THE EFFECT OF RELAXATION TRAINING ON ANXIETY FOR THE POETRY RECITATION TASKS AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

To date, traditional methods of educational instruction have not addressed the complete development of the mental capacities of children. Curricula in public education has long focused attention on objectively measureable achievement. Often those areas which require a more subjective evaluation have been rejected from the formal curriculum. Early in American education instruction was designed to fill the faculties of the mind through verbally feeding information to students and evaluating the knowledge they obtained by having them respond verbally (Rudolph, 1978). Although scientific inquiry did eventually make its way into educational institutions, the pattern for a highly verbal form of instruction was ingrained. Such practices may have served to develop a one-sidedness in mental growth by stimulating the verbal functioning of the brain and neglecting the intuitive (Blakeslee, 1978; Hendricks, 1981; Ornstein, 1972).

Recent brain research, reported by Springer and Deutch (1981), revealed that the human brain is dichotic in its functions of obtaining, evaluating, and processing information. Though there is disagreement concerning hemispheric specialization of the brain, it has been widely accepted that there are two different ways of thinking,

and the two ways are often referred to as "right brain" and "left brain" functioning. The left brain is considered to be principally involved with verbal skills and thinking that is convergent, rational, analytical, and sequential. It is hypothesized that the left brain can only process information in a step-by-step manner, applying one concept at a time. The right brain is considered to be more versatile, with holistic, simultaneous formulation of concepts; providing intuitive awareness from metaphoric and imaginative processes. It is further hypothesized that the right brain processes rhythm and music, and reacts emotionally but lacks the complex skills necessary for verbal expression (Springer and Deutch, 1981). The rhythmic nature of poetry, along with the verbal functioning of reading and speaking poetry aloud, provide a link between the two hemispheric processes.

Left brain functions are often referred to as verbal, linear, or analytical, whereas the right brain is commonly spoken of as intuitive, spatial, and affective, because the process of emotions is thought to occur mostly in the right hemisphere. The use of those terms will refer to the respective processes of the hemisphere which is described.

Brain research has vast significance to education in many ways, some yet unknown. Educators have known for some time that there was a void in instructional practices, yet they lacked scientific evidence that would allow for identifying areas of neglect. With the development of hemispheric specialization theories, teachers now have a common terminology with which to work, as well as new concepts to describe the diversity of the human mind and its needs. Ornstein (1972) cautioned that there is still much that is not known about the

brain and that care should be taken to avoid assigning tasks exclusively to one hemisphere or the other, but he encouraged diversity in teaching methods, along with continued research and study in the area. Hopefully, improved instruction will help the two functions work together for greater accomplishment.

As a result of this research, some educators have begun to examine and compile selected instructional activities that promote development of the intuitive/affective hemisphere, or right brain, even though the evaluation of those activities was often more subjective than that of traditional forms of measurement. There are a great many ways to incorporate intuitive/affective learning activities in education, including: instructing with visual aids, using the rhythm and meter of music, using simulation games, brainstorming, discussion, interacting with subject matter and poetry, and relaxation techniques (Hendricks, 1981; Hendricks and Roberts, 1977; Ostrander and Schroeder, 1982).

Poetry, as an element of the arts, with its rhythm and fantasy, appeals to both the analytical and the creative mental processes (Shapiro, 1978). Memorization of poetry affords lifelong enrichment, as certain lines can be recalled to heighten the emotions in given situations.

Relaxation training--that is, breathing exercises, muscle tension awareness, visual imagery, and meditation--lead to a holistic awareness that is a function of the right hemisphere of the brain (Blakeslee, 1978). In a state of relaxation one may have a sense of peace and well-being, absence of self-consciousness and a reduction of internal chatter which quiet the mind (Shapiro, 1978; Blakeslee,

1978). Hendricks (1981) advocated that schools discontinue the practice of teaching to fill the empty vessel and begin to encourage children to expand their self-awareness to find the wholeness of themselves. He saw the teacher's role as one of finding the creative side of the students and helping them bring it to its fullest potential.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of instruction designed to stimulate right brain functioning. Traditionally, school curricula have focused on instruction for which the outcome is objectively measureable and is now believed by man to have been primarily left brain directed in nature. Right brain activities have not been, on a large scale, incorporated into the mainstream of the educational process. Often the educational system fails to provide instruction that executes a balance in stimulating brain hemispheric activities that bring about a holistic development of students' mental capacities. One such right brain directed activity is meditation, or relaxation training.

Extent of the Study

Delimitations

One delimitation of the study is the self-evaluation of the STAIC questionnaire reported by the subjects. The raters were a second delimitation in that they had been correlated to the self-evaluation, even though raters are not good predictors. Also, the results are appropriate to similar ages and social strata.

Limitations

This study is limited to fifth and sixth grade students, the literature sample, and the American cultural understanding of anxiety. It is further limited by time and financial resources. The researcher was the guest facilitator in each classroom and may have had some bias in anticipation of results.

Assumptions

It is assumed that the students in the sample represent a general population of fifth and sixth grade students. It is also assumed that students are capable of evaluating their own anxiety levels.

Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis I: There will be no significant difference between anxiety levels of students, as reported on the STAIC, receiving relaxation training and those receiving no relaxation training on a pretest and posttest.

Null Hypothesis II: There will be no correlation between anxiety levels and quality of task performance.

The hypothesis statement I was tested using the STAIC questionnaire, a self-evaluation of internal anxiety levels as perceived by the subjects. Scores generated by the instrument were treated by ANOVA.

The hypothesis statement II was tested using rater evaluated rankings of student performances on poetry recitation. The rankings were tabulated and treated with t-test. A level of significance of $\alpha=.05$ will be used as the decision point for their hypotheses.

Definition of Terms

The following words occur frequently and are defined as indicated:

Affective Thinking: The process of involving emotions in the thinking process (Gumear and Voorneveld, 1975).

Analytical Thinking: Mental processing that includes functions that are verbal, linear, rational, and logical (Springer and Deutch, 1980).

Anxiety: A combination of the emotions of fear and any two other emotions of distress, shame, anger, or interest and excitement. It may occur as a result of the internal and/or external stimuli of a particular situation, or an individual may have a propensity for anxiety (Moursund, 1976).

Anxiety Level: Immediate prior to and during poetry recitation.

Centering: Described by Hendricks (1981) as having self-knowledge, being in harmony with ourselves and others, and being aware that we are connected to ourselves, others, and the universe.

Imagery: Visualizing in vivid mental pictures; internally visualizing in vivid mental pictures (Blakeslee, 1978).

Intuitive: A way of knowing or having insight without logical reasoning; a Gestalt insight (Hendricks and Roberts, 1977).

Meditation: A form of relaxation training consisting of the practice of focusing attention on one subject so that distended stimulations are diminished and monotonous stimulation elicits a peaceful, enlightened state of mind. It is related to other relaxation techniques (Carrington, 1978; Shapiro, 1978).

Poetry Recitation: Reciting a poem aloud in a dramatic manner using verbal expressions and gestures.

Relaxation: A sense of calmness achieved by meditation, centering, breath awareness, muscle relaxation, and guided imagery (Hendricks and Roberts, 1977).

STAIC: State-trait Anxiety Test for Children (Spielberger et al., 1973).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Anxiety

Relaxation training is a useful skill for extending human potential, improving quality of life, and enhancing self-concept. Increasing pressures of a fast-paced society and added demands for an accelerated acquisition of knowledge contribute to rising levels of stress among today's youth. Schools can provide children with coping skills needed to contend with high stress levels through relaxation training, guided fantasy, meditation, and muscle tension relaxation (Hendricks, 1981).

The need for relaxation training in schools was emphasized by Johns and Johns (1983), who worked with the school setting as psychologist and consultant. They cautioned teachers that most students lack skills in coping with anxiety and need to be taught coping skills. These conclusions were based on another study of soldiers in wartime coping strategies that indicated people respond to stress according to their experience with it. Some soldiers were able to make stress useful in constructive ways. Johns and Johns suggested teaching children to direct the effects of stress in constructive directions, making it work positively for them rather than negatively. Relaxation exercises were recommended so that children could control

their anxiety which would, in turn, affect their thoughts, feelings and actions.

Children need to know how to control anxiety for both day-to-day stress and for situationally stressful experiences in the classroom (Omizo, 1980; Smead, 1981; Day and Sadek, 1982). According to Moursand (1976), anxiety may serve as an interference or as an aid in the form of motivational drive for achievement, depending on individual reactions, sex, age, and difficulty of the task. Children tend to react to anxiety differently. Those with high A-trait, that is, a readiness to anxiousness, will be more quickly anxious in situational instances, or A-state situations. There are indications that past success/failure rates have an effect on performance under anxiety, so that children having a higher grade point average (greater rate of success) are more likely to have their achievement enhanced by anxiety, and those with fewer success rates in school are hindered by high anxiety levels (Bowers and Hilgard, 1981; Campbell, 1981)

Moursund (1976) further stated that girls score higher on measures of anxiety than boys do. With anxiety acting as a motivator for achievement, people are driven to accomplish tasks, but strong drive can cause errors in complex task performances where simple tasks may be achieved without error. Therefore, performance for complex tasks was lower when subjects were under high anxiety and higher for simple tasks where little danger for error existed. Anxiety has adverse effects on memorization as well as retrieval of previously learned information. Mnemonic devices, as well as visual aids, were recommended to aid in memory task and retrieval of information.

Anxiety appears to be more prevalent in these times of increasing demands and high stress. Children today need to develop coping skills for dealing with that anxiety and must learn to direct its effects so that they work to the students' advantage. By controlling the effects of anxiety, children can improve learning and enhance memory recall.

Relaxation Training Techniques

Various Techniques

Techniques that include breathing patterns, selected music, imagery, and suggestion combine to improve memory and accelerate learning. Ostrander and Schroeder (1982) compiled the Bulgarian studies of Lazanov which focused on accelerated learning and expanding of mental abilities. The technique was first used to aid in learning foreign languages and later applied to other subjects that involve memorization. Ostrander and Schroeder called the process "Super Learning."

Guided imagery is an exercise implemented by the facilitator to aid in reaching greater depth in meditational states and to enhance awareness of concepts. It consists of vividly visualizing situations of comfort, being relaxed, playing, laughing, recalling peak experiences, and picturing others successfully carrying out a difficult task, followed by picturing one's self successfully doing the same task. Other visualizations include images of associations and mnemonic devices for understanding concepts and learning lists and sequential order of events in poems. The techniques combined the recommendations of Anderson (1980), Hendricks (1981), Shapiro (1978), and Carrington (1978).

Hendricks (1981) described centering as having self-knowledge, being in harmony with one's self, others, and the universe. Carrington (1978) described centering as a preparation for meditation, but acknowledged that the Western world has adopted the term to indicate the actual state of meditation and the post-meditation reactions much like those described by Hendricks.

Relaxation techniques vary in type, from simple muscle relaxation to deep meditative states. Techniques previously used in studies with elementary school age children include: breathing exercises, deep muscle relaxation, guided imagery designed to facilitate a meditative state, enhanced awareness, serving as an avenue to suggestive learning and mnemonic practices, and centering exercises. The various techniques were used in different combinations, all of which appear to be effective. The combination used for Super Learning (Ostrander and Schroeder, 1982) was studied by Lazanov for effectiveness and found to be useful in accelerating learning.

Benefits of Relaxation Training

The benefits that may be derived from having greater control over mind and body through meditation and relaxation can be valuable for self-growth as well as physical well-being (Carrington, 1978). In states of relaxation, outer sensory awareness is temporarily lessened, while internally the senses focus on the self for increased self-awareness (Carrington, 1978; Shapiro, 1978). The mind becomes aware of the body's inner rhythm, perceiving that body tensions need relief and then inhibits the emotional responses of anxiety (Carrington, 1978; Rossman and Kahnweiler, 1977; Linden, 1973).

Self-concept can be enhanced through the use of relaxation training. States of relaxation provide a sense of calming and peacefulness that often leads to self-awareness and acceptance (Carrington, 1978). Positive suggestion and guided imagery, as well as self-directed imagery, lead to improved self-concept and are readily useful because of the versatile options available for use in imagery (Shapiro, 1978; Ostrander and Schroeder, 1982).

Benson (1975) conducted studies on transcendental meditation and his own meditation techniques and concluded that physiological benefits were to be gained from either method of relaxation. He found that one can lower metabolism, reduce the heart rate, and lower blood pressure, all of which results in decreased physiological stress and a calming of the body. Carrington (1978) supported Benson's findings, but disagreed with his conclusion that all forms of meditation work equally well in reducing bodily stress.

Through relaxation training, one can enhance human potential by increasing self-awareness, providing control over anxiety, improving self-concept, and lessening the effects of stress-related physical reactions. In relaxation states, external sensory awareness is reduced, allowing heightened internal awareness, inhibiting anxiety, and enhancing self-concept. Physiological effects of meditation result in a lowered metabolism that allows the body added rest and reduced bodily tension. Relaxation states promote harmony of mind and body.

Related Research

Related Techniques

There is a paucity of research studies directly related to

relaxation training of children, and the studies that have been conducted are with special populations such as the hyperactive, learning disabled, overly anxious children, or children with reading disabilities. Additionally, the existing studies seem to indicate that training for relaxation varies. Muscle relaxation alone was used in attempts to reduce anxiety with students who had been instructed to attend to muscular tensions, then constrict and relax them. The exercises were designed to stimulate awareness of muscle tension, as well as to demonstrate to children that they can control muscle tension (Proeger, 1978; Sullivan, 1979; Smead, 1981).

Forms of meditation training were used in studies by Linden (1973), Day and Sadek (1982), and Omizo (1980). Even though they were called by different names, each of them made attempts to reach an altered or deep relaxation state of consciousness. Rossman and Kahnweiler (1977) and Anderson (1980) placed emphasis on guided imagery in their studies. The common element of all the studies was the attempt to reduce anxiety and enhance learning potential, as measured by achievement in specific areas.

In a study by Anderson (1980), guided imagery aided in reducing anxiety and enhancing self-concept among elementary school children. Omizo (1980) found relaxation training was a positive force in the enhancement of three aspects of self-concept: levels of aspiration, anxiety, and identification and alienation. These studies supported Carrington's (1978) and Shapiro's (1978) contentions that the practice of meditation-type relaxation can succeed in increasing levels of self-concept.

An attempt by Linden (1973) to increase children's attention to a task through meditation resulted in a significant gain on the measure of field independence and a reduced anxiety level. Students were reported to have greater abilities to focus and control attention. In a study conducted by Smead (1981), a reduction in A-state anxiety was evident after training in relaxation techniques, but no significant measure was shown for A-trait anxiety. In contrast, Shapiro (1978) reported case histories of subjects who were able to gain control over both A-state and A-trait anxiety over an extended period of time. In comparing the two reports, it appeared that there should have been little expectation for subjects to acquire control over A-trait anxiety in short-term studies involving groups.

In previous studies, types of treatment varied from deep relaxation training that included breathing and muscle exercises with meditation and guided imagery, to simply training in muscle tension relaxation alone. Proeger (1978) limited her treatment to relaxation of muscle tension, but received no significant results for anxiety reduction. Meditation aided by the repetition of a word or mantra was used effectively with Lebanese children (Day and Sadek, 1982). Muscle relaxation was combined with imagery in treatments for anxiety reduction and enhancement of self-concept with children who were not promoted to the succeeding grade level at the end of the year (Rossman and Kahnweiler, 1977).

Most research in the area attempts to show a correlation between meditation techniques and reduction of anxiety, but much of the focus seems to be on a population having special difficulties in school. Only one large group study was found with children not having specified

problems in school. Sullivan (1979) noted a correlation between relaxation training.and anxiety reduction in a study involving 191 third and fourth graders who had not identified learning problems.

Research Related to Poetry

Carefully selected poetry can help children find perceptions of feelings, ideas, and new forms of expression. In Koch's (1974) studies with children and poetry, he found poems about wishes, dreams, colors, the past and present, and unusual words effective in eliciting children's creativity. Koch selected poetry with which he attempted to stimulate a connection to children's own feelings, their intelligence, and their familiarity.

Koch also suggested that fantasy in poetry is easily adapted to guided imagery. He provided techniques for helping children learn to read and understand poems through visually creating incidents. In conjunction with imagery, Koch recommended specific exercises to stimulate sensory awareness. He cited cases and provided examples of improved poetry writing following the exercises.

Carlson (1972) found that poetry provided an opportunity for the reader to respond emotionally through humor, sadness, or identity with passages which corresponded to his own feelings or experiences. It can be a poem of fantasy or reality, but whatever the content, poetry can add depth to man's experiences.

Shapiro (1978) denoted the Zen practices of combining poetry and meditation as a means of getting closer to nature or as a means of expressing emotion.

Summary

Based on the hypothesis that this study is related to previous studies cited, the relaxation training will encompass more than simple muscle tension exercises. Breathing techniques with muscle exercises, together with meditation and guided imagery, will be implemented to reduce anxiety and consequently enhance self-concept.

As A-trait anxiety was shown to respond more effectively to individualized treatment, it was determined to limit this study to the treatment of A-state anxiety.

The selection of poetry recitation for the tasks was decided upon because of the rhythm and fantasy of poetry. Also, its figurative language lends poetry to guided imagery activities.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The population for this study consisted of all the fifth and sixth grade students (104) attending Wilson Elementary School in Miami, Oklahoma. The subjects ranged in age from 10 to 12. There was a mixture of achievement levels within the grades, although the means of the students' percentile scores was 52, based on the Science Research Associates, Inc. (SRA) achievement tests. This range included students identified as gifted on the basis of SRA scores ranging in the top three percentile, those who qualified for reading remediation based on scores below 30 percentile on reading achievement measured by the SRA test, and those identified as learning disabled through a battery of tests. There were no students in this study identified as mentally deficient. All students were stratified in heterogeneous classrooms based on ability ranking as determined by the SRA tests which were administered in April of the 1982-83 academic year. Randomization was carefully implemented in anticipation of this study. The classes comprised four groups of 26 each: the fifth grade experimental group (A), fifth grade control group (B), sixth grade experimental group (C), and sixth grade control group (D).

Procedures

This study was intended to examine the relationship of relaxation training to anxiety levels in elementary age children and to compare the performance of poetry recitation for groups receiving relaxation training to those having no treatment for relaxation.

The instrument used to identify students' perceptions of levels of anxiety was the STAIC: "How I Feel Questionnaire"; in particular, the A-state Form C-1 (STAIC) developed by Spielberger et al. (1973), to act as a self-evaluation inventory of situational anxiety. This instrument has shown that a significant difference exists between high stress situational anxiety and anxiety in normal situations.

The normative data was gathered for the STAIC by testing two large groups of students: 456 male and 457 female fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students attending the Tallahassee and Leon County, Florida, schools, and 281 male and 357 female fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students attending Bradenton and Manatee County, Florida, schools. In establishing reliability for the A-state form, the difficulty of recreating the exact situation for retesting as it existed for the first test was not possible when dealing with such a large number of subject. Since the purpose of the form was to test situational anxiety, it would be necessary to administer the instrument a second with the same situation as existed previously for a true measure of reliability. The alpha reliability of the STAIC A-state scale was computed by the Kuder-Richardson formula 20 as modified by Cornbach, and was .82 for males and .87 for females.

Data for establishing construct validity of the S-state scale was gathered from a sample of more than 900 fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students. They were first administered the A-state scale with standard instructions (NORM condition), and then administered with instructions to respond based on how they believed they would feel if they were taking a final examination (TEST condition). The mean scores for the A-state scale were considerably higher in the TEST condition (males, 41.76; females, 43.79) than in the NORM condition (males, 31.10; females 31.03) (Spielberger, 1973). In this study, relaxation training consisted of the centering skills of breathing and body awareness, meditation, and guided imagery, all of which can lead to a calming effect for the participants. Instructions for the training were taken from models by Carrington (1978), Hendricks and Roberts (1977), and Ostrander and Schroeder (1982). In order to bring about body awareness, muscle relaxation exercises combined the tensing and untensing of muscles, beginning with the toes and moving upward through the body to the head and face, and breathing deeply from the diaphragm, in and out.

The facilitator was trained in relaxation training methods by a licensed hypnotherapist, Dr. Robert Scheverbush, who is also a Master Leisure Therapist certified by the International Society of Leisure Therapies. Additional training was obtained through the study of Neurolinguistic Programming, which included theoretical study as well as practical application of theories. Also, the facilitator has studied and practiced the technique of Transcendential Meditation for seven years.

Subjects practiced pacing or breathing in a rhythmical manner following the lead of the facilitator, who counted in four/four time from twelve backwards to one. The counting served as an object to focus attention away from outside stimuli and facilitated the meditative mood. Guided imagery was directed by the facilitator to deepen the meditative state and suggest calm peacefulness followed by visual images of successful performances of another peer, shifting to images of the student himself performing successfully.

The facilitator instructed in the following manner:

> In your mind's eye, go now to a favorite place, a place where you are always happy and content. See the happiness on your face, your smile, even laughter. Look at the clothes you are wearing, your shoes, your hands. Watch yourself doing a favorite thing. It's fun and easy.

Following the breathing and deep muscle exercises, the facilitator instructed:

> In your mind's eye, see yourself standing at the top of a gently sloping mountain, where all around you, you see gray slabs of rock and snow covered peaks of the other mountains in the range. Big, puffy clouds are floating all around and one may float over you, wrapping you in a mist. You can make the mist a favorite, comfortable color. Feel your body becoming lighter and lighter and start to lift up off the ground, floating down the gentle, green mountain. See the stones in the mountain path as you are descending, suspended just above the path. As you float along, you come to a meadow of purple flowers, smelling the scent, and seeing shades of purple and lavender all around. You want to stay here over the purple meadow, but something urges you to float gently on down the mountain trail. You float down deeper, down the sloping trail of the mountain, going down, down, down. There is a sound of water in a babbling brook you can hear, and as you come upon the stream, you see the clear, sparkling water running over the gray stones in a musical way. Feeling the mist from the stream on your face, you reluctantly move on. Going down the mountain path, you float over green grass, gray stones, and meadows of brilliantly colored flowers. As you go on down the mountain, you come to a rail fence,

> feel your body rise up and over the rails, and move on down the mountain. Going into the woods, you find a place where you are always comfortable and happy. See the happiness on your face, your smile, even laughter. Look at the clothes you are wearing, your shoes, your hands. See any scars you might have. Watch yourself doing a favorite thing. It's fun and easy. See yourself alone saying the poem, then to your family, doing it easily. Now, watch someone else, someone who always seems to do things easily. Notice how the person walks to the front of the room with confidence. See the straight way they stand, the way they look, confident and at ease like an actor. Watch as they go through the poem and notice the expressions they use, the gestures their hands make. Now see yourself sitting, waiting to be called. You are sure of yourself, you are prepared and know just how to express the poem. You laugh a little at the poem. See yourself leaving your seat and moving smoothly to the front. Your step is quick and sure. Turn, pause, and give the title and author. You see yourself begin the lines with a clear voice and expression. Hear your voice; you sound good to yourself. See yourself ending the poem with expression, and, pausing, you walk quietly back to your seat, knowing you did well.

Following the visual imagery above, the exercise concluded with guided imagery for each line of the selected poem.

To begin the study, fifth and sixth grade students were told they would have a guest teacher to facilitate training in dramatic poetry interpretation. No mention was made of the study itself.

In order to pretest anxiety levels of poetry recitation, the poem was assigned on Tuesday of the first week. The students were told to memorize the poem, to practice reciting it with their family or friends, and to be prepared to recite it before the class on the following Friday (three full days later). Groups A and B were pretested for internal perception of their anxiety levels using the STAIC, A-state (Form C-1) (Appendix B). The test was administered to the groups immediately preceding poetry recitation on Friday of the first week.

On Tuesday of the second week, the facilitator met with the control group for 30 minutes to assign a poem, read and discuss its meaning, and make a creative poetry writing assignment. Writing instructions were based on the Koch (1974) technique of reading and interpreting poetry to students, whereby they used class analyzed poems to pattern their writing. The selected poem for the week served as the model for patterning. By focusing on the selected poem, the students in the control group spent time in class relating to the meaning of the poem just as the experimental groups did, using guided imagery. On Friday of the same week, the control students presented the poem in class during a 30 minute session. The facilitator continued to meet with the two groups for 30 minutes on Tuesdays and for 45 minutes on Fridays for the next five weeks, a total of 14 sessions.

Training also began during the second week for experimental groups A and C. The poem was assigned on Tuesday, but was not discussed at length; instead, the facilitator led directly into the training. Relaxation training terminated with guided imagery which focused on the meaning of the poem and its interpretation. On Friday, the facilitator instructed the class in relaxation training for 15 minutes, followed by poetry recitation presented by the subjects. During the next five week sessions, the teachers met with the experimental groups for 30 minutes on Tuesday for relaxation practice and poetry assignments, and for 45 minutes on Friday for relaxation and poetry recitation. Standard instructions for relaxation training were used with each session (Appendix A).

During the last session, posttesting was administered before relaxation with groups A and C and before poetry recitation for any of

the groups. The teacher asked the subjects to take a few minutes to fill out the STAIC form before the poetry recitation. All four groups completed the posttest.

The two raters, selected from a list of experienced speech and drama judges for secondary school competitions, were to be impartial observers of students' performances in order to assess the level of an apparent anxiety based on established criteria for quality of performance. Inter-rater reliability training was provided by having the raters appraise the performances of students enacting the task of poetry recitation during an earlier pilot study. For the training session, a list of 10 criteria was provided. The criteria were designed to rank quality of performance on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 indicating from external evidence that anxiety has little effect on the presentation. A low ranking (3 or 4) would signify that observers detected evidence of a higher level of external anxiety.

These raters, who were not associated with the school, rated the poetry recitation in order to rank the quality of performance according to established criteria structured to assess external anxiety (Appendix C). The criteria was established by the researcher, based on rating scales for dramatic presentations for secondary speech and drama contests, and was adapted to the elementary school level. The raters observed student performances on the first and last Fridays in the study, and were not present in the classroom before the administration of the STAIC or during the relaxation training exercises, to insure that their presence would not influence the outcome of the STAIC or interfere with relaxation training. The raters were not told the purpose of the study.

Duration of the Study

The duration of the study was seven weeks, with all four groups receiving 75 minutes of time with the facilitator weekly. Training was conducted on Tuesday mornings for 30 minutes, beginning at 10:45 a.m. for group A, 11:15 a.m. for group B, Tuesday afternoons at 12:45 p.m. for group C, and 1:15 p.m. for group D. The Friday sessions were 45 minutes long and began at 10:30 a.m. for group A, 11:15 a.m. for group B, 12:45 p.m. for group C, and 1:30 p.m. for group D. Sessions were planned around regularly scheduled free time so as not to interfere with normal daily schedules.

Setting

Students remained in their regular classrooms in order to avoid distraction and stimulation of moving to a new environment. Rooms were dimly lit and free from sudden noises. The guest teacher facilitator provided all the instruction for the four groups. The students' regular classroom teacher was not present during the sessions.

Instruments

The STAIC (Form C-1) was used to measure state anxiety just prior to poetry recitation. The Poetry Recitation Rating Scale, developed by the researcher, was based on rating scales used in evaluating secondary level speech and drama contests. It was adapted by the researcher for use at the elementary school level.

Analysis

Solomon Four Group Designs were used in order to control most

internal and external variables which are of concern in experimental studies (Kerlinger, 1973). Four randomly assigned groups made up the design. To control testing interaction, two groups of fifth grade students (groups A and B) were pre and posttested, while two groups consisting of sixth grade students (groups C and D) were given only the posttest. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to measure the variation between and within the four groups. By use of this test, any differences existing before and after treatment could be identified:

Group A	Pretested (O_a)	Treated	Posttested (O_1)
Group B	Pretested (O_b)	Control	Posttested (O_2)
Group C		Treated	Posttested (O_3)
Group D		Control	Posttested (O_4)

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship of relaxation training to anxiety levels of elementary age school children, and to compare the performance of poetry recitation among groups. The STAIC (see Appendix B) was used to assess the students' internal perceptions of the level of anxiety each was experiencing. The instrument contains 20 questions, with possible results ranging from 60 (indicating a high level of anxiety), to 20 (indicating a low level of anxiety). Completing the study were 86 fifth and sixth grade students placed at random in four intellectually heterogeneous groups. Collected data was treated with Analysis of Variance, with the results showing a significant difference on the STAIC between groups ($F = 21.682$; $p<.000$).

Raters were used to appraise the external anxiety apparent on the basis of the quality of student performance on the poetry recitation. The raters ranked performance on a scale of one to ten, with ten indicating a low level of anxiety influencing the performance, and lower numbers (three to four) indicating a high influence of anxiety upon the performance. Results obtained from the raters was intended for use as a covariate with the results of the STAIC; however,

inconsistency with inter-rater reliability made the results of the raters' observations unuseable.

Hypotheses

This study consisted of two hypotheses for which the results will be presented in this chapter. The major focus of this study was to examine the effects of relaxation training on the anxiety levels of fifth and sixth grade students performing poetry recitation in class, and to determine whether relaxation training would have an effect on the performance of the poetry recitation. The hypotheses will be restated and the results pertinent to each will be presented.

Hypothesis I: There will be no significant difference between anxiety levels of students, as reported on the STAIC, receiving relaxation training and those receiving no relaxation training on a pretest and posttest.

The data did not support this hypothesis. The treated results of data obtained from the STAIC indicated that students receiving relaxation training reported lower levels of anxiety after seven weeks of treatment than those receiving no relaxation training. Therefore, there was a significant difference in those receiving treatment and those not receiving relaxation training and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis II: There will be no correlation between anxiety levels and quality of task performance.

The results of this hypothesis were not valid, due to the differences in observer ratings on the students' performances.

Gathering the Data

The data was gathered over a seven week period, with the researcher meeting with each group for 30 minutes on Tuesday and 45 minutes on Friday each week. During that period, the groups receiving treatment were given relaxation training on Tuesday and before they recited the poetry on Friday. The control groups were instructed in the elements of poetry, the background of the selected poet, and the meaning and significance of the poem, with the same amount of weekly time given to those groups as that given to the treatment groups.

Groups A and B were pretested using the STAIC, which is designed to assess internally perceived anxiety. On both the first and last session days of the study all groups were observed and rated by raters for indications of external anxiety determined by a criteria scale rating performance on poetry recitations. Before the performance of poetry recitation for the final session, all groups were administered the STAIC questionnaire for posttesting.

The instrument (STAIC) is a self-report inventory having a vocabulary appropriate to fifth and sixth grade level students and is more thoroughly discussed in Chapter III. Only the STAIC Form C-1 was used in this study, as the major concern was with state anxiety. The questionnaire contained 20 statements offering three choices for rating anxiety levels, ranging from calm to very nervous. The highest level of anxiety a student might report was 60, with the lowest being 20, so that students reporting above 30 were experiencing a higher level of anxiety than those reporting a score below 30.

Findings of the Study

The subjects completing the study, 86 students who attended all 14 sessions, had been randomly placed into four groups. In order to determine whether pretesting would have an effect on the outcome, two groups (A and B) were pretested, using the STAIC, on the first day of the task performance. Following the study, the STAIC was administered to groups A, B, C, and D. It is important to note that pretesting had no effect on the results of the posttesting, and it would not be necessary to pretest subjects in any subsequent studies.

The Raters

The raters were asked to observe the enactment of poetry recitation given by the students during the first and last session of the study, rating each student's performance according to the established criteria.

The ratings were compared using a t-test. The results showed a significant difference existed between the raters as to their perception of the level of anxiety in each participant's performance. Thus, the data was not appropriate for use as a covariate with data obtained from the STAIC.

Rater one was compared on responses between day one and day two and was found not to be significantly different in evaluation between days. Rater two was also compared on responses between day one and day two and was found not to be significantly different in evaluation between days (Table I).

TABLE I

OBSERVATIONS OF RATER ONE AND RATER TWO

	M	SD	df	t-value	Probability
Rater One					
First day	7.0460	1.880	86	1.78	.078
Second day	6.7471	1.374			
Rater Two					
First day	7.5000	1.643	85	0.67	.502
Second day	7.4070	1.783			

However, rater one differed significantly from rater two on both the first day and the second day. Apparently, the raters evaluated the elements of the criteria differently despite the inter-rater reliability training provided. Therefore, a significant difference was shown to exist (Table II). Since rater one differed from rater two in visual evaluation of the subjects, their ratings did not correlate highly with the self-evaluation results on the STAIC. Therefore, the raters' evaluations were not included in any further analysis.

Although the raters were prepared similarly and were observing from a position that placed them at equal distance and viewpoint from the subjects, their measurement of the individual subjects' performances resulted in a varied perceptions of quality between the observers. The variation may have been caused by inadequate inter-rater reliability training before the study, differences in expectations for

performance between the raters, or lack of experience in evaluating performances of young children, due to their previous experience of judging performances at the secondary level. In further studies of a similar nature, this variation in raters must be controlled by extending the training for inter-rater reliability, providing greater exposure to the performance abilities of young children and more definitely stated criteria for elementary school age children's performance ranking.

TABLE II

COMPARED OBSERVATIONS OF RATER ONE AND RATER TWO

	M	SD	df	t-value	Probability
Rater One					
First day	7.0349	1.888	85	-2.08	.041
Rater Two					
First day	7.5000	1.643			
Rater One					
Second day	6.7471	1.374	86	-3.83	< .001
Rater Two					
Second day	7.4368	1.750			

Treated Data

The data generated on each subject by the STAIC was tabulated on the Oklahoma State University computer using the Statistical Package for the Social Science Update ($SPSS_X$). An Analysis of Variance was first performed on the data showing that a significant difference did exist between groups (Table III).

TABLE III

ANOVA FOR STAIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDY GROUPS

Source	SS	fd	f	Probability
Main effect group	3460.317	3	21.682	<.001
Residual	4415.361	83		
Totals	7875.678	86		

Because a significant difference was shown to exist, follow-up tests were necessary to determine the cause of those differences. Therefore, each related observation was paired and tested using the t-test on $SPSS_X$ (Tables IV and V).

Groups A and B were pretested for internal perceptions of anxiety using the STAIC form for state anxiety. The results on the pretest

indicated a significant difference in the two groups even before the study began. The pretest mean of experimental group A was 35.70, which is significantly lower than the mean of control group B, 44.71. The treated data obtained from the posttest for groups A and B also indicated a significant difference in the mean of the two, with a mean of 30.90 for group A and 42.047 for group B. Both the experimental and control groups had a lower mean on the posttest than on the pretest, signifying that both reported a lower level of anxiety at the end of the study than was reported at the beginning (Table VI).

TABLE IV

DEFINITION OF STUDY GROUP PROCEDURE

Group A	Pretested (O_a)	Treated	Posttested (O_1)
Group B	Pretested (O_b)	Control	Posttested (O_2)
Group C		Treated	Posttested (O_3)
Group D		Control	Posttested (O_4)

While the two groups (A and B) were significantly different (-3.78, t-value $p<.001$) before the study began, there was an even greater difference following the treatment (-4.25, t-value $p=.000$). Pretest differences may have occurred as a result of several independent variables,

TABLE V

RELATED OBSERVATION IN FOLLOW-UP TESTS

t-test Pair	t-test Pair	t-test Pair	t-test Pair
O_a	O_1	O_1	O_2
O_b	O_2	O_3	O_4

TABLE VI

SUMMARY TABLE FOR T-VALUE OF GROUPS A AND B, PRETEST AND POSTTEST

	M	SD	df	t-value	Probability
Pretest					
Group A	35.7000	6.538	39	-3.78	.001
Group B	44.7143	8.539			
Posttest					
Group A	30.9000	5.067	39	-4.25	<.001
Group B	42.0476	10.642			

such as: peer influence within each group, differences in teaching styles between the regular classroom teachers, and personalities within the groups. These variables were still factors in the posttest results, but greater differences in pooled variances of the two t-tests indicated that the treatment group A reported a more significantly reduced level of anxiety on the STAIC than that reported by control group B. Also, the standard deviation from the mean of experimental group A was much closer on the posttest (SD=6.538) than on the pretest (SD=5.067), but the standard deviation for the control group B was more widely spread (SD=10.642) on the posttest than on the pretest (SD=8.539), indicating that group A became more uniform, while group B became more widespread. That is, both groups learned to be less anxious from practicing poetry recitation for seven weeks, as measured by the means of the two groups. However, some individual subjects in group B reported higher levels of anxiety after the practice. Subjects in group A uniformly reported lower anxiety, but some subjects in group B reported higher levels of anxiety at the end of the seven week period. In comparing posttest results of experimental groups A and C, no significant difference was found between the mean of the two, as the t-value was -0.31. Therefore, there is no statistical effect on the outcome of the posttest results from subjects having taken a pretest (Table VII). The results from comparing posttest scores between control groups B and D indicated no significant difference between the means (t-value = -1.15) of the two groups. Therefore, there was no statistical effect from the first observation of pretesting (Table VII).

Summary

The results of the study found a significant difference between students receiving relaxation training and those not receiving relaxation training, in their perceived anxiety level ($F=21.682$; $p<.001$). Therefore, the null hypothesis I was rejected. Null hypothesis II was not included in the final results of the study, as raters did not demonstrate a reliable close observation (t-value = -2.08 the first day; -3.83 the second day). It was determined by the researcher that this data was not useful as a covariate to the data obtained from the STAIC. Pretest scores, when compared with posttest scores, indicated that pretesting had no significant effect on posttesting, and it would not be necessary to pretest in future studies using this treatment.

TABLE VII

SUMMARY TABLE FOR T-VALUE OF POSTTEST FOR GROUPS A AND C AND GROUPS B AND D

	M	SD	df	t-value	Probability
Posttest					
Group A	30.9000	5.067	41	-0.31	0.758
Group C	31.4348	6.081			
Group B	42.0476	10.642	42	-1.15	0.256
Group D	45.0435	6.212			

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of relaxation training on students assigned the task of poetry recitation in a heterogeneously grouped classroom. Eighty-six students of the original possible population of 104 attended all 14 sessions. The STAIC self-evaluation questionnaire was used to measure internal anxiety, while two observers were asked to assess external anxiety apparent during poetry recitation performances. Treated data collected during the study provided evidence that a significant difference occurred in means of STAIC scorees between those receiving relaxation training and those not receiving the training ($F=21.682$, $p<.000$). There were no significant differences in the posttested mean or pooled variances of experimental group A and experimental group C (t-value = -0.31; $p=.758$), nor were there significant differences in control group B and control group D (t-value = -1.15; $p=0.256$). The fact that posttest self-evaluations were similar regardless of prior self-evaluation would indicate that all differences were caused by the study treatment. Therefore, no pretest is necessary in future studies of this treatment.

Conclusions of the Study

Since treatment groups A and C differed significantly from

control groups B and D on the results of the self-evaluation questionnaire STAIC, it can be concluded that relaxation training does have a positive effect on reducing anxiety levels of fifth and sixth grade school children attending Wilson school.

Results of the performance ratings made by the two raters could not be correlated with the STAIC results, due to significant differences in similarity of the rankings made by rater one and rater two.

It can be concluded, due to differences in rankings of level of performances for poetry recitation made by the raters, that the raters were inadequately trained for inter-rater reliability. Differences may also have occurred due to misinterpretation of the criteria on the rating scale. Both of the raters were experienced in judging secondary level speech and drama contests, but neither had observed such presentations at the elementary school level. It is possible that rater expectations were more appropriate to older children. One rater was the mother of adult children and the other rater was the mother of elementary age children, which could have had an effect on the degree of sympathy each felt toward the subjects.

In future studies of this nature, it will not be necessary to pretest students on the STAIC because of the evidence indicating that pretesting had no effect on the outcome of the posttest results.

Findings of the Study

The primary hypotheses of the study was that relaxation training will have an effect of decreasing anxiety levels toward poetry recitation, with the results indicating (according to the subjects' self-evaluation on the STAIC questionnaire) that the students receiving the

treatment reported lower anxiety levels than those not receiving the treatment. The results of the questionnaire were tabulated on the $SPSS_X$ computer of Oklahoma State University, using ANOVA with a follow-up evaluation using a t-test. The results of the ANOVA obtained a F score of 21.68, denoting a significant difference between the groups receiving treatment and those receiving no treatment. T-test results provided further support for those differences. Therefore, the null hypothesis I was rejected.

A secondary hypothesis that the effect of anxiety levels would be evident to raters who observed and ranked the performance in poetry recitation was tested by having two raters not associated with the study rate the oral presentations according to established criteria designed to evaluate external anxiety. Differences in ratings of the two were significant to the degree that the results were not reliable as a covariate and therefore were not included in the data used to determine the outcome of the study.

The study was designed to determine whether pretesting internal anxiety using the STAIC would have any effect on the outcome of post-test results. Groups A and B compared to posttest results of groups (A, B, C, and D) showed no effect on the outcome of posttesting from pretesting. In other words, students did not demonstrate that they had learned from the pretest.

Questions concerning the randomness of the sample arose due to prestudy differences in groups A and B evident from the compared pretest results. It would be expected that the two would report similar levels of anxiety prior to the study, as subjects were randomly placed in the two groups based on SRA achievement test data.

Despite such expectations, group A had a pretest mean score of 35.70, while the mean score of Group B was 44.71. The t-value of the two was -3.78 ($p = .001$). Posttest results illustrated an even greater difference, with a t-value of -4.25 ($p<.000$).

The differences prior to the study can be attributed to several factors difficult to control in a study of this nature, where the subjects are under the influence of teachers other than the researcher during the study. Also, peer influence is difficult to control within the groups. Personality of the teacher, classroom environment, and teacher expectations for student behavior in daily situations influence the subjects within groups. The researcher noted that the teacher of group A was more humanistic in her classroom management; students in group A were accustomed to working in small groups, tutoring by peers, and had a general attitude of concern for the group as a whole and its members. The teacher of group B developed an environment of isolation where students worked alone, receiving help only from her. Students in that group worked independently of their peers and had little reason to socialize as a group.

Another factor that may have influenced the differences in the pretest results is peer influence. Strong personalities or strong group leaders often have a major influence on students within a group. In group A there appeared to be a keen sense of competitiveness, even though there was evidence of group support. The students helped others in the group, encouraged more timid students, and applauded success, but each was very concerned about receiving a high score for himself. At the same time, the researcher rarely observed students in group B working together on the memorization of the poem for the week.

The subjects in group B did not encourage their peers, laughed at others' mistakes, and appeared to be concerned only with their own performances.

Peer influence can also have an effect on the attitude of a group toward a task. Students with short attention spans may distract the attention of the group from the task, while a strong leader who is attentive to the task may influence the group to pay closer attention.

Factors within a group that cause that group to vary from another group are difficult to control within a school setting with limited space, time, and financial resources. However, despite the outcome of any educational research, the fact remains that the same elements of limited space, time, and financial resources exist throughout the educational system in the United States. If educational research can demonstrate positive results in spite of limited resources, it is more acceptable to educators who share those limitations. Teachers are very skeptical of research conducted in "ideal" environments.

Recommendations of the Study

In future studies of this nature, the researcher would recommend that students be randomized so as to more carefully control the factor of influence from teachers outside the study. Ideally, students in a study would each have the same environmental influences with the same teachers instructing all the subjects in one classroom, and also, the same peer influence.

The use of raters cannot be more than subjective in nature, but more extensive training for inter-rater reliability is recommended, as well as matching personal characteristics of the raters more closely,

such as family and ages of children, experience with younger children, and experience in judging dramatic performances.

The students in this study were Caucasian. It is recommended that similar studies be conducted with students of another culture. Noting the supposedly high stress level of American Blacks, it might be advisable to study methods of providing anxiety coping techniques to Black youth.

As relaxation training has proven effective for fifth and sixth grade students, other studies need to be made to determine the effect of such training on students of another age group.

It is desirable that children develop and retain stress-coping mechanisms; therefore, longevity studies ae recommended to determine the degree of independence children can obtain for using these techniques throughout a lifetime.

To strengthen future studies, it is recommended that the researcher identify covariates which may serve as predictors of anxiety levels. One such covariate could be the use of well trained raters.

Implications from this study that children can be provided with training enabling them to cope with anxiety raise further questions concerning the control of anxiety. If theories of the Neo-Hullians (Bowers and Hilgard, 1981) are correct in theorizing that anxiety, when sufficiently intense, can act as a driving force or motivation to avoid the situation arousing fear, is it possible to train children to direct that arousing force to a useful advantage? Moursund (1976) indicated that anxiety can be an advantage in certain situations and circumstances, and that it is generally accepted that, depending upon the individual, anxiety may act either as a hindrance or as an aid to

achievement. Can children be taught not only to gain control over anxiety in certain teacher directed sessions, but also to adopt the training to their daily encounters with anxiety in order to control and direct the energy produced through anxiety to usefulness?

A subjective impression noted by the researcher was that children can enjoy control over anxiety. If they become independent meditators, they can learn to use situational stress to their advantage while experiencing freedom from the pain of uncontrolled anxiety. By teaching children control over anxiety, they can enjoy healthier, more meaningful lives through enhanced creativity and self-awareness (Benson, 1975; Hendricks and Roberts, 1977; Shapiro, 1978; Carrington, 1978).

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

THE TREATMENT

Directions for Centering

I want you to take a deep breath, taking air deep into your diaphragm, holding it, and slowly releasing your breath. I am going to count in four/four time (4/4), pacing my counting so that you breathe in to the count of four, hold your breath to the count of four, release to the count of four, and wait for the same count of four. Try it now: one - two - three - four; hold it, two - three - four; release, two - three - four; hold it, two - three - four; continue, one - two - three - four; hold it, two - three - four; release, two - three - four; hold it, two - three - four. Continue breathing in this same manner until it feels natural and easy. (When most of the students appear to be breathing in a 4/4 rhythm, continue.)

While continuing to pace your breathing, I want you to tighten your muscles beginning with your toes and moving up to your ankles, your calves, your thighs. Tighten your hips, your back, your shoulders; now go down your arm tightening your upper arm, your lower arm, and your hand. Tighten your neck, your ears, your forehead, and your teeth. Tighten all your muscles to the count of four, hold the tension for a count of four, and release to the count, wait four counts, and tighten again. Be sure to begin with your toes and move up your body, making your muscles as tight as you can. We will do this four times. Ready now? Follow the counting: Tense, 2-3-4; Hold, 2-3-4; Release, 2-3-4; Hold, 2-3-4; Tense, 2-3-4; Hold, 2-3-4; Release, 2-3-4; Hold, 2-3-4; Tense, 2-3-4; Hold, 2-3-4; Release, 2-3-4; Hold, 2-3-4; Tense, 2-3-4; Hold, 2-3-4; Release, 2-3-4; Hold, 2-3-4.

Directions for Meditation

You feel very relaxed and peaceful. Feel yourself go deeper and deeper into relaxation as I count backwards (space counting at 12 beat intervals). Ten . . . nine . . . eight . . . seven . . . six . . . five . . . four . . . three . . . two . . . one . . . (the facilitator lets the counting fade away, being careful to allow time for the breathing rhythm to continue between each count).

Directions for Guided Imagery

In your mind's eye, see yourself standing at the top of a gently sloping mountain, where all around you, you see gray slabs of rock and snow covered peaks of the other mountains in the range. Big, puffy clouds are floating all around and one may float over you, wrapping you in a mist. You can make the mist a favorite, comfortable color. Feel your body becoming lighter and lighter and start to lift up off the ground, floating down the gentle, green mountain. See the stones in the mountain path as you are descending, suspended just above the path. As you float along, you come to a meadow of purple flowers, smelling the scent, and seeing shades of purple and lavender all around. You want to stay here over the purple meadow, but something urges you to float gently on down the mountain trail. You float down deeper, down the sloping trail of the mountain, going down, down, down. There is a sound of water in a babbling brook you can hear, and as you come upon the stream, you see the clear, sparkling water running over the gray stones in a musical way. Feeling the mist from the stream on your face, you reluctantly move on. Going down the mountain

path, you float over green grass, gray stones, and meadows of brilliantly colored flowers. As you go on down the mountain, you come to a rail fence, feel your body rise up and over the rails, and move on down the mountain. Going into the woods, you find a place where you are always comfortable and happy. See the happiness on your face, your smile, even laughter. Look at the clothes you are wearing, your shoes, your hands. See any scars you might have. Watch yourself doing a favorite thing. It's fun and easy. See yourself alone saying the poem, then to your family, doing it easily. Now, watch someone else, someone who always seems to do things easily. Notice how the person walks to the front of the room with confidence. See the straight way they stand, the way they look, confident and at ease like an actor. Watch as they go through the poem and notice the expressions they use, the gestures their hands make. Now see yourself sitting, waiting to be called. You are sure of yourself, you are prepared and know just how to express the poem. You laugh a little at the poem. See yourself leaving your seat and moving smoothly to the front. Your step is quick and sure. Turn, pause, and give the title and author. You see yourself begin the lines with a clear voice and expression. Hear your voice; you sound good to yourself. See yourself ending the poem with expression, and, pausing, you walk quietly back to your seat, knowing you did well. (Following the visual imagery above, the exercise concludes with guided imagery for each line of the selected poem.)

APPENDIX B

THE HOW-I-FEEL QUESTIONNAIRE

HOW-I-FEEL QUESTIONNAIRE

Developed by C. D. Spielberger, C. D. Edwards, J. Montuori and R. Lushene

STAIC FORM C-1

NAME _____ AGE _____ DATE _____

DIRECTIONS: A number of statements which boys and girls use to describe themselves are given below. Read each statement carefully and decide how you feel *right now*. Then put an X in the box in front of the word or phrase which best describes how you feel. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any one statement. Remember, find the word or phrase which best describes how you feel right now, *at this very moment.*

1.	I feel	☐	very calm	☐	calm	☐	not calm
2.	I feel	☐	very upset	☐	upset	☐	not upset
3.	I feel	☐	very pleasant	☐	pleasant	☐	not pleasant
4.	I feel	☐	very nervous	☐	nervous	☐	not nervous
5.	I feel	☐	very jittery	☐	jittery	☐	not jittery
6.	I feel	☐	very rested	☐	rested	☐	not rested
7.	I feel	☐	very scared	☐	scared	☐	not scared
8.	I feel	☐	very relaxed	☐	relaxed	☐	not relaxed
9.	I feel	☐	very worried	☐	worried	☐	not worried
10.	I feel	☐	very satisfied	☐	satisfied	☐	not satisfied
11.	I feel	☐	very frightened	☐	frightened	☐	not frightened
12.	I feel	☐	very happy	☐	happy	☐	not happy
13.	I feel	☐	very sure	☐	sure	☐	not sure
14.	I feel	☐	very good	☐	good	☐	not good
15.	I feel	☐	very troubled	☐	troubled	☐	not troubled
16.	I feel	☐	very bothered	☐	bothered	☐	not bothered
17.	I feel	☐	very nice	☐	nice	☐	not nice
18.	I feel	☐	very terrified	☐	terrified	☐	not terrified
19.	I feel	☐	very mixed-up	☐	mixed-up	☐	not mixed-up
20.	I feel	☐	very cheerful	☐	cheerful	☐	not cheerful

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APPENDIX C

RATING OF POETRY RECITATION PERFORMANCE

Very entertaining performance having no mistakes----------10 points

Performance is clear, with good expression and no mistakes---------- 9 points

Recitation of poem with some voice inflection, appropriate pauses, and no mistakes---------- 8 points

Recitation of poem with some inflection, appropriate pauses, but with slight incorrection---------- 7 points

Recitation of poem with all lines correct, but no expression (monotone or hurried speech)---------- 7 points

Recitation of poem with no expression, slight mistakes---- 6 points

Recitation with no expression and missing one line-------- 5 points

Recitation with some expression, but having missing lines---------- 4 points

Recitation of poem with two or more missing lines and no expression---------- 3 points

Recitation starts, but cannot be completed---------- 2 points

Recites title and author---------- 1 point

Starting over, forgetting to say title and/or author will cost---------- 1 point off

VITA

Barbara Kay Blevins

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: THE EFFECT OF RELAXATION TRAINING ON ANXIETY FOR THE POETRY RECITATION TASKS AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

Major Field: Higher Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Berkeley, California, October 2, 1942, the daughter of Harold and Madeline Moore, the mother of: Jeri Mishell, Lise Melene, and Jason Maldon Blevins.

Education: Graduated from Hollis High School, Hollis, Oklahoma, in 1960; received Bachelor of Science in Education degree from Southwestern State University, Weatherford, Oklahoma, in 1965; received Master of Education degree from University of Pittsburg, Pittsburg, Kansas, in 1980; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in December, 1984.

Professional Experience: Ten years of teaching experience in both public and private elementary schools; consultant to Governor Nigh for State Education Conferences, 1978, 1980; served on the Oklahoma Education Association Legislative Commission, with attention to teacher retirement, school funding, and quality in education; served for four years as committee member for the Miami School District staff development; served on committees for curriculum development, effective discipline, quality control, and effective grading; served Governor Nigh as a consultant for Excellence in Education, 1983-84.