with books was supported in part by the research cited in this study.

The population utilized in this study was composed of fifth and sixth graders from three different schools a large Midwest school

district. Three gifted groups and three nongifted groups were involved. There was one gifted group using the literature program, one gifted group involved in the listening program, and one gifted group acted as the control group. The same held true for the nongifted groups. Because of administrative limitations it was decided to use intact classroom groups and to randomly assign treatments (literature programs). Since intact classrooms were used, the class means were used as the basic observations, and treatment effects were tested against variations on those means.

The data was analyzed using a mixed-design three-way ANOVA. The analysis was conducted using scores from the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale collected at both pretest and posttest administrations with eleven weeks between the two test administrations. The hypotheses were stated in chapter IV and the findings reported. Based on the findings of the present study, there appears to be differential effects of the literature programs for the gifted and nongifted students.

## Discussion and Conclusions

This investigation was designed to determine if specific literature programs significantly influence the self-concept of fifth and sixth grade students. The researcher also attempted to determine if gifted and nongifted students react differently to the specific children's literature programs. On the basis of this study, there are a number of conclusions that appear to be justified.

With respect to the three-way interaction of type of literature program, time of testing and ability level of student, it does not

appear that the self-concept is influenced by the unique combination of these three factors.

The two-way interaction of ability level by type of literature program was significant, indicating that the differences in self-concepts of gifted and nongifted students is related to the type of literature program received. A graph of the interaction suggests that gifted students respond more positively to the listening program than to the literature program or the control program while nongifted students respond more positively to the literature program than to the other two programs.

It should be noted that gifted students in the listening program started out with a pretest mean of 68.2 and moved to a posttest mean of 72.1 creating the average of 70.2 when the measures are collapsed across time. This would indicate that the gifted students in the listening program already had a high self-concept before starting the treatment. This researcher is reluctant to conclude that the type of literature program (listening program) produced the high self-concept score. It should be noted, however, that of the three literature groups of which a gifted student could be a part, the group mean of the students involved in the listening program made the largest increase from pretest to post-test. This may indicate that gifted students prefer to create their own structures with a less organized literature program that presents stories to think about and internalize. Interaction with books (biblio-theraphy) happens through identification with the characters and the plot which provides a type of catharsis that encourages insight. It is through this insight that the readers are able to see themselves in the behavior of the character (Weinstein, 1977). Baskin and Harris (1980)

state that books for gifted students should leave them with questions to answer providing a means for continual contemplation.

The two-way interaction involving ability level of student and time of testing was found to be significant. Nongifted students scored significantly higher on the posttest than they did on the pretest. This would indicate that the nongifted students were generally more receptive to both types of literature programs than were the gifted students.

The main effect of time was also significant. This indicates that on the whole, all groups involved in the study made a positive significant gain in their self-concept.

The results obtained did not provide any compelling evidence of the superiority of one treatment over the other two. This could be due to many variables that were uncontrolled for in this study. Because the teachers were randomnly assigned literature programs, their skill in children's literature or interest in language arts and previous experience in discussing stories could not be taken into account. It has been established in numerous studies that the teacher's attitude and interest level toward books has been a determining factor in predicting treatment outcome (Roach, 1975). In future studies, it may prove more effective if one teacher, guidance counselor, or librariarn provided a uniform treatment to several groups of children.

## Limitations of the Findings

Any research, and probably especially doctoral dissertation research, is subject to some limitations. The present study is no exception.

Self-concept research, by its very nature, is prone to severe

constraints. How a person feels about himself may change from day to day, depending on how that person perceives his environment. Any number of events can occur in a child's life that may momentarily change the self-concept slightly. While the more internal and central aspects of our self-concepts may remain relatively intact, those beliefs about ourselves that are much less central are more open to change and fluctuation. One limitation of this study is due to the use of a pencil and paper test to evaluate something as sensitive as a person's self-concept. It is possible that a more accurate indication of positive change in the student's self-concept came from the teachers participating in the study. All teachers involved in the literature programs reported to this researcher that they were sure positive gains would manifest themselves. These statements were made because of observations they had made during the course of the research time period.

It is also the opinion of the researcher that certain aspects of time may have seriously limited the study's ability to elicit changes. First, the eleven week period may have provided too intense an experimental period for self-concept changes to occur. Because it takes a whole lifetime to develop a self-concept, it may be presumptious to assume that a relatively short literature program will change significantly a person's perception of himself. While this present study did reveal significant changes in positive self-concept, it should be further researched to determine of the changes are permanent.

## Implications for Education

The implications of this investigation are of importance to college teachers of children's literature and reading, curriculum planners,

classroom teachers, librarians, and authors and publishers of children's books. The present study has provided some support for the belief that books can influence students. Although the class means indicated that gifted and nongifted students reacted differently to the two specific literature programs, it is clear that they responded in a positive direction. Examination of individual scores showed that more students improved their self-concept scores on the posttest than those whose scores moved in a negative direction.

The implication for educators involved with the school classroom (teachers and college professors) is that oral reading of children's books can affect the self-concept of students. Therefore, selection of books for oral reading should include those pieces that are written with a self-concept theme.

Curriculum planners should be aware of the possibilities for inclusion of children's literature in the total integrated curriculum. Plans should be made for long-term changes in the focus of literature programs in the schools. The use of children's literature to improve students' self-concept is likely to be one of the most powerful means by which educators can organize a child's environment to maximize growth and development.

Authors and publishers of children's books should be made aware of the need for more books on the self-concept theme. Their contribution to a high quality literature program will make it possible to provide a wide selection of books from the various genres to students and teachers that will meet the needs of every age and stage of a child's growth toward maturity.

Suggestions for Further Research

The present study raised some questions that could well be the basis for future research. Some of these possibilities are presented below.

1. In view of the ambiguity of present research, further investigation into the type of literature program (discussion and activities, read aloud, or individual reading) that best enhances the self-concept of the gifted student seems necessary.

2. The present study should be replicated making some of the following adjustments in order to arrive at more definitive information:

a) The use of a larger sample would increase the power of the study.

b) A longer, but less intensive period could possibly affect the self-concept more significantly.

c) The study could be replicated in school districts which are quite dissimilar to the present study, such as rural schools or inner city schools.

d) A follow-up administration of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale two or more months after the treatment period is over and the posttest has been given would yield data as to the permanency of self-concept change.

e) The use of attitude assessment instruments other than paper and pencil tests may provide more accurate indications of self-concept levels.

f) Repeating the present study in grade levels other than fifth and sixth grades would provide further data

concerning the effectiveness of the literature program for
all ages.

3. Further research is needed to study the effects of the
teacher's attitude and behavior on the self-concept of all students.

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APPENDIX A

STRUCTURED LITERATURE PROGRAM

Structured Literature Program

Session 1

Introduce <u>Maybe, A Mole</u> by saying, "For the next five sessions, we will
    be exploring who we are with the help of a very special mole named
    Maybe."

Read Chapter I of <u>Maybe, A Mole</u>.

Discussion Questions

1.  (On p. 3) Maybe says he is not unwilling to be moleish—just unable
    because he is different. How was he different? Have you ever felt
    that way—You wanted to be able to do something, but couldn't
    because of the way you are? How does it make you feel when you
    cannot be something you aren't?

2.  (p. 3) Fox suggests that he hide his unnatural ability—Pretend he
    can't see. Can you think of times humans do that—Pretend they
    can't do something? What basic need of humans is evident here?
    Why would we even want to cvover up something we can do? (People
    tend to want to be like others, to be accepted.)

3.  Why didn't Maybe just hide the fact that he could see? (It was too
    much a part of him—he loved to see.) What do you think would
    happen if we tried to cover up our talents and strengths? Would we
    be happy?

4.  What strengths do you see Maybe having? (Loyalty, trustworthiness,
    and a good friend, loving) How did Maybe change the fox? Do you
    think Maybe felt good about himself?

Explain that at the end of each session, each student will be given the
    chance to write in his/her journal. One activity that will be done
    each day is a "Here and Now Wheel." Ask each student to draw a
    circle with four lines intersecting in it at right angles. On the
    lines have the students write the four words that describe how they
    are feeling right now. Encourage the students to consult the page
    in their journal naming feeling words. Then ask them to choose one
    of the words and expand it into two sentences.

Explain to the students that this "Here and Now Wheel" is a tool we will
    use to explore our feelings and our relationship with others and
    ourselves. Let them decorate their journals in any way they
    desire.

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 22)

Materials needed:  Journals

<u>Session 2</u>

Read Chapter II of <u>Maybe, A Mole</u>

<u>Discussion Questions</u>

1. We have described Maybe as loyal, trustworthy and a good friend.
   How did he show these qualities in this chapter?  Who was he loyal
   to?

2. How did Maybe prove his friendship to the lady?

3. Why did Alfred the mouse upset Maybe?

4. Why do you think Alfred acted as he did?  (Could it be he had too
   much self-confidence or maybe not enough)

5. Who do you think likes himself better, Maybe or Alfred?  Who
   understands themselves better?

Have the students sit in a circle.  Have the first person start by
   stating their name along with a word that describes something they
   are good at.  The next person must do the same along with stating
   what the person in front of them said.  "I am singing Miss Jones."
   "I am basket-ball playing Billy and that's singing Miss Jones."  And
   so forth.

Close by having the students make their "Here and Now Wheel" for the
   day.

Materials needed:  Journals


<u>Session 3</u>

Read Chapter III of <u>Maybe, A Mole</u>.

<u>Discussion Questions</u>

1. Maybe encouraged the mouse to finish his song.  Why is it important
   to encourage our friends to be the best they can be?  How does that
   help them grow as people?

2. How did the encouragement and support Maybe gave to the mouse help
   him (Maybe) at the end of the chapter?  (Maybe helped the mouse see
   his strengths and put his trust in the mouse.  Therefore he came
   back to help probably because Maybe showed he believed in him)

3. How did the mouse show that he had grown in his own self respect by
   the end of the chapter?  When we start to think about others does

that show that we like ourselves? Is that part of being secure in
our own strengths and abilities?

Name some feelings that Maybe has experienced in this story so far.
Think of both positive and negative feelings. Put them on the
board, positive on one side and negative on the other. Can the
students add any more feelings that they have experienced?

Have the students sit in the circle like they did yesterday. This time
think of adjectives that describe feelings. Let each person have a
turn stating their feeling and reviewing what everyone else has
said. "I am happy Miss Jones." "I am angry Sally and this is tired
Billy and that's happy Miss Jones."

Close by giving students time to make their "Here and Now Wheel" for the
day.

Materials needed: Journals


## Session 4

Read Chapter IV of Maybe, A Mole.

## Discussion Questions

1. Why do you suppose Maybe isn't the kind of mole who would make fun
   of anyone? (He likes himself too much)

2. How did Maybe help the turtle to like himself? (He took him to a
   place where he would be loved. He allowed him the chance to see his
   strengths—namely his shell and the potential for using it to
   protect another)
   How had the turtle shown that he had changed toward the end of the
   chapter? (He no longer hid in his shell but used it to protect
   another)

3. What strengths did Maybe exhibit that is very unmoleish in this
   chapter and in all the other chapters for that matter? Think about
   this—how do moles usually act and live? What does Maybe "see" that
   prompts him to help others?

## One Special Thing

Divide the class into pairs. Instruct the students to carry on a
normal conversation for five minutes, each person telling the other as
much as possible about himself. Ask the students to pick those things
about themselves that they think are important to share. After five
minutes, ask the class to come back together again as one large group.
Then ask each student to introduce his partner by stating the partner's
name and the one special thing that impressed him as most important
about that person. Talk about what it was like to talk to the other
person and what it was like to be talked about in the group.

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 32)

Journal time—"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:  Journals

## Session 5

Read Chapter V of <u>Maybe, A Mole</u>

### Discussion Questions

1. The hound said it was respect that lead to his kindness toward the fox.  What does respect mean?  Is it possible to respect yourself?  Is it possible not to respect yourself?  How would you show that you didn't respect yourself or others?

2. Do you think the fox would have risked his life for the hound before he met Maybe?  How has Maybe changed all the animals he's come in contact with (taught them to like themselves and therefore others.)

### Success Sharing
Divide the class into small groups of five or six.  In the groups ask them to share a success, accomplishment, or achievement they had before they were six years old.  Then do the same for between the ages of six and now.  Children may need to be encouraged to see that even learning how to walk is an accomplishment.

Journal time—"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:  Journals

## Session 6

Read <u>Swimmy</u>

### Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe Swimmy's feelings about himself at the beginning of the book? (alone, afraid, unsure of himself)

2. How did Swimmy grow in maturity as the story progressed?  (gained courage, discovered the marvelous world around him, found out he had something to contribute to the world)

3. How do you think Swimmy felt about being different from the other fish?

4. How did Swimmy use his being different for the good of everyone involved?  (taught them to swim as one big fish—Swimmy was the eye)

Have the students choose the clay of the color they wish to use and ask them to make their own faces with the clay.  Allow students enough time to finish (about 15 minutes).  Make sure each child who wishes,

has an opportunity to show his work. This activity should lead to a discussion of how we see ourselves, how others see us, and what we think about ourselves. Children should be complimented on their efforts and encouraged to add other features to their models.

(Thompson and Poppen, 1979, p. 25)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Modeling clay, Journals

## Session 7

Read "How Jahdu Became Himself" from Time-Ago Tales of Jahdu (chapter 4)

### Discussion Questions

1. What do you think Jahdu is? (a spirit-pride in what you are-- courage to be the best you can be)

2. How did Jahdu affect the grass? the ocean (encouraged them or tricked them into extending themselves, being more than they thought they could be)

3. What does it mean when Mama Luka said, "There is pride in Jahdu's face that is always the same?" (In knowing you are the best you can be you have pride and power and are self--confident).

Give each student a 4x6 card. On one side ask them to draw a self-portrait. On the other side have the students write out some biographical information that describes them but does not make it too obvious who they are. Include such things as hobbies, talents, major trips they have taken, unusual things about their families and so on. When each person has done this, collect the cards and read them while the class attempts to guess who is being described. Include a card of your own.

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 35)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: 4x6 cards, Journals

## Session 8

Read Chapter I of The Fairy Doll

### Discussion Questions

1. How did Elizabeth feel about being the youngest in the family? How was she treated?

2. How did the way Elizabeth was treated influence the way she felt about herself?

3. How did you think the fairy doll will help Elizabeth? Has she already helped her?

## Writing An Ad For Yourself

Begin with a discussion about what makes a good advertisement. Then ask the students to write an ad about themselves that "sells" their strong points and best qualities to others. This can be included in their journals. Let anyone who wishes to share their ad with the class, do so. Even if they don't share with the class, the mechanics of thinking it through and writing it down should be a real ego booster for most students.

(Thompson and Poppen, 1979, p. 46)

Journal Time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Journals

## Session 9

Read Chapter II of The Fairy Doll.

## Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the things Elizabeth can do now that the Fairy Doll is a part of her life?

2. What does the "Ting" represent in this story? (Every time Elizabeth Elizabeth believes in herself, thinks for herself and grows as a person)

3. How has Elizabeth changed since the beginning of the book?

## Feelings and Thoughts Collage

Write several titles on a large sheet of construction paper (one for each student). "Things that make me feel happy" "Things I do well" "Something that makes me feel bad" and "My family and things I can do to help them" The students cut out from old magazines, pictures that express these feelings and thoughts, and paste them under the appropriate titles. This would best be done in groups of four or five.

(Thompson and Poppen, 1979, p. 30)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Journals, Drawing Paper, Magazines

## Session 10

Read Chapters III, IV, V of The Fairy Doll

### Discussion Questions

1. What did Elizabeth learn about herself when the Fairy Doll was lost?

2. Is this realistic fiction or a fantasy? Is the Fairy Doll magic? What were your clues?

3. How important is it for us to believe in ourselves? How does this belief affect everything we do?

### The Compliment Game

Divide the group into clusters of four or five. Have the members talk briefly about one thing of which they are proud—a personal characteristic or something they do well. Then the members are asked to talk about their most successful experiences and why they they consider such experiences more successful than others. Following the sharing of personal information, preferences and values, ask the participants to go around the group and pay each member a compliment based on the information that has been exchanged and on other things they know about each other. Have them go around the circle one way and then repeat the process going the other way.

(Thompson and Poppen, 1979), p. 34)

Journal Time—"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Journals

## Session 11

Read Chapters I and II of The Hundred Dresses.

### Discussion Questions

1. What kind of feelings do you think Wanda is having at school each day?

2. The girls teased Wanda because she had a funny name and lived in a crummy place. Why do you think people do that? Could it be that people do that to make themselves seem better? People who are unsure of themselves will run down others to make themselves look better.

### Strengths Badge

The students make a drawing depicting something they do well. Then they make badges out of their drawings and either wear the badges all day or tape them to their desks, depending on the mood of the class. The badge works best when the students write on it "I am good at _____" and let the drawing explain the rest.

(Thompson and Poppen, 1979, p. 38)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:  Construction paper, crayons, scissors, safety pins, tape, journals

Session 12

Read Chapters III & IV of The Hundred Dresses.

Discussion Questions

1.  Why is Maddie feeling uncomfortable about Peggy's teasing of Wanda?

2.  Does Maddie have enough self-confidence to tell Peggy to leave Wanda alone?  Why not?  (She's afraid Peggy will tease her too--not real sure of herself)

Pride Line

Have students draw a line the length of a large piece of construction or drawing paper.  Tell them they are going to draw a pride line. At the beginning of the line tell them to draw a picture of something they've done for their parents that they are proud of.  Move along the line and give the following directions as you go.
Things you've done for a friend
Your best work at school
How you've earned some money
Something you do often
What you are proudest of in your life
Something you have shared
Something you tried hard for

If time, share the pride lines with each other.

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 47)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheels"

Materials needed:  Construction or drawing paper, crayons, Journals

Session 13

Read chapters V and VI of The Hundred Dresses.

Discussion Questions

1.  How did the children's thoughtlessness affect how Wanda felt about herself?

2. How does what others say or do to you affect how you feel about yourself? How does knowing all this affect how you will treat others from now on?

3. Why does Maddie feel she is even more to blame than Peggy? (she knew what they were doing was wrong from the beginning)

4. What special talent did Wanda have that she could have been proud of?

Have students sit in a large circle. Have the first student start by
    saying "I'm proud that I ........" filling in the blank.
    Continue around the circle until everyone has had a chance.
    Go around the circle several more times using these stems
    "One thing I did for a friend was ........"
    "Something I've tried hard for is"........
    "I feel good about myself when I ........."

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 47)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Journals

Session 14

Read Chapter VII of The Hundred Dresses.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Wanda Petronski change the lives of the students in Room 13, especially Peggy and Maddie? What did they learn about people in general? (Everyone is important and special--everything we say affects people)

2. How did Wanda show that she was more mature than the rest of the children? (she forgave them for teasing her, gave them her special drawings)

Personal Flag

    Pass out ditto sheet with the blank flag on it. Tell the students
that today they are going to make their own personal flags--a symbol of
themselves. In each of the five sections of the flag, draw the
following things:
    1. Your greatest success or achievement in the past year
    2. The happiest moment in the past year
    3. Something you are good at
    4. What you hope to be as an adult
    5. Three words to describe you

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 52)

Journal time--Here and Now Wheel

Materials needed:  Flag ditto sheet, crayons, Journals

## Session 15

Read Chapter I of Last Was Lloyd

### Discussion Questions

1. Pretend you are Lloyd. How does the prospect of going to school sit with you each day? How do you feel about recess? the other kids?

2. How does Lloyd's body size affect how he feels about himself?

### Paper Doll Autobiography

Explain to the students that they will be making a life sized paper doll of themselves covered with magazine and newspaper cut outs of pictures, words, etc., that mean something to them as individuals (favorite foods, hobbies, places). When completed, these paper dolls will be a personal picture essay. Have the students pair up, one laying down on their strip of butcher paper and their partner tracing their outline with the crayon. Reverse roles. Ask students to look through old magazines and to cut out and then glue to their paper doll, pictures and words that mean something to them personally.

Display the paper dolls about the room or in the hall for a few days.

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:  Butcher paper, magazines, crayons, glue, scissors, Journals

## Session 16

Read Chapter II of Last Was Lloyd

### Discussion Questions

1. Why do you suppose Lloyd keeps the fact that he is good at hitting the balls a secret from his classmates? (let the students speculate at this point)

2. Why do you think he lets his mother baby him so much--tying his shoes, fixing his snack, etc.? (He doesn't have a good self-concept--he doesn't believe he can do anything for himself)

### The Card Game

This activity is the completion of unfinished sentences. On separate poster board cards are printed such sentences stubs as:

```
Reading ......
If I were older .......            I wish .......
My favorite place .......          I can't understand why .......
When I make a mistake .......      Other kids .......
```

The teacher and the students form circles of six to eight people.
The game calls for each person to finish a sentence as he wishes.
Emphasize that there is no right answer, and that the sentence may be
funny or serious, true or not true, whatever the speaker chooses.  The
teacher asks one child to pick a card, and respond if he wishes by
saying the finished sentence aloud.  If the student does not feel like
saying anything himself, he may hold up the card for others to see and
give them the opportunity to respond.

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 65)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:  Sentence stubs, Journals

## Session 17

Read Chapter III of Last Was Lloyd

## Discussion Questions

1. ·Why do you think Lloyd daydreams so much?  (to avoid the reality of
   his own life)

## Killer Statements and Gestures

· Introduce the concept of "killer statements and gestures" to the
students.  All of us have many feelings, thoughts, and creative
behaviors that are killed off by other people's negative comments,
physical gestures, etc.  Some killer statements that are often used are:
    We don't have time for that now.
    That's a stupid idea.  You know that's impossible.
    You're really weird!
    Are you crazy? retarded? kidding me? serious?
    Only girls/boys do that!
    Wow, he's strange man, really strange!
    That stuff is for sissies.

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 67-68)

Brainstorm with the students some of the killer statements that they
have heard.  Ask them how they feel when they are the ones that the
killer statements are about.

2. What killer statements have you heard so far in Last Was Lloyd?

3. What do killer statements protect us from?  We cover up our own
   insecurities by putting other people down.  Such as saying "that's

for sissies" may cover up "I'd like to do that, but I'm afraid I can't"

Tell the students that they're going to be social science researchers for the day. Ask them to keep a record of all the killer statements they hear in school, at lunch, at home, and at play. Ask them to record them in their journals.

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Journals

## Session 18

Read Chapter IV of Last Was Lloyd.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why does Lloyd skip school as often as he does?

2. What does he hope to avoid?

3. How do you think Lloyd feels about himself?

### Puppets
Have the students make paper-bag or sock puppets of themselves. Try to encourage the students to make the puppets look as much like themselves as possible.

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Socks, Paper Bags, Construction Paper, Glue, Scissors, fabric scraps, Journals

## Session 19

Read Chapter V of Last Was Lloyd.

### Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever felt as if someone has sprayed you with Freezone? What does Lloyd mean when he says that?

2. How do those times affect how you feel about yourself?

### Puppets
Have the students in groups of 2 or 3 make up a story about themselves using their puppets. Let them practice with each other for the whole period.

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:  Puppets, Journals


Session 20

Read Chapter VI of Last Was Lloyd.

Discussion Questions

1.  Do you think Lloyd is old enough to be responsible for himself?

2.  What does being responsible for youself involve?

Puppets
      Let the students present their puppets and skits to each other.

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:  Puppets, Journals


Session 21

Read Chapter VII of Last Was Lloyd.

Discussion Questions

1.  Why was Lloyd sick this time?  Do you think he really was sick or
     was it "in his head"?

2.  What did Lloyd mean when he thought of himself as being full of
     uncooperative hatefulness?
     Why is he uncooperative?  (likes the power it gives him)
     What does Lloyd hate?  (school, kids, himself)

Strength Bombardment
      Have the students break into groups of five or six, preferably with
other students they know well and feel comfortable with.  Focusing on
one person at a time, the group is to bombard him with all the strengths
they see in him.  The person being bombarded should remain silent until
the group has finished.  One member of the group should act as recorder,
listing the strengths and giving them to the person when the group has
finished.  The group should be instructed to list at least fifteen
strengths for each student.  They should also be cautioned that no
"put-down" statements are allowed.  Only positive assets are to be
mentioned.

                    (Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 96)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:  Journals

Session 22

Read Chapter III of Last Was Lloyd.

Discussion Questions

1. Lloyd says that he likes to make the other students in his class mad. He does it to get them back because they hurt his feelings. Can you think of a time you did something similar? Tell us about it.

2. Do you think Lloyd should continue to keep his own special secret for his own special pleasure?

Commercial for Oneself

As a self-enhancing activity tell the students they are going to spend the next three class periods making advertisements and commercials to sell themselves. They have the option of designing a magazine or newspaper advertisement, a poster, a billboard sign, a brochure, a radio or television commercial, or any other form of advertising they can think of.

You may wish to allow two or more students to work together in a team.

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 109)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Poster paper, crayons, markers, water colors, scissors, magazines, newspapers and glue, Journals


Session 23

Read Chapter IX of Last Was Lloyd.

Discussion Questions

1. Lloyd decided to be a "turtle" rather than fight back when the kids teased him. What does that mean?

2. Do you think being a "turtle" is a good way to handle problems? Why or why not?

3. Do you think it was wise of Lloyd to lie about having hypoglycemia? Why do you think he did it? (He wanted to be special, somebody)

Continue to work on Commercial for Oneself.

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Journals

Session 24

Read Chapter X of Last Was Lloyd.

Discussion Questions

How is Lloyd beginning to show that he is ready to change his view of
    himself? (He wants to learn to do things byhimself, he doesn't want
    to be so dependent on his mother)

Finish up and present Commercial for Oneself.

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Journals


Session 25

Read Chapter XI of Last Was Lloyd

Discussion Questions

1. How is Kirby helping Lloyd learn to like himself? (accepting him as
    he is, teaching him to be independent)

2. How can you help each other grow in self-confidence?


If I Could Be.....

    This exercise is another way of helping students clarify who they
are, what they want to be,and what they want to do. Have the students
work in pairs and talk about their written responses to such questions
as,

        If I could be any animal, I'd be a(n)_____, because........
        If I could be any bird, I'd be a(n)_____, because........
        If I could be any flower, I'd be a(n)_____, because..........
        If I could be any piece of furniture,
                    I'd be a(n)_____, because...........
        If I could be a food, I'd be a(n)_____, because.............
        If I could be any color, I'd be_____, because.............

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Journals


Session 26

Read Chapter XII of Last Was Lloyd.

## Discussion Questions

1. Do you think Ancil is good for Lloyd or not?
   (She doesn't let him get away with the games he plays)

2. Does Ancil understand Lloyd? Can she understand how it feels to be made fun of?

3. Do you think Ancil likes Lloyd?

## What if.......

This exercise helps students become aware of what feelings they have about themselves through the use of projection. It often turns out that even children who do not feel appreciated by people will project a deeper sense of self-appreciation into the objects discussed in this exercise. Start the exercise with comments and questions like:

Did you ever think of things like "What if my bike could talk?" What do you think tour bicycle would say about you? Pretend you are something on this list, and tell us what it would say about you.

| Toothbrush | Baseball Glove | Dresser | Radio | Brush | Doll |
| Bed | Schoolbus | Dog | Schooldesk | Coat | Bike |
| Shoes | Closet | TV | Refrigerator | Hat | |

Put these suggestions up on the board. Let the students write down their thoughts in their journals using one of the words above. After everyone has had a chance to write down their responses, let volunteers read their paragraphs.

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 129)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed: Journals

## Session 27

Read Chapter XIII of Last Was Lloyd.

## Discussion Questions

1. What did Mr. Duggan mean when he said, "Sometimes we cause ourselves more trouble than anyone else causes us." Can you think of examples from the book or in your own life to support this statement?

## I Used to Be.....But Now I'm.....

Ask the group to sit in a circle. Begin this exercise by saying: I always used to (pause), but now I'm (pause). Can you think of something you used to be or do or think that has changed?

If statements are incomplete, ask them to make them more complete. For instance, if a student says, "I used to be happy but now I'm not," you should respond, "You used to be happy but now you're not what?"

Examples of student responses have been:
I used to be worried about someone stealing my bank, but now I'm
   not.
I used to worry about having awful handwriting, but now I'm working
   harder.
I used to be afraid of the dark, but now my mother can shut the
   door.
I used to be afraid of the witch at Halloween parties, but now I'm
   not afraid.

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 131)

Journal time—"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:  Journals


## Session 28

Read Chapter XIV of Last Was Lloyd

### Discussion Questions

How has Lloyd shown that he's more sure of himself now than at the
   beginning of the book?  (helping mom, riding a bike, tying his own
   shoes, standing up for Ancil)

### Public Interview
      The purpose of the public interview is to gain a deeper knowledge of
the student, to give the student the opportunity to publicly receive the
attention of all his classmates, to suggest life alternatives to others,
and to show the students that they are not alone in many of the feelings
they have.
      Ask for a volunteer to be interviewed in public.  The selected
student is asked to stand in front of the class.  A series of questions
is asked.  The student may choose to answer the questions or to pass.
It is important that the right to pass is made explicit.
      At the end of the interview, the student may ask the interviewer any
of the same questions that were asked him.

Some sample interview questions are:
      What is your favorite sport?
      What do you like best about school?  least about school?
      What kind of TV program do you like to watch?
      What would you do with $1,000?
      If you were a teacher, how would you teach your class?
      Do you have a hobby that takes up a lot of your time?
      What is your idea of a perfect Saturday afternoon?
      What is the best news you could get now?
      If you had three wishes, what would they be?

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 140-41)

Journal time—"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:   Journals


Session 29

Read Chapter XV of Last Was Lloyd

Discussion Questions

1. How is giving away his olive shell to Ancil a sign that Lloyd is
   maturing and growing in self-confidence?  (he took a chance knowing
   she may reject his bid for her friendship)

2. Does admitting that he really does want friends show that Lloyd is
   beginning to like himself?  How?  (Yes--he knows that he needs other
   people)

Composite Picture

   Have your class get into groups of five or six.  Tell each group
that they are to draw a picture of an imaginary person.  This person
will be a composite of the best features of each of the members of their
group.  Great artistry is not needed in this exercise of their group
because the important notion is to get the group members to seek the
pleasing features of the other members of the group.  You might suggest
some parts of the composite--head shape, hairlione, haircolor, eyes,
ears, etc.--or have the class first brainstorm as many physical
characteristics as they can think of and list them on the blackboard.

(Canfield and Wells, 1976, p.161)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:   Drawing Paper or Butcher Paper, Journals


Session 30

Read Chapter XVI of Last Was Lloyd.

Discussion Questions

Does having a positive self-concept mean that you believe you can do
everything well?  (Positive self-concept means you know who you are,
what you can and cannot do well and you accept your abilities and
limitations.  This means you don't feel bad if you can't do something.
But you know you are a good person no matter what you can or cannot do.

"Friendly" Sentence Stubs

Have the students sit in circles of six to eight people.  Give them some
of these sentence stubs to go around in the circle with answering by
filling in the blanks.

   The world would be better if everyone.....

One thing I like about my friends is.....
Cooperation is important because.....
If I could teach everyone in the world one thing,
                                       it would be.....
One way that I am like everybody is.....
One way I am different from everyone else is.....
I like being with people when.....

                    (Canfield and Wells, 1976, p. 226)

Journal time--"Here and Now Wheel"

Materials needed:  Journals, sentence stubs

APPENDIX B


LISTENING PROGRAM

LISTENING PROGRAM

These books are to be read in the order listed for 20-30 minutes each session. There will be 30 sessions in this treatment covering a 10-week time period. The participating teacher should be able to finish all the books with asterisks beside them. The remaining book is listed for the purpose of enrichment and extension should the basic list be completed.

*Henry 3                                          Joseph Krumgold
*The Bully of Barkham Street                       Mary Stolz
*The Hundred Dresses                               Eleanor Estes
*Last Was Lloyd                                    Doris Buchanan Smith
"How Jahdu Became Himself"
   from The Time-Ago Tales of Jahdu              Virginia Hamilton
*Fairy Doll                                        Rumer Godden
The Cat Ate My Gymsuit                             Paula Danziger

APPENDIX C

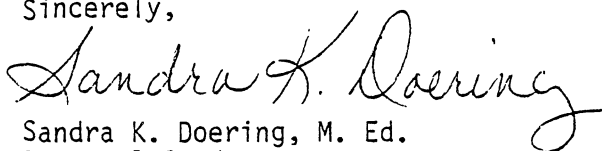PARENTAL PERMISSION SLIP

September 4, 1984


Dear Parents:

In spite of all the progress that has been made in knowledge
of how children learn, there are still areas which need more study.
A positive self-concept increases the likelihood of greater academic
achievement and social development. Our goal is to learn which
aspects of a literature program can enhance the self-concept of
children.

The Research Council of the Wichita Public Schools has agreed
to cooperate with us in research which may ultimately provide benefit
to your child and other children in the public schools. We would
consider it a privilege to work with your child.

We are seeking your agreement to have your child included as
part of the research population. In addition to the usual classroom
learning experiences, your child will be administered a standardized
self-concept instrument, *The Piers -Harris Children's Self-Concept
Scale*. Your child is assured complete confidentiality by us as well
as by the Wichita Public Schools. If you are willing to have your
child participate in this project, please complete the attached
form and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible.
The initial research activity will begin about the middle of September.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Sandra K. Doering, M. Ed.
Doctoral Student
Oklahoma State University



Carolyn J. Bauer, Ed. D.
Associate Professor
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Oklahoma State University

Please return as soon as possible. The research activity will begin by the middle of September.

My child, _____

has my permission to participate in the research study conducted by Sandy Doering and Dr. Carolyn J. Bauer of Oklahoma State University.

_____
Signature

_____
Date

VITA

Sandra Kay Doering

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: THE EFFECTS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ON SELF-CONCEPT OF GIFTED AND NONGIFTED STUDENTS

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction--Elementary Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Fort Worth, Texas, September 29, 1949, the daughter of Warren and Yvonne Snyder.

Education: Graduated from W. A. Berry High School, Birmingham, Alabama, in May, 1967; attended Concordia Lutheran College, Austin, Texas, 1967-1969; received Bachelor of Arts Degree in Elementary Education from Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Illinois, in May, 1971; received the Master of Education from Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma, in May 1983; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in July, 1985.

Professional Experience: Taught grades one to three in Lutheran elementary schools in Southern Illinois, 1971-75; taught grades one and two at La Maison des Enfantes, Gonzales, Louisiana, 1977-79; taught grade one at St. Paul's Lutheran School, Enid, Oklahoma, 1979-83; graduate teaching assistant, supervised student teachers and taught Children's Literature, Oklahoma State University, 1983 to present; member of Phi Delta Kappa, National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), International Reading Association (IRA), Lutheran Elementary Association; member of Graduate Committee, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Oklahoma State University, 1984-85.