

**THE ESSENCE OF CARE IN THE
CLASSROOM**

By

KAREN M. ROGERS

Bachelor of Science
University Of Central Oklahoma
Edmond, Oklahoma
1986

Master of Education
University of Central Oklahoma
Edmond, Oklahoma
1988

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Thesis Approved:

Kathryn Castle

Thesis Advisor

Hans

Sally Carter

Margaret Meert

Wayne B. Powell

Dean of the Graduate College

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
THE FOUR DIRECTIONS	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Research Problem.....	3
Violence and the Lack of Care in the American Culture.....	3
Violence and the Lack of Care in School.....	6
School Response to Increasing Violence.....	10
Care as an Absent Goal in Education.....	13
The Research Question.....	16
How do Children Experience Care in Classrooms?.....	16
What is the Meaning of Care in the Classroom to the Teacher?.....	18
What is the Meaning of Care in the Classroom and It's Importance to Parents?.....	19
Significance of the Study.....	20
Clarification of Terms.....	21
Listening.....	21
Caring.....	22
Tact.....	22
Essence.....	23
Phenomenology.....	23
Hermeneutic Phenomenology.....	24
Naturalistic Inquiry.....	24
Curriculum.....	24
Pedagogy.....	25
Pedagogue.....	25
Pedagogue Researcher.....	25
Violence.....	26

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
Caring: An Analysis of the Term.....	29
A Call for Caring.....	32
Organized Programs Claiming to Promote “Care”.....	35
Care as Reflected in Educational Settings.....	39
The Construction of Care.....	46
III. METHODOLOGY	
Design of the Study.....	50
Participants.....	54
Purposive Sampling.....	55
Data Sources.....	56
Children.....	56
Field Notes of Observation.....	57
Interviews.....	58
Documents.....	60
Teacher.....	60
Parents.....	61
Data Analysis.....	61
Time Line.....	64
Development of a Logistical Plan.....	64
IV. LENS OF THE RESEARCHER	
Pedagogue Researcher.....	65
Child Participants.....	72
Teacher Participant.....	72
Parent Participants.....	75
Classroom Choice.....	75
V. FINDINGS	
Introduction.....	78
Theme Definitions.....	81
Community.....	81
Mutual Respect.....	82
Literacy.....	82
Autonomy.....	83
Choice.....	84
Empathy.....	85
Helping.....	85
How Do Children Experience Care in the Classroom?.....	85
What is the Meaning of Care in the Classroom to the Teacher?.....	86

What is the Meaning and Importance of Care in a Classroom to Parents?.....	88
The Essence of Care.....	89
Care in Terms of Community.....	90
Where Community Begins.....	90
The Room in terms of Community.....	95
Others in the Extended Community.....	98
Together in Community.....	100
Advice for Each Other.....	106
Care in Terms of Mutual Respect.....	110
Together in Mutual Respect.....	111
Others in Mutual Respect.....	115
Perspectives through Mutual Respect.....	117
Mutual Respect of Time.....	121
Importance of Mutual Respect to Parents.....	125
Care in Terms of Literacy.....	125
Reading and Literacy.....	126
Content Areas and Literacy.....	135
Writing and Literacy.....	142
Publishing and Literacy.....	148
Care in Terms of Autonomy and Choice.....	152
Self-governance and Autonomy.....	152
Collaboration and Autonomy.....	158
Choice and Autonomy.....	161
Care in Terms of Empathy and Helping.....	164
Empathy.....	164
Helping.....	170
Conclusion.....	179
VI. REFLECTIONS	
Autonomy as it Relates to Care.....	181
Community as it Relates to Care.....	185
Literacy as it Relates to Care.....	188
Mutual Respect as it Relates to Care.....	190
Parents as Partners.....	193
Implications and Recommendations.....	193
Concluding Thought.....	197
VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	198
VII. APPENDICES	
Appendix A - Ms. Worth's Interview.....	207
Appendix B - Consent Forms.....	225
Appendix C - Children's Artifacts and Documents.....	232
Appendix D - IRB Form.....	295

“Western culture speaks of four directions. Native American cultures throughout the continent recognize seven. There are the cardinal directions of East, South, West and North, directions that correspond to our life cycle of birth, youth, adulthood, and the time of being an elder, respectively. Then there are the directions of Earth and Sky. These Six Directions are easy to locate. The Seventh Direction, however, is harder to see. It is the direction within us all, the place that helps us see right and wrong and helps us maintain the balance by choosing to live in a good way. It is about learning where and how to look, and when we learn this, we will not miss seeing the beauty that is all around us and within us. We must look within, through the eyes of our heart, as we walk between Earth and Sky.” (Bruchac, 1996)

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

I was perfect in first grade. I remember that my teacher got married during the year, therefore she was a teacher and a bride! I was perfect in second grade, too. I was every teacher's dream. I worked hard on my papers and always finished on time and got good grades. I raised my hand and waited to be called upon. I played well with others and was punctual. Every teacher's dream. I was perfect in third grade, too, until the teacher hit me with a ruler. I don't remember the names of my first or second grade teachers but I remember Mrs. Miller, not only her name but what she looked like, her smell and the sound of her step. I was eight, skinny, freckled and had braids. Aaron sat behind me and always pulled my braids. One day he pulled them and I ran after him and chased him around to the back of the room when, accidentally, I stepped on someone's finger painting and even left a somewhat distinguishable footprint. The teacher never even asked what caused me to be out of my seat. She told me to sit down and put my hands out in front on my desk. I remember how calm she was, how matter of fact. She hit my outstretched hands five or six times.....hard. I can't remember if I cried. I do remember that it hurt and I remember hating her.

I was never perfect again. School was not safe, it was not fair. She didn't care. Perfect was not enough. My school career changed that day. I learned to be sneaky and not get caught. I learned to say only what the teacher wanted to hear and keep my real thoughts and opinions to myself. I learned not

to trust and never to rely on what was fair or kind. I learned that rules must never be broken outwardly. I learned that teachers only care for rules and procedures, not for students. I learned that time matters and efficiency is the goal of education. I learned that no one really cares; caring is not an integral part of schools and schooling. As I became a teacher, I was faced again with the realization that caring is not a part of the standardized curriculum.

I ask the questions: Who cares? and What is the essence of care in the classroom? How do we recognize the seventh direction? How do we find the place that helps us to see right and wrong and helps us maintain the balance by choosing to live in a good way? How can I help to make school a place of kindness and safety and caring.

I set my goal to become a teacher, a different kind of teacher, a teacher who listened, one who didn't hit, one who cared. I moved through my elementary education program and learned how to present material, manage my class, mete out discipline, control curriculum and not to smile until Thanksgiving. I moved through my Master's Program in Special Education where I learned to use time-out, behavior charts and behavior incentives. I learned that respect for rules outweighed respect for people and that earning rewards and fear of punishment are the keystones for controlling student behavior. I learned not to smile until Christmas.

I got a job in a "regular" education third grade classroom and it took me three weeks to realize that everything I "learned" didn't matter. This was not what I had envisioned. The blank faces, the yawning, the misbehaviors, and the silent submissions were robotic in nature. These kids obviously viewed learning as a necessary evil. My students went through the motions, they turned

in their homework and earned stickers. They read when it was their turn and never got more than two check marks next to their names. They raised their hands to speak and walked in two straight lines with their hands at their sides when they left the room. I was in control and I didn't have time to listen if I intended to cover the curriculum. In three weeks I recognized Mrs. Miller in my shoes. I vowed then to change, to remember, to reflect. I vowed to educate minds by way of hearts, I vowed to listen, to care.

The Research Problem

VIOLENCE AND THE LACK OF CARE IN AMERICAN CULTURE

Violence in our neighborhoods and communities has grown to an alarming level in the past twenty to thirty years. According to the United States Bureau of Justice Statistics (1996), despite recent declines, homicide rates remain near historic highs and teens experience the highest rate of violent crimes. Serious violent crimes included are rape, robbery, aggravated assault and homicide.

According to the State Of America's Children Yearbook 1996: Homicide takes a disproportionate toll on America's young people. It is the eleventh leading cause of death for all Americans, but the second leading cause for all children and young adults between the ages of 15 and 24. Homicide accounts for nearly one quarter (23%) of all deaths among 15 to 24 year olds, killing four times as many young people in this age group as cancer. Homicide is the

number one cause of death among Black and Latino 15 to 24 year olds, and the third leading killer of Whites in that age group. For all children between the ages of five and fourteen, homicide is the third leading cause of death. Every day, 15 children and youths younger than twenty were killed by firearms and about 125,000 youths younger than 18 were arrested for violent crimes in 1994 (p. 56).

Crime rates have increased dramatically among juveniles. For many children, crime is a part of their lives, in both the home and the school. Every month, secondary schools experience 2.4 million thefts, almost 300,000 assaults and over 100,000 robberies. Criminal behavior starts early, usually in school, and peaks quickly. More 17 to 20 year old males are arrested for virtually every class of crime (including homicide) than males in any other age group. But the record of children under 10 (55,000 arrests in 1980) is itself sobering and it gets seven times worse by age 14 (Murphy , 1982).

To these alarming statistics we must add that over one million children run away from home each year, and an indeterminate number of these are forced into prostitution or pornography, or both (Elkind, 1984, p.8).

According to Fordham University's Index of Social Health for the United States, based on sixteen measures, including infant mortality, teenage suicide, dropout rates, drug abuse, homicide, food stamp use, unemployment, traffic deaths, and poverty among the elderly, from 1970 to 1992, the index showed a decline from 74 to 41 (Miringoff, 1994). This means that the overall well being of our society decreased significantly. (The index ranges between 0 and 100, with 100 being the best). (Garbarino, 1997, 13). The statistics are staggering and it is becoming more and more difficult for children to find a place

of safety.

Although no long, black granite wall commemorates them in our nation's capital, more U.S. young people have been killed by guns in their own homeland during the last thirteen years than lost their lives in Vietnam during that quarter-century war! Yet the American public - numbed by decades of television, radio, newspaper and real-life images of dehumanizing violence - has not responded to the loss of so many children and teenagers with the same sorrow, anger, or grief as was roused by Vietnam (Sautter, 1995, p. K6).

Violence is a commonality in today's world. The very nature of television with the daily doses of physical threats, shootings, beatings, and other violent acts invade children's lives and thoughts. "The typical American child spends more time in front of the television than with parents, teachers, peers, or anyone else" (Eisenberg, 1992, p.127). Eisenberg (1992) shows that children begin watching television on a regular basis three or four years before entering the first grade and by the time they have reached eighteen years of age have logged over 15,000 hours of television content.

Children and youth today must contend with a constant stream of messages that undermine their sense of security. If it isn't the threat of kidnapping, it's the high probability of parental divorce. If it isn't weapons at school, it's contemplating a future with dim employment opportunities. At stake is the essence of childhood as a protected time and place in the human cycle (Garbarino, 1997, p.14).

Violence is a continuing issue in education and on the political front, indeed, reducing violence is necessary to the continued success of our democratic system.

Reducing violence in this country is going to take efforts in all directions. The cycle of violence must be broken at many points. Those aspects of our society that breed violence must be changed, while the violence that presently exists must be restrained. Children must be cared for so they do not perpetuate the cycle by growing into violent adults (Wallach, 1997, p. 135).

VIOLENCE AND LACK OF CARE IN SCHOOL

Violence in our culture finds its way into schools and classrooms. The 1996 Kappan Gallup Poll shows that “Drug abuse has once again replaced discipline and inadequate financing as the major local school problem most frequently mentioned by respondents. And a majority of respondents would address the problem with such measures as random drug testing and the use of trained dogs to sniff out drugs in school” (Elam, Rose & Gallup, 1996, p.42). In looking into violence in the schoolhouse, The National School Boards Association has

concluded that two factors - the disintegration of the family and the increasing depiction of violence in the media and in popular music - are the leading causes of violence in public schools. Other contributing causes, according to the NSBA, are alcohol and drug abuse, easy access to guns, and poverty (Sautter, 1995, p.K2).

Student responses to school indicate that school is viewed as “an alienating experience” (Jackson, 1992, p.474). “Among the issues examined in these studies are students dropping out and tuning out because they are bored by school work and abused by the professional staff” (p.474). And according to Elkind this “miseducation ” begins at a very early age and includes pushing

academic goals before it is appropriate. Early instruction “miseducates”, not because it attempts to teach, but because it attempts to teach the wrong thing at the wrong time. “When we ignore what the child has to learn and instead impose what we want to teach, we put infants and young children at risk for no purpose” (Elkind, 1987, p.25). “The threat of miseducation is greatest in public education where the most children will be affected. And public education is increasingly guilty of putting children at risk for no purpose by exposing them to formal instruction before they are ready” (Elkind, 1987, p.9). This is indicative of the uncaring atmosphere that infiltrates schools beginning in Kindergarten and even the preschool years. The motivation that encourages these uncaring practices is the attainment of high achievement test scores. (Paciorek and Munro, 1997) The place called school continues to harm young children in the elementary classrooms as the need for high test scores and control manifests itself in four common elements:

- 1) the teacher’s use of fixed, predetermined curricula, with no allowance for situational modification;
- 2) a competitive approach that pits students against one another and forces them into destructive forms of social comparison;
- 3) disciplinary patterns inflicted on children to stop bad behavior without assisting their academic or social development; and
- 4) class sizes, daily schedules, and administrative tasks that inhibit teachers from building relations and bonds of trust with students and other teachers (Noblit, Rogers & McCadden, 1995, p. 681).

In traditional classrooms it is common practice for teachers not to smile too often or say anything positive to students, or even use a student’s name unless in conjunction with a reprimand. Sarcasm is common in classrooms, as

is embarrassment and humiliation. Students are singled out for embarrassment if they are wrong, or late, or sleepy, or need to use the bathroom at “inopportune” times. Children see school as a place for repetition, being quiet and securing the approval of the teacher, at any expense. School is about avoiding shame, getting good grades and not making mistakes. It has little to do with the eagerness to learn that was present when children entered the classroom. Glasser (1986) interviewed students and notes that when asked what they liked about school, students struggled to come up with any type of answer. Finally they responded that their friends were there. When asked what they didn't like about school the response was that school was hard and boring and there was too much work. They also complained that teachers did all the talking but never answered their questions. When Glasser asked, “Do you ever feel important anywhere in school?” Students seemed to think this was an odd query and, according to Glasser, “They seemed not to be able to answer and sat and stared at me with a kind of quizzical look as if I had not the slightest idea of what really goes on in school” (Glasser, 1986, p. 41). Finally, these students did say they found some importance through social contacts, not through academic achievements.

Youngsters learn that authority is always right and that one must avoid reproach and learn to know what the teacher wants, in order to feel safe and unafraid. This becomes even more important than establishing solidarity with other students. This is protection from emotional and even physical (corporal) punishment. Corporal punishment is still an option in many schools, even though the research shows that corporal punishment is counterproductive, resulting in a child doing more lying, bullying, breaking things and other antisocial behavior (Internet, Reuter News, August 1997, p. 1). “Spanking has

been linked to low self-esteem, depression and low educational attainment” (Internet, Reuters, August 1997, p. 1).

These harmful practices persist. Changes in these practices and teacher behaviors might go a long way toward promoting care in the classroom. “There are some common assumptions and a common orientation toward change that link the diverse body of research on youth and caring. To revitalize our society, we must develop effective moral communities, or we will be doomed to increasing social fragmentation” (Chaskin & Rauner, 1995, p.718). If we don’t turn this around and start caring in our schools, our children will perpetuate the cycle by growing into uncaring, violent adults.

The American Psychological Association (APA) maintains that early childhood intervention to prevent future violence is critical (Sautter, 1995 p. K7). Preschools, Head Start programs, and the early elementary years are times when educators must have the skills and resources, as well as the assistance of psychologists and social workers, to thwart future problems of violence during the difficult years of adolescence. “If we are serious about reducing violence, it is ridiculous to ignore the causes insofar as we know them. Therefore early action is imperative” (Sautter, 1995, p. K7). The APA has further stated that the use of punishment is implicated in the development of aggressive behaviors in children and that positive interactions of adults do lessen the risk of developing violent attitudes. “...the involvement of just one caring adult can make all the difference in the life of an at-risk youth” (Sautter, 1995, p. K8). This one caring adult could very well be a teacher given the fact that working mothers spend only an average of eleven minutes each weekday doing quality-time activities such as reading, conversing or playing with children, and an average of thirty minutes per day on weekends (Elkind, 1987, p. 24). Caring gives priority to

relationships, and “morally and culturally, caring is a belief about how we should view and interact with others. In this way, caring is essential to education and may guide the ways we instruct and discipline students, set policy, and organize the school day” (Noblit, Rogers & McCadden, 1995, p. 680).

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO INCREASING VIOLENCE

The educational community has recognized and is trying to confront this issue in a very characteristic way. “Many schools are standing up to violence by trying everything from enacting new school suspension policies to using closed-circuit television on school buses, and adopting ‘zero tolerance’ policies for possession of weapons or any kind of violent behavior” (Sautter, 1995, p. K8). It is common in schools to establish dress codes, search lockers, install metal detectors, and adopt closed campus policies. Dallas Independent Schools, for example, have introduced a multifaceted strategy to reduce violence.

The program has placed new campus safety teams at every school, consisting of specially trained teachers, counselors, and security people. Other components of the program include a crisis planning guide for principals, 24-hour hot lines for students to call in with confidential information, and peer mediation projects. The state of North Carolina started A Scholastic Crime Stoppers program that pays rewards of up to \$1,000 for crime tips (Sautter, 1995, p. K8).

Many schools are training students in peer mediation, conflict resolution, anger management and Resolving Conflict Creatively programs. A new 4-step program designed by Ronald Slaby in Newton, Massachusetts, has been used to help students practice their new learned behaviors by (1) Keeping cool (2)

Sizing up the situation (3) Thinking it through and (4) Doing the right thing.

Slaby is determined to promote behavioral changes in students, step by step.

Public schools are indeed doing something. They are adopting new programs, training more teachers, programming more students, and using more reward and punishment methodologies to combat the issue of violence. You cannot fix a problem using more of the same mentality that created it and that is precisely what is being done. The programs that are being designed and adopted are promoting skill oriented, extrinsically motivating criterion to help shape and mold behavior. This model is nothing more than a "quick fix" and in essence would seem to undermine the long term effects of civility and community awareness. "The people who set goals seldom take into account scientific knowledge about how children acquire knowledge and moral values. They usually formulate goals based on tradition and on their own values and priorities" (Kamii, 1994, p. 673). Affective goals will not be considered as worthy as long as the goal setters rely on their own experiences replete with rewards and punishments to shape behavior. Kamii (1994), following the writings of Jean Piaget (1932/1965) states that heteronomy is the opposite of autonomy and is defined as "being governed by someone else" (p.410).

Heteronomy includes the use of rewards and punishment and

in general, punishment leads to three possible outcomes. The first outcome is a weighing of risks. Children who are punished will learn to calculate their chances of getting caught the next time and to weigh the price they might have to pay against their chances of getting caught. The second possible outcome is, interestingly, the opposite of the first one: blind obedience. Sensitive children will do anything to avoid being punished. Thus by completely conforming to the rules, they give the

impression that punishment works. The third outcome of punishment derives from the second: revolt. Many "model" children surprise everyone by beginning to cut classes, to take drugs, and to engage in other acts that characterize delinquency. Their reason for switching to these behaviors is that they are tired of living for their parents and teachers and think the time has come for them to start living for themselves (Kamii, 1994, p. 674).

We need to worry about the conforming demands of school. We need to ask why there are so few episodes of laughter and enthusiasm. Goodlad (1984) finds that "The pattern dominating in our data supports the conclusion that the classes in our sample, at all levels, tended not to be marked with exuberance, joy, laughter, abrasiveness, praise and corrective support of individual student performance"(Goodlad, 1984, p.112). We need to wonder why classrooms are controlled and exude a relatively flat emotional tone. Kenneth Sirotnik (1981) observed over 1000 elementary and secondary classrooms to raise questions about classroom environment and practices. His findings concur with Goodlad. The average classroom has: the teacher explaining or lecturing to the total class, asking direct, factual questions or monitoring or observing students. Students in this average classroom are "listening" to the teacher, responding to direct questions or working alone on specified tasks. Sirotnik concludes that there is "negligible amounts of noticeably positive or negative affect. What was observed could only be described as 'neutral'" (p. 10).

The focal point around which teaching should be organized is not the instrumental but the relational. Without this connection, a teacher may have the subject-matter knowledge and the technical ability to teach, but the opportunities for real learning will be scarce, because what the

teacher does not have is the student. Caring fosters this student/teacher connection and encourages possibilities for learning that may not otherwise occur (Noblit, Rogers & McCadden, 1995, p. 680).

We must wonder, if positive relations in schools are related to student satisfaction and student satisfaction is related to academic attainment, then why are we not demanding school conditions that maximize the relational aspects of learning? It is possible that the lack of care in our culture and in our classrooms inevitably leads to the formation of carelessness and an increase in violence and violent acts. We need to arm our children with models of caring. How can this simplest of solutions be so universally overlooked?

CARE AS AN ABSENT GOAL IN EDUCATION

The attitude of care is typically foreign in the public school setting. Public schools provide learners with educational opportunities designed to help them acquire and develop the academic and social skills needed to prepare them to live productive lives in a global community. Piaget defined three domains to meet these ends, the cognitive, social and affective. The cognitive and social domains of Piaget's triad are clearly evident in school curriculum. Missing from the curriculum, however, is Piaget's realm of emotional or affective development. This omission is irresponsible according to van Manen (1991), DeVries (1994) and Noddings (1992). Noddings (1992) says

Schools cannot accomplish their academic goals without attending to the fundamental needs of students for continuity and care. Social changes over the last forty years have left many young people without a sense of continuity and with the feeling that no one cares. Therefore, although schools should continue to reflect on and pursue many purposes, their

first - their guiding purpose - must be to establish and maintain a climate of continuity and care (Noddings, 1992, p. 64).

This missing part of the curriculum may occur because of the emphasis on efficiency in the traditional model of public education. Schools first defined academic skills and then added social skills into the accepted model of schooling. Is it not time to redefine curriculum and add the component of affective education? If so, what would that look like in practice? How is it experienced? How can teachers help students learn thoughtfulness and kindness? How can students learn to think of others as well as themselves? Also, what place do these needs have in the school curricula? "Children are not there for us. We are there primarily for them. Yet they come to us bearing a gift: the gift of experiencing the possible. Children are children because they are in the process of becoming" (van Manen 1986, p. 13). Children are sensitive to the atmosphere and teachers model possible ways of "being" with children.

In the study of intelligence there is interaction between the domains of intelligence and affectivity. Care and caring lead to a child's healthy growth and development. Piaget draws parallels between the acquisition of knowledge and the emotional-motivational. "Piaget argues that affect is related to the function of intelligence - acting as an energizing force emerging from the disequilibrium between assimilation and accommodation. Affect is likened to the gasoline that activates the car, while the engine provides structure for the energy and direction of the car's motion" (Cowan, 1981, p. xi). Affect influences our selection of goals, our choice of values as well as our decisions to become involved in situations. It is the motivation, the encourager, the feeling that accompanies the doing, the component of learning that is not often acknowledged in the public schools. Schools cannot accomplish their

academic goals without attending to the fundamental needs of students for continuity and care. "Caring in education differs from brief caring encounters in that it requires strong relations of trust upon which to build. Such relations take time and require continuity" (Noddings, 1992, p. 64). Without the affective component as a working part of curriculum we are becoming the dysfunctional school system that we have allowed dysfunctional families to make. We don't want to discuss feelings in the schools only the facts that are to be imparted to the students and the rules that are to be followed. Do not question, do not notice, be loyal, stay the same, be compliant, do as you're told, do not trust anyone, maintain the status quo. You have no choices, do not make waves, do not mention problems, don't contradict, do not acknowledge mistakes, be perfect, avoid conflict, always be in control, follow directions, don't think...don't feel.

According to William Glasser there are five basic needs that drive us all: to survive and reproduce, to belong and love, to gain power, to be free, and to have fun (Glasser, 1990). Goodlad (1987) finds that

the goals set forth for schools are particularly idealistic in the social, civic, cultural, and personal domains. It is here that we find the most altruistic expectations for understanding differing value systems; developing productive and satisfying relations with others based on respect, trust, cooperation, and caring; developing a concern for humanity; developing the ability to apply the basic principles and concepts of the fine arts and humanities; to the appreciation of aesthetic contributions of other cultures; and developing an understanding of the necessity for moral conduct. And it is here that we find statements about developing the ability to use leisure time effectively, to criticize oneself constructively, to

deal with problems in original ways, and to experience and enjoy different forms of creative expression. I conclude that the schools in our sample were contributing minimally to the attainment of such goals.

With respect to some, they were rather neutral. With respect to others, they contributed negatively. And as is the case with other goals, they contributed differentially to individual students and groups of students (Goodlad, 1987, p. 239).

With the realization that schools are where increasing numbers of children, especially younger children, are spending increasing amounts of time, why are these tenets not a concern when curriculum is designed? Caring and affective goals are not a part of our current system. Children who are not cared for in school may not get cared for anywhere.

The Research Question

HOW DO CHILDREN EXPERIENCE CARE IN CLASSROOMS?

van Manen (1990) offers an idea as he explains the difference between phenomenology and other human science approaches. Phenomenology seeks the understanding of the nature of a thing and it “offers accounts of experienced space, time, body, and human relation as we live them” (1990, p. 184). The question becomes multifaceted when we ask: how do children experience care through lived time, through lived space, through lived body and through lived relationship with others? Themes arise through the study of the existentials that are embodied in the classroom.

The four fundamental existentials of spatiality, corporeality, temporality, and relationality may be seen to belong to the existential ground by way

of which all human beings experience the world, although not all in the same modality of course. In the phenomenological literature these four categories have been considered as belonging to the fundamental structure of the lifeworld (see, for example Merleau-Ponty, 1962). This is not difficult to understand, since about any experience we can always ask the fundamental questions that correspond to these four lifeworld existentials. Therefore, spatiality, corporeality, temporality and relationality are productive categories for the process of phenomenological question posing, reflecting and writing (van Manen, 1990, p.102).

Temporality, lived time, exists for children in the school setting through schedules and specific times embedded in the school day. It is, among others, the time they spend reading, at recess or in time out. It is the time that incorporates past experiences as children live toward a future. Spatiality is the place, the arena around the child, the classroom, the school building, "lived space is a category for inquiring into the ways we experience the affairs of our day to day existence; in addition it helps us uncover more fundamental meaning dimensions of lived life" (van Manen, 1990, p.103). Corporeality is the bodily being in the world, the physicality. School children experience their bodies developmentally on the playground, at their desks, or holding a pencil. Through their bodies they reveal and conceal parts of who they are simultaneously. Sociality is the use of shared space and interpersonal exchange. The classroom is replete with relational aspects to experience socialness with a sense of purpose and meaningfulness. Dialogue and interaction provide cooperative opportunities to search for understanding, appreciation and information.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF CARE IN THE CLASSROOM TO THE TEACHER?

These same factors help to define the essence of care in the classroom and give rise to essential themes, for a teacher as she reflects on the felt space in her classroom, herself as a child, a student, and in the present as a teacher. Does the space provide for individual and group components? Is the use of available space adequate for the needs and feelings of students? Is the space defining for more than physical needs? Does the shared space exhibit an aura of safety and concern? Is the shared space pleasant or inhibiting? Is the space alterable or constant? Is it warm and forgiving, or cool and judgmental? Is one's space respected or invaded or violated? Does the teacher use the space or does the space use her? Who controls the space?

Temporality is another issue that defines the teacher, affected both as a student, a child and as a teacher. Clock time is one dimension while subjective time is something else. Concerns regarding clock time consist of schedules, time frames, daily/monthly or seasonal constraints and aspects of shared and private time. Is time content driven or flexible? Subjectively, temporal concerns vary as to the context.

The temporal dimensions of past, present, and future constitute the horizons of a person's temporal landscape. Whatever I have encountered in my past now sticks to me as memories or as (near) forgotten experiences that somehow leave their traces on my being - the way I carry myself (hopeful or confident, defeated or worn-out), the gestures I have adopted and made my own (from my mother, father, teacher, friend), the words I speak and the language that tie me to my past (family, school, ethnicity), and so forth. And yet, it is true too that the

past changes under the pressures and influences of the present” (van Manen, 1990, p. 104).

Temporality is a defining, shifting essence and refers to lived time as opposed to clock time. “Lived time is the time that appears to speed up when we enjoy ourselves, or slow down when we feel bored” (van Manen, 1990, p.104). “The temporal dimensions of past, present, and future constitute the horizons of a person’s temporal landscape” (p.104).

Corporeality is the physicality of being in the lived world, the awareness of how the body and body language affects self and others in a shared experience. Merely being present in a situation may alter the situation. Being there in body only may also have an impact on a shared experience. Movement and gestures as simple as looking one in the eyes during exchange, or turning away can alter communication and understanding.

What van Manen (1990) refers to as lived other is the factor of relationship in the lifeworld of experience. It is the social dimension that leads us in search of a sense of purpose, a meaningfulness of shared experience. “It is the lived relation we maintain with others in the interpersonal space that we share with them” (p.104). Experiences of care often emerge in the student/teacher relationship.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF CARE IN A CLASSROOM AND IT'S IMPORTANCE TO PARENTS?

Parents will experience their understanding of care through memories and shared stories with their children. Care may exhibit differing forms as perceived by parents (as both student and parent) as care and caring is defined

according to experience of self. Parents will be asked to share their personal memories of early schooling. They will also be asked to discuss their goals for their children and their expectations of how they want their child(ren) to experience care in the classroom.

The overriding research problem is a deeper understanding of the pedagogy of care in the classroom, and simply stated the question is:

What is the essence of care in the classroom?

How do children experience care? What is the meaning of care in the classroom to the teacher? What is the meaning of care and its importance to parents?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

School is where increasing numbers of children are spending increasing amounts of time. Nel Noddings (1992) notes that:

It is not surprising that the single greatest complaint of students in these schools is, 'They don't care!' (Comer, 1988). They feel alienated from their schoolwork, separated from the adults who try to teach them, and adrift in a world perceived as baffling and hostile. At the same time, most teachers work very hard and express deep concern for their students. In an important sense, teachers do care, but they are unable to make the connections that would complete caring relations with their students (p. 2).

Being cared for in schools leads to children's healthy growth and

development and lack of care leads to problems - drugs, early sexual activity, alcoholism, delinquency, dropping out of school, child abuse, neglect, and violence. This realization poses a deep distress that children are not being cared for in school and may not get cared for anywhere. The essence of care must be explored and identified in order for the school to meet the needs of children.

***Unless someone like you
cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better.***

It's not.

(Dr. Seuss, 1971)

Clarification of Terms

Listening

Listening is understanding the child's world in a thought-filled way, open, receptive, non-judgmental, warm and concerned.

Children also need to be listened to, without critical or negative judgment. Confiding in another person whom the child trusts helps clarify things. Yet passive listening does not satisfy; it is not enough to be merely open and receptive. Non-judgmental understanding becomes pedagogical understanding only when it is intended to foster responsible self-awareness, self understanding, a personal sense of direction and how one ought to deal with life. Non-judgmental pedagogical understanding is still characterized by a certain intentionality.

Such listening/understanding knows when to be silent, where to support, and how to phrase a question that helps clarify the significance of the shared thoughts and feelings (van Manen, 1991, p.86).

Caring

“*Caring* connotes an attitude, a feeling rather than an ability or skill” (van Manen, 1991, p. 146). Caring in a pedagogical relationship is being sensitive to who the child is and who the child is becoming. “A caring relation is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings” (Noddings, 1992, p.15). Caring involves not just being there for the child but just “being” with intention. It involves taking and having time for and with, time to notice. A child cannot always experience his own goodness unless it is reflected to him from the noticing of others. Caring is “when the pedagogue’s eyes and ears search in a caring and receptive manner for the potential of the child, what this child can become. This requires a perceiving and listening oriented to the uniqueness of the child, using a multiplicity of perspectives, considerations, and vantage points to try to gain a vision and pedagogical understanding of a child” (van Manen, 1990, p. 172).

Tact

“The sensitive eye of *tact* mirrors back its caring glance. Tact does what it does by using the eyes, speech, silence, gestures as resources to mediate its caring work. We can compare the analytical and detached glance which coolly observes and judges from above, as it were, with the

sympathic glance that establishes contact and searches for pedagogical understanding in a dialogue with children. The eye that only observes the behavior of children objectifies, whereas the tactful eye subjectifies: The tactful eye makes contact, makes personal relationship possible” (van Manen, 1990, p.172).

Tact is being “tactile” with another, touching another, intuitively, without planning, it is a natural, sensitive thoughtfulness. “Tact shows itself as openness to the child’s experience” (van Manen, 1991, p. 152).

Essence

Essence is different from how things happen, it is deeper, broader, more involved and more involving. It is the whatness of a thing. What makes a thing what it is rather than what it could or might become. I use this term in the same way van Manen(1990) does, “Essence is that what makes a thing what it is (and without which it would not be what it is); that what makes a thing what it is rather than becoming something else” (p. 177). “The essence or nature of an experience has been adequately described in language if the description reawakens or shows us the lived quality and significance of the experience in a fuller or deeper manner” (p. 10). Essence is alive and filling.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is the science of phenomenon. “Phenomenology is the study of essences” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. vii). The research question is asking what is the essence, the meaning, the nature of something. “Existential phenomenology (not to be confused with the life philosophy of existentialism) aims at describing how phenomena present themselves in lived experience, in

aims at describing how phenomena present themselves in lived experience, in human existence” (van Manen, 1990. p. 184).

Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Hermeneutic Phenomenology is both descriptive and interpretive.

“It is descriptive (phenomenological) methodology because it wants to be attentive to how things appear, it wants to let things speak for themselves; it is interpretive (hermeneutic) methodology because it claims that there are no such things as uninterpreted phenomena. The implied contradiction may be resolved if one acknowledges that the (phenomenological) “facts” of lived experience are always already meaningfully (hermeneutically) experienced” (van Manen,1990, p. 180).

Naturalistic Inquiry

Naturalistic Inquiry is a research methodology often referred to as the constructivist paradigm. It is dependent upon context and affirms that “context provides great power for understanding and making predictions about social settings” (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen,1993, p.17). It also allows that the researcher must be involved and that the respondents and researcher have effect on each other. Naturalistic inquiry holds that “interpretation is both limited and enriched by context” (p. 18).

Curriculum

Curriculum is normally used to reference the content or substance of the school experience, curriculum refers to the subjects, the academic

requirements, the acquisition of knowledge. Eisner (1985) brings forth the idea that curriculum must be centered around process rather than product, around students as opposed to content. "Teaching is not to impart, but to help students to learn to inquire" (p. 62). I refer to this experienced curriculum. "The curriculum is what teachers and students experience" (Jackson, 1992, p. 493).

Pedagogy

"Pedagogy is a fascination with the growth of the other" (van Manen, 1991, p. 13). It shows the orientation of one to the other, it is the sensitivity of the lived world, it is thoughtful, reflective and relational. "Pedagogical understanding is always concerned with unique and particular circumstances. Pedagogical understanding is interactive. It is not an abstract, detached form of understanding that must then be translated into practical action" (van Manen, 1992, p. 85).

Pedagogue

A pedagogue is one whose lifeworld experiences "the powerful influence of children that transforms personal existence and that radiates throughout the life" (p.12).

Pedagogue Researcher

A pedagogue researcher is not an observer in a classroom, rather a pedagogue researcher is an active participant, not one who observes and talks about children but one who is with children, participating in their school time, their learning time. It is one who knows each child and works beside them. One who plans with and for them. One who listens and shares frustration and joy.

One who pedagogically asks the question, How is it to be this child? in this situation? The pedagogue researcher takes the risk of having a personal relation with each child, and with the class. The freedom of not being held accountable for curricular mandates allows the researcher to be nonjudgemental in the eyes of the student. The researcher is not limited by having the power to assign grades. The researcher is there to be with and among children to learn their perception of the concept of care.

Violence

Violence is the exertion of physical force so as to injure or abuse (Webster, 1989, p. 1316).

Chapter Two
Review of the Literature

To care for others we must learn to care for ourselves and to care for ourselves we must learn to care for others. Further, I believe that to bestow enduring value on their students, teachers must bestow value on themselves and to bestow value on themselves, teachers must bestow enduring value on their students. I think that teaching is a caring profession and that the ethics of care, as opposed to the ethics of rules and justice, is full of such paradoxes.

Everyone is a mixture of actual and potential. Who we actually already are actualizes the potential of others, and who they actually already are actualizes our potential.

(Garrison, 1997, p. xiv)

“Caring is a luxury in a standard classroom.”

(Greene, 1998)

A review of Piaget's social theory shows that there are three parallels to sociomoral and cognitive development. According to Piaget: (1) psychosocial knowledge is constructed, (2) socioaffective bonds motivate social and moral development, and (3) an equilibration process can be described for social and moral development as for cognitive development (DeVries, 1997). Piaget (1954) states that, "there is as much construction in the affective domain as there is in the cognitive (p. 12)." Beane (1990) defines affective learning as being concerned with personal-social development, stating:

It includes knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes related to personal interests, social relations, and the integration of those two. Affect enters the curriculum in any experience that influences (or attempts to influence) how young people see themselves, the world around them, and their place in that world. Wherever personal-social development is involved, either implicitly or explicitly, there is affect in the curriculum. (p. 10)

In Chapter One a rationale for adding an affective component to present-day curriculum was presented. It was argued from a position that

Schools cannot accomplish their academic goals without attending to the fundamental needs of students for continuity and care. Social changes over the last forty years have left many young people without a sense of continuity and with the feeling that no one cares. Therefore, although schools should continue to reflect on and pursue many purposes, their first - their guiding purpose - must be to establish and maintain a climate of continuity and care. (Noddings, 1992, p.64)

It was also argued that care and caring leads to a child's healthy growth

and development and that the institution of school can be harmful to children as the demand for high test scores and issues of control take precedence over the need for children to feel safe and experience the sense of care. Such practices include: competition among students (and teachers), predetermined curricula, time constraints inherent in school settings, and disciplinary measures inflicted upon children without discourse, intended to regulate behaviors. Caring, on the other hand gives priority to relationships and may create the impetus to transform current policies toward more caring educational settings and organization.

It is, therefore, the purpose of this chapter to review the literature and: analyze the understanding of the term “care” in education, ascertain if there is a call for caring, examine some of the organized programs of care, look at the ways care is reflected in educational settings, and to examine the construction of care.

Caring: An Analysis of the Term

This section will present various definitions of care.

Our modern English word “care” which ultimately derives from the double meaning, having, (via the Anglo-Saxon “caru”) a nominative sense of care as “burden” or “sorrow” but also, as a verb or participle, the more common sense of “liking; to hold in high regard; heed; and protection,” (from the Latin *carus*, which has given us the now somewhat archaic English word “charity”). Thus we may and readily do distinguish consciously or not between “care taking” and “care giving” (Prillaman, 1994, p.20).

“The noun *care* is derived from the Old English *caru*, meaning “anxiety,

sorrow". The Old English verb means "to be troubled, take thought for, have affection or liking for". Today we still find *care* defined as 1) "to take charge of, look after, provide for" but also 2) "to be anxious, solicitous, concerned about". (Lashly, 1994, p. 108)

Webster (1989) tells us that *care* is 1) suffering of mind and a state of mental engrossment, a disquieted state of blended uncertainty, apprehension and responsibility and 2) maintenance, charge or supervision. (p. 207)

Noddings (1984) allows that there are different uses of the term care, but in the deepest sense the "essential elements of caring are located in the relation between the one-caring and the cared for" (p. 9). She refers to aesthetical caring as caring about ideas or things, and caring as action when we consider the other's point of view and act "not by fixed rule but by affection and regard" (p. 24). Noddings (1995) continues to define care by emphasizing that it is "not just a warm, fuzzy feeling that makes people kind and likable. Caring implies a continuous search for competence. When we care, we want to do our very best for the objects of our care" (p. 25). She contends, too, that care and justice should be integrated in their efforts toward society rather than becoming the antithesis of each other. She posits that "care picks up where justice leaves off" (1998, p. 676).

Chaskin and Rauner (1995) define care as a concept "that encompasses and connects a range of discrete subjects, such as empathy, altruism, prosocial behavior and efficacy" (p. 670). They go on in their definition to state that care has an additional understanding that is significant for social scientists and different still as used in academic terminology. For the Research Program on Youth and Caring the term caring was defined as:

The ways in which individuals and institutions protect young people and

invest in their ongoing development. It also involves the ways in which young people, in turn, protect the rights and interests of others and ultimately support the ongoing development of their social and civic communities. Thus, caring concerns relationship and commitment, mutuality and reciprocity, participation and continuity, concern for and acceptance of others. (p. 672)

Yawkey and Jones (1982) define *care* in terms of “having a strong feeling or opinion,” while the act of caring “is an internal, cognitive activity involving a mental process that centers around relationship” (p. 2) While Bosworth (1995) says that:

In its simplest form, any definition of caring involves at least two people who are engaged in some sort of activity in which one person gives while the other person receives, and the roles of the giver and receiver may be interchangeable at any point in the relationship or at any moment in time. (p. 689)

Eisenberg (1992) defines care in terms of prosocial behavior which she considers to be “voluntary behavior intended to benefit another, such as helping, sharing and comforting behaviors” (p.3). She also draws a distinction between prosocial behaviors and altruistic behaviors. Altruism would be care that is motivated by sympathy or the need to adhere to internal moral convictions. This study found that children define care and kindness in relation to whom they are interacting.

Young children (age 6 to 8) tended to define kindness toward adults as being good and polite, whereas unkindness was the reverse. The older children defined kindness toward adults not only as obedience and “being good,” but also as doing one’s chores and, occasionally, as

showing concern for an adult in need. In contrast, children viewed peer-directed acts of kindness as involving giving and sharing, playing together, giving physical assistance, and occasionally (for older children) understanding or teaching. (p. 125)

Lastly, the definition of caring that guided my investigation was the one put forth by Max van Manen. He defines "tact" very simply as the practice of otherness. Therefore, "to be tactful is to be thoughtful, sensitive, perceptive, discreet, mindful, prudent, judicious, sagacious, perspicacious, gracious, considerate, cautious, careful" (van Manen, 1991, p. 126). The essence of care can be viewed as a composite of the existing definitions. However, the meaning of care varies from individual to individual. Meaning will become apparent when stories are told within the context of intentions, in personal and situated sense.

Care is multifaceted and engenders different meanings to different people at different times and in various circumstances. It is referred to as kindness, empathy, tact, altruism and prosocial behavior, yet each of these phrases carries a unique meaning intended to clarify the understanding of care. There is one clear and undeniable fact that emanates from the study of care, it is needed.

The Call for Caring

"Why should we care about caring?" and "Who cares?" are common questions asked today. The literature is replete with the call to reform our schools. A picture of drugs, violence, teen pregnancy, crime and selfishness are ever in the nightly news. "Statistics on declining test scores, reports of violence and decay in the nation's schools, evidence of defection from religious organizations, and debates about public morality do not present an

encouraging view of the future” (Wuthnow, 1995, p.6). Schools are being recognized for their individual achievements, which creates a climate of competition and coercion, and students are being pitted against other students for honors and awards. Apparently, most of the conversation in classroom settings is centered around curbing negative behaviors rather than promoting self worth and prosocial behaviors. It is little wonder then that students are afforded little or no time to practice caring. At the same time there is a demand for schools to become moral communities, a request for codes of ethics and responsibility, and programs designed for character education. There appears to be a huge disparity between theory and practice in the context of schooling.

A great deal of educational research, along with the educational policies we derive from it, is illogical because it lacks sympathy. For example, students’ abilities and subsequently their access to educational possibilities are often dependent on their performance on pencil-and-paper, machine graded, multiple choice tests yielding a number that allows us to calculate and classify. Such research often fails to collect its data appropriately because it confuses the sensory material fit for investigating physical things with the sympathetic and emotional data appropriate for acquiring knowledge of persons (Garrison, 1997, p.37).

Kids today are in trouble as reported by Fordham University’s institute for Social Policy. On its Index of Social Health for the United States the index showed a decline indicating that the overall well-being of our society has decreased significantly between the years of 1970 and 1992 (Garbarino, 1997). Further study showed an increase in emotional and behavioral problems among American children. The Achenbach and Howell study revealed that:

In 1976, 10 percent of all children studied were judged to be doing so poorly that they could be candidates for therapy. By 1989, 18 percent of the children were doing badly enough in their behavior and development to warrant needing therapy. (Garbarino, 1997, p.13)

According to Garbarino (1997) teachers also “overwhelmingly agree that more and more children are in greater and greater trouble” (p. 13). Garbarino (1997) goes on to indicate that the social environment that our children have grown up in has become socially toxic and poisonous to their emotional and physical health. He shows that this toxicity is a culmination of media and the “constant stream of messages that undermine their sense of security” (p. 14), coupled with divorce rates, lack of adult supervision, availability of guns, and a 50 percent decrease in the amount of time that parents spend with their children.

Even the United Nations has stated that children have a human right to be cared for and yet the United States has not added its signature to the UN Convention document. We know that caring is useful and that caring promotes learning by establishing an environment for learning, a culture for learning. Experience and research have shown that promoting social and emotional development in schools is the missing piece in the efforts to maximize the intent associated with school reform. Though we have made inroads with programs designed to teach conflict resolution, including cooperative learning and The KJ (kindness and justice) Challenge, we have not defined the essence of care or caring in our classrooms.

Jensen (1995) has identified reasons why the “game” has changed. He looks to the decomposition of the school as the center of information and the increase in advanced technology and the sophistication of the information age

as one culprit in the breaking of caring relationships. The electronic authority that students now turn to in use of the Internet, home computers, television, radio, CD-ROM, compact discs and videotapes is replacing parents, church and school as a center for information. "Perhaps creating an even greater impact is the additional learning students get electronically: trends, values, fashions, manners, customs and ethics. This trend creates fewer positive role model relationships and less sense of community, bonding and responsibility (Jensen, 1995, p. 3).

The call for caring is being heard and being tended to, but we need to examine the ways in which care is being offered in packaged programs and see if it qualifies as embodying the essence of care.

Organized Programs Claiming to Promote Care and Justice

The current vogue is moral education. There is a call to teach children to have good character. "...the perception engendered by the media and political rhetoric that today's youth have no moral bearing has brought about a movement toward fostering the development of such a bearing through curricular interventions" (McCadden, 1998, p. 4). There are a plethora of these programs being offered to help teachers promote social and emotional development. One such program is provided by Lee Canter, who has not moved very far from his stance on assertive discipline. Canter (1995) offers a program called *Teaching Students to Get Along*. It is advertised as containing hundreds of ideas to teach prosocial behavior complete with easy to follow lesson plans, reproducible posters, charts and student worksheets. At the end of the teacher's guide there are a set of award certificates to be run off, colored and handed out to those students who "sparkle" because they get along!

Yawkey and Jones (1982) have also compiled a book of activities to teach the young child to care for others. These activities are divided into chapters to appeal to different aspects of caring. For instance, there is a chapter on "Caring for Special Friends," referring to the handicapped, and another dedicated to single parent families.

Jim Anderson (1995) has authored a book called *Courageous Teaching: Creating A Caring Community in the Classroom*. This is a set of lessons outlined to use with the group process approach. He even states that there are effective responses to student misbehavior and that, "Nearly every student can be won over with respect, kindness and firmness" (p.24). The emphasis of this program is on children discovering what constitutes being a "good" person.

A very popular program is "Conflict Resolution with Peer Mediation" in the public schools, which makes these claims:

Through conflict resolution approaches to classroom management and peer mediation programs, students have the opportunity to strengthen their self-esteem, learn to appreciate diversity, improve their communication and analytical skills, and avoid disciplinary problems. Schools as a whole may benefit as these programs support staff and problems. (Girard, 1996, p. xxvi)

This type of peer mediation is being used in many schools and some are using this in helpful ways. Other programs are setting classmates up to police other classmates, causing division instead of the community that it is designed to foster. There are also peer mediation programs out there that are only allowing the students who exhibit high academic achievement to be drafted as mediators. Some programs are used to threaten students to keep up with their school work or face the possibility of being asked to step down.

Another “prosocial” program taken from the Internet is the KJ Challenge (1997). This is an interesting unit designed to cover a two week period addressing kindness and justice in the form of a radio station. The challenge is to divide the class into KJ Squads and keep track of and tally and display acts of kindness and justice “based on the Step by Step instructions for Tallying” (KJ Challenge, 1997, p. 16). At the end of two weeks the teacher hands out the certificates for completing the challenge and, “Reminds the class again that just because the KJ Challenge is over, the challenge to be just and kind is ongoing” (p. 32).

Violence prevention is another aspect of prosocial learning that students across America are experiencing in the form of role-playing. This program is officially called “Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways” (Meyer and Northup, 1997, p. 31) but is known as RIPP, SCIDDLE, and RAID to students. These acronyms stand for the content of the various programs.

RIPP stands for “Responding In Peaceful and Positive ways”.

SCIDDLE is a problem solving model: “Stop, Calm down, Identify the problem and your feelings about it, Decide among your options, Do it, Look back, and Evaluate”.

RAID represents four nonviolent options: “Resolve, Avoid, Ignore, and Diffuse”. (1997, p.31)

Another program uses recitation and chanting to integrate the message, Holden (1997) calls her curriculum “Students Against Violence”. The children begin each day by reciting by heart their class motto and their classroom rules: “Show respect,” “No pushing or fighting,” “Smile,” and “Always do your best.” Then they recite their Rap song, called “Hugs not Slugs” (1997, p. 75).

Character education is another catch phrase that is being passed around in educational circles. It presents a series of choices set up as hypothetical dilemmas, and dialogue is facilitated by an adult trained in the Socratic approach to character education. Facilitators are trained because, "When conducting such a discussion you must have a clear vision of the lesson you want your students to take away from it. It is essential to have your endpoint in mind so that you can always be angling toward it" (Elkind, 1997, p.59).

Then there are *Guidelines For Educators* (Elias, 1997) written for the express purpose of promoting social and emotional learning. Some of the wording of these is cause for consternation. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development guidelines claim to help students, "discover the value of mistakes and apparent detours to the learning process" (Elias, 1997, p.70). This statement would support the errant idea that life experiences might be considered "detours" to the learning process. The Social-Emotional Learning training also "provides guidelines for appropriate self disclosure" to help teachers "discover a new freedom in sharing their personal stories and wisdom with students" (p.70). At the same time these guidelines stress the idea that, "It is most beneficial to provide a developmentally appropriate combination of formal, curriculum-based instruction with ongoing, informal, and infused opportunities to develop social and emotional skills from preschool through high school" (p. 33). It occurs to the researcher that "formal curriculum-based instruction" would not lend itself to the creation of a risk free environment that would ultimately foster social and emotional learning.

Many of these programs are stating that they have been effective in moving toward their stated goals and that is a good thing. Society would hope

that students are becoming less violent, that they are kinder, that exclusionary episodes are lessening. Society would hope that there is less name-calling and bullying and playground fighting. Hope exists that there is a reduction in the rate of teen pregnancy and drug use is on the decrease. Society hopes for these things. Skepticism still exists and the query is the same: What is the essence of care?

Programs designed to teach and promote kindness are incompatible with practices that include rewards and punishments, prescribed texts, or identification of marginalized groups. Kindness is honest and cannot be taught using manipulation, or policing policies to identify peers. Conflict resolution programs that demand academic excellence for participation are unkind in nature and are based on a practice of exclusion. Songs, recitations, catch phrases and chants about kindness are superficial and ineffective if not in conjunction with a lived experience, and discussion that has an endpoint in mind is contrived and neither authentic or honest. These programs do not emerge from children. They are imposed from the outside by others who view them as a solution.

Care as Reflected in Educational Settings

“You have to enable students, it’s the greatest caring you can give”

Maxine Greene

There appear to be differences between acknowledged concepts of care and the way these concepts are enacted in the school setting. The ideals of care that educators strive for are in conflict with how these ideals are being dispensed to students. Caring is a community action that learners and teachers must engage in together.

Alfie Kohn (1991) points out that

At a tender age, children learn not to be tender. A dozen years of schooling often do nothing to promote generosity or a commitment to the welfare of others. To the contrary, students are graduated who think that being smart means looking out for number one. (p.498)

It is Kohn's conclusion that much of what goes on in American classrooms emerges from a belief about human nature.

The belief persists in this culture that our darker side is more pervasive, more persistent and somehow more real than our capacity for what psychologists call "prosocial behavior". We seem to assume that people are naturally and primarily selfish and will act otherwise only if they are coerced into doing so and carefully monitored. (p. 498)

Kohn writes about the hundreds of studies that have convinced him that human beings are also "decent, able to feel - and prepared to try and relieve - the pain of others" (p.498). It thus becomes evident that we can help students by assuming whenever possible that they are warm, caring and empathetic by nature. It is true that what teachers, adults, humans believe matters, and that how educators relate to students will make a difference. The goal of educators might then be to bring children into the conversation and provide opportunities to cooperate and build consensus. The conversation would be authentic, relevant and honest. The dialogue would constitute the lived experience, the process of life.

Child Development Project schools in coordination with the Developmental Studies Center in California, rely on the creation of community to aid children's learning and sociomoral development. These programs are different than the character education programs in that they are on-going and

provide an atmosphere, created by the members of the community, rather than a unit for study imposed by curricular mandates or adopted by an entire district for all to follow. The Child Development Project schools rely on five principles that guide practice and enable them to strive for: 1) Warm, supportive, stable relationships, 2) Constructive learning, 3) An important, challenging curriculum, 4) Intrinsic motivation, and 5) Attention to social and ethical dimensions of learning (Lewis, 1996. p.19).

In *Ways We Want Our Class To Be* (1996) The Developmental Studies Center offers literature that focuses on class meetings as:

A forum for students and teacher to gather as a class to reflect, discuss issues, or make decisions about ways they want their class to be. Class meetings are not a forum for teachers to make pronouncements or impart decisions. Neither are they tribunals for students to judge one another. The teacher's role in these meetings is to create an environment in which students can see that their learning, their opinions, and their concerns are taken seriously. The students' role in these meetings is to participate as valuable and valued contributors to the classroom community. (Developmental Studies Center, 1996, p.3)

Nel Noddings (1992) offers an approach to moral education that encompasses "centers" of care to address areas of social injustice in context. Issues of race, gender, multiculturalism would not be separated out to special units or months of study, they would be naturally occurring:

If the curriculum were redesigned around centers and themes of care, matters of interest to women and minorities could be included in a natural way. For example, we might tackle the question: How can we produce a new generation better than the present one? Such a theme

promotes discussion of a host of sub questions: Should boys as well as girls be educated to provide care giving? What causes racial tensions, and how do people feel when prejudice is directed at them? Why do all (or most) groups see themselves as genuine human beings and outsiders as others? What do we mean by "better" when we plan a generation "better" than we are? All of the existing disciplines have something to contribute to the study of such questions, but in the new curricula the disciplines would not themselves be central. They would serve larger purposes. As long as the existing disciplines are central, they will tend to overwhelm material injected to revise them. (p. 115)

Noddings (1984) defines caring as a capacity that takes time to cultivate and states that children learn in communion, in relationship. From the perspective of moral education she allows that there are four major components: dialogue, modeling, practice and confirmation (Noddings, 1984), and that these four are always in attendance. Noddings (1992) offers that "caring is the very bedrock of all successful education and that contemporary schooling can be revitalized in its light" (p.27). Caring can substantiate that moral life should be the aim of education, that moral life cannot be accomplished "merely by designing a better curriculum, finding and implementing a better form of instruction or instituting a better form of classroom management" (p.173). Noddings (1992) further asserts that

We need to give up the notion of an ideal of the educated person and replace it with a multiplicity of models designed to accommodate the multiple capacities and interests of students. We need to recognize multiple identities. For example, an 11th-grader may be black, a woman, a teenager, a Smith, an American, a New Yorker, a Methodist, a person

who loves math and so on. As she exercises these identities, she may use different languages, adopt different postures, relate differently to those around her. But whoever she is at a given moment, whatever she is engaged in, she needs - as we all do - to be cared for. Her need for care may require formal respect, informal interaction, expert advice, just a flicker of recognition, or sustained affection. To give the care she needs requires a set of capacities in each of us to which schools give little attention. (p.173)

It is evident that the centers of care would not constitute a prescriptive program but would work in conjunction with legitimate purposes, capacities, and issues along with the interest of learners. Noddings takes us on a journey through the practice of these centers of care in a nonprescriptive way. Each center is devised in response to an area of concern that is generated by the idea of multiple capacities. The area of study is on-going and should not be confused with "doing" centers that are a part of many elementary classrooms.

The creation of a sociomoral atmosphere is the first principal of Constructivist education according to DeVries and Zan (1994). Creating the moral classroom is the focus of their studies grounded in the works of Piaget. "The term sociomoral atmosphere implies our conviction that all interactions between and among children and their care givers/educators have an impact on the children's social and moral experience and development" (1994, p. 1). Much of this philosophy is played out in the efforts to establish community and communal experiences. Children are helped to feel comfortable and encouraged to pursue their own interests. Learners are cooperative decision makers and self-regulating. The teacher is actually viewed as a mentor.

This Constructivist mentor is a companion guide who organizes a

program of activities designed to stimulate children's reasoning and provide them with a supportive environment in which to explore and experiment, to make inevitable errors in reasoning, and to invent new ways of reasoning (DeVries and Zan, 1994, p. 17).

The moral classroom is based on mutual respect, that is the teacher's attitude of respect for the children that engenders the respect of children in turn. The relationship is reciprocal and the role of the authority figure is minimized. DeVries and Zan (1994) maintain that it is not too much to say that, "these relations determine the nature of the interpersonal atmosphere. The Constructivist teacher attempts to cooperate with children and foster cooperation among children themselves" (p. 70). It is understood by Constructivist teachers that children do not think like adults and it is important to put aside assumptions and genuinely listen to what children know and how they think. Teachers in moral classrooms think out loud and promote reflection of feelings and understandings; they help students to decenter and take new perspectives. The sociomoral classroom is organized to meet the physical, emotional, social and academic needs of children. Peer interaction is encouraged and procedures and routines are arrived at with mutual assent. Children establish their own classroom rules and classroom meetings and voting are common vehicles for discussion and dialogue. This is an approach that illuminates the individual in the context of capacity.

Jane Roland Martin (1992) advocates a concept of *Schoolhome* as she considers rethinking how schools are functioning. She sees the challenge to move the schoolhouse mentality into a more inviting and thoughtful Schoolhome, "a moral equivalent of home for our young that will be responsive to the needs and conditions of children and their parents" (Martin, 1992, p. 33).

Martin calls for education which encompasses the three C's: care, concern and connection. She worries that schools today deny individuality and interpret difference as a movement away from the norm, "[schools] treat variety as a problem to be overcome and individuality as a disease to be cured!" (p.181). She asks if it is possible to look toward home and family as models for a nation "proposing that domestic tranquility be inscribed on the whole society" (p. 182). The recognition of the gap between the ideal and the real exists but basing our education system on the three C's would offer a "vision of what our private and our public or civic worlds should be, not what either one was" (p. 182). The schoolhome would be a place where mind, body, reason, and emotion are all a part of the lived experience and "the curriculum of the Schoolhome does have a common core. It is equally important to note that that core is composed mainly of attitudes, skills, and values, not bits or bodies of knowledge" (p. 84). It is very interesting to note that Martin (1992) likens what is normally thought of as extra curricular activities as the place where minds and hearts are connected.

It is the place where students work so hard and so enthusiastically that disciplinary problems rarely arise and motivation takes care of itself, where they take initiative, carry enormous responsibilities, solve problems, think critically - in sum, do regularly all those things our elders say our nation's youth should be learning (p.94).

Michelle Karns (1995) has put together a book that lists the things that caring adults can do to improve the adult-child relationship. She lists her *DOisms* as ten things to ensure caring and connection with kids. Her list is tailored for the adult with the overarching understanding that, "Nothing is more important than the relationship" (p. 53).

“An emotional attachment to teachers, peers, and school is a vital link to academic success (Hawkins, Catalano, et al. 1992; Solomon et al. 1992).

Educators accomplish this goal by communicating caring in their teaching and inspiring students to identify with them and feel hopeful about their ability to learn. Equally important is fostering students' abilities to form and maintain mutually supportive relationships, which serves as a buffer against developing social, emotional, physical, and academic problems (Parker and Asher 1993, Rutter, 1990).

The Construction of Care

The personal bonds of relationship formed between teacher and children influences much of the understanding in schools. In the perspective of constructivism, we understand that feelings and caring are not just concepts to be learned, but rather are constructed by each child as they participate in the creation of the shared meaning of the lived experience. “The meaning is more created or acquired than it is learned. It is far too complex to be simply learned” (Dupont, 1996, p.3). Morality is constructed internally.

Morality does not just happen, it is not something we develop into, it is not something we logically deduce; it is something we make, conserve, change, and impart. By examining our own moral practices, educators can potentially guide that construction thoughtfully and take it back from the realm of political, mediated rhetoric (McCadden, 1998, p. 111).

Classrooms must reflect care and acceptance. “A shift away from competition, rewards, and punishments helps all students - not just the high achievers - feel like valued members of the classroom community” (Lewis, 1996, p. 20). What is needed is a classroom where there is genuine interest

and warmth, a place where children have an equal voice in decision making and rule creating, a place where belonging is the norm, and learners can risk trying new ideas, and understanding that mistakes are important to growth.

Classrooms must encourage classroom meetings where the teacher will function as a model, a listener, and a facilitator - accepting students' ideas and feeling, drawing students out, letting them air opinions, helping them see their classmates' perspectives, encouraging them to respond to each other, and prompting them to reflect on and extend their own thoughts (Developmental Studies Center, 1996, p. 29).

A classroom needs to be homey, in the sense of being comfortable with ourselves, to know each other and be at ease with each other. "The heart of any relationship for me is to be listened to and heard beyond words alone. Being heard creates a home" (Sinclair, 1994, p. 37). Students need to know that their teacher takes them seriously on issues of both social and intellectual learning. Teachers need to listen more and talk less, they need to ask for patterns of thinking and opinions, they need to understand "what is important to them - it is a part of respecting them. And it is a big part of how a caring community happens" (Dalton & Watson 1997, p. 147). According to DeVries and Zan (1994)

A Constructivist sociomoral classroom atmosphere is based on the teacher's attitude of respect for children's interests, feelings, values, and ideas. The classroom is organized to meet children's physical, emotional and intellectual needs. It is organized for peer interaction and child responsibility. Activities appeal to children's interests, experimentation and cooperation. The teacher's role is to cooperate with children by trying to understand their reasoning and facilitating the

constructive process. The teacher's role is also to foster cooperation among children by promoting their construction of emotional balance and coping abilities, interpersonal understanding, and moral values.

(p. 78)

Teachers should be aware of what constitutes a sociomoral atmosphere and look carefully before considering the character education programs in the market place today. These programs, according to Kohn (1997) "for the most part, are a collection of exhortations and extrinsic inducements designed to make children work harder and do what they're told" (p. 429). Kohn further warns that good behavior is often regarded as good character and that some teachers and some sections of society value most in children what children value least in themselves. "They prize docility, suggestibility; the child who will do what he is told; or even better, the child who will do what is wanted without even having to be told" (Kohn, 1997, p. 429).

Many times intending to help, teachers become involved in programs that drill students in certain behaviors at the expense of engaging them in thought-filled discussion and reflection about ways of being. It is the easier course to view teaching as a matter of telling than to create the relationship that cultivates caring.

Deiro (1996) suggests that "To be a rich source for young people, we educators may need to reframe our primary professional responsibilities to include making healthy connections with students. Educators may need to think about teaching and schooling in unfamiliar ways" (p. 7). Educators must look carefully at the instructional purposes and begin to ask "What is missing in the curriculum?" as they examine the broad spectrum of the human journey. "My hunch is that if we allow ourselves to give who we really are to the children

in our care, we will some way inspire cartwheels in their hearts. What great professions we are all in together” (Rogers, 1994, p. 33).

My conclusions from the review of the literature is that care is multifaceted in its definition. In the practical arena it is being interpreted as something tangible that can be delivered to children. It is considered a product and the teacher as the dispenser of the product, when in reality the essence of care resides in the process. It resides as an outgrowth of the relationship that is evolving, changing and dynamic in nature. In my estimation there is a breakdown between the theoretical literature and the literature of practice in the realm and understanding of the essence of care.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

“Each individual is a unique, one-time only event.”

(Garrison, 1997)

***“As persons, we are incomparable, unclassifiable, uncountable,
irreplaceable.”***

(van Manen, 1990)

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The researcher chose an hermeneutic-phenomenological approach to this human science study of care following the guidelines of naturalistic inquiry. “The aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence” (van Manen, 1990., p.36). I chose “phenomenology because it is the descriptive study of lived experience (phenomena) in an attempt to enrich lived experience by mining it’s meaning; hermeneutics because it is the interpretive study of the expressions and objectifications (texts) of lived experience in the attempt to determine the meaning embodied in them” (p.38). The guidelines of naturalistic inquiry provide the sharing of human

experiences in the social context of the classroom. I took the role of pedagogue researcher for this study and was a pedagogical participant. I spent a sufficient amount of time to become accepted as a member of the classroom community.

It is a matter of being present as a whole person, with your own thoughts and feelings, and of accepting children as whole people, with their thoughts and feelings. It is a matter of working very hard to find out what those thoughts and feelings are, as a starting point for developing a view of a world in which people are as much concerned about other people's security as they are about their own. (Duckworth, 1987, p. 121).

"To get to the relevant matters of human activity, the researcher must be involved" (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993, p. 15). "The naturalistic paradigm affirms the mutual influence that researcher and respondents have on each other" (p. 15). I was neither an observer nor a visitor. I was actively involved and pedagogically oriented in order to develop the relational aspect that went with the role of pedagogue. The relational aspect extended across conversation and involved helping, sharing, comforting and promoting social activity.

The major characteristics that constitute naturalistic inquiry are explained by Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen (1993) as:

- 1) Qualitative methods are preferred because they allow for thick data to be collected that demonstrate their interrelationship with their context.
- 2) While both relevance and rigor are important in research, relevance is paramount.
- 3) Grounded, emergent theory, that is theory that is derived from analysis, is preferred to a priori theory, or theory that precedes data analysis.
- 4) Tacit knowledge (including intuitions apprehensions, or feelings) is

treated differently but on an equal basis with propositional knowledge (knowledge that is explicated in language).

- 5) The primary research instrument is the researcher.
- 6) Research design emanates from the research.
- 7) A natural setting is always preferred to a laboratory or controlled setting.

The assumptions of a grounded hermeneutic approach and their implications are:

- 1) Participants of research are meaning-giving beings and the meanings are important in understanding behavior.
- 2) Meaning is not only that which is verbalized; meaning is expressed in action and practices. It is important to look at everyday practices, not just beliefs about those practices.
- 3) The meaning -giving process is not always free; meanings are made possible by background conditions such as immediate context, social structures, personal histories, shared practices and language. When something is noticed as missing, wrong, or problematic, illuminating these background conditions can allow for change to occur.
- 4) The meaning and significance of human action is rarely fixed, clear and unambiguous. Meanings are not limited to preestablished categories. Meaning is being negotiated constantly and changes over time and in different contexts.
- 5) Interpretation is necessary to understand human action. It is never possible to achieve an objective, value-free position from which to evaluate the truth of the matter. Facts are always value-laden, and researchers have values that are reflected in their projects (Crabtree & Miller, 1992).

It was therefore necessary for me to become immersed in classroom events and to enter into active dialogue with students and teacher, to establish trust and thoughtfulness as well as maintain an ever open and questioning attitude. It was important to be a caring, contributing, co-constructing member of the miniature society which was the classroom. I was oriented to the lifeworld of each child. The role was one of pedagogue researcher. "Whenever people decide to learn, they undertake research. If teachers wish deliberately to learn about their teaching, they must research" (Miller, 1990, p.163). As a pedagogue researcher, I knew that being with children was my focus. I was not there to follow a research method or technique nor to participate in a prescribed program. I was there in the hope of broadening my understanding of children's thinking and feelings in an atmosphere described as caring. The research was as much incidental as purposeful. As a pedagogue researcher I was actively engaged in dialogue and reflection of our experiences. There was understanding and sharing through language but the understanding was essentially layered in the fabric of our relationship. Though the initial reflections and conversations were individual experiences the language was only the medium that joined the individual to a composite. We lived together in our semester. We created bonds of affection through mutual endeavors. We wrote together, we read together. We explored the concepts of distance and time and space. We shared secrets, made mistakes and conspired. I defined my relationship as a partner, I stood with them. We shaped a history and through field notes wrote an autobiography of a lived adventure. Care is immeasurable in the life of a child and the thick description is based on the felt sense of care and cared for. It could only be written by a participant who experienced the bonds of relationship through caring. This may be further clarified in the words

of van Manen (1990):

Every situation in which I must act educationally with children requires that I must continuously and reflectively be sensitive to what authorizes me as pedagogic teacher or parent. Exactly because it is an ultimate or definite sense unfathomable, it poses the unremitting invitation to the creative activity of pedagogic reflection which brings the deep meaning of pedagogy to light (p. 149).

PARTICIPANTS

The study took place in a third grade, public school classroom located in a semi-rural area. The school is one of six K-5 elementary schools in the district. The children enrolled in the school are from predominately white, middle class homes; they live in near-by neighborhoods and most ride busses to school. There were twenty-one members of a primary third grade classroom, ten boys and eleven girls. One family was Hispanic and two were Native American.

The classroom teacher, Ms. Worth, holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education and has since completed her Master's degree in early childhood education. She has taught third grade at this school for the past three years. In an interview, (see Appendix A) she explains some of her philosophy about literacy as having originated from her early experiences of schooling from the perspective of being a member of a military family. Informally, she talks a great deal about sharing professional literature and her active participation in several educational organizations.

Participation in the study was requested via a letter of consent to the school district, school principal and the teacher. (See appendix B) Parents of the children received a letter of introduction and a consent form requesting permission for their child's participation and an invitation for their own participation. (See Appendix B) All participants were assured in writing that their participation was voluntary, that there was no penalty for refusal to participate, and that those children whose parents had given consent were also asked verbally to cooperate and were free to withdraw their consent or participation in this study at any time. The children's consent was requested through verbal solicitation in which their voluntary cooperation was requested after a brief explanation of their involvement in the study. Children were informed that they were free to leave any study situation at any time without reprisal. All participants were informed that their responses and actions were voluntary, anonymous and completely confidential.

All Federal regulations and Oklahoma State University policies regarding research that involves human study were followed.

PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

Naturalistic inquiry allows for the maximum discovery of relevance and richness that occur in context, and made purposive sampling ideal for this study. The classroom in this study was purposefully selected based on what it could contribute to the understanding of the essence of care in a classroom. The teacher was nominated by educational professionals in higher education and the public school system who were most likely to know teachers who are well versed in the creation of communities that exhibit care and kindness. The

researcher collected the names of teachers from two colleagues and contacted those teachers in the order of recommendation. The researcher observed in the classrooms to be certain that the availability would meet researcher demands. The classroom needed to be one where the sense of community was prevalent and where the researcher was accepted by the teacher and the children as a contributing part of that community. I chose this classroom because the climate of the classroom was not autocratic or rigid. Students talked as they worked together and conversation was not discouraged. This was a comfortable, collegial, safe classroom that had an almost homelike lack of external authority. Everyone in this room acted in a caring manner. It was a warm, inviting atmosphere where expectations seemed to be known and accepted by each contributing member. The teacher was receptive and eager to have me participate in the classroom. This classroom met the criterion for selection.

DATA SOURCES

Children

I derived data from observing, interviewing and being with twenty-one children in this third grade classroom in a K-5 elementary school in a semi-rural setting. Ten of these children had been together for two years. They looped with their first grade teacher to second grade. One young man moved to the neighborhood and joined the class in early October. No other mobility resulted for the remainder of the year.

Field Notes of Observations

Observation field notes formed the basis of this data collection. The field notes consisted of both descriptive and reflective components of the observations. Field notes reflect a detailed and objective record of what occurred in the classroom during observation and participation times. I endeavored to make the descriptive fieldnotes a concrete, accurate, detailed and objective record of what occurred in the classroom during my time there. This included description of the physical setting, reconstruction of conversation and dialogue, accounts of particular events, and a clear representation of activities. The reflective field notes included ideas, interpretations, impressions and feelings of particular events and activities. This created the phenomenological text to serve pedagogy. van Manen (1990) points out that "Language is the only way by which we can bring pedagogic experience into a symbolic form that creates by it's very discursive nature a conversational relation" (p.116). I observed the children in their natural classroom and school settings (this included specials classes, recess, media center and hallway, as well as their home base classroom). Attention was focused on the children's interactions in the classroom and the relational aspects of the lived experience. Children were periodically observed while interacting with each other, the teacher, their environment and me. I kept both formal objective field notes and a reflective journal which logged observations capturing vignettes and anecdotes that embody episodes of care and caring.

Anecdote particularizes the abstracting tendency of theoretical discourse: it makes it possible to involve us pre-reflectively in the lived quality of concrete experience while paradoxically inviting us into a reflective stance vis-a-vis the meanings embedded in the experience. The

important feature of anecdotal as well as phenomenological discourse is that it simultaneously pulls us in but then prompts us to reflect. (van Manen, 1990. p.121).

On several different occasions, I shared sets of field notes with Ms. Worth to elicit her response and affirmation that I was accurately capturing events, activities and conversation. She would provide additional comments and reflections to the notes.

Field notes were stored in a secure place. Field notes and computer files will be destroyed and deleted at the conclusion of this study. I transcribed field notes from recordings that I made after classroom sessions. In the course of a semester I had participated forty seven times during morning, afternoon or both. I would spend the morning with the group and go to my car at lunch and talk into a recorder. I often had slips of paper to jog my memory of significant details. At the end of the day I did the same. I would do the transcription as soon as possible and I filled 179 pages of field notes with pencil remarks added to margins.

Interviews

I engaged in both spontaneous conversation and scheduled interviewing with the children and the teacher. I elected to use an audio recorder only during the two scheduled interviews with the teacher. I did not want the recorder to command attention away from my very real conversation with the children. I jotted things down as inconspicuously as possible and added to these notes when children were not present, and spoke on the recorder in the car. These field notes were later transcribed and logged in a journal to develop a deeper understanding of children's concepts of caring. The journal was mostly

keyboarded and kept as one part of a 3 inch binder notebook. Other parts of the notebook consisted of hand written materials, copies of children's documents, classroom photographs and hand written letters, notes and pictures the children gave to me. I formally interviewed each child one time and took actual field notes during each formal interview. This constituted another section of the notebook. During the interviewing, I asked them to respond to questions that elicited their understanding of care. In each interview there were several questions that were addressed, aimed at helping me understand, at a deeper level, how each child viewed care and caring. These questions were used as a guide to begin each interview.

- 1) What does it mean to care?
- 2) Can you give me an example of caring or kindness?
- 3) Can you tell me about a time when a teacher has shown care?
- 4) Can you tell me about a time when another student has been caring or kind?
- 5) Can you remember a time when you were really kind to someone else here at school? How did that make you feel?

These questions were adjusted somewhat as I proceeded in a conversational manner as it was necessary to follow the lead of the respondents in these purposeful conversations. I directed the interviews toward school issues. Any divergence from these questions was centered around the child's meaning of care and was focused on the school experience. As Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen (1993) have found,

Once the study is begun, the design of a naturalistic study continues to emerge. As the researcher gets deeper and deeper into the context, he

or she will see that early questions and working hypotheses, however helpful in getting started, are very simplistic. First sources of data reveal others that the researcher could not have imagined. (p. 75).

Documents

Documents (See Appendix C) included students' work samples, (journal entries, poetry, quickwrites and writings), photographs of projects, reading lists, drawings and agenda book (referred to as the "black book") entries. Agenda book entries are entries made by the children themselves, and shared by the class to resolve conflicts during their school time. Children were also asked to make some drawings showing acts of care and/or kindness and I talked with the children about their writings. Some of these documents were in the form of quickwrites, poetry and journal-type writing. These documents of children's work completed the triad: 1) field notes, 2) interviews and 3) documents, that comprise the data of the study that centered around children. This triangulation is an essential check for a researcher. "The naturalistic investigator seeks trustworthiness in data collection by trying wherever possible to use multiple methods and divergent data sources" (Crabtree & Miller, 1992, p.177).

The Teacher

The teacher was invited to write and reflect on classroom interactions through journaling, protocol writing and interviewing or "purposeful conversations" (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993, p. 86). The teacher was asked to write about her personal memories of how she experienced care as a student and as a teacher. An interview was conducted informally, similar to a conversation rather than question-and-answer session. The goal was to

gather descriptive data in the teacher's own words. The researcher audio-taped this session and transcribed it. Questions were asked that were designed to compare the teacher's own school experiences gathered from the protocol writing, with the experiences she saw in her own classroom. The following questions were used as a guide for further inquiry.

- 1) What does it mean to care?
- 2) Was your school experience a pleasant experience, overall? In what ways?
- 3) Do you see your classroom as a caring place for students? In what ways? Is this by design? How do you plan for this?
- 4) How do you establish a caring classroom?
- 5) How do you see caring demonstrated by your students?
- 6) Are the affective components of your classroom a part of your curriculum? Please explain.

Parents

Parents were invited to share their personal experiences of care as a child in school, as well as give examples of what they wanted their child to experience as care in a classroom, in an open-ended question, survey instrument (See Appendix B for "An Informal Parent Survey"). I sent out 21 surveys and received 14 responses, which represented a good return.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was an ongoing process that began on the first day at the site of the study. Data gathering and tentative analysis were on-going and simultaneous. Data was collected and analyzed as the study proceeded. "A

naturalistic study involves an inseparable relationship between data collection and data analysis" (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993, p. 114). The data gathering and analysis were necessarily shaped by the data rather than any preconceived theory. "The human instrument responds to the first available data and immediately forms very tentative working hypotheses that cause adjustments in interview questions, observational strategies, and other data collection procedures" (p. 114). Data were then set into preliminary categories in the search for patterns and regularities that emerged as themes. A theme, according to van Manen (1990, p. 88) is:

- 1) the experience of focus, of meaning, of point.
- 2) a simplification
- 3) not objects one encounters at certain points or moments in text. A theme is not a thing; themes are intransitive.
- 4) the form of capturing the phenomenon one tries to understand.

Theme describes an aspect of the structure of lived experience.

The emerging themes gave order to the analysis. van Manen (1990) described three approaches toward uncovering themes. The wholistic or sententious approach is "expressing the fundamental or overall meaning of a text" (p. 94). The second approach is the selective or highlighting approach which seeks to identify any phrases that stand out, and the third is the detailed or line-by-line approach where each sentence or sentence cluster is read carefully (1990). The wholistic or sententious approach was selected for this study. It was used in order to communicate the fundamental meaning of the text. Conclusions were inductively developed from the research and themes emerged.

As we thus study the lived-experience descriptions and discern the themes that begin to emerge, then we may note that certain experiential

themes recur as commonality or possible commonalities in the various descriptions we have gathered. The task is to hold on to these themes by lifting appropriate phrases or by capturing in singular statements the main thrust of the meaning of the themes” (van Manen, 1990, p. 93).

Analysis began with the field notes of the every day life in the classroom. The narrative helped me reclaim those moments and brought the sense of reliving the frames of events. I was able to add thoughts and elaboration for clarification in the margins which deepened the weight of the words and strengthened the interpretations. The narratives were formed as the individual elements were interwoven to create a meaningful story.

I examined the children’s writings, pictures and poetry and the interviews with Ms. Worth. Parent surveys were then checked and the last thing I looked at was the children’s interviews. I went through all the data first sorting by the four existentials of temporality, spatiality, corporeality and relationality. The categories were identifiable but three themes of community, mutual respect and literacy were very strong.

I reviewed the data from field notes again looking for common words, phrases and meanings within the day to day transcriptions. As themes began to emerge I resorted the data using a color coding system and checked for themes. In addition to the three very strong themes I identified themes of autonomy and choice, empathy and help. From this point I sorted through all the data and reorganized it into vignettes that helped the reader get a sense of the theme in the moment to moment classroom life. Through data collection and analysis, incidents of care and caring were captured and themes emerged and allowed for insightful description. It is interesting to note that the theme of care as empathy and helping were very strong in the data analyzed from children and

parents and less obvious in the data from the teacher. It was also seen that the theme of care through literacy was strongly evident in analysis of the data from teacher and student but not considered important in the parent surveys.

TIME LINE

In summation, a phenomenological study with naturalistic inquiry guidelines was chosen to answer the question, "What is the essence of care in a classroom?" The researcher became more than a participant observer in this primary classroom. The researcher was a pedagogue researcher for approximately five months, from January through May, 1998, taking and analyzing field notes, conducting formal and informal interviews, keeping a journal, writing memos, and seeking peer validation from a respected colleague and member checks with teacher and children to identify and verify recurring patterns of care.

DEVELOPMENT OF A LOGISTICAL PLAN

1. Contacted Colleagues for nominations for participants to study.
2. Sought and obtained permission and cooperation of teacher.
3. Sought and obtained permission from school district.
4. Sought and received permission of parents of children in the classroom.
5. Became a pedagogue researcher in the classroom.
6. Organized data according to four existentials.
7. Reviewed field notes to reorganize data and identify common phrases, patterns and themes.
8. Concluded research and began writing narrative.

Chapter 4

Lens of the Researcher

Pedagogue Researcher

My findings are presented from the perspective of a pedagogue researcher. A pedagogue researcher is a person who practices pedagogy as one researches. It is the ultimate in involvement and relationship with children. "The pedagogical relationship is a very personal relationship animated by a special quality that spontaneously emerges between the adult and the child that can neither be managed or trained, nor reduced to any other human interaction" (Reynolds, 1994). van Manen (1990) says that true pedagogy requires an attentive attunement of one's whole being to the child's experience of the world. Van Manen (1992) relates that the pedagogical relation is characterized by three aspects:

First, the pedagogical relation is a very personal relation animated by a special quality that spontaneously emerges between adult and child and that can be neither managed or trained, nor reduced to any other human interaction. Second, the pedagogical relation is an intentional relation wherein the intent of the teacher is always determined in a double direction: "by caring for a child as he or she is, and by caring for a child for what he or she may become" (Nohl, 1982, p.135-136). Third, the educator must constantly be able to interpret and understand the present

situation and experiences of the child and anticipate the moments when the child in fuller self-responsibility can increasingly participate in the culture (p. 9).

With this understanding, a pedagogue must act on the reality that the child is in the state of becoming and the ultimate in possibility. Therefore, the pedagogical relation is beyond the concept and is the experience, the being together.

The questions that must be asked by the researcher are ones that identify how the child "is" in this situation and "how can I say and do things that will help him learn from this experience?" and "how can I help him be himself now, in a way that will benefit his becoming in his future?" A pedagogue researcher sees oneself as being there for the child, in a way that allows the child to experience life as possibility as building and adding dimensions and seeing his lifeworld widen and broaden. I tried to place myself beside the student, and allow the child to become the teacher and share with me interests, thoughts and wonderings. At the same time, I watch, listen, share my thoughts and stories, and try to understand the uniqueness that is each child. I endeavor to be sensitive, to understand fears and vulnerability, to remain patient and attentive. I am focused. I watch the movements, I watch the eyes, I listen to the words spoken and unspoken. I clear my head of outside thoughts as I enter the room. I immerse myself in the company of children.

This then goes far beyond the role of researcher as participant observer. Observation would be limiting to the relationship, observing as a participant removes the affective component and lessens the importance of the felt sense. My observations are done as part of my being with the student. I observe to

gain information for my study then the observations are done for me, and my role in the classroom would change. The pedagogical relationship involves the scope of reaching out, understanding, forming mutual bonds with students. It involves the care of a child, the feeling, as well as the desire to guide and stretch the child in cognitive pursuits. Indeed, it is the understanding and action upon that understanding, that the whole child is in attendance.

Pedagogue researcher is not limiting as is teacher. A teacher ultimately holds the power of a grade or the decision to pass or not to pass. A pedagogue researcher holds no such "power" over the student. The established relationship is not hampered by a relation that necessitates judgment. A teacher has curricular guidelines and deals with the every day operation of the classroom. A pedagogue researcher is unfettered with the more mundane, managerial aspects of the classroom and is free to act toward and with children and their sensitivities as the focus with the hope of understanding their understandings. The teacher is distracted by being accountable for every child at once. I could attend exclusively, analytically, intending to interpret the significance in the moment.

A pedagogue researcher is one who sees the relationship as a joyful experience, not as a means to an end, which at times could have "interfered" with my own research. I was easily captivated by relational events and probably missed other happenings. But that is the role of a pedagogue researcher. It is the understanding that the attunement to the child's experience is the intent of the role. "Role" used in this sense is problematic. It was not a role, but rather a way of being. Words tend to be limiting in this context.

My understanding of pedagogy has its beginnings in my own experience

of school and schooling. As a young student, my elementary and precollegiate years were spent in frustration and my motivation was to “beat the system”. I learned early on that school was not a safe place and that I may not always be able to please the teacher, but that I could usually fool the teacher. The enjoyment of that, far outweighed the threat of the consequences. As an aide in a Special Education elementary program (seven years), I learned that control was paramount to learning but that it was stressful and unfulfilling. I learned that I could not function in a controlling manner. As a classroom teacher for ten years, I learned that joy enhanced learning and listening was the key to understanding. I learned that from Nick.

Nick was a student who came into my third grade classroom on the first day of school. He wore his clothes inside-out, his hat on backwards (before it was fashionable), and his shoes with no laces. He approached me resolutely, announced that he had requested me as his teacher, knew that I was “big into reading” and that was okay, but he just wanted me to know from the start that he didn’t read. I listened carefully to Nick, not only to his words, but to his direct gaze, his stance and his appearance. I knew pedagogically that trust was an issue here in the form of a blue-eyed young boy. I watched Nick, I listened carefully to what he didn’t say as well as to what he did vocalize. I was patient, agonizingly so. I waited. He did not offer to read. I did not ask him to read. I did not set him up to make the choice to either read or fail. I did not require the same kind of work from him that I requested from some others. In late November I asked Nick and several other students to work on a food collection project. It wasn’t long before two of the students came to tell me that Nick was not helping, all he was doing was reading the cereal boxes. I summoned my

courage, walked out to talk to Nick and sternly told him to *stop* reading and help with the project. His quick smile was not lost on me, and that afternoon he asked me if I had a copy of that Christmas story with the three ghosts in it. Nick was a reader and from that day on, I did not have to wonder about it. By the end of that school year, Nick was wearing his clothes right-side in and had laces in his shoes.

As a teacher, I worked at being pedagogically in tune with all my students and was successful to a fair amount. As a teacher, I experienced the confines of the entity of institution, and the limitations placed on relationship by my perceived power of grading. As I entered my chosen classroom as pedagogue researcher, it was freeing and at the same time, burdensome. My responsibility was solely and completely to be and act in the best interest of the child, student. I would need to employ all my powers of listening and to responding with only that intent and garner my needs from the residue.

It was Stan who helped me find that perspective as an outgrowth of our Reader's Theater presentation. Stan is a quiet boy and leaves each day for special help with reading. He does not volunteer to participate in class very often. He takes a lot of work home because he does not finish and finds it difficult to stay focused at his seat. He wanders, both physically and mentally. I could tell that Stan felt he was a less capable reader and he showed reluctance to read aloud. During our "play practice" I centered in on his quiet, his distance. While we were all reading over our parts and practicing, I offered to be with him. I let him know that I could see that he seemed to have gotten the part with all the hard words in it. I read the words for him while he repeated them, and we conversed about what the words were saying and how it fit in to make sense with the storyline. This was not carried out as a comprehension check, rather

as sharing what we noticed and understood. It was arriving at personal significance so as to better understand. At the end of our time I asked all of the students to practice their parts at home. The following day Stan came in ready. He met me at the door saying he knew his part, all of it, and he recited his lines for me. We were both feeling pretty proud. He said his part with confidence and wore his "father's tie" with pride. He was perfect! The play was in two groups and it so happened that the boy who played the father in the other group was sick and Stan was asked to play his same character for group two. I was very proud of him, but, more importantly, he was incredibly proud of himself. We high fived after both plays, and our pedagogic relationship was fired up. In my field notes, I carefully recorded not only what happened but how I felt, and how my sensitivity for Stan and his feelings played a role in this incident.

I followed our experiences in the classroom and became aware that Stan now chose to give me a hug and not just a handshake at the end of every day. He volunteered to read when we were together in the same group. He felt comfortable to slide under my arm when we walked to computer lab and he sought me out for conversations and sharing and reading. I was also aware that he would try to sit near me, and come out on the steps whenever I was working with anyone. He laughed more easily and more than once asked, "Can I read this to you?" The level of trust between us was comfortable, comfortable enough for Stan to risk reading and thinking and wondering out loud.

My intent was always to become a part of this classroom and orient my role to act toward children with the hope of understanding their understandings. I felt it was important to be known by the children before I actually began the study. I went in September of the school year as a visitor. I would participate in

whatever was happening in the room. I was introduced as Karen, at my request, choosing not to separate myself by a title. I joined them on a field trip, and visited the classroom. I read to them, I wrote with them, I presented lessons and shared in class discussions and class meetings. We did art projects together and book talks. I got to know them in their setting, as a contributing member of the group. In my attempt to understand what it is like to be in this place as a child, I began to lose my feeling of acting out a role and replace it with a lived experience. I defined my relationship with the children as that of a partner. I stood beside them and we shared the experiences of the semester and were touched by them. It was around these shared times that a history was shaped. This history helped promote a new level of engagement and this heightened awareness allowed insights, previously unrecognized to be noticed.

Through this lived experience I was able to “strengthen the intimacy between knowledge and action by moving toward a personal and lived sense of principled knowledge” (van Manen, 1990, p. 155). Only upon achieving this status could I then function as a pedagogue researcher and hope to understand the essence of this lived experience. It was necessary to orient myself, to enter the lifeworld, in this way in order to be adept at discovering the meaning or essence of care. It became impossible to observe from this standpoint but it became possible to *be* a part of the essence and to be alert to situations that would enhance reflection. In this way I was able to draw together the research aspect of this study as a form of thoughtful learning. “Thoughtful learning has the dialectic effect of making us more attentively aware of the meaning and significance of pedagogic situations and relations” (van Manen, 1990, p. 155). From the perspective of researcher, this inquiry sought to explore

phenomenologically the experiences encountered as they presented themselves. The intent was to grasp the structures of the experiences and their interrelatedness.

Child Participants

The class I chose to be a part of is a class of 21 students, ten boys and eleven girls. They are members of a class in a building with three other third grade classrooms. However, many of these children know each other well and have been together for three school years. Ten of the children were involved in a first and second grade looping situation where they remained together with the same teacher for two years. This year the parents of these ten students specifically requested Ms. Worth because her educational philosophy was similar to their former teacher and would provide a consistent learning frame for their children. Ten other children were placed in random fashion and Randy entered the class at the beginning of January. These same twenty-one children remained together with no additions or losses during the entire school year. I cannot tell which ten have been together for the three school years. They all seem to integrate nicely and work and play together. I do wonder what effect, if any, the looping situation had on the creation of community in the new classroom.

Teacher Participant

The teacher is in her third year of teaching and believes in a constructivist philosophy and works to integrate learning with authentic experiences. She perceives her job as pedagogy and easily fits with van Manen's (1991) description of pedagogical tact showing

a sense of vocation, love of caring for children, a deep sense of responsibility, moral intuitiveness, self-critical openness, thoughtful maturity, tactful sensitivity toward the child's subjectivity, an interpretive intelligence, a pedagogical understanding of the child's needs, improvisational resoluteness in dealing with young people, a passion for knowing and learning the mysteries of the world, the moral fiber to stand up for something, a certain understanding of the world, active hope in the face of prevailing crises, and, not the least, humor and vitality. (van Manen, 1991, p. 8)

Ms. Worth sees herself as a learner and recognizes that through her focus on children she, too, is in the state of continuous formation. She listens to children. She shares herself, her feelings, her interests and her own sense of journey. She is non judgmental and contributes her enthusiasm and her curiosity. She is genuine in her interest and helps create the environment that helps students develop their abilities and try new ideas through the exploration of interests. It is easy to detect the intrinsic care she possesses for each child. When Randy joined the class in January, she worked diligently to make the transition as easy and enjoyable for him as possible. She had his desk placed next to Sam's desk who volunteered to be his buddy. She let Sam show Randy around the school and the classroom and gave them time to acclimate and get to know each other. They spent an entire morning talking about class routines, procedures, the black agenda book, lunch and recess. By afternoon, Randy's level of comfort was noticeably higher. She also talks about her concerns that she unknowingly has placed burdens on children in the way of assignments and reading and in her conversation, she also worries that she is not stretching their thinking. It is a dilemma she consciously thinks about. She worries about

the influence that she has on children and sees it as a huge responsibility, one that she takes on willingly but thoughtfully. According to Garrison (1997) "All existence is a mixture of the actual and the potential. When two events interact, the actuality of the one may actualize the potential of the other". (p.73)

Ms. Worth's instruction is literature-based. She lets the literature give rise to areas of concentration. She believes that children must be part of the rule creating process and should be involved in the everyday workings of the classroom. Classroom meetings are practiced as the technique of discipline. Discussions of academic as well as social and affective concerns are considered part of the learning process. Classroom meeting time is a time when the children all come together and share their concerns for the successful functioning of their classroom. They may take the initiative to call for the meeting or contribute their concerns or suggestions during meetings. It is a democratic practice similar to the Town Meeting format where one student at a time speaks, but together they arrive at solutions. Discussion precedes voting and a majority is necessary to accept solutions as part of the classroom procedure. These practices helped me understand that this teacher was a caring individual and that a caring environment was one of her goals.

The pedagogue researcher also found me as a relational agent with this teacher. I was encouraged to plan with her, to participate, and add any ideas that came to mind. We discussed our ideas in regard to curriculum, planning and children with most of our time discussing the latter. It was especially meaningful when she shared frustrations about her relationships with the students. In particular she felt she was failing the needs of one young man and she asked that I watch and try to help both her and him with their relationship. We had several discussions of her fear that her spelling program was not

reaching all the children. She worried that some were doing it for her and not truly as learners. She also worried that she was not challenging some of them. We discussed problems involving both children and curriculum. Ms. Worth worried that she was not attending to the quieter children and struggled with the idea that she was “not enough”. We shared insights from our reflections in regard to Gary and a placement decision. We shared insights as to the developmental progress of some of the more immature students and worked together to understand some of the oppositional stances that were indicative of Noreen’s personality. We complemented each other through dialogue and reflection. I had envisioned the idea of pedagogue researcher as encompassing the entire lived space, and was not disappointed.

Parent Participants

The parents were active in this school and in this classroom. I had the opportunity to meet many of the parents during Author’s Fair, Ms. Worth’s birthday party, Mother/Daughter book club and visits during and after school. There was an open invitation for parents to drop in any time. Some did. Ms. Worth had established a cooperative and friendly partnership with parents. Of the 21 surveys that I sent out, I received 14 returns with seventeen respondents. Three families made copies so that spouses could respond.

Classroom Choice

I was able to identify this as a caring classroom based on the tact of the teacher and the four components that according to Noddings (1984) are essential to the development of an ethic of care. These four components are dialogue, modeling, practice and confirmation. The classroom was relaxed and

conversation was a natural and accepted standard for learning. It was not unusual for children to be engaged in conversation in different parts of the room. The stairway entrance was a typical gathering place. Children worked together and shared their understanding. Sharing information and knowledge was expected and never regarded as cheating. Learning was a collective activity. Dialogue in the class was about talking and listening, sharing and responding to each other.

Modeling was done as the teacher and researcher participated in the activities with the students. We wrote books with them and read as they did. We made our helicopters and experimented with different shapes and materials. We shared materials and findings. Ms. Worth did her display as the person of the week and we modeled manners and concern. We cared and worried about the students. We considered their viewpoint and valued their ideas. Ms. Worth and I wondered out loud and asked authentic questions. We modeled how it was to consider others and be considerate of others.

We also practiced being caring and caring about others. The class was always vigilant for opportunities to invite others to share their expertise and they were prompt and courteous to thank those who helped. They practiced caring by tending to their environment and doing jobs to help each other. They practiced caring when they cleaned their room for Debbie, the custodian. Ms. Worth practiced care when she set the parent sharing time during the traditional lunch time to enable more parents to attend. Ms. Worth practiced care in the every-day normal functioning of the classroom.

The fourth component essential to the development of the ethic of care is confirmation. "In education, what we reveal to a student about himself as an ethical and intellectual being has the power to nurture the ethical ideal"

(Noddings, 1984, p. 193). Confirmation depends upon and interacts with practice, dialogue and modeling. In the classroom a child is confirmed through dialogue and cooperative practice. Praise is genuine and never forced. The student finds confirmation in what is actually done as well as in the feelings in which it was done.

In order to establish a relationship of pedagogue researcher with this class I planned to interact with them and be involved in varied and assundry activities. I had to establish that I, too, would qualify as tactful and allow for the awareness of the four components as part of my being in the classroom with the children. Dialogue connects people and “provides us with the knowledge of each other that forms a foundation for response in caring” (Noddings, 1991, p.23). It is open ended and results in a search for understanding. Modeling, as defined by Noddings (1991), is the process of showing, “we are not trying to teach students principles and ways of applying them to problems through chains of mathematical reasoning. Rather, we have to show how to care in our own relations with 77” (p. 22). Practice is necessary with people who demonstrate caring as a matter of being and confirmation is essentially the “act of affirming and encouraging the best in others” (p. 25).

My findings are situated through my lens and are subject to my voice. My lens is based on constructivist theory and my own experience as a classroom teacher. My voice is heard as an interpretation tempered by both personal and professional experiences. I will allow that I think the message is clear given both of these qualifications.

Chapter 5

Findings

Introduction

What I found was the essence of care in a classroom. The essence was so much more than what happened. It was deeper, broader, more involved and more involving. It was fraught with mutual regard and substantiated by trust and perspective taking. It was viable, palpable, unseen but always felt. It was the lived experience of individuals bound together in anticipation of growth and learning. It was actualization and pursuance of potential. It was good.

I found a classroom with no posted rules, no imposed consequences. I found a classroom that functioned without a discipline system; a place where competition was kept on the playground. This included the giving of grades. Ms. Worth was not required to give the standard A - B - C grades. The reports that went home were rated either S for satisfactory or U for unsatisfactory. There were no U's in this class; it was understood that natural development accounted for pacing and progression. Rewards were intrinsic in nature and the consequences were usually natural consequences. Some of the students considered getting to cook and do art as rewards for good behavior. Ms. Worth regarded these events as authentic learning experiences. Dialogue was considered the key to understanding, and blame and exclusion were faced in a collaborative framework. Students were encouraged to discuss problems as they came up or to enter their concerns in an "agenda" book. (See sample page in Appendix C, p. 253). The items in the agenda book were then addressed with the entire class in attendance. Class meetings and use of the agenda book

constituted the mode of governance and autonomy was evident in the many choices and decisions the class made in regard to curriculum. The curriculum was integrated and reflected a strong literacy component. Reading and writing were ways of learning and expression. Voting was a common practice and apologies were offered by classmates and teacher when feelings were hurt. Students and adults were comfortable to take risks.

I'm attempting to analyze the components and make some generalizations as to the essence of care. I recognize that a lived experience is a process, ever-evolving and dynamic. The experience can never be replicated and can be recaptured only through diligent field notes, observations, artifacts and reflections. The life of a classroom is unlike a tapestry that is caught up in a pattern. A more accurate analogy might be that of a meandering stream that shifts and winds in constant motion, touching and being touched by nature as it moves toward a larger entity encompassed by a larger whole and yet retaining some of the remnants that contributed to its very essence.

Themes of the essence of care were identified by the repetition of common patterns in field notes, interviews, artifacts, reflective journal, conversations and parent surveys. My task, according to van Manen (1990) is "to hold on to these themes by lifting appropriate phrases or by capturing in singular statements the main thrust of the meaning of the themes."

Essential themes identified were community, autonomy and choice, helping, mutual respect, empathy, and literacy. According to van Manen (1990) in order to identify themes it is necessary to ask: "Is the phenomenon still the same if we imaginatively change or delete this theme from the phenomenon? Does the phenomenon without this theme lose its fundamental meaning?" In conjunction with the themes, the four existentials of corporeality, spatiality,

temporality and relationality have risen, yet they do not fit neatly into categories. In the phenomenological literature these four categories have been seen as belonging to the fundamental structure of the lifeworld (see for example, Merleau-Ponty, 1962). This is not difficult to understand, since for any experience we can always ask the fundamental questions that correspond to these four lifeworld existentials. Therefore, theme analysis as experienced with spatiality, corporeality, temporality and relationality are productive categories for the process of phenomenological question posing, reflecting and writing (van Manen, 1990, p.102).

“In determining the universal or essential quality of a theme our concern is to discover aspects or qualities that make a phenomenon what it is and without which the phenomenon could not be what it is” (van Manen, 1990, p.107).

Themes arise, they are not planned for or looked for. They tend to infiltrate the thinking and become almost expected, yet they are more than words can indicate. Themes are a way to aid communication by having similar understandings and yet they go beyond the simple translation to enfold the essence of a lifeworld. The lifeworld of this classroom exists beyond description; I use themes as describing agents. Themes are an interpretation of a need for making sense and sharing the sense. Van Manen (1990) shares the understanding of theme in four ways:

- (1) Theme is the experience of focus, the desire to make sense and the means to get at the notion.
- (2) Theme is at best a simplification, the sense we are able to make, it gives shape to the shapeless.
- (3) Themes are not objects, it is the openness to something and

describes the content of the notion.

- (4) Theme is the form of capturing the phenomenon one tries to understand, the process of insightful invention, discovery, disclosure and yet it is always a reduction of a notion (p.87-88).

I have attempted to sort the themes to answer the preliminary questions as to the essence of care to students, to teacher and to parents.

Theme definitions

Community

Community refers to the relational aspects in which interaction and social ties draw people together. "Relational communities are defined as 'networks of individuals who interact within formal organizations and institutions, and as members of informal groups'. Common interests, histories and experiences draw these individuals together and are the basis on which social relationships develop" (Heller, 1989, p. 3). In Ms. Worth's classroom community exists and continues to develop through meaningful experiences. Students in this room share personal stories, beliefs, strengths and ideas. The teacher sees herself as a member of this community and also shares a personal view of who she is and what is important to her. She does not put herself at the front of the room. She is with the children and not separated from them by size or power. Through these sharings, students get to know each other and Ms. Worth on a personal level. Sharing brings connections, connections bring relationship and can then be translated into communal feelings. These feelings mold the sense of belonging and help the class establish the recognition of commonalities and celebrate the differences through perspective-taking.

The school year begins with a full week of getting-to-know activities and

games. Learning about each other is continued through the year with the Friend of the Week program. The Friend of the Week is viewed as an opportunity and each child designs a bulletin board with artifacts and pictures that tell about themselves and their family. They bring in items of interest and personal identification. The display remains there all week and then is shared by the "Friend" in a ceremonious way. The environment created here encourages students to connect with one another. This ceremony of sharing values the individuality of each child and honors the interests that contribute to their individual identity while building community.

Mutual Respect

Mutual respect encompasses a two-way regard between teacher and student and student and student, in fact, person to person. Mutual respect is a "social interaction toward a certain goal between individuals who regard themselves as equals" (DeVries, 1997, p. 9). This is not to say that students and teachers are to be considered as equals, rather it is the understanding that the teacher is able to respect each student as a person with the right to exercise his/her will and proffer opinions. DeVries (1997) warns that this does not mean that students have complete freedom because "such freedom is inconsistent with respectful relations with others" (p. 9).

Literacy

In the context of this classroom, literacy is simply the act of reading and writing for meaning, expression and communication. It is an element that inundates the room and the mind set of class participants. From my involvement in this classroom, I can say unequivocally that literacy played a key role in the organization and management of the environment. Literacy was valued, shared and provided common bonds of understanding. The act of

reading or writing was interwoven with children's thinking. Seventeen of the children indicated that either reading or writing was their favorite school subject. Three chose mathematics and one chose science while Mary knew without hesitation that music was her favorite subject. Amy mentioned that she hated reading and wasn't very good at it until this year. Now it is her favorite thing and she is good at it. When I asked why she thought that was so, she indicated that it was because they got to pick their own books to read and they read "every single day".

Autonomy

Autonomy is defined by Kamii (1994), following the work of Piaget, as the ability to make decisions for oneself, about right and wrong in the moral realm and about truth and untruth in the intellectual realm, by taking all relevant factors into account, independently of rewards and punishments. Children in this class are not only allowed to make decisions for themselves, it becomes necessary because Ms. Worth does not provide solutions to problems. She responds to many concerns with the question, "What do you think you should do?" or "How might you fix that?" or "Who do you think you need to talk to about this?" Many times I have seen her cock her head to one side and say "Hmmmmm, interesting" and move on leaving the child to come up with his/her own solutions. This is standard practice in this room and is commonly used for social as well as cognitive questions. Children have to think and consider other ways, other perspectives, and they do.

Another factor that contributes to autonomy is the fact that there are no extrinsic rewards doled out in Ms. Worth's room, no stickers, no candy, no free time or grades. Rewards consist of smiles, hugs, high fives and pats on the back and the intrinsic pride of accomplishment. Praise is given sincerely,

affectionately and not given to force compliance.

Choice

Choice is the ability to consider options. It is directly related to autonomy in that choices in this class are moral and intellectual. Students are surrounded by an atmosphere of consideration and care, and this tends to permeate their senses and affect their choices in powerful ways. Children generally choose how to behave toward others. They make decisions and solve problems on their own. Many times they are left to their own devices with confidence that their choices will be beneficial to the individual and the group as a whole. Ms. Worth has an innate belief that children are good and can be trusted to make decisions that are morally sound and intellectually stimulating. Being wrong is not frightening in this space. Being wrong is viewed as an opportunity to learn, to feel, to consider other options and sometimes to experience the natural consequences that result. Gary made a bad choice the very first month of school. He did not work diligently on his first book and ended up without a book to share at the first Author's Fair. This happened only once because sharing his creativity was important to Gary. However, spelling was another matter. Gary never figured out that it was less painful to do the lessons on a daily basis than to do them all at one time every Thursday evening. This was a weekly battle and a consequence he chose to accept. Options of behavior and instruction were available to the children and options for governing themselves were also available and used. Students had the option to call class meetings as did the teacher. Both exercised these rights.

Empathy

The theme of empathy recurs in this classroom and is defined eloquently by Noreen who says she likes reading books about other times and people so

she can “see what it’s like to be them”. During one meeting where the problem was exclusion, Linda asked the question, “how would that make you feel?” This was a question that I think was considered by many children in many instances. Webster (1990) defines empathy as “the mental entering into the feeling or spirit of a person or thing; appreciative perception or understanding” (p. 393).

Helping

Helping is a theme that appeared over and over in the children’s thinking. They defined helping as “tending to” or “assisting”. They saw the role of the teacher as one who helped them with their work. They helped each other with projects and spelling.

HOW DO CHILDREN EXPERIENCE CARE IN THE CLASSROOM?

Children experience care through the lived experience of caring for, being cared about and cared for. They see care as helping and being helped. They identify with care through literature and reflection. They recognize care when they are allowed to hear their voice and understand that their voice has been heard. They experience care when they are permitted to exercise their opinions, their creativity and their feelings. Children recognize care as pertinent to their motivation toward learning. They understand that learning follows misunderstandings and mistakes. They are not afraid, they don’t need to be fixed, they freely exercise the abilities they have available to them and move toward opportunities for growth and confidence. They experience care through the nurturance of a relaxed and peaceful atmosphere. Cara defined care as “trying to comfort them even if they don’t know they need comforted”. Kerry maintained that to care is to “know that someone is sweet and nice and that another word for care is kindness”.

Care involves close contact that values each personal story. It is the internalized understanding that the teacher comes to school to be with them. They experience care when they contribute to their lifespace through choice and decision-making and they experience care as they relate to others in empathetic and helpful ways. They embody care as they care for others and the rights of others. Donald said that ,” It is a caring thing to pick flowers, help people with homework, don’t call them names, don’t fight and pick fair teams.” Care evolves through relationship. Tracy said simply, “Care is when someone likes to do things for other people. It’s when friends don’t boss you around and we play together”.

Children were confident and positive that care was found in helping. Overwhelmingly in their interviews, their drawings and their actions, they defined care in terms of helping or being helped. Paul said, “ If you are kind or loving, you really care about someone. If you help, you’re being kind and you care.” In sorting through my data it became increasingly apparent that in terms of vocabulary they could express their understanding of care as helping, but in their lived experience their expressions of care were seen in how they treated each other, how they looked after each other, how they talked to and shared with each other. It was shown in their efforts to contribute to the common good and to make choices that would benefit the collective. Mostly it was shown in the way they managed their relationships.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF CARE IN THE CLASSROOM TO THE TEACHER?

The teacher experiences care in a classroom as the new school year approaches. She reflects upon the professional reading she has accomplished over the summer and she reflects upon the experiences of previous years. She

reviews her own understanding of being a student and a family member. She checks the room and experiments with different settings looking for the one that exudes warmth and trust. Her goal is to create an atmosphere characterized by mutual respect, autonomy and a feeling of community. She knows she can enhance these goals with and through the use of literature. *The Keeping Quilt* and *The Memory Box* will constitute the first two picture books. These will help establish the care of self. She chooses the read-aloud book, *The Green Book* that tells the story of the creation of a new colony, a new beginning. The choices are important for her. To experience care she must bestow care. She must provide safety of body and spirit. She knows that she must follow her own internal convictions about the necessity of respect. A care filled classroom is one that is characterized by respect and cooperation. It is a place that fosters listening and self-regulation. It is a place that functions as a democracy and everyone works together to develop feelings and decisions that take the interests of others into account. She reminds herself to always consider the student's point of view and take advantage of children's natural curiosity.

She sets up the room to be neutral until they give it personality. She opens her doors and her heart to the children and their families. She understands that her orientation is open to the "inner life" of the child and that the child is a member of a larger community. She understands van Manen's (1991) reference that pedagogical understanding is "engaged understanding" (p. 98). She welcomes each child with a feeling of acceptance and approval. Care must extend to and touch each member of the class. Each student must feel cared about and in turn care about others. Care is kindness, patience and responsibility. It must be internalized but always moving outward. It must embrace each and reach out to others. Care is being respectful, communal,

empathetic and autonomous. Care is encompassed in body, space and time and care resides in relationship. Care is not given but felt - individually and collectively.

Through interviews, field notes, discussion and observation I have come to the conclusion that care is seen as community and relationship to the teacher. Repeatedly she refers to how incredible this particular class is. When asked to define the word she said, "Caring, I'm thinking is wanting what is best for them even if sometimes that is hard." Ms. Worth showed her care by not making decisions, by not controlling the aspects of the classroom. She talks about that saying she feels that it is helpful, but she doesn't think that they see it as helpful at first. The themes of this study are all present in the teacher's reality.

WHAT IS THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF CARE IN A CLASSROOM TO PARENTS?

I received seventeen responses to the parent survey I sent out, and collectively parents agree that care is a necessary ingredient in every classroom. However, very few had any recollection of feeling cared for in their own school experience. One respondent said, "Isn't it sad that neither my husband nor I could come up with an example of caring." Others left that question blank and one parent remembered friends helping her get caught up with her assignments after being sick. Another parent wrote:

the sad thing is that the two specific instances that I remember feeling as if someone personally cared about me and my situation, the person couldn't do anything to help me. At that time people didn't interfere with a child's home situation. I wish that they could have interceded on my behalf, but mostly all I received was an expression of sympathy.

There was not even an offer of a willingness to listen and even that much would have greatly unburdened me and might have given me some insight in dealing with the emotional abuse I underwent.

When asked, "How would you like to see your child experience care in the classroom?" they were very verbal. Parents wanted someone to be available to listen, they wanted a teacher who would model kindness and encourage kindness in others. Parents wanted someone to help their child and treat the child as they would want to be treated. Another response stated that they wanted their child to experience positive reinforcement, while another said it would be important for the teacher to show respect to children. One parent who apologized for rushing responses to such important questions wanted her child to be in an atmosphere of "general niceness".

Only one parent mentioned academics saying, "I chose teachers for my kids based on their reputation as a kind and caring person as much as on their academic teaching style (these are usually closely related though)."

In consensus, parents want their children to experience care but mostly see it as being given by the teacher. Only one parent referred to the entire classroom, "children and teacher should care about one another." Usually the response suggested that caring was understood as coming from the teacher.

The Essence of Care

I found a community of learners, a care filled classroom. I found common themes emanating from parents, students and teacher. I found the essence of care defined in terms of community, mutual respect, literacy, autonomy and choice, and helping and empathy. All of the themes were apparent to some degree, but not all themes were common to all three. Parent responses

incorporated the themes of empathy and mutual respect. Children overwhelmingly defined care as helping and Ms. Worth frequently made references to building community and providing choices. The themes generated seemed to be reliant upon relationship.

Care In Terms of Community

Where community begins

This is a classroom where everyone counts and everyone contributes. It is a place where the creation of community starts before the first day of school. Ms. Worth sends out letters of introduction and welcome to the children and their families. She establishes her interest in them and expresses her joy that they will be together.

The creation of community is a stated goal as she prepares for the year and as she meets her students and plans the first days. The community is made up of complex, multifaceted learners who engage the world in numerous ways and yet maintain a uniqueness of self. In a community, each learner, student and teacher, needs to be pedagogically responsive to all other members and recognize that each learner is the center of his /her own knowing. A pedagogical community must capture the essence of ownership and judiciousness and evolve from mutual, intrinsic trust.

There are two daily rituals established by Ms. Worth that enhance the communal stance and her expression of personal caring. She meets her class at the doorway to the room every morning with a personal greeting for each individual accompanied by a touch. It is a gesture of welcome, a statement that she is glad they are there. The end of the day is more formal. This is H or H, which stands for Hug or Handshake. Ms. Worth stands at the door and each

child would choose either a hug or a handshake as they answer the exit question for the day. The exit question is just a quick question with no one right answer, such as: "What is your favorite room in your house?" Again this is her way of making personal contact, a way to thank them for being a part of her day, a way to connect.

In my study I have come to recognize that a community spirit must: 1) nurture tolerance, 2) establish dialogic interaction, 3) issue invitations to explore and question, 4) value and use authenticity, 5) rely on internal motivators and 6) cultivate the concept of "serious play". This is such a place.

Ms. Worth places great value on the establishment and continuance of community within her setting and beyond. Nurturing tolerance and encouraging dialogue among class members is a natural phenomenon in this room. Her own delight in language and culture is shared easily and often with children. She is aware of the larger community and makes a concerted effort to link her classroom community with the larger community on an immediate level, a local level and a more global level.

Parents are the first source of the larger community and there is a classroom open door policy for parents. Ms. Worth encourages parent participation in all aspects of the classroom. She arranges programs and the monthly Author's Fair to accommodate parents' schedules, and drop-ins are greeted with enthusiasm. Invitations for family involvement are issued on a continuing basis and Ms. Worth makes a concerted effort to personally know the families. One thing that has come from this is the Mother/daughter book club. Ms. Worth noticed that six or seven of the girls were ordering the same books from the monthly book club. She suggested that perhaps the girls would like to form a reading circle. From there the idea took shape and grew into the

Mother/ Daughter book club. The mothers and daughters get together in one of the homes each month. They vote on which book to read, they send off a book order and decide on the hostess for the following month. Mothers and daughters read the book. Some read it together, other pairs read separately and engage in book talk as they read. The host family provides a treat for the meeting, usually one that fits with the story in some way, and they prepare an activity that furthers comprehension. When they read *The Twenty-one Balloons*, we actually did a balloon launch and when we read *Josefina*, we played a game with Spanish words and ate chips, salsa and guacamole. Ms. Worth and I are honorary members and we look forward to the session each month. We hosted the club one month and Ms. Worth spent several days getting her house ready and displaying the different gifts the children had gotten her. This has continued into the next school year. The girls are now in different classrooms and it is always a reunion when we get together. Last month we met at Mary's house and had all read *True Friends* by Bill Wallace. The activity was a pantomime and the treats were twinkies and heart shaped cookies. Noreen was my daughter for the evening because her mom was unable to attend. We did our pantomime together as our characters were the "true friends", Courtney and Judy.

Parental involvement is interactive and ongoing and the strongest link to a larger community. Ms. Worth recognizes that the concept of community extends outward from the school neighborhood into the town. The first field trip that was planned for this class was a field experience to the local art gallery. The gallery was showcasing ceramic sculpture and they had invited artisans from the area and from around the country. While at the gallery, Ms. Worth learned that firing and sculpting was in progress at another building. She

directed the bus driver to the site and arranged for the class to view the process and talk with the sculptors.

Another link to the larger community provided through Ms. Worth is her love of language and her effort to align language with literacy. When the class studied fairy and folk tales she introduced the German language and taught the class words, phrases and numbers. She also shared many Japanese words, sayings and numbers through their study of the book *Sadako and a Thousand Paper Cranes*. Ms. Worth arranged for this class to host a visitor from Japan who taught them words and origami, and the school invited a Japanese storyteller as a school-wide experience. Another language that was learned by the children is sign language. Ms. Worth taught them a song, a poem and the alphabet in sign. They used many of these words and phrases throughout the year. Ms. Worth often issued invitations to the children to join her at the reading area in sign language and more than once the children would use signing or words from another language to communicate. Ms. Worth attempts to help students care in a more global context.

She values their experiences and knowledge of otherness and takes advantage of opportunities by inviting input. She uses the concept of serious play as she issues invitations to explore further research questions that children ask from the literature. They are encouraged to do projects and to use available resources in authentic ways. It is a class where community begins with getting to know each other as learners and as people. It is a place where children and teacher seize countless informal opportunities to share personal stories and experiences.

The teacher-child relation is experienced as a special lived relation to the other in the sense that this relation is highly personal and charged

with interpersonal significance. In this lived relation the child experiences a fundamental sense of support and security that ultimately allows him or her to become a mature and independent person. And in this lived relation the child experiences the adult's confidence and trust without which it is difficult to make something of oneself (van Manen, 1990, p.106).

I see this classroom as a meeting place, an invitational environ, a place where trust is generated through communication, active listening and perspective taking. A place where nurturing empathy emanates from person to person. It is similar to the Schoolhome described by Martin (1992) where each child would have a "double sense of belonging: they would feel that they belonged to this home and also that it belonged to them." (p. 13) Relationality and community is built in this atmosphere of peace and comfort. Ms. Worth started the year by being the first Friend of the Week. She shared her personal stories, her interests and her family. She begins building this trust process by trusting them to know her.

When I asked her if she saw her classroom as a caring place, her answer was an immediate, "Yes." Then after a moments hesitation she continued, "I hope so. I hope they see it that way." She maintains that her classroom in reality is a reflection of her home and family. In her family, she sees herself as the happy-go-lucky one, the youngest, where everyone is always included and gets along easily. She likens the uniqueness of her family members to the children in her class. "They all have a place, they are all different but work together like my family, I worry about them like I worry about my family." The school and family parallel gave rise to her sharing her sincere worry about her cousin and his third-grade experience.

It was an experience that when he would venture out or risk, things did not work out the way he wanted them to work out. It wasn't horrendous, but it was enough to make him go into a shell. I just thought that I needed to be very careful of that for his spirit.

Ms. Worth refers to this as always giving the child the benefit of the doubt. She makes it a priority not to say, "No, that is not right." Rather she understands that there is more than one way to understand something. This acceptance of students and their ideas also builds the sense of trust and respect that flow naturally into a relationship.

The room in terms of community

The classroom is a smaller room compared with other classrooms in this building. In fact, it could be that this room was originally designed as a central workroom and became a classroom when space was needed. The "back door" leads to the new addition of the school building and the "front" entrance is at the bottom of a flight of stairs with the front part of the room being "open" to the school library. This small classroom settled itself in the back of the school and is still oftentimes used by teachers and other school personnel as a pathway to the newer section of the school building.

Classroom materials are shared. All supplies are collected at the beginning of the year and are put out for common use. Students have access to any supplies they may need during the course of the day. There is a set of containers located at the front of the room and the containers are filled with glue, rulers, crayons, markers and scissors (See Appendix C, p. 237, bottom). Paper and pencils are available at the writing center. When asked about this Ms. Worth related that she views this as an important community building effort. Students do not bring in "special" pencils or rulers and then have to keep track

of them and keep them from being used by others. They do not compare or covet material things. They share.

The desks are arranged in the center of the room, in a square with five desks to three sides and six desks on the fourth side (21 children). All the desks face the center area. In the center of the square is a round table and an overhead carrier. Ms. Worth and I often sit at the round table in the center area to be available for any kind of conference or question while students are writing or working. We do what the students are doing, whether it be writing, math or reading, usually at this table. The children's desks are pushed together. They are not filled with textbooks. Most of the desks contain several folders, a variety of children's books, and spiral notebooks. None of the desks appear to be overflowing with papers. The arrangement of the desks also encourages partnerships. One child moves to the inside of the square and faces the other child using the same desk space. It is a convenient way to have children work in pairs.

Ms. Worth struggled with the room arrangement. She actually spent three days moving the desks around to come up with a way that would foster community. Seating arrangement is a form of corporeal control but this did not seem to be a problem for these kids. When I asked Ms. Worth about her arrangement she said that she had originally designed the room to have the desks in a circle. It was always important for her to have them facing each other. When she first started teaching she had the desks in clusters, but that didn't work for her. "The tables were all at different heights because the kids were all different sizes and I would just look out at the room and I was not happy, it did not look orderly to me, it was not peaceful. And I think some of the kids couldn't see, there was always someone with their back to me." She

further explains that she got the idea for a square in her Summer Writing Project experience. "I like the feeling of everyone seeing each other and the fact that we are all looking in." She talked to the class about the desk arrangements during the first week and asked that they consider other options for the next several days. At the end of the first week they all agreed to try it for awhile. Even though they changed seats every month or so, they did not choose to alter the arrangement.

When asked if seats were assigned, Ms. Worth explained that she had tried letting them choose their own seats, but they seemed always to sit by the students that they knew best from the previous year for comfort reasons. She could tell whose room they came from by their voluntary seating arrangement. After the first couple of weeks of being "comfortable", she assigned seats to promote community and gender interaction (boy, girl, boy, girl). This was done because she was seeing a specific cluster of girls that appeared to be isolating themselves from other members of the class. Seat assignments were changed each month to promote interaction, but the girl, boy configuration was kept.

Space is used in the classroom to give comfort and provide safety not only in a physical sense but emotionally as well. According to van Manen (1990) "lived space is felt space". This lived spatiality provides a feeling, a sense of who we are. "Lived space is a category for inquiring into the ways we experience the affairs of our day to day existence; in addition it helps us uncover more fundamental meaning dimensions of lived life" (van Manen, 1990, p. 103). Space is used by the group and it changes with their needs. I have seen them push their desks together to create a larger working area for the clay, and I have seen them push all the desks to the center to make a stage area for play practice.

The classroom is comfortable. It is filled with secure items, childrens' things. There are no commercially made posters. On the clothesline that is strung diagonally across the room, there are four posters that highlight the process of writing and these are teacher made. The other class decorations are student-made charts, graphs, and art work. There is a sense of contribution. The people who inhabit this space are known to each other and have built a communal relationship. The space is safe and adds to the quality of life that is experienced here. The room is designed to provide a feeling of being protected. This space is flexible, and there is room for voice. Furniture is easily moved to provide a more open area or it is gathered inward to enhance security. We move to the "homey" area, (See Appendix C, p. 233) and gather around the over stuffed chair to share and be with each other. "In general, we may say that we become the space we are in" (van Manen, 1990, p.102). Comfortable, cared for and caring.

Others in the extended community

Community is evident and empathetic in the teacher-student exchange as well as the student-to-student interactions, and in one example it spilled over to support personnel. In Ms. Worth's words:

One amazing thing I witnessed early in our year: for Support Personnel Week we decided to write an acrostic poem for our custodian, Debbie. I had introduced her the first week as the person who helps us clean our room. Debbie also worked in the lunchroom. The kids decided during Support Personnel Week, they wanted Debbie to be surprised with our spotless room. We took the last forty minutes of our day one Friday and cleaned top to bottom: trash taken outside, vacuumed, wiped the chalkboards, dusted erasers, cleaned the boys and girls restroom area,

scoured the classroom sink, etc. We left Debbie a note with the lights turned off (her signal to herself that she had completed a room). They felt so proud, and begged to do it every day and then once a week. They settled on once a month after I had convinced them that she might lose her job if we did it for her too much! We got to know Debbie this year because we cared about her. Debbie cared about us. My kids took more pride in their room this year than ever before. We heard from Debbie that all the other custodians were envious. It made her day.

A feeling of the general goodness of humanity exists here. Trust and mutual respect is freely given and accompanied with the expectation of trust and respect in return. I, too, was the recipient of this acceptance and respect.

It was always special to enter the room. The kids always announced me with, "Karen's here." I always received hugs from Gary and Amy and greetings from the others. It was a joy to get to the classroom, a time that I truly valued. I felt the sense of double belonging, I not only belonged to them, but they belonged to me. Relationality was a gift here, freely given by each participant. The relationship was felt both on a group level and on an individual level. The sound of the classroom itself was indicative of the essence of care and relationality encompassing the themes of community, empathy and mutual respect. The tone created by students and teacher together was calming and genuine, sensitive and enthusiastic. It was not quiet, but rather it was the sound of contentment. Hannah said, "If I'm working really hard, silence is too loud." Many times when work was in progress, soft classical music was playing.

I felt special with each child in different ways, but several times I was actually considered to be someone's special guest. I was a special guest for Jenny and Gary and Bonnie on an Author's Fair. Their parents were unable to

attend that day, so I was their guest and they waited on me and brought me a cup of mead and a cookie that they had made and read the fairy tales they had written. We read underneath the round table and had a special place and time for ourselves. Jenny and Gary both sidled up close to me while we enjoyed Bonnie's story. It really was a time that I became more to them than just a teacher or friend. They made me feel special and I am fairly certain our relationship, our shared experience, brought us to a stronger connection.

Together in community

Time, and how it is used, contributes in meaningful ways to the pervasive communal atmosphere. I cannot count the number of times that I have been fooled by time in this classroom. It moves so quickly. Lunch will sneak up on us and the end of the day brings groans of "having" to go! It amazes me that we can get so caught up in sharing activities and let the time slip away. Making our airplanes was one of those times. We were following the video step by step and helping each other when someone realized that it was time to go home! We didn't have time to get the planes in their envelopes so we just left everything right where it was. No jobs got done that day. We agreed to leave everything just as it was and start first thing in the morning and get cleaned up once we were finished with the construction of the planes. It was a mutual agreement that served us several more times when the clock made our decision for us. We got caught in the time crunch when we were doing the division with tiles, the V alliteration book and the helicopters.

Community was firmly established with individual children and groups of children. There was very little gender exclusion practiced and acceptance was evident in students as they chose partners or groups. Girls and boys grouping together was common. Single sex groups were not the norm. The children

were never grouped by ability but almost always by choice and interest. On the playground the teams were mixed for basketball and soccer and girls and boys cooked together.

An example of the shared community was evidenced when we watched the Thunderbird video. I was somewhat surprised at how they positioned themselves in relation to each other. The TV was near the steps and it is not very tall so that seeing it could have proved problematic for some. The kids moved to wherever they wanted. The general rule (understood, not written) here is if you can't see, move to where you can. Noreen, Zina and Amy sat criss cross applesauce on desks at the back of the room. Jerry sat at his desk, on the other side of the room. Gary and Owen brought chairs closer to the TV while most of the others sat near the front and settled in to watch. When Donald brought his chair up, he looked back at me to be sure that he was not blocking my view. When Gary brought his chair up, he hesitated looking around for a good place. I motioned to a place next to Hannah. He at first started to move directly in front of her, but then settled in next to her. No seats were assigned. There was no discussion of who was in front. There were no complaints of inability to see. This was a new kind of perspective taking that is rare in classrooms where children generally vie for position. The general feeling of being together in support of one another in a common experience played a part as they situated themselves.

As the video played some kids spoke out offering comments about things referred to in the video. There was no "shushing". The commenting was in conjunction with the content and was neither loud nor prolonged. Jerry was the only member of the class that was not focused. It appeared that he had other things on his mind. He was moving around, changing places, going to the

restroom, etc., but at no time did he distract others or get in anyone's way.

Noreen remarked about the different ways the planes were heading and Gary was very interested in the planes spinning. Larry said he was pretty sure that he would be barfing and others chimed in their agreement. They were there together and individually.

Ms. Worth had very special relationships with the class as a whole as well as with each child individually. She would greet them each morning at the entrance to the room and ask after a family member or about a specific home project. Each morning she connected with each child on a personal level. Linda would talk about her pets, Kerry would tell about her little brother and Paul would bring something from home to show her. These were daily connections that personalized relationship.

I, too, was able to establish relational ties with the children and become a member of the classroom community. My relationship with Amy grew and flowered and yet there was never a specific beginning. We were drawn to understand each other on a more individualistic level. Amy trusted me with concerns for others and feelings of inadequacy about herself. She was lighthearted and very sensitive at the same time. She never appeared sad, yet she was not confident and did not assume leadership roles. She was a peacemaker and perhaps that was the attribute that drew me to her. She worked at including everyone. She wove groups together. She worried if someone didn't have a partner. Several times she pointed out to either Ms. Worth or myself that someone did not have a partner, and she always wanted whoever it was to join in her group. Amy invariably ended up in a threesome for a partner activity.

Blaine and I drew a connection during a Big Word session. They

discovered the word Cubs. Simultaneously, as Ms. Worth was putting the word up on the overhead, Blaine and I said, "Go Cubs". Cub fans are automatically connected. Blaine and I talked about the players and how the team was doing. We were pretty certain that this was the year of the Chicago Cubs. The next day he brought me his extra Fleer Mark Grace baseball card to add to my collection. Well, it just doesn't get any better than that in my book. Blaine and I were definitely connected and that was only strengthened when we discovered our mutual interest in paper airplanes. Blaine has a ghost of a smile that he uses to show his appreciation and I was the recipient of this several times. Once after he hurt his leg and couldn't concentrate, it was enough for me to notice and empathize with him.

Jenny, so painfully shy, became my special friend and I just never let her remain aloof. I sat with her, I read with her, I wrote with her and we played our math game together. One day, in early February, the class was bustling around getting folders ready to go home. Jenny had a pile of papers next to her desk and she was just sitting there. When I asked her about her folder she whispered to me that she didn't have one. I located a loaner folder for her and she resumed the normal activity. It was important that I recognize and accept that it was not in her make-up to take initiative at this time. There was too much movement and activity for Jenny to even get up. She was too shy, and she was still learning. To force her to help herself was inappropriate at this time, that would come later. It was not too long before I found her always next to me during the carpet sharing time. It was an unspoken agreement that we would share carpet space. If she got there first, there was always room for me, and vice versa. Sometimes she would sit close and I would smooth her hair, but we knew we would be next to each other. It was necessary to accept Jenny for who

she was and not try and “fix” her.

There is a story that goes with each child in some way. Each story establishes the concept of a caring community. Two children affected me in ways I cannot account for. Gary needed me. He was the one child that had a hard time getting involved with each thing. His mind wandered and it was difficult for him to sit still and focus. He needed to move around and to wiggle and attend to many things simultaneously. He was always behind in work and always taking work home. He troubled over decisions when he was forced to choose, and deadlines made him crazy. Every day during DEAR time, Gary would start reading and then need to change books or use the restroom, or get a drink. He always started his spelling with good intent and lost concentration along the way. Writing workshop was especially troublesome for him because he had to decide what to write about. Gary was very verbal and he told wonderful stories and he was an artist. Every week he gifted me with a new drawing to grace the front of my refrigerator. His specialty was action figures and roses. Gary and I had a special relationship in the classroom. He felt comfortable to be able to come to me for help. He could get his work done if we could talk about other things along the way. The conversations would sound very disjointed to a passerby, but Gary and I always knew where we were. His best efforts were showcased in his A-B-C book because every letter brought a new set of ideas to pursue. Gary had a hug for me every time I entered the room. Sometimes we just stood together and listened. Several times Gary had little gifts for me, besides the drawings. Once he gave me a soldier figure. It sits here next to my computer. I was also acutely aware on the days that Gary was absent. I missed him.

It was Mary who was very confident and a leader in the group and so

sensitive. Above all other things Mary saw herself as fair. It was a Thursday afternoon and everyone seemed busy but there was an undercurrent in the room that was nearly palpable. Suddenly, Mary burst out crying and ran from the room. No one really reacted and it seemed to be felt that she needed some time and space. About ten minutes later, Mary returned to the room, gathered herself together, turned the music off and proceeded to the front of the room. With some halting words and tears, she addressed the class saying that she felt badly because some of her classmates were saying that she was playing favorites as the artist of the week and she was giving out markers from the art cart to her friends. She explained that she was giving out markers to certain people that needed to finish started projects from when the art cart was open to all. She felt that the markers were necessary for people to complete a project and that the colored pencils were to be used for the picture and poem associated with the photography only. She said those were the only supplies she was getting for people and it did not matter to her if they were special friends or not. She repeated that her feelings were hurt because some people were saying that she was unfair. Ms. Worth interjected here saying, "So, I hear you saying that the markers are to be used by folks to finish their card making, and colored pencils are to be used for the photography project, is that correct?" Mary nodded. "Does everyone understand now what the rules for the art center are and agree to go along with this?" Everyone agreed. "And finally, does everyone understand that Mary was not favoring her friends, and was trying to be fair?" Everyone assented and that seemed to be the end of it.

I was standing near the table at the back and Mary came over. I hugged her and thanked her for being so courageous to stand up and explain the circumstances and to share her feelings. I told her how proud I was of her and

she melted into my arms and dried away new tears. Our relationship deepened on that day and I was reawakened to the risk free environment that had been so carefully crafted in this room. This was before the upset with Cara that nearly divided the girls in the room and further strengthened our respect for each other. The next afternoon all the girls surrounded me when they returned from recess. They had made pictures for me from the natural colors in the dandelions, clover flowers and grasses. They had also woven a halo of flowers for me to wear during the afternoon. It is always a special delight to sit with Mary at the Mother and Daughter book club meetings every month. We gravitate to each other.

There are solid relationships amongst the students although not to the exclusion of others. Bonnie and Kerry are very close. Jenny and Tracy are best friends. Sam and Noreen are buddies and Amy and Blaine are friends with everyone. All relationships give evidence of cohesion and community.

Advice for each other

I wanted to capture the essence of care in their communal relations. I had a project in mind to compile a class book by them and for them. I read excerpts from the book, *always kiss me good night: instructions on raising the perfect parent*. They liked that it had been written by children between the ages of six and twelve. I told them that I felt they knew a lot about friendship and could give sound advice for being the perfect friend. I asked them to close their eyes and consider what it means to be a friend and when they had formulated their ideas, I would give them paper and markers to write and decorate their advice.

Their responses follow:

Never! make a promise if you can not keep it.

Friends - try to compromise more.

Don't hit them!

Don't be mean or you will not have anyone.

Don't tell everyone what to do all the time. And don't exclude anybody when you play a game.

Don't boss people around.

One thing I would ask for is that when after the summer we have different people in the class that they would not be best friends with them because I was their best friend before.

LISTEN to me first and if I ask you for advice give me suggestions, but DON'T try to fix or solve my problems for me.

To be a friend: If someone like wins a basketball game, tell them good job. Or compliment them in a different way.

Trust in your friends!

Listen! let me do what I want.

Share with me.

Pay attention to all your friends not just one.

Don't tell somebody they can't play because they aren't good.

Don't do something back when people do something to you.

Don't fight, Be nice, help people up when they fall, compliment people when they do good stuff, spend time with your friends, say nice things, play nice, be friends FOREVER!

Get something for him if he needs it.

Never lie to your friends.

Dear Fellow Friends,

A good way to be a friend is to stick by them always. If they have something to tell you about you that is bothering them, let them

tell you.

A good way to be a friend is be nice and do unto others as you would want do unto you.

Don't buy me plane tickets from Mass. to Cuba unless it is on a navel ship.

(Paul was studying the Bermuda triangle at this time!)

When a friend falls down, help him or her up.

Don't boss people around.

One way to be a perfect friend is: have trust in your friend.

I was amazed that there was such a variety of advice. I put their pages together to form a class book and took it in to share as a group. We gathered at the reading chair and I asked that each student read their own page. This provided an opportunity to discuss feelings and incidences when friends hurt friends. Noreen and Paul chose not to read their advice aloud and I respectfully turned their page with no coercion to share. The advice Noreen gave was too personal for her to share, it had to do with her feeling left out of a certain group of girls. Paul's advice was too funny (about the Bermuda Triangle) and he recognized that it did not really fit with the seriousness of the conversation. They were verbal in understanding the feelings from both sides. They had all experienced hurting and being hurt. We got into a lengthy exchange about exclusion. Mary was noticeably quiet as was Noreen during most of this exchange. We also touched on the idea of hitting. I remarked that I never saw anyone in the class even think of hitting. Larry said that *they* don't think about it, but that others do and they have to deal with it. Other negative responses involved lying, bossing and revenge. Hannah said that sometimes there were too many bosses and it was hard to do everything for everyone. Some positive

pieces of advice told about keeping promises, complimenting others, sharing, helping and compromising.

When we had finished reading the book together, I asked if they considered that these were good pieces of advice. They were emphatic in their agreement and I asked if they considered themselves as experts. They agreed saying:

“We are experts because we are friends.”

“We are experts because we have friends.”

And Amy offered, “We are experts because we are living it right now.”

Community is a reality here where the quality of the relations are positive. There is a strong sense of belonging. The literate environment is conducive to community in that it offers many perspectives and these children are actively involved with books as they recognize and respond to the power of story.

Care was also in evidence in the attitudes displayed by the boys and girls regarding their classroom. The physical space was cared for as was each individual's place in the classroom. It was apparent that they had respect for material things as well as for each others feelings. They cared that it was a safe place to be and to speak. They cared that it was inviting and looked nice. They cared that they were helping another in his/her job. They cared that the teacher's space was considered as part of their responsibility. Further, they cared that each other had the opportunity to contribute to the overall well being of the room. Ms. Worth cared that the place they inhabited was comfortable. She took great pains to be sure that the children viewed the classroom as their own and not as though they were visitors in her space. Lived space in this classroom community is “felt space” and they have, in general, become the space they are in and it is a special experience that helps establish the essence

of care in a community.

There are connections. The teacher and each child functions in this miniature society as a caring, contributing, co-constructing member. Parents are part of this miniature society, too. The class reaches out to include the home in many significant ways. Parents are kept informed of classroom happenings through Thursday folders and are considered in the scheduling of events and assignments. I met all but two of the parents during my time with the class. When asked about care in the schools several mentioned that the creation of a positive environment was important. One parent defined care in the classroom as “learning what they need to learn to be able to do the right thing by themselves and others” while another said that care was “making a person feel safe or secure and protected from undesirable conditions.”

Implicit in the sense of community is that children feel cared about, that they belong. This is not something that Ms. Worth does for the children rather it is something she helps the children establish with and for themselves. Without the sense of community, without the feeling of belonging and without the consideration of other perspectives the essence of care would not exist in a classroom. The essence of care for the teacher, for the parent and for the child resides in the creation and continuity of community. It is the felt sense of being together, of being included. It is the intent that the expression of care shared in this miniature community will destine the child into being an effective, caring member of a larger society.

In terms of Mutual Respect:

It is only by refraining from unnecessary authority over students that the teacher opens the way for students to develop minds

capable of thinking independently and creatively and to develop moral feelings and convictions about the necessity for respecting others (DeVries, 1997, p. 63).

This is a comfortable room for children. There are no posted classroom rules and consequences. I do not see a “time out” area. There are no behavior charts or evidence of incentive programs. There is no token system of rewards and punishment. Students are friendly, conversant and helpful. As members of the class we are engaged with whatever the students are doing. If they write, we write. If they are reading independently, we do, too. Ms. Worth feels that it is important to be personally involved in what the children are doing. It is important for our own experience and students need to see that the activities are important to all of us as learners. Children are eager to read and volunteer to do tasks and activities. They work and play together. There is great trust in this atmosphere.

Together in mutual respect

The arrangement of the room allows for free movement and encourages the sharing of common supplies. Respect is evidenced by sharing rights responsibilities and common materials. When the kids were doing the Valentine measuring activity they got rulers from the bins at the front of the room. When they needed to color code their math paper they went to the marker bin. They shared their school supplies and always had available whatever they needed. There was never the competitive spirit of comparing supplies that is common in traditional classrooms. All supplies were readily available and easily attained. Materials were neither coveted nor hidden from others.

It is interesting to watch this class in this small classroom area. They are

very thoughtful about space. They seem to understand that they may get in each other's way but that it is not purposeful and it seems to always be forgivable. They are really cognizant of each other's presence and their limitations due to small shared space. There is no feeling of lostness, of being alone or having no one to be with. When we visited the pottery barn and the space was very close, they took turns going into the building and watching outside. When they gather on the carpet area, there is no pushing to get there first. There is some wiggling but no jockeying for a particular space. They are respectful of each other. For example, when Ms. Worth was reading *White Socks Only* Jenny was struggling to see the pictures. She is very short and was in the back of the group. She did not ask the student in front of her to move. She simply got up and went to a chair, quietly pulled it out and sat down. She didn't blame anyone for being in her way. She did not make it an issue, and others did not complain that she "got to" sit on a chair. She attended to her own needs and that seems to be expected here. Fair is not defined as everyone getting the same thing. Fair is respecting one's right to tend to individual needs.

Ms. Worth developed classroom management by cultivating positive relationships both between herself and her students and among her students. Ms. Worth cooperates with her students in getting their needs met and she listens. She listens when they express their ideas, their feelings and their opinions. Donald has trouble getting his words out but she does not hurry him. She waits respectfully and sets the example for others who are impatient. Noreen is oriented to debate and could be considered argumentative, but Ms. Worth honors her views and lets her ideas have voice. Noreen likes to play devil's advocate and often her remarks are made to help others see a different perspective. One such discussion revolved around the story *The Bracelet*. This

is a picture book about the Japanese internment camps in Utah during World War II. Most of the children were offended that the United States would have a place like this. Noreen pointed out the possibility of undercover spies and allegiances to Japanese relatives that gave the rest of the class pause. A discussion ensued centered around the need to treat others as you would want to be treated even in wartime. It was decided that "all people needed to respect all other people."

Cooperative games and projects were another aspect of learning and mutual regard. Students interacted with each other and were allowed the freedom to work out differences and rules of play. Hannah, Tracy and Blaine had an incident with a math game that they were playing. Hannah was insistent on a rule that Blaine was not abiding with. All three approached Ms. Worth for intervention. She listened to all three explanations and then offered that she could see each viewpoint but didn't know which was best. As she stood there, they worked out an acceptable solution. They thanked her and resumed playing. Ms. Worth and I laughed later over the incident. They thanked her as if she had told them the answer, when in reality all she did was listen.

There were no posted rules in the room and I asked Ms. Worth about that. She responded by saying that because half her class had been together in the looping situation and had some previously established routines, she decided they would not make specific rules until there was a need. She further stated that to have a set of rules, before they were needed, automatically assumes that children are going to need correction and she didn't feel that this was the case.

Problems were attended to as they arose and usually on an individual basis. Classroom management was established through class meetings and exceptional listening practiced by Ms. Worth. It was evident to all that Ms. Worth

valued each voice. During class meetings a gavel was used to identify the speaker. It was passed to whomever needed a turn to talk. Ms. Worth would then identify the speaker and ask that person to wait until attention was focused. During one meeting she spoke to quiet the class saying, "Only Zena has the gavel and it is important that we all hear what each other has to say". Another time she asked Stan to wait until everyone was able to listen because she knew that everyone wanted to hear his idea. And another time, "Kerry , I know you are excited and I promise you will get the gavel next, but we need to listen to what Cara has to offer first."

These types of rejoinders were typical of teacher-student exchanges. Ms. Worth practiced thinking and feeling like the child in order to approach them in a dignified, care-filled and respectful way. She worked at her questioning techniques and was very aware of feelings and sensitivity. She honored their decisions.

An example of this was their decision to close the art and library centers for a week. She shared her concern with me and knew that this was going to be very difficult for the class. It eventually eroded into a misunderstanding for Mary that led to tears and frustration. Ms. Worth did not try to talk Mary out of this. She did ask Mary if she thought this would be helpful and had she thought it through completely. Mary replied, "I know it will be hard, but it's too hard to pick everything up every night when they just throw things, they need to learn not to throw the markers." Ms. Worth then let Mary make the announcement to the class and supported Mary by reminding the class that this was Mary's job for the week and she had considered it very carefully. Ms. Worth then went to the art center and physically helped Mary turn the center around so that it would not be accessible. In this way she showed her support for the decision in spite of the

fact she knew there would be repercussions. The art center was a much used commodity in the classroom.

Others in mutual respect

She also acknowledged her students and thanked them for little things. "Thank you, Jenny, for reminding me." and "Thank you for picking that up, it makes Debbie's job easier." Another time it was incidental when she recognized Kerry for putting up Sam's chair because he was absent. She told Kerry that it was a big help to her and Sam.

Promoting mutual respect was shown through the many opportunities the children took to write thank you notes and letters to parents, guests and each other.

It was the practice of kindness and respect for others that took the central focus on the day after the Valentine's party. When it was time for writing workshop Ms. Worth reminded the kids how much fun the party had been and that a lot of people worked together to make it so. They listed the names of all the parents that helped by being there or sending in treats or paper products. They talked about who did what and asked each other about how their parents contributed. The kids decided then that each contributor should receive two thank you notes. They figured the math and decided that each student should write one note, but that each helper would get two notes, and therefore they needed to double up. They decided to write individually and not collaboratively. The next discussion proved interesting. They needed to decide if it was okay to write to your own parent or whether it would be nicer for parents to hear from someone besides their "own kid". Sam was pretty sure that his mom would like to hear from him. Ms. Worth invited Sam to convince her of that, but little support from other classmates followed and his parent was actually chosen by

two others to write to before Sam came back with any justifications. Sam dropped that idea and chose another name from the list. Ms. Worth had chosen a name and was busy writing her thank you when Kerry had the idea that each student could sign each thank you so the writers should sign their note but leave enough space for other signatures. They set up the system to leave the notes on the desks and travel around the center of the room to the left and sign each note. Kerry noted that Tracy was absent, so she signed her own name and Tracy's as she moved around.

As they were moving and signing they became impatient waiting for their turn. They did not physically push but they did verbally encourage the slow signers. It was discovered that those students signing in cursive were taking longer than the printers, and Amy was signing her whole name in cursive. After some good-natured coaxing by classmates she agreed to sign just her first name but with this compromise; "I'm still signing in cursive because it looks nicer and that's a rule now." This exchange was indicative of how these students treated each other. They wheedled and cajoled to get their needs met but rarely with the intent of hurting another and usually in a good natured way. Amy's feelings were never in danger, and it was Hannah who followed Amy in line saying, "It does look nice *and long.*"

The thank you letters carried surprisingly specific references:

"Thank you for sending fancy plates and cups for our valentines party day."

"Thank you for coming to are party and helping to serve."

"Thank you for helping us make love bugs for valentines day."

"The pink cupcakes were good thanks."

It is easy to see that thanking people is an established pattern of being in Ms. Worth's classroom.

It is also a very common occurrence for her to thank students for volunteering answers, or to thank them for offering an idea or sharing a story. She never missed an opportunity to help her students help someone else feel special or important. As the semester went on we wrote many Thank You letters to different people who shared with us. We had a University person who came as an observer and helper. We had college students who presented three art lessons with clay. We had parents, and guests who talked about specialty areas or cultural knowledge or special pets, like the person who shared her snake and her knowledge of the care and feeding for reptiles. It was common practice to thank all the people who enriched the classroom experience.

Both "Thank you" and "I'm sorry" were meaningful phrases offered in serious tones. Children were not asked to fix problems or arguments with a quick, "I'm sorry". They were invited to share perspectives and decide on a solution acceptable to both parties.

Perspectives through mutual respect

One such event was very notable. Ms. Worth was made aware of a situation that caused some children to be uncomfortable. She quietly asked Gary to stay in the room while the others went to lunch. She asked that he think about what he had done to make Donald so upset. We talked a bit and he was adamant that he didn't do anything. I asked him to consider "what thing happened that was misunderstood". He insisted that nothing happened. When Ms. Worth returned, she clarified that the problem was between Gary and Owen, not Donald. At this, Gary admitted that he knew what the problem was. He was smelling Owen's fingers and Owen didn't want him to. Owen had washed his

hands in the grape flavored soap and when Gary was smelling his hands he got Owen's finger up his (Gary's) nose. Owen didn't say anything because he didn't want to get Gary in trouble, but Donald became upset for Owen and told Ms. Worth that Gary treated Owen "disrespectfully". This was not unusual. They protected and took up for each other. This episode ended with Gary realizing that he needed to apologize to Owen and thank him for not telling on him. Ms. Worth sent him off saying she was sorry that he would have less time for lunch but that she was glad they got everything straightened out and she understood that it was an accident, She would explain that to Donald so that Gary would not have to miss recess. Hugs were exchanged before he left to join the others. After recess, Gary let Ms. Worth and me know that Owen had accepted his apology and they had played together.

Ms. Worth was always viewed as approachable. Children seemed to know that she was there for them and that their concerns were her concerns. Students do not need to have permission to get out of their seats nor do they hesitate to come to either of us with questions. Children were "allowed" to jump up in greeting, and express their needs in kinesthetic ways without fear of recourse. Conversations are a natural part of the environment and a respectful volume is typical. Students do not yell but there is a conversational buzz that identifies learning together and respect for other learners. Many days there is classical music playing while the business of learning is going on.

Mutual regard is apparent in student-to-student exchanges, too. When I was working with the reader's theater group, I asked them to talk about a way to choose who would get which part. Bonnie said, "It needs to be fair." Donald suggested that we guess numbers between one and twenty. Blaine suggested that we draw names from a basket and we agreed. Hannah remembered to put

in Linda's name even though she was absent. When Linda's name was drawn, Hannah thought she would like to play the part of Jimmy's mother and we all agreed. Later, Cara highlighted Linda's script for her so that she would be ready to start at the same time. We worked together for several days practicing readings, making props and settling on chair arrangements. No one was ever critical or unkind as we read through with different abilities evident. The practices took on the personality of the group. They decided on how to introduce themselves, they decided that Hannah must have a music stand and a seat so that she would not have to stand through the entire play. One time, in her excitement, Jenny accidentally hit Bonnie in the face with her script, she apologized immediately and the incident went virtually unnoticed. We had conversation to help improve things we saw each other do and say. In essence, the players adopted each others strong points and tended to each others' needs.

On the day I read *Mary McLean and the St. Patrick's Day Parade* we talked about the many Irish traditions and shared if we had Irish bloodlines. Mary was very verbal and helped us to understand the "wearing of the green" as she tossed her beautiful red hair back from her face! When most of the kids had gathered around, I began reading. Blaine did not join us that day, though I feel certain that he listened. He remained at his desk working. It was a choice that he made that met his needs and that choice was honored. I cared enough about his needs not to insist that he join us.

I brought a large green cookie to share that day and after reading and discussing how the dad got the shamrock in the story we held another discussion on how we were going to share the cookie fairly. It was a big round cookie and we talked about cutting it. Ms. Worth reminded them to consider a

pizza graph with sixteen sections that they had on the felt board. They decided that it would be hard to cut the cookie in twenty-two sections because the pieces would be too skinny. Kerry suggested that we could just use our fingers - if we all washed our hands first. While they washed their hands (some are at the sink and others are passing around the bottle of waterless soap) I got the cookie ready to pass around. Amy got the waterless soap for me while Zina passed the napkins around. I started and took a portion and passed it to Stan. Stan had a difficult time but finally managed to get some cookie on his napkin. As the cookie made its way around the circle everyone took a similar size piece. Blaine came over to get his piece and took it back to his seat. Gary got a piece that was about twice the size of everyone else's. Bonnie spoke up and pointed out to Gary that his piece was pretty large. Larry suggested that Gary break it in half and not take another piece when it went around again. While this was happening, Noreen and Kerry noted that Owen was out of the room with his reading buddy and that we should save his share for him. The cookie came back to me and there was plenty left. Hannah said that Stan should get another piece because he only got a very little piece to start with. I sent it around again, and this time Bonnie delivered Blaine's piece to him. Even after it went around a second time there was cookie left. I set it on the table and left it there. No one asked about finishing it. Ms. Worth told me later that afternoon when Linda came in, the kids told her to go get her part of the cookie and to read the book at DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) time. These kids are aware of the whereabouts of their classmates and look after them.

The cookie episode was very interesting to me. The feelings of community and mutual respect were strong enough to overcome any feelings of greed or fear that the sharing would not be equitable. It was not overly

important that each child get exactly the same size piece. Nor did they intimate that the teacher could be more fair. They trusted each other to be fair. In fact they were so careful that they took very small pieces to insure that there would be enough for everyone, and this happened twice around. Furthermore, they were aware of those classmates who were not there and looked out for them. Such consideration is indicative of the mutual respect that led to perspective taking and consideration for all members of this micro-community. They cared about each other.

Another example of patience and respect was on a day a group of children were cutting material for a specific project they were doing and they learned that school scissors are not meant for cutting material. They then took the teacher scissors. Randy came to me to show me the problem he was having and I suggested that he might need to borrow the teacher scissors. He waited patiently while Linda finished her cutting and then asked if he could borrow them. Paul was also having difficulty and was working at the center table. When Gary asked to borrow his scissors, he said, "I'm sorry but Cara asked first." As he finished he called over to tell Cara. She said, "Oh, I found some others so you can give those to Gary."

These types of considerations were commonplace and as a researcher I feel certain that I became so inured in this setting that I came to expect this kindness and forgot to take note of many such occurrences.

Mutual respect of time

The use of time and flexible time frames are other ways that respect is shared. Time to form thoughts and speak is respected in this classroom. We have several students who take time to formulate their thoughts and get them to the surface. Children are not hurried, nor are sentences finished for them. We

have one child who actually stutters when excited. Speech is not rushed. Patience is exhibited by teacher and students alike. Class meetings provide an excellent opportunity to see this. At the beginning of meetings, the gavel is passed around and each child gives a compliment or a positive comment to get started. This does not come easily to either Jenny or Tracy. They hold the gavel and the others wait silently until they say their piece. Jenny will sometimes “pass” and have the gavel come back to her at the end so she has the time to consider things. Frustration and insecurity arise when this class feels rushed.

Another example of respecting individual differences deals directly with time. Time in this classroom is generally felt time. We can feel when it is time to move on. You can hear as one activity moves toward completion to indicate the need to move on to something else. A general shuffle begins to invade the room. Children’s time frames are generally respected. The only actual time restraints occur when it is time for a “special” or time for lunch or time to go home. The schedule is what I call a sliding schedule. Reading workshop slides into writer’s workshop and integration occurs for both Science and Social Studies. Math has a stated time that typically follows a specials time after lunch. Math then shapes its time frame depending upon the task or the general hum of game playing. This is not set in stone because many times morning activities roll into afternoon times. One of the things that is nice in this atmosphere is the ability for kids to see the need for scheduling. If they are not finished with morning projects, they are encouraged to just leave things as they are, go to lunch and return to the work after shared reading and specials. There is rarely pressure to finish for a deadline or have homework. Individual time frames are respected. Developmental differences are respected. The use of time is

flexible and regularly adjusted to fit children's needs. Time limits are never imposed unnecessarily. Ms. Worth shows her respect for students when the schedule of daily events is listed on the board with no times attached to it. (See Appendix C, p. 236, bottom).

Gathering time is significant for these children. Ms. Worth gathers them together in non interruptive ways. She uses sign language to issue invitations, or begins reciting a poem that they all begin to chant as they move to our common area. Sometimes we just physically go over to the comfortable chair and start to read a picture book. They come when they can, they may join when they finish what they are doing, or they may choose to shelve what they are doing and join immediately. We never require that they all be there before we begin. We do not make the rest of the class wait on one who is tardy. Children are never embarrassed because of their lateness. We have found that children tend to respond to invitations in positive ways. They understand that if their focus is elsewhere, they may join when they are able to focus on what we are doing together, and they come eagerly in response to invitations rather than feeling imposed upon when edicts are issued. It has become apparent that time is better used this way. Transitions from one thing to another are calm and unobtrusive. Children are not forced to comply to demands imposed by the teacher. Children are not rushed and the day has a natural flow rather than the traditional stop and start manner. "Hurry up and wait" is not a typical part of transitioning during the day.

Lived time is experienced as natural. There are few deadlines. Opportunities to spend extra time is always proffered. There are times when the kids are working alone on different projects but even then they get up when they need to ask others for help or suggestions without being required to raise hands

or ask permission. There have been very few times that I have seen them resort to hand raising. They just naturally, respectfully go about doing what they need. Time to speak is given freely and the tone for discussion is conversational rather than the usual calling on one student and then another. Use of wait time is respectful and discussions are allowed to run their course. (usually Linda or Owen will pull us back to the issue at hand if we stray).

There are set procedures and routines that have evolved with time. When it is time to go to a specials class, they line up and fall in wherever they may, they are not required to put all their things away every time they leave the room. We try to allow enough time to comfortably get all hands washed before lunch, and we try to have enough time for jobs to get done at the end of the day. There are bathroom passes always available (this is done to keep track of children in case of fire or emergency) and permission is not required.

Time frames are respected both by the teacher and by the students. When time gets away from us we work together in helpful ways not to be late. Mutual respect seems ordinary in this setting. It is sincere, not contrived. It is honest and thoughtful. It is a way of being in the world with children. It is a way of understanding that children are naturally respectful when they are in a respectful environment. Unlike many other classrooms, children's needs determine the time frames and time is used to control activity. Time can punish children and lead them to do inferior work. Typically, children are told how much time they have to complete a lesson. If they are not finished it becomes homework. Many times students will rush to be finished and turn in work that is not their best. Ms. Worth erases this fear and reminds students that she is not looking for the fastest, but the best they can do. She told Randy that his shuttle story was much too good to hurry, and that she would give him all the time he

needed to finish his revision. Ms. Worth also let the children determine if more time was needed. She'd say, "At eleven thirty we'll wrap up, how many need more time?" Children that finished often helped others or took care of their own needs. It was not a race to get extra privileges for finishing. It was a respectful atmosphere that promoted an understanding of differences.

Importance of mutual respect to parents

Parents want their children to experience care and respect not only with the teacher but with other students. The concept of respect was touched upon in all but one of the returned surveys. In general, the parents want the classroom to be respectful, and refer to both teacher and other students. One parent wrote that he/she wanted a teacher for their child that, "encouraged trying in such a way that he would keep trying. That the teacher would be sensitive to stresses and fears and joys and help children express those same feelings safely." Another parent felt that "two-way respect was crucial."

Mutual respect is advocated with the open invitation for parents to visit or just drop by. They are greeted enthusiastically by both Ms. Worth and students. One day, Ms. Smith (fictitious name) stopped by and was greeted with, "Oh, Hi, did you come to watch our practice and give us some advice?" from Ms. Worth, followed by a cacophony of children's voices welcoming and inviting the parent to join them. Visitors were always welcomed and pulled into participation. Parents and visitors were viewed as adding to the classroom experience never as a nuisance or distraction.

Care In terms of Literacy

This class is a place for literacy. Students are writing to read and reading to write. Making sense and shaping meaning by and through print is

the job they undertake when they enter the room. Expression and communication is valued. The joy of literacy is practiced on a routine basis and learning is essentially a byproduct. Themes of literature and literacy are identified each month and the content areas grow outward from there. Reading and writing are ways of being in this classroom and the many shared story experiences provide a framework for community. Common understanding of story elements such as character and point of view draw us together into a conversation of being. Children find relevancy of character, setting, or theme. Many times references to specific books are made and this naturally flows into their writing processes.

Reading and literacy

Bookshelves are a predominate feature of the room. The west wall (See Appendix C, p. 237, top) has the teacher's desk (which is nearer to the outside of the room), and then a series of three tall bookshelves arranged in such a way as to form a cubby. The shelves are filled with more chapter books and it is easy to see that these books are well used but cared for. A blue plastic container is on the floor and contains quite a few books needing to be reshelved by the class librarian. This is a busy area and all the books are arranged in alphabetical order according to author's last name. There are library sticks that designate the letter area. As children finish books they place them in the bucket to be reshelved at the convenience of the librarian. This became a major point of contention with this class as it became a huge job with the amount of reading done by the kids. The librarian needed help and it eventually became a two person job. Along side the cubby area is a wall area and it contains the BIG WORD chart (See Appendix C, p. 236, top). BIG WORD is a major part of the spelling program in this classroom and next to the chart is

a list entitled *BOOKS WE READ TOGETHER*. (See Appendix C, p. 235, top). They are on number 97 The “reader, author” was the person who kept track of the books read aloud. This list was an ongoing compilation of shared reading of chapter and picture books.

There are also different book areas. One such area is a double book shelf that highlights the special genre books for the area of study. There is no east wall, it is the open area. Ms. Worth has made a wall with bookshelves and a wooden divider screen. One of the bookcases is the reference area and is filled with dictionaries, nonfiction and informational books along with various reference materials such as thesauruses, almanacs and atlases. Another bookshelf holds books that have been authored by the students (See Appendix C, p. 235, bottom). There is a designated area for chapter books with the main “library” section on the west wall. There are books laying on desktops. They are everywhere.

Another area that promotes the sharing of literacy is a cozy “homey” area in the main corner of the room. It has a white overstuffed chair with an end table next to it and a living room lamp behind it. There is a light blue carpet space in front of the easy chair and it is on top of the regular floor covering. The table has four books and a poetry file on it. This is the shared reading space. The reader sits in the chair and the others gather around in the carpet area. This shared space is not very big and yet it is an area that is respected by each member of the class.

The daily schedule promotes literacy. Most every day allows for a reading and a writing workshop format. The time frames are largely generated by need. On some days, writer’s workshop is extended, and other days the class may need a longer reading workshop. There is a daily DEAR time and

that time is protected by the children. They read for thirty minutes each day and they will rearrange their recess if necessary to get their full thirty minutes.

Another daily event is the read aloud time that follows lunchtime. Ms. Worth reads a chapter book to them that they have selected and voted on. At this time the students remain at their desks and they are encouraged to listen, draw, or color while they listen. It was not uncommon for the kids to think aloud as we read aloud. Sam would offer an opinion in the story or ask a question and the class would dialogue, until Owen would interject and ask if we could “kindly get back to the book”. It was also always Owen’s voice that was the loudest protest when it was time to stop reading and move on to something else. Almost daily we heard the groans when it is time to stop reading. The kids bartered for more read aloud time. I have heard them offer to give up their recess to finish a book and promise to work really hard tomorrow if we could just finish *Spotting the Leopard* by Anna Myers now.

This shared reading time is so interesting to see in action. Students sit at their desks while Ms. Worth or myself sit at the center table to read. The kids draw or listen or work on their own projects while we read. It is amazing how they are so completely drawn into the story. They start out by drawing but it often happens that they forget to actually draw while they listen. I have seen the same picture be worked on over the course of several days and the pictures that do finally get finished often reflect a part of the story. Nearly every day, Sam gets out his crayons and nearly every day he holds one in his hand but rarely draws. Paul just pulls out the same picture every day to work on, and Bonnie finally gave in to the pull of story and doesn’t even take her crayons out anymore, she lays her head on her desk and listens carefully. Gary on the other hand, does pencil drawings every day. He draws very intricate pictures of

action figures. Kerry is another one who is able to draw and write and still actively attend to the story. She often asks for things to be clarified, and she will ask inference questions. I think she sometimes forgets where she is and just wonders out loud.

Ms. Worth plans for a different genre theme each month and the curriculum emanates from the issues and conversation generated during the exploration of the literature and writing. During September the genre is Fairy Tales. All the Fairy Tale and Folk Tale books are shelved in an identified area in the room. Library information is shared and the children are introduced to Galdone, Perrault and the 398.2 section of the library. They share tales they find and stack their choices next to the reading chair for read-aloud and sharing time. *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* is the chapter book selected by the group to start the month. They are beginning to form their own thoughts to write an original or fractured fairy tale during writing workshop. From this study of Fairy and Folk tales arises the study of the German culture and language, Europe, word origins, and measurement for recipes. The music and art is also centered around the theme of Fairy and Folk Tales. The month is dedicated to understanding the genre and the idea that, "it expresses their interpretation of the relationships among human beings and their fears and desires, and it gives expression to such deep, universal emotions as joy, grief, fear, jealousy and awe" (Sutherland, 1981, p. 156).

The reading of *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* gives rise to discussion about friendship and caring for animals. The significance of being truthful and respecting differences is another theme in the story and the children discuss gender issues related to that theme. Finally they write their own versions of noted tales and good versus evil and trust versus mistrust become issues in

their own writing. This point is nicely illustrated in Sam's version of a common tale.

The Three Billy Goats Gruff

told from

The Troll's Point of View (the Real Story)

Hey, are you listening to me? Everyone says I want to eat the goats. Right! I was just doing what I had to do. Besides, they were going to break my bridge and you wouldn't like it if somebody was going to break your house.

This is the way it really went. Once there lived a peaceful troll. He was kind to everyone who crossed his bridge. Even the goats. Even though they were mean! They were very mean and they broke my bridge. now I have to fix it.

Uh-Oh, here they come. I'd better bet my hard hat on. Trip trap, trip trap. Yikes! Do you remember the little troll? Oh yow, here's the grass. You may cross. *(Picture shows troll feeding small goat).*

Here comes Bigger Billy Goat. Do you remember the toll? Oh yes, here are the cobwebs. You are free to cross. *(Picture shows troll giving the toll of cobwebs to the goat).*

Here comes Big Billy Goat. Do you remember the toll? I have the lizard tongues, here they are. You may pass. *(Picture shows Troll handing tongues to the biggest goat with big smile on his face).*

Now I can make my favorite soup. I'll just add some wolf fur and grasshopper legs and it will be perfect!

Here comes the Billy Goat Gruffs. I wonder what they want? May we join you for some of that delicious smelling soup? Why certainly, I'd love to have you (See Appendix C, p. 287-294).

Sam was very eager to point out that the troll was really very good and was giving the goats food for the toll money and he was using the money to rebuild the bridge that the goats broke. According to Sam, the troll "got a bad deal when they wrote the story". Mary's rendition of Goldilocks and the Three Bears uses viewpoint and perspective to make her tale entertaining, too.

Relationality extended beyond person to person to include their relations with their reading and writing. Much of the reading that occurred in this classroom was shared reading. Instruction was literature-based and children shared many read aloud experiences. Ms. Worth read at least one picture book a day that was pertinent to an area of interest or study and usually more than one. When I joined the class I was equipped with my most valuable tool when working with children, a bag of books. I explained that my two favorite things in the world were books and children and I thought this was an opportunity to combine the two. They eagerly agreed and we carried on a conversation for twenty-five minutes and discovered how much we all knew about books and reading. I knew the class was studying fairy tales, so I started by sharing a Cinderella story called "*That Awful Cinderella, as told by Drusilla*". I followed this by reading another fractured version of Cinderella called, *Sidney Rella and*

the Glass Sneakers. We then each selected another book from the collection I had brought and set to reading and sharing all sorts of fractured fairy tales. Our dialogue had begun. I followed this up several days later by reading *Princess Smartypants* and *Prince Cinders*, both by Babette Cole, and doing a book talk about the fairy tales we had read during the week. We talked about beginnings and middles and endings. We discussed the elements of fairy tales and they invited me to the Author's Fair on the last Friday of the month to hear the tales they were writing. Dialogue of issues of empathy and care were generated in response to many literature choices. Tears were shed for Sedako, and anger was expressed for Jesse. Cruelty was denounced and questions of man's inhumanity to man were raised in response to shared stories. Blaine was outraged by the treatment Jackie Robinson received in his book, *Teammates*. Bonnie was delighted at the victory experienced by Booker T. Washington in the book, *More Than Anything Else*. Literacy became the vehicle for caring about issues and others.

Author's Fair is a celebration of writing that they hold each month. They invite parents and friends and share a special drink and treat with their guests while they read to them. I got together with Bonnie, Gary and Jenny and was their special guest. From there my relationship developed with the class as an entity and with individual children. Together, we explored dragons in literature based on the book, *Jack and the Meanstalk* by Brian and Rebecca Wildsmith, and each of us made a dragon scale and experimented with the basic elements of art through line, color and design. We put our scales together in a unique way at the front of the stairs to enjoy. I worked to establish a comfortable feeling about my presence through the sharing of story.

Many times writing workshop was based on a mini-lesson that was

explicated by a picture book. The children also had a common experience with the daily read aloud chapter book. Many times conversations would evolve around a particular book character. Bonnie and Kerry strongly identified with Amelia and her Notebook and made reference to their own notebooks. The entire class identified and empathized with Sadako after their Japanese visitor taught them how to make cranes using origami. Paul and Blaine actually kept count of the number of paper cranes folded by their classmates and hung them each afternoon moving toward the goal of 1,000 to help someone in need, as was the case in the story *Sadako and A Thousand Paper Cranes*.

Each month brought a different genre that translated to a writing experience and a theme base for the month. October was the month for realistic fiction. November brought out an appreciation for Biography. Perspective and history highlighted student choices during this month. Donald wrote a fascinating story incorporating the idea of time travel to assist his plot in his story, *Back to the Day Johnson became President*. Blaine put pencil to paper and wrote about the trials that Jackie Robinson experienced as the first black man in baseball (See appendix C, p. 282 - 287). December was a month for non-fiction and January was fantasy. My favorite month was February and the genre was autobiography. Each child brought in their own timeline created with family and wrote their own life story from the information. Many of these were personalized with photographs. Cara based her autobiography on the life of a third grader and fetched her memory box to help her organize her timeline of third grade. Each student had a memory box and they kept their special third grade items to celebrate together. They would get their boxes out periodically to add to them and revisit them.

March was the month of historical fiction and April was poetry. May

brought the year to a close with A-B-C books. Each month was exciting and the writing skills developed through talking, sharing and conferencing. The students were literate. They talked about authors and genres and theme. They identified with characters and related to issues of friendship and justice and acceptance of difference.

Sam and I had wonderful recess discussions. We walked and talked about books and authors while the others were playing. He talked about books that he liked but his family didn't. "They like real stuff, like biographies and history." Sam is a fantasy fan and does not share much of this with his folks or his sister. We talked about King Arthur and Merlin, and Lucy and Aslan of Narnia fame. He is very well read and invited me to read a story he was working on. When recess was over, he was not ready to leave my company so we played math games when we returned to the room and he taught both Hannah and me a new game.

Conversation and activity naturally centered around the aspects of literacy because so much of the class time was shaped by the books that were shared and the authors who wrote them. Biographical information about Patricia Polacco, Rosa Parks, Karla Kuskin and Bill Wallace added to the understanding of story and sent students in pursuit of more books by the same author. Noreen was a huge fan of Bill Wallace and read all the books she could find by him. She decided she liked his adventure books better than his "fun" books and it was Noreen that suggested his books as a selection for every book club. We all read and shared his book *True Friends* for the February book club. Through literacy this group was able to talk about issues of esteem and difference. They were able to relate to character dilemmas and take on new perspectives. They talked openly about feelings and honesty and friendship

and fear.

Ms. Worth shared her passion for books and literacy in many ways. Her personal collection of books was extensive and her willingness to share made selection an event in the room. When she read aloud, she took on the personality in voice of the different characters. Her expression and fluency was enviable and it was apparent that she knew the books and practiced to help the story take on meaning for her listeners. She did not merely read books aloud. She became the characters. She lived the experience through the author's words. It was hard not to be pulled in to such a story.

Ms. Worth regularly attends literacy conventions and brings new books and stories about her experiences for her class. Before she started the book, *The Story of Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles, she told about her own experience meeting both Ruby Bridges and her teacher Ms. Henry at a professional meeting she attended. She showed where Ruby Bridges and Ms. Henry had autographed her copy of the book. Then she shared a Norman Rockwell print of the four United States Marshals escorting Ruby to school. She told a little about Norman Rockwell and his part as an artist in our history. She then referred them to a book at the horseshoe table about Rockwell and more of his artwork if they were interested. She read *The Story of Ruby Bridges* to all of us and paused for dramatic effect. This was not an extraordinary event, it was very typical. Literacy was the very heart of this classroom.

Content areas and literacy

Literacy spilled over into all the content areas. We had done lots of sharing together and had developed math lessons, social studies, science, art activities and language, always centered around literacy. The spelling program in this class is integrated with the class theme also. It is never handled in a

competitive way. There are no spelling bees and spelling tests are individualized in a class setting and include a math component. The spelling “Big Word of the Week” is related to something the kids are studying. The letters are presented and the students try to find words by arranging and rearranging the letters (See Appendix C, p. 245). The letters of the Big Word are presented in alphabetical order with vowels presented, followed by consonants (See Appendix C, p. 245). One week the letters presented were A-A-E-I-L-N-P-R-S. A list of small words were generated on the overhead by the class. Ms. Worth wrote them down as students called them out and spelled them: are, ear, sip, pear, real seal, learn, pearl, as, Al, IRS, plan, Spain. The spelling list is generated and used for the week. The kids made sentences, poems or stories using as many of the words as they could and yet retaining the essential meaning.

Each day they were invited to add to the list and Ms. Worth talked about the letter sound relationships and the words that do not follow phonetic rules. She promoted phoneme and grapheme awareness as well as rules for capitalization and use of hyphens and apostrophes. This was also an opportunity to take advantage of incidental learning. When the word IRS was discovered, clarification involved sharing of student understanding of the Internal Revenue Service and what the functions of taxation are. They were very knowledgeable about who paid taxes but wanted information about how tax money was used. This developed into a discussion about police and fire workers and roads and the issuance of money and how and where money is made. This was a valid and instructional social studies lesson couched in the spelling format.

Math is an area that is naturally incorporated with the weekly spelling

ritual. At the end of the week, the class added their two letter words to their three letter words to their four letter words to their five letter words to see how many words were generated over the week. They first counted the numbers in each column and added the tens numbers first and then the ones number, going from left to right. (See Appendix C, p. 245). All this was done in their heads without paper and pencil. This week they had generated 81 words from the word Airplanes. Mental math infiltrated all the different subject areas.

The spelling assessment was always done by the children themselves. The process was fascinating to watch. One such session started when Ms. Worth announced that it was time for the spelling test and moved to sit in the reading chair with a dry erase board in her hand. Noreen got paper and began passing it out, Randy started handing out writing boards. The class was gathered on the carpet area and Ms. Worth went over the point system. There is one point for a correct spelling, one point for writing it in print, another point for writing it again in cursive. There are other points for capitals, apostrophes or hyphens. The Big Word this week was "Vegetables" and the words chosen for the test were specifically chosen to strengthen certain spelling and phonetic skills. The first word was table, she gave the children time to write the word on their papers and then wrote it on her board in both print and cursive. She turned her board so that they could see it. Ms. Worth talked about the -le sound and asked for other words that fall into this category. She then pointed out the intricacies of making a "b" in cursive and how it, "barely retraces a line before it connects to the "l"." She then let them give themselves the number of points they earned out of three. Some other words on the test included: stable, beast, least, eagle, let's, blast and Steve. Discussion centered around the vowel combination of "ea" and the long "e", short "e" sounds. There was quite a long

discussion about the word "Lee's" and she took this opportunity to talk about the rules for contractions and capitals as well as the long "e" sound. Zina wanted to know, "why don't they spell it l-e-a like the "ea" words instead of using two "e"s? or... they could spell e-e-g-l-e and l-e-e-s-t!". They agree that spelling is "funny". The kids figured out that Lee's was an expensive word worth five points. Care was reflected in this spelling program as Ms. Worth trusted that students were learning through sharing. The spelling lists were generated in an authentic manner and the students learned in a cooperative setting. They "graded" their own papers and corrected misspellings. This type of assessment enables children to learn from mistakes without feeling belittled. They were eager to ask questions about the English language without fear of judgment. This is a respectful way for children to learn at their own pace.

It is interesting how spelling changes so casually into a math lesson. The kids were busy adding up their scores when Bonnie asked what the score for a perfect paper would be. Together they figured, there were 15 words and each one is worth three points, therefore 15×3 is 45 plus two capitals and 2 apostrophes equals 49. They agreed to add one point if you spelled your name correctly to make it worth an even 50 points. They were satisfied with this, added up their scores individually, and turned them in to the spelling place on the shelf.

There was never any comparison of scores. There was no cheating. There was no fear of a test or a grade or failure. The testing situation here proved to be both safe and styled for learning. Not everyone took this test. Amy, Stan, Gary and Larry were out of the room in their lab time when the test was started. When they returned to the room, they automatically went to their desks and worked on writing their spelling sentences. Their spelling was

assessed in individual conferences, both in their lab setting and by Ms. Worth as she moved around the room doing writing conferences during Writing Workshop.

Integrating the content areas with the literacy aspects was so natural as areas of interest emerged through genre studies. We were careful to facilitate the dialogue and affirm and encourage the cognitive, social and affective areas of learning. One such science component emerged as the kids were fascinated with paper folding from their visitor and the study of Japan accompanied by the biographies of Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart. Paper airplanes began to make their way on the scene and the study of flight was inevitable. Ms. Worth and I talked over the weekend and began pulling together a unit on flight. We cared enough to respond to class interest sparked by reading. We collected and pooled our resources, including books, kits and videos. Ms. Worth led them in sharing the chapter book about Amelia Earhart and I introduced my copy of the book *Flight* by Mike Wimmer to share as a picture book about the life of Charles Lindbergh. I shared my experience when I met and spoke with Mr. Wimmer and showed the class where he had signed my book and had drawn an airplane for me.

A whole class group gathered on the reading carpet we talked about the time frames for Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart and we talked about places. During this conversation, Paul stood up and pulled down the map and began to point out the places we were discussing. No one asked Paul to do this, he realized he was closest to the map and just did it. Donald knew that Lindbergh's plane was named the Spirit of St. Louis and that he had left from New York. Paul followed the path the plane took on the map as we read the story. Both Jerry and Blaine had seen the actual plane in the Air and Space

Museum in Washington, DC. and described how it was housed and what color it is. From there we moved into a fascinating exchange about time zones and the difficulty it would have been to keep awake. Noreen was really puzzled about the time zones and her relentless questioning led to explanations of the rising and setting sun, day and night and the four seasons. We got out the globe and continued to develop the understanding of the relationship of the earth to the sun and then the moon to the earth. When we finished the book, we talked about the four elements of flight. I was surprised to hear so much from Randy. He knew a great deal and even referenced a couple of different books that he had read. Randy explained lift and drag and defined gravity in answer to a question from Larry. We talked about the rotation and revolution of the earth and Randy and Gary demonstrated both concepts using the globe. This was a time for Randy to shine and take the role of expert. The entire day was devoted to pursuing questions and answers initiated by the book.

This was a lesson that was student initiated. We let the lesson unfold. We followed their lead, respecting their need to persist and understand. We then wrapped the spelling, and geography and art around the theme. It is important to understand that Ms. Worth listened and respected their request. She threw out the plans she had and was able to trust the interests of students. This was all done with joy and excitement. She was excited that Randy and Paul and Blaine were taking the lead.

We presented several books and activities that allowed children to discover the aspects of flight using the scientific procedure and identifying the variables of weight, force and balance, along with lift and drag. We introduced the concept of how things fly by helping them make and fly their own autogiros (See Appendix C, p. 247) The students followed directions and both teachers

helped by rereading directions, helping them understand the idea behind scoring folds, and by counting the rotations of the autogiros. As soon as Hannah had folded her autogiro and had experienced a couple of successful flights she began to help Donald who was next to her. I saw Blaine helping Paul while Cara and Linda worked together. Kerry and Randy were sharing and comparing scored lines and folds. We were all very aware that fifth grade was testing so our voices were very low and we helped monitor each other with gestures and fingers on lips.

This activity took up an entire afternoon as experimentation led to the children constructing their own understanding of the elements that affect flight. Noreen was throwing hers at first instead of dropping it. Sam rescored his folds for better lines and Kerry figured out that she was too short and needed to stand on a chair to get rotation. Noreen tore her autogiro and then discovered that it actually turned faster than before which set the class to making tears in different places to watch the effects. Bonnie began making a second one out of a different kind of paper. Randy and Blaine were adding paper clips for weight. Mary experimented by putting the paper clip in different places to check on flight variations. No one was making fun of anyone's creation. Indeed they were interested in what did not work in order to help them discover better designs. Blaine cut off the trunk part of his to see if there was a difference. Jerry folded several. Gary added an oversized paper clip. They were all busy and they were all considerably quiet. The room was abuzz with comments such as:

“Look at this!”

“Watch, watch.”

“Help me count.”

“Watch how fast mine starts.”

“How did you do that?”

“Why does it do that?”

Mary was going around showing everyone what happened when she dropped hers upside down. I looked for signs of frustration but did not see any. After quite some time, Ms. Worth put the journal page (See Appendix C, p. 246) on the overhead and each student filled in their own discoveries in their learning logs. They wrote in their journals (See Appendix C for a sample of a page from the learning log, p. 248). The overhead page was a good guide for their journal and there was some discussion of the word “variable”. Higher order thinking skills were truly evident as there was focused attention on inference and prediction. The students did not show aggression nor competition with these toys. I noticed playfulness, focus, wonder and cognitive development throughout the afternoon. Science through literacy was initiated by taking advantage of a teachable moment. Ms. Worth recognized the interest and capitalized on the moment. She understands that curriculum is designed by children and she cares enough to follow their lead and trust to their instincts.

Writing and literacy

The literacy aspect of writing is a special strength in this class and I capitalized on their creativity when I introduced some basic geometric concepts using tangram puzzles and storytelling. They wrote their own stories using tangram characters they created after hearing the book *Grandfather Tang* by Ann Tompert. All of their stories reflected compassion in some context. Several of the stories reflected their science study of endangered animals. One such story was written and illustrated using the geometric pieces by Linda and Kerry called, *As the Manatee Swims*. The story shows a friendship between a turtle and a Manatee and the turtle saves the manatee by biting through a fishing net

that has caught the manatee (See appendix C, p. 265- 275). Another story written and illustrated using the tangram pieces was done by Hannah, Tracy and Jenny. Their story entitled *Injured Animals* reads like this:

Once there was a girl named Nicole Jane Rogers in her nature dress.

Nicole loved to search for animals that were injured.

This is the house that is the animal hospitill. Were Nicole worked, all of the animals loved her.

A rabbit looked like it was fine, but it kept coughing.

This is a frog named Polly Wog. It was rescued by Nicole.

The mouse that Nicole rescued was well anofe to go home evan though the frog was not.

Heather was the rabbit, even though the mouse had left everyone was very happy and more animals came over the years.

The End (See Appendix C, p. 258 - 265).

These stories and others were indicative of the empathy that exists among these children and how literacy has drawn them into thinking about deeper issues. Mary wrote later that she "liked making storys and messing with shapes" and Cara wrote "that we didn't have to do anything but read and write in math today".

I planned weekly with Ms. Worth, sometimes in formal ways and other times on the run or on the phone informally and usually in response to a direction the day took. We were both comfortable with taking advantage of teachable moments and moving our plans aside to follow the direction that children's thinking took us. Sometimes I began the activities, sometimes I helped to facilitate and provide books or other supplies. One lesson developed

around a Valentine's math lesson and writing a story using alliteration with the letter "V". I read them a book that was done by one of my college students in which the alliterative element was the sound of "B", we chose to do "V" words for Valentines and started by brainstorming all the words that began with the letter "V". We then wrote stories using lots of those words.

Both of the early February activities were indicative of the collaborative atmosphere that marks the essence of this room. Children worked together. They offered their ideas for "V" words openly and eagerly to be written out on the big chart paper and left there for everyone to use. They were intent on filling the page so several groups broke out the dictionaries and were shouting out words to add to the list while others pulled down the classroom maps and were calling out "Vermont" and "Venice" and "Venezuela", still others clapped with each addition.

There was never an idea to hide special words for just one person's story. Sharing appeared easy for this group. The kids were then asked to partner up to work on their stories. Sam was very sure that he wanted to write his story on his own because he had "a great idea" and he set off alone while two other groups formed threesomes to work together. Who they were working with did not seem as important as whether their ideas fit together. They grouped themselves on the basis of interest rather than on popularity or any social agenda. Hannah came and said she didn't have a partner and wondered if there was anyone else without a partner. I told her I thought Jerry was still looking for some one to work with. She hesitated only a second and summed up her understanding saying, "I'll have to do all the work, but okay."

There were two pairs that consisted of one boy and one girl and gender did not appear to be an issue. They created their stories over a four day

period and joyously gathered to share them on a Thursday. It was always understood that any pair who wanted to share would be allotted that opportunity, therefore there was no clamoring to go first. It was understood that sharing would be on a voluntary basis and no one would be required to read. The stories were very creative, my favorite being the one by Blaine and Tracy about Valentino the valuable vulture from Venice. We put the stories all together in a three ring notebook so that they could be read and reread. This became our first class book which led to a Valentine candy math lesson.

Students were asked to pair themselves up and work on graphing and math problem solving before they ate the candies. It was interesting to watch the different ways they used for graphing and measuring. Some of the graphs started at the bottom and went up, some went from left to right, and some started from the top and moved downward. Some graphs were pie graphs, some were bar graphs and some were pictographs. The instructions were purposefully vague to allow for various interpretations. No one was telling anyone else that theirs was wrong. They were actually noticing each others with interest and positive comments. Hannah told Owen that she really liked his idea to make pictures of hearts. Bonnie and her partner decided to intentionally make their graphs opposites. Bonnie's graph went one direction and Kerry's went the other way.

When they began to measure, they measured their desks from side to side and top to bottom. They were not afraid to do things differently and be non conformists. This class seemed to have embraced the idea that there is no one right way to do things. During this activity the kids were reading the messages on the hearts and Sam asked out loud if any one else had a "fax me" heart. Several chorused that they did and Mary offered that she found a "page me"

heart. They continued sharing their heart messages with glee and a couple of girls off to the side of the room were singing softly. This was math at it's best.

There was some consternation as they got to the part that asked them to find an average. Some discussed their understanding of averaging. Some just added the four numbers and went on. Two groups settled on the idea of using the number that repeats and two other groups came to ask what it meant to average. Both myself and Ms. Worth worked with different groups to teach the meaning and method of averaging. Cara and Noreen listened and worked with me step by step. They understood and worked the first problem with me and then chose to go do the other on their own. Donald and Stan came to me next and were fine until we got to the division part. They had never done division and I let them decide what they should do. They added the numbers and got 157. Then they decided in order to divide by 4 they needed to start with something they knew about. They knew that 4 times 25 is 100 and that left them 57 more to divide. They then realized that 10 times 4 is 40 and that only left 17. So far they have 10 plus 25 which equals 35 and 17 left to divide four ways. They made 17 marks on the paper and circled groups of four giving them four groups of 4 with one left over. I showed them that the 1 is actually one of four making it the fraction $\frac{1}{4}$. Finally they had the answer, 157 divided by 4 is 39 and $\frac{1}{4}$. They were excited that they understood division and were off to do the next problem. It was enlightening to watch their process. It is also interesting for me to see that these children are at very different places in their understanding. The two girls knew how to divide with a traditional algorithm, the two boys divided in an untraditional way, and some of the others never got to the division because they never questioned the understanding of averaging. All the places these children are is okay here. We teach when the question is asked, if the

question is not asked, they are not at a place where learning will take hold. It is recognized that it is not necessary to have everyone at the same place at the same time. It is a kindness that allows them to progress at their own pace. It is kindness that allows them the time to form their own questions and not pressure them to find answers to our questions. It is kindness that allows for this exploration without the fear of being graded or compared.

It was easy to have the literature incorporate both science and social studies content, and we were pretty successful integrating math concepts. I loved the day that we stumbled on a particular math problem during a writing workshop. I was all but accosted by Tracy when I entered the classroom one day. She said, "I know you are not supposed to tell us, but could you help us? Here's our problem, we have \$.50 and have to divide it up between us four. How can we do that?" I worked with them and asked if they will give me the \$.50. I gave them each a dime back and they changed the dime for ten pennies and then each one took their two cents, only to find that there were two cents left over. Randy offered that a saw would cut through the coins, but Amy was adamant that there is always a right answer in math. Sam agreed with Amy and they went off to start over by trading their dimes in for nickels. Eventually all four accepted that it was impossible to evenly divide the \$.50 but they are still reluctant to put this finding in their math journal. Bonnie was very frustrated that the new class rule was that everything must now be written in cursive. She asked me how to spell equal. I told her there was a "q" in it and she said, "e-q-u-a-l, right? Now how do I connect the q and the u?" Amy spoke up then and announced that she was trying to figure how to get from a "b" to an "l" in cursive while she was writing the word *problem*. Amy spent so much time on the cursive that her spelling suffered. "Is it -em or -um for problem? Oh, I can't

remember the sentence I was writing!" Ms. Worth knows that it does tend to interfere with thinking but she feels pressured by the requirements for next year for them. When asked she responded with, "they will be required to write everything in cursive next year and I hope I can help ease them into it and save them some hassle." Her motives are in keeping with how to help the children. She worries over this because she understands that her philosophy and the district policies are at odds with each other and after wrestling with the concept decided to require it in the "gentlest way possible".

Learning in this environment encompasses many aspects of care and caring. It is important to understand that it takes true care to provide the opportunity for children to explore, dialogue and make mistakes. It would be so much easier to just show them how and move on. It would be easier to plan the lessons around text pages, to keep a strict schedule and abide by clock time. It takes a great deal of trust, respect and autonomy for Ms. Worth to respond to children's choices. These days were filled with expressed care by children and teacher alike.

Publishing and literacy.

Reading and writing workshop formats allowed us to follow the interests of children and still tailor the activities to meet imposed curricular district guides. Literacy is at the very heart of this classroom and Ms. Worth's philosophy. Each child publishes a book a month based on the genre and follows the steps of the writing process as they move toward publication. The "Worth Publishing Company" was founded on five principles established by Ms. Worth for publishing student-authored books:

- 1) Students learn to write by practicing writing. To see their own stories in print is exciting and motivating.

- 2) Just as reading helps writing, writing helps reading. These skills develop simultaneously. Student's become more fluent readers by writing their own books.
- 3) Students need real reasons for editing. In our class we edit for ideas, organization, word choice, fluency, voice and conventions. We discuss these traits, look at examples of writing and talk about individual work during writing conferences.
- 4) The opportunity for children to observe their books being read by other children and adults increases self-esteem and helps students think of themselves as authors and thinkers.
- 5) We also identify personally with every author we read about since we have taken similar steps in getting our stories published.

Ms. Worth involves parents in her effort to further literacy by having the Author's Fair every month to celebrate the publication of children's books. Students work each month writing, revising, editing and rewriting a story or book. This year each child has written a biography, an auto-biography, an original fairy tale, a story based on an aspect of historical fiction, a fantasy, an informational book, a realistic fiction story, a book of poetry and an A-B-C book.

Ms. Worth and I had collaborated and decided to introduce the opportunity for each child to write and illustrate an A-B-C book for the last writer's workshop project. I had purchased a hard cover blank book for each of us and we decided to let the kids choose their topic of interest. We flooded the room with our combined collection of alphabet books and introduced the concept by reading *Away From Home* by Arnold Lobel and *Goblins in Green* by Jos. A. Smith. We talked about patterns and illustrations and observations and color. I shared a format they might use and showed them my start with my

book, *Any Body Can*. The next several days were spent reading and sharing alphabet books. We all struggled with a topic. All the students participated. Linda was the first to come to a decision. Hers would be called *The Flower Alphabet*. Randy wanted to do The A-B-C's of Space and Tracy did Onomatopoeia! Gary and Noreen have changed their focus several times. Gary wanted to do super heroes but was being discouraged by Ms. Worth. He eventually settled on doing the A-B-C's of castles. Amy called her book *Names and Rhymes* and Sam Worked on the *ABC Book of Places*.

Cara did an A-B-C book that captured the spirit of literacy throughout the year. Her book was titled *Our Schoolyear an ABC Book* and is replicated here:

A is for Author Celebrations - At Author Celebrations we share the books we write each month.

B is for Big Words - Each week we have a scrambled BIG WORD. We make smaller words out of it also.

C is for castles. We made fun castles in groups, out of sugar cubes, beans and icing.

D is for division. $56 \text{ divided by } 8 = 7$.

E is for entertainment. We got to listen to the Boy's Choir and Sangre Singers. It was real entertainment.

F is for Fujita San. Fujita San from Japan came and showed us games that children play in Japan.

G is for Germany. We learned a lot about Germany during the year. Also Ms. Worth lived in Stuttgart, Germany for three year. Mutter, Bruder, Voter, Zum Geburtstag!

H is for History. Throughout the year we read several history books, such as *Back to the Day Lincoln was Shot*.

I is for ITBS Tests.

J is for Jump Rope for Heart. Most of us went and jumped rope for heart at Lewis Field.

K is for Kindergarten Buddies and Karen. We read to our kindergarten buddies every Thursday. Karen came and helped us. Sort of like a second teacher.

L is for leaf pictures. We went out on our nature trail to find leaves we could use to make animals.

M is for Math Games and Mother-Daughter Book Club. Almost every day we come in and play Math Games. They are extra fun. M is also for Mother-Daughter Book Club.

N is for New Kid. During the year we had our special friend, Randy come and join us.

O is for OSU Friends. We did alot with OSU this year! But with two of the things we did we made new friends. We got to have fun pen-pals to write to, and cool art teachers to come and teach us each Friday.

P is for Pen-Pals. When Ms. Worth visited Japan she met a new friend that speaks English. They wrote to us and we decided to be their pen-pals.

Q is for Quilts. When we visited the OSU Art Gallery we saw lots of quilts. The quilts are very pretty they are decorated with designs.

R is for Ruby Bridges Play. We did a Ruby Bridges play for black history month. We had two casts.

S is for Super Kids Day. Super Kids Day is kind of like track and field day. It was fun but the kindergarten group got rained out four

times.

T is for teachers. Of course we couldn't have school without our wonderful teachers. But we are all teachers to each other.

U is for unique. We are all unique in our own ways. But sometimes we need help so we have author's chair and give each other stars and checks.

V is for Vacation. We all love school but sometimes we need to have a little vacation. But it won't be fun if you're sick! Yuck!

W is for Writing Projects. This is a very important part of our year. Every month Ms. Worth would give us a genre and we would write a story.

X is for X-mas Centers. Each year we would go and do X-mas centers with teachers around the school. Then we would decorate the school.

Y is for You. You can make the classroom neater by helping.

Z is for Zoom. Our year went by so fast. But it seems faster when it's fun.

And now this is the end. Bye!

Cara's book truly captures the spirit of literacy and how it was perceived by the class. There are many references to the importance and impact that a literacy based classroom has on kindness, perspective-taking and care of self and others.

Care in terms of autonomy and choice

Self-governance and autonomy

It is evident that this group knows that the classroom belongs to them and

that they have a voice in the everyday happenings of their room. The evidence of ownership presides in the amount of artifacts on display of children's work and interests. Ownership can be illustrated through the ease of decision-making when it comes to getting their needs met. Children typically move classroom furniture to meet their needs. They tend to their jobs and create new jobs as needed. They decide where items should go and they know where the school vacuum cleaner is stored and when it is needed. They speak up on behalf of each other and they ask for more time without fear of tampering with the schedule. They vote and agree that majority rules on issues of contention. There are no posted rules because they chose their form of classroom governance when they voted to accept the black agenda book (See Appendix C for sample page, p. 253). This book allows that they write their concerns in the book and give it to the party that may be able to assist in changing the problem. This was sufficient to alleviate most problems. The children each had a page number in the notebook and they decided that if they were the cause of a problem, they would have to write about it in the black notebook to help them become more responsible for themselves and to understand how their actions affected others. One child's page had only one entry, it said, "I was making fun of Gary." Kerry's page showed that she had to explain herself three times.

"I was talking to Gary and Sam told me I was distracting."

"I was talking to Bonnie and Gary and distracting Ms. Worth."

"I was moving my chair and distracting Sam."

Eventually a class meeting was called by two girls to deal directly with the recurring problem of distractions. The girls approached Ms. Worth and said that a group had decided that this needed to be talked about as a whole group. On the day of this class meeting, Ms. Worth asked the students to each bring

their chair to the inside of the square. They gathered together to make a circle on the inside of their desks. They were closer together and the desks created no barrier for discussion. This formation was intentional and served the purpose of promoting openness and honesty. This particular class meeting was called specifically by two students who were concerned that the agenda book was not working as it was designed to work. The agenda book was created by the class as a method to have members of the class be accountable for their actions.

Once the class was seated, Ms. Worth went over the protocol for class meetings. She reminded them about the use of the gavel. Only the person with the gavel had the floor and they always start by just passing the gavel around and starting the meeting on a positive note by saying a compliment. Cara began by telling about the custodian who came in to thank them for picking up their room so nicely. Cara told how it was nice to hear that the custodian noticed and it made her feel good. The gavel was passed around the circle and several different ideas emerged. They mentioned that they appreciated when writing time was quiet. Mary and Cara were appreciated for straightening the art supplies. Owen thanked Jerry for doing his job for him when he was sick. Sam mentioned that Randy put all the books away.

Noreen began then by saying, "We need time and date in the black agenda book because two boys names keep coming up over and over and we need to stop people from mocking us when we are writing in the book!"

This began a marathon classroom meeting where it becomes apparent that these students understand that there is space in this classroom to speak honestly. The physical space is merely a precursor to the emotional space to speak openly. The discussion was passionate and yet always respectful.

This meeting was specifically about space and how distractions were bothersome. The black agenda book had been established by the class as a way to communicate ones needs without interrupting the entire class and helping classmates become aware and take responsibility for their own actions. The group had chosen to put their individual complaints in writing in the book and give it directly to the person responsible for the discomfort. The person would then reply and either explain the event or hope to become better aware of problem areas. The problems that arose were troublesome and Ms. Worth had been approached to help them solve these problems by holding a class meeting.

The conversation follows:

Noreen: "It takes all my time to write all the stuff in the black book."

Kerry: "Maybe we should be telling our parents or something."

Gary: "I agree, the black book isn't working, some people in the book keep on distracting."

Noreen: "It is working for some, so we should keep it, but not for everyone."

Zina: "it seems like some people want their name in the book!"

Kerry: "Tapping (pencils) and talking is distracting. I ask them to stop but they don't, I give them the black book but they just toss it. They just need to write the time and the date and just do it without talking about it. I wasted time just talking and I didn't get my spelling done!"

Sam: "Some kids are using the black book with no cause - it's rude, both are losing time."

Gary: "People are just saying "you are distracting me, even when they're not."

Cara: "The kids who are complaining are distracting me more than the two they are complaining about! The whole thing about them flying planes."

Jerry: "All I hear is Jerry and Gary and nobody else!"

Bonnie: "Too many kids are picking up on little things that don't matter."

Several kids begin talking all at once and nothing is distinguishable.

Ms. Worth: "I can only listen to the person who is holding the gavel."

Bonnie finishes by saying: "Instead of writing in the black book, maybe we could give a sign."

Blaine: "I agree with the others. You shouldn't start an argument when you get the black book, and there is no need to tell the other person what to write."

Ms. Worth: She recaps what she is hearing for them. "I'm hearing you say that 1) the black book may not be working for some, 2) specific date and time are needed to see patterns, 3) we may need a sign or a word, 4) people don't like wasting their own time to talk to others and 5) there should be no argument when you are presented with the black book. Did I miss any other points?"

Noreen: "Distractions are more than just talking. Jerry, it isn't our fault cause you're making noises with the paper planes and...sometimes there are two different stories about the same thing and I think we need to think of other ways besides the black book."

Ms. Worth: "If you think the black book is not working, would you please show me by raising your hand?" (Lots of hands go up) "I have an idea, would it work if we had a small notebook and we each have our own?"

Noreen: "Some only have one or none in the black book so we wouldn't all need a black book."

Mary: "If we don't have many entries, we could keep the black book for them, but some with more would need their own black book."

Sam: "I agree with that."

Jerry: "Me, too. I'm willing to buy black books. I can bring some in for us."

Zina: "I agree, those who have a lot should have a notebook of their own, they should learn to tune people out. The people who don't have a lot now, probably won't have a lot by May. They won't need their own."

Hannah: "We need an individual notebook for people that need them and then have an end of the year check to see if it helped, then you would know next year if it works."

The decision was unanimously reached to get individual notebooks for two and allow the main notebook to remain for the others. This group does not force their ideas on others, nor do they try to convince others of their way of thinking. Comments are valued and they merely share their thoughts. They are encouraged to discuss incidents that cause concern in order to better understand their responsibility to themselves and the class. There are no stickers, tokens or candy given as rewards, and no sad face stickers on behavior charts or time out places in use.

Autonomy is demonstrated as the class establishes the need for a meeting and the agenda for discussion. Everyone is involved and they tend to the problem through discussion of facts and feelings. The meeting is not directed by Ms. Worth. She does not provide them with solutions. They decide on a course of action and the means to try it out. They call for class agreement and set the new guidelines for governing themselves in place. This class created their own laws and fashioned their own government taking all relevant

factors into account. Autonomy was not hindered by the teacher. She encouraged students to develop their own rules by refraining from coercion and control.

Collaboration and autonomy

Mostly choice was incorporated with issues of autonomy. Students chose how to accomplish tasks or problems. When they were having relational problems with friends or classmates they were brought together to choose how to best work together. Blaine and Jerry decided that it would be best if they were not partners for the parachute activity. Sam and Kerry asked Noreen to mediate their difficulties over a disagreement about the camera. Linda and Zena talked about the problem with the classroom library and decided to let someone else work with them. All the girls in the class were having a disagreement about the creation of a club and club membership and as a group they chose to meet during lunch recess to work out a compromise. Nobody fixed problems for children. They were encouraged to choose their own methods to create dialogue and perspective taking to help reach solutions or compromises. Relational autonomy manifested itself as the right to choose who you worked with. Rarely were partners or groups assigned. Children were trusted to make wise choices. This proved most effective when common interest guided the choice. I was amazed that Gary and Jerry were allowed to team up and then surprised when they worked effectively together. It was also nice to see that they rarely practiced exclusionary tactics with each other. There was a fair amount of time dedicated to cooperative endeavors and partner sharing in the room. Individual learning was the exception rather than the rule.

During a science study of simple machines we capitalized on both their autonomy and their writing ability along with the interest of working with other

classes. We partnered our class with a fifth grade class in the building that was studying inventions and inventors. This seemed like a natural pairing and I got them started by sharing a book about inventions and how they work called, *Until I Met Dudley: How Everyday Things Really Work* by Robert McGough. Each of our kids paired up with a fifth grader and went off to work out the details. They had to decide on a machine, appliance or invention, make up a tale about how it worked and then find out how it actually did work. They wrote up their findings to share orally and put their work together in a class book to be shared again and again. It was fun to watch the process students went through including the “get to know” process. This took several meetings of the two classes and caused some real thought about obtaining information. The kids researched helicopters, lighted shoes, telephones, garbage disposals, cement trucks and Zina and her partner Cindy found out about the toilet. My personal favorite was the research and story that accompanied the workings of the fax machine (See Appendix C, p. 277 - 281). Noreen worked with two fifth grade girls and they actually faxed a company that makes fax machines and asked for information. They received, by fax, a schematic of a fax machine. They struggled to understand and finally simplified their understanding for sharing by writing:

The Fax Machine

Once upon every day there lives an evil elf that receives messages from the Rogers family. Since he has so many letters he decided to hire a kangaroo to steal little people from little York City. Then the kangaroo puts the little York people in her pouch. She takes them back to the evil elf and he ties their feet together and sticks a stamp onto each of their feet. Then when the machine sends a message the elfs copy it by jumping when the evil elf calls their

alphabet letter. When the letter is finished the evil elf signs the big person's signature, then he whistles for his cat, Rombo, to come pick the letter up. When the cat arrives the evil elf tells him the address and he delivers it to the other elf in the fax machine at the destination. The elf there pushes the letter through the slot and yells, "Beep, Beep, you have mail."

Until I met Dudley ... and he told me the real story of the fax machine. You insert the paper into the slot. The machine turns your letter into a code, and it sends it by telephone wire to the place it's supposed to be. The other fax machine decodes the code, and turns it back into a letter to be read by the receiver.

These students were allowed to use the school telephone book, telephone and fax machine to get their information. They were allowed to think beyond the textbook and the schoolhouse to come up with their report.

Blaine and his fifth grade partner had another problem, they could not find out how a garbage disposal worked. They finally decided to call a plumber. The plumber was delighted and explained over the phone while the boys listened and took notes. Their final version (See Appendix C, p.276 - 279) of how the garbage disposal works was:

Food goes down the pipe and mixes with water and gets chopped up by the blades. When you turn the switch it turns on the motor which turns the blades, which chops the food.

The story also has a picture with the sink and all the working parts complete with arrows and explanations.

We teachers served only as helpers throughout this project. We did collect books about inventions and we did provide passes to the office for

phone privileges. I helped with the revision stage when asked, and also with some specific editing concerns. It was important for us to allow ample time for them to get to know each other, to discover what their interests were, to find the information and then go through the writing process together. This project took several afternoons and it was necessary to juggle schedules and allow for student movement between the two classrooms. When all the stories were completed the two classes came together to celebrate and share. I was teacher and researcher and pedagogue and put together a class book for each class to keep. Each book contained every story, the drawings and the factual report that went with it. One of the fifth graders designed a cover for us and we each signed the author's page. This proved to be a book that was selected for nearly every DEAR time. We learned how important it was for students to revisit their learning experience.

This was a project with choice and very little teacher direction. Teams chose their topics, their method of research and their manner of display. They made decisions through consensus and solved their own problems. It was very interesting to watch. The third graders were not dominated by the fifth grader. The teams functioned as equal partners and took equal responsibility for the product. There were many innovative approaches to the research.

Choice and autonomy

Choice was another theme that was a key to autonomy. Children had choices. They chose to work together, sometimes in pairs, sometimes in small groups. They chose to read and write together. They chose to play their math games with others that were interested in the game. They chose to do research and reports with others who were interested in the same subject and they chose to share their BIG WORDs with their neighbors. At the start of the year they

chose their seats, but seating began to be assigned after the first couple of weeks to help them interact with different partners and friends. For a time Ms. Worth felt it necessary to seat them in a boy-girl arrangement to aid in a stronger community and more diverse grouping. She felt she needed to help mix the group up due to the fact that more than half of them had been together in the looping situation. These children tended to flock together and she wanted to help stretch them to become more inclusive.

Students also had say in their time frames and their schedule. Time was not static and the schedule was flexible to meet their unfolding needs. Many times students would work together to negotiate a better choice of time or schedule. They also had the choice to work on projects at home or during class time. This choice was given with sincerity and student choices were honored. Randy had spelling that he was working on and he asked if he could take it home so he could help Blaine with the airplanes. Ms. Worth let him decide saying, "Randy, Yes, you may decide but think about your schedule at home tonight, too." She was helping him take all relevant factors into account and then trusting his decision.

Ms. Worth lets her students decide on an individual basis whether to stay indoors or go out for recess. She ate her lunch in her room so that if children choose to come in to play games, work on the computer, write, read or catch up, they could. Ms. Worth then used this time to either help or play with children. I personally benefited and learned a magic trick when Paul stayed in and a new card game when Hannah stayed indoors.

Choice was also exercised throughout the literacy aspects of the class. Students chose their own reading materials for DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) and they chose the read-aloud selections by vote. They chose their own

writing topics within a given genre.

At the start of the year students had free choice to be wherever in the room they wanted to be for DEAR time. It was not long before some dispute broke out over who could sit in the easy chair during DEAR. The class called a class meeting and came up with the decision to assign places for DEAR reading based on your job for the week. It was decided that whoever was serving as President should get the comfortable chair as their place for the week. Other choice places coincided with the job that was held. For instance, the mathematician had the choice of laying down in front of the math games area and the paper passer could choose to sit on the stairs.

Choices, such as using the bathroom and getting a drink were left to the individual on an as needed basis. Choices of who to stand next to in the lunch line were never forced upon nor denied for children. When bad choices were made they were used as a stepping stone for discussion on what could or should have been done differently. These instances were never used as a chance to humiliate or judge a child. Ms. Worth would ask what happened and then listen. In one instance with Jerry her stance and facial features remained non-judgemental as she asked him, "If you could change something to make this feel better what might it be?" After hearing his response, "I will ask first before I borrow something". She stated matter-of-factly, "Yeah, you're right. I think that would make the whole thing feel differently."

Children contribute to the class through the choices they make. Ms. Worth does not feel obligated to manage every detail of the day. Through the choices children make they govern their own values, beliefs and ideas and in essence are led to question and examine their own choices. According to DeVries (1997) "simply obeying others will never lead to the kind of reflection

necessary for commitment to internal or autonomous principles of moral judgment.” (p. 6)

Care in terms of empathy and helping

Empathy

Taking perspective, caring for and about each other is relational in nature. The best examples of this come with the unit on poetry. The students expressed sensitivity and caring through their poems. Ms. Worth began each poetry mini-lesson session by issuing an invitation to join her as she recited:

Keep a poem in your pocket
and a picture in your head
and you'll never feel lonely
at night when you're in bed.

The little poem will sing to you
the little picture bring to you
a dozen dreams to dance to you
at night when you're in bed.

SO--

Keep a picture in your pocket
and a poem in your head
and you'll never feel lonely
at night when you're in bed.

This is a poem by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers and became the signal to announce writer's workshop for the next month. In three days time the kids had memorized the poem and when either Ms. Worth or myself began to recite

it, they would grab their poetry folders, say the words along with us and move to the carpet area. I brought in some of my favorite poetry books to add to the extensive collection of books gathered by Ms. Worth and the room was filled with poetry books. The students were introduced to many different types of poetic forms through a daily mini lesson. They experimented with a new form every day for the next three weeks. Each mini lesson was introduced by reading poems and talking about different poets. One such mini lesson revolved around limericks and concrete poetry. Ms. Worth read from the children's book of poetry entitled *Lots of Limericks* by Myra Cohn Livingston and *Splish, Splash* by Joan Bransfield Graham. We talked about the form of a limerick and introduced using "a's and b's" to designate the rhyme scheme. We also talked about the shape of concrete poems. This was a long introductory session as the students were encouraged to share what they knew or remembered about poetry. No child was rushed and Ms. Worth did not move on until everyone who had something to share had been recognized. I sat on the floor with the kids and felt honored that both Jenny and Gary had joined me. The three of us were close together and shared one folder. Just before lunch we broke up to return to our desks to try writing either a concrete poem or limerick. Most everyone wrote both kinds but we had time to share only a couple before we had to rush to get our hands washed and get to lunch.

Throughout our poetry month we worked toward making our own books of poetry. We experimented with many different forms and had to choose at least five to put through the revising and editing process to publish in our finest cursive handwriting. Bonnie proved to be a prolific poet and struggled over the decision of which poems were better than others. Eventually she chose to publish all sixteen of her poems because, "Well, really, they're all too good!"

During this month, it was discovered that many poems reflected feelings and emotions. The five senses poetic form and the the 5 W's poems leant themselves to children's definitions of kindness (See Appendix C. p.). Sam writes:

Kindness is yellow
It smells like fresh cut grass
It tastes like chocolate
It sounds like a song
And feels like a soft dog.

Linda's version is:

Kindness is yellow
It tastes like candy
It smells like a daffodil
It sounds like an angel
And it feels like a pillow.

Amy also chose kindness as her theme for color and writes:

Kindness is a light pink color
Kindness smells like cinnamon
And it tastes like a sweet apple
It sounds like a soft-tuned bell
And it feels like silk.

I showed my delight and shared my kindness poem with Amy and asked her to tell me what it meant when she said that kindness smells like cinnamon or sounds like a bell. She replied, "It's good, you know, it's fair and being kind makes me feel good, like hearing a bell makes me feel good and eating a sweet apple."

Zina also wrote about kindness. Her poem was:

Kindness is loving.
It smells like a flower,
It tastes like sweet chocolate
It sounds like a choir,
And feels soft and huggable.

When I asked Zina what she meant by her poem, she eloquently said, "It's the way the whole world should be." I pursued her understanding further and asked what the world would be like if everyone were kind. She hesitated for a moment and said, "No one would have to cry and feel bad. Everybody would be nice to everybody else and everybody would be friends with everybody. There would be no animal shelters cause all animals would have a good home."

Another poetic form that invited children to express their understanding of an emotion was the Recipe Poem (See Appendix C, p. 254). They were asked to choose an emotion and write a recipe of the ingredients that would be needed. Kerry wrote her recipe for care:

Recipe for Care

4 people

1/4 cup of sugar

3 teaspoons of helpfulness

1/2 cup trips

Mix 4 people with 1/4 cup of sugar and 1/2 cup of trips in the car and 3 teaspoons of helpfulness (after the trip).

She shared her story of her family just returning from a great trip but no one wanted to help her unpack the car when they got home.

Zina wrote a recipe for thoughtfulness:

Recipe for Thoughtfulness

Ingredients: 2 cups of sharing

3 cups of caring

2 Tablespoons of loyalty

2 Teaspoons of helpfulness

Directions: Take 2 cups of caring, carefully mix with sharing. After that, put in 2 Tablespoons of loyalty and bake until golden brown. Sprinkle on the helpfulness.

Cara and Sam both wrote recipes for kindness:

Kindness by Cara

Ingredients: 2 cups of care
3 cups of helpfulness
1 cup of friendship
5 cups of understanding

Directions: Pour in 5 cups of understanding, dump in 3 cups of helpfulness. Blend while sifting in 2 cups of care. Then sprinkle with 1 cup of friendship. Serves two people and best if eaten together.

Sam writes:

Kindness Recipe

6 cups niceness
4 cups generosity
3 cups of not being mean
Bake at 375 till golden brown.

I asked Cara why there was so many cups of understanding. She offered that if no one tried to understand there would be no kindness. She said, "You have to know how someone feels, then you can care and be helpful and have friendship." (referring to her poem)

I was surprised by the poems in several ways. The first being the interest in each new type of poem introduced through the reading and mini lesson. Ms. Worth and I always wrote when the children did and we were as eager to share as were they. There was much groaning when we had to stop sharing and wash hands for lunch. Nearly every day, every student wanted to share what they had written, boys and girls. It was Larry who pointed out that I always started and got to share mine first. He was polite, but strong in his innuendo that perhaps that was not fair. I was also surprised that there was such autonomy demonstrated. There were few conversations of what each other was writing. They did not borrow ideas from each other. They did want to share though. Each day I heard a lot of commands of, "Listen." and "Listen to mine".

And I heard some revising. Gary asked Jerry, "Does this sound right?" and Hannah wanted to know another word for comfort, while Jenny was asking for help in spelling the word scenery. Noreen was all over the room reading and rereading her poems. Owen was ever vigilant as he rewrote his favorites in cursive struggling more over the mechanics than enjoying the word play. Donald got all of his poems started and turned to Paul to help him finish. Paul wrote his poems quickly and seemed to really enjoy this month but he struggled with the spelling while making his final copies for his book. I actually think he changed a word or two to words that he knew for certain how to spell so that he would not have to look them up. Jerry has started on medication this month to help his ADHD and he has seemed lethargic and both Ms. Worth and I have moved to help him get started. I also took him out on the stairs to work just with me so that he could keep motivated. We were never out there long before Donald joined us and this helped him to finish, too.

I had to rewrite one of my poems because I forgot to write it in cursive. This was a fun month with everyone sharing joyously. Mary came with special greetings. This was because our relationship had become so warm since sharing her tears as the Artist. Bonnie was animated with our relationship since she had tricked me into saying the Big Word. Hannah and Cara worked on their color poems and I shared *Hailstones and Halibut Bones* with them. Cara was intent on fitting her poem on one page and she was crossing out entire lines. I really questioned her deletions and we edited together. She eventually agreed to keep most of the lines and to write smaller! Amy always managed to make her way to me and get under my arm usually with a question about spelling. So much activity marked these days. The young poets were moving at their own pace and sharing freely and joyously. The communal feeling enveloped the

room. Poems reflected feelings and information, geography and biography. Learning was at it's finest and the essence of care and caring was evident. Their ability to reflect and verbalize their appreciative understanding was indicative of the prevalent sensitivity to others.

Helping

Helping comes in some very typical ways as friends help friends. When constructing paper planes we followed the video instructions one at a time and did not move on until everyone had completed each step. Ms. Worth took control of the pausing and rewinding and I moved about the room helping. The instructions were complex and though we did not finish that day, we got pretty far. There was a lot of sharing, a lot of helping hands, and again, very little show of frustration. They were patient and cooperative. When Zina had to leave early, I watched to see that Linda received help from others. Mary and Amy were worked together and were good about moving around to help others. Cara and Hannah got a little behind because their first fold was backwards, but Mary got them caught up. Not once did anyone say, "Here, let me do it." Jerry and Gary, however, asked me twice to fold for them. They seemed to need reinforcement because they asked me repeatedly, "Is this right?" It always was. The afternoon sped by and we were all surprised when the clock showed that it was time to go home. Owen, The clock watcher, was especially surprised and asked, "How did that happen?".

The following morning, we started right in. The atmosphere in the classroom seemed stressed, due possibly to the raucous thunderstorm going on outside. Bonnie was finishing the plane for Kerry because she was absent, and seemed uncertain. She repeatedly asked, "Karen, is this right?" or "Will you help me?" I assured her that she was doing fine and she told me that she

did not want to “mess it up for Kerry”. Noreen and Cara were working well together, sharing directions. Noreen would do one, Cara would do the next. Hannah and Sam were not faring so well. Sam had taken over the assembly of the plane and I heard Hannah say as much. After several attempts to participate with Sam, she gave up and I saw her at her desk reading a book. This day found Donald and Jenny working with each other. One watching, the other folding. There was more insecurity throughout the class but I lean toward thinking it had a lot to do with the weather combined with the fact that this was a continuation from yesterday and they were eager to be done and disappointed that they would not be able to fly their planes because of the weather.

I felt good because Bonnie let me drape my arm around her today. She is a child that does not like to be touched and generally shrugs off attention. I was talking with Zina and Linda and just naturally put my arm around her when she came up next to me. She did not shrug off but I was careful to move on when the conversation ended so as not to make her uncomfortable. I felt that this was a breakthrough for us and I think perhaps it may have been her way of acknowledging that I understood her need for extra help today and gave her my attention.

We finished the study of flight with the construction of helicopters and we emphasized the concepts of hypothesis, variable and constant, and testing in the experimentation process. Each child made three helicopters changing only one variable related to material. Everyone jumped into the measuring and cutting process making many decisions to share and help one another. Lunch time snuck up in a hurry and caught us all by surprise again. We dropped everything where it was and picked up where we left off after lunch. After lunch they just walked in and started measuring and cutting. One of the problems was

the school scissors they were using would not cut plastic or cloth easily. There were three pair of teacher scissors that needed to be shared and even that proved slow going as the teacher scissors were difficult for little hands to control. Blaine and Jerry had figured out that they could use their paper parachute as a model to measure their plastic and cloth. Gary watched and announced, "I like your idea." Most of the others were using the ruler and a marker. Gary was getting behind because he was using a water based marker and his marks kept wiping off. Owen was quiet but focused on his efforts. Mary had figured out that if someone held the plastic taut, it would cut faster. Amy learned by watching Mary and began moving around the room holding for others.

As a pedagogue researcher, I recognized the strong literature and writing connection that prevailed with these students. It became my job to capitalize on these particular strengths in further understanding their understanding of care and caring. It was also my intention to allow for curricular themes to unfold and to be sensitive to the interests of the class and individuals. This, in essence, led to our next venture into photography, art and kindness, and generated the strong theme of helping as evidenced in their photography and writing.

I had noticed their interest in photography when I heard them talk about the "Student of the Week" pictures, Sam had asked Bonnie about who had taken some of the pictures and that generated into a conversation of cameras. I asked Ms. Worth about this and she wanted to present photography as part of her art curriculum, so together we planned. I started by reading the book, *Prairie Visions: The Life and Times of Solomon Butcher* by Pam Conrad, and *Click* by Gail Gibbons. By this time the kids knew that they were going to get to take pictures and the excitement grew. I brought out the cameras to share. The

Gibbons book led us into discussions about posing and looking directly at the camera. We decided to try and catch people doing kind things instead of asking them to pose for pictures. We also talked about the physical act of taking pictures and how sun, shade, distance and flash affected picture taking. We got the cameras out and checked out the workings based on the Gibbons book. We practiced holding it and looking through the window. We decided on a system for keeping track of who took which pictures from which camera, and then devised a fair way to ensure that each class member would have the opportunity to have the cameras out at recess.

There was some discussion on what might constitute a caring action but that seemed to be the least of their concerns. They wanted to know the wheres and whens of this project. Where could they take pictures? When could they take pictures? Could they take the camera home? Could they use it at recess? The next several days proved to be fun as they were talking about taking pictures and catching classmates being nice. I read the book *Through our Eyes: Poems and Pictures about Growing Up* by Hopkins and Dunn and we talked about the poems being about the pictures and that it fit right in with poetry month. I then gave them their developed pictures. The culmination of this project was to have each student choose a photograph that they snapped, draw the same picture adding details to help tell the story, and then to write an explanation or poem that would go with it. The prevailing theme that dominated the children's thinking in their photography was that kindness is synonymous with helping. Kerry wrote a great poem that went along with her photograph of Linda pitching in to help her with the librarian's job (See Appendix C, p. 251):

Books

I have all these books to put away

What a day, what a day!

It's nice and clear

That I need some help over here.

Oh, Linda, Hi - You're going to help me?

Thank You!

Wow! Now it's all done, thanks again.

Now I can go to piano.

Cara takes a photograph and makes a drawing of Linda, Noreen and Hannah (See Appendix C, p. 252) working on a Math Jobs chart and writes:

Hannah was having trouble with her math,

Friends who were done wanted to help.

They pointed out the mistakes she had made,

Helping her understand, so she'd get a better grade.

Paul shared his struggle with perspective as he sees Donald busy elsewhere in the room while they are getting ready to leave for the day and I catch him being kind and snap his picture. Based on this photograph, he writes:

It's his problem.

Not should I put up his chair.

Should I be nice.

But it's his problem, not myn.

I have to get my stuff. It's his problem.

Should I be nice? It's his problem, not myn.

Should I be nice? I'll be nice.

I'll put up his chair.

As a culmination to this project, I put all their photos and pictures and

poems together in a class scrapbook to be shared and left with the children in their classroom. When I shared their *Kindness Book of Photography*, I asked that each one read and tell about their page in the book. Some of the themes that emerged from the classroom showed their understanding of kindness. They alluded to kindness as being helpful, sharing, having compassion, caring for animals, being honest, taking responsibility and making decisions with thoughts about other people.

Most of the pictures and poems were about helping in some capacity, helping friends who were hurt or helping with jobs or school work. Noreen wrote about caring for her pet ducks and that they needed her to feed them, water them, clean them and play with them. Larry wrote about his reading time with his kindergarten buddy, and Gary wrote about a Japanese visitor to the classroom who shared her culture with them, and taught them how to do origami cranes and to say thank you in Japanese. Tracy wrote about a fifth grader who brought in her snake to saying: "I thought that was nice, so I will do stuff like that. And that was sharing." They often took this book during DEAR time to read and reread. They spent a lot of time looking at both the photos and the drawn pictures. This group of children were involved in both the reading and writing aspects of literacy and their ability to express their thoughts was evident.

Another tumor helping is important is "job" time. This class of students elected to identify 20 jobs, thereby guaranteeing that everyone had a job. They do their jobs at 3:30 allowing fifteen minutes a day to get jobs done before leaving. At the beginning of the year they had a class meeting and identified areas that needed attention as well as a system of rotation that would afford everyone an equal opportunity to participate at each job. The working of the

classroom was important to all of them. The job rotation and time elements stirred quite a discussion about cheating and doing their fair share of work. The jobs were agreed upon, and names that related to the task were assigned. They agreed on rotation after one week in spite of some suggestions for both longer and shorter periods. They also agreed that a clothes pin rotation would be used. Each child's initials were put on a clothes pin and drawn from a hat and pinned to the job on the chart. After one week, each clothes pin would move down the list of jobs with the bottom one going to the top and becoming "president". The jobs reflected their interest in keeping their space organized and neat through shared effort. Their job list included the name, the area to keep orderly and a description. It is as follows:

- 1) President - chair - pencil sharpener
- 2) Secretary - desk (Ms. Worth) - lunch count and attendance
- 3) Meteorologist - sink - calls time and temp.
- 4) Librarian - library - reshelves books
- 5) Poet - computer desk - shares poems at the end of the day
- 6) Reader/Author - author chair - Monday read a favorite book
- 7) Scientist - Friend of the Week - picks an experiment to share
with the class
- 8) Artist - By BIG WORD - in charge of the art supplies
- 9) Mathematician - math games - math games
- 10) Musician - where paper is - plays music during cleanup
- 11) Athlete - computer desk - in charge of class sports equipment
- 12) Paper Passer - stairs - Thursday Folder
- 13) Speller - by graphing - helps pass out BIG WORD letters
- 14) Coat Clerk - breezeway - helps keep the breezeway clean

- 13) Speller - by graphing - helps pass out BIG WORD letters
- 14) Coat Clerk - breezeway - helps keep the breezeway clean
- 15) Lunch Box Carrier - corner of computer table
- 16) Lunch Box Carrier - corner of computer table
- 17) Door Holder - by door
- 18) Custodian - by books - helps clean at the end of the day
- 19) Substitute - circle table - helps in place of any absent member
of class
- 20) Substitute - circle table - see above (See Appendix C)

The list was generated by the class to meet their needs, and reflected their care toward their shared space. Two areas came to the attention of the class immediately with problems. They were very concerned with keeping the books in order and recognized that this was going to be a major task. They titled this job, "librarian" and decided that a receptacle for holding books while they waited to be shelved was necessary. A blue container was put in front of the chapter book shelves and finished and returned books were put there and reshelved by the librarian before going home. This would assure that their book area was kept tidy and in order.

This system worked for some time before it became an issue to call a class meeting. The librarian did not have enough time to get so many books shelved in a mere fifteen minutes. They talked the problem out and reached agreement that some other jobs took less time and it was acceptable to help the librarian if and only if your job was really done. At this meeting the artist also lodged a complaint that everyone was just throwing their art supplies at the bins and he could not be expected to keep it all straight. Everyone agreed to be more careful and to add another person as Artist because Randy was new to

year. In April I had brought a project for the class and they were delighted to see that I had also brought markers. They explained to me that the art area was off limits for the rest of the week. The decision was made by the Artists for the week. The shared area was such a mess each day that the two Artists felt that they could not keep up or be held responsible for the mess. They decided to let the entire class experience not having the convenience of the art area, in order to impress upon them the need to be responsible for it's upkeep. The Librarians were considering the same dire consequences. The problem escalated two days later when Mary rushed from the room crying.

I was very interested in the Secretary position because they were to keep the teacher's desk tidy. I was assured that originally this job was to be overseen by the teacher. This was the intent but it never panned out that way. Each week's Secretary would straighten piles and make sure that staplers had staples and the pens were in the container and that paper clips, etc. were in the appropriate place. The teacher's desk was just another area of the room that needed attention.

At the end of each day, when jobs were finished and the room looked ready, they would move to the bottom of the steps and do our "Hug or Handshake" ritual. The class space was always ready for the next day. The room was treasured and cared for by the occupants and every child knew that he had contributed in a meaningful way.

Children helped children, they accepted their responsibility toward the welfare and upkeep of the classroom and each other. They enjoyed helping and did not need to be coerced to help. They were not extrinsically motivated by stickers and smiling faces or tokens to be traded in at the end of each week. They truly liked how it felt to help another. Children defined care as helping.

They saw helping as the proof that someone cared. There was a lot of caring in this room.

Conclusion

This was a class that cared. A class that established care through community, mutual respect, autonomy and choice, literacy, empathy and help. This is a class who established relationship as the cornerstone of care. Themes were identified and examined. As I reflect and write, it comes to me that relationality was the component that drew the themes together. The relevance of relationship in this class needs to be underscored. Is it possible to teach relationality to preservice teachers? Is it possible to reconstruct the relationships among this group to pass on to other groups? Can we define care in the classroom to be replicated, packaged and sold as a program? No, but we can open the dialogue.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTIONS

Teacher, come on outside!
I'll race you to the seesaw!
No, you won't fall off!
I'll show you how!
Don't be afraid, teacher.
Grab my hand and follow me.
You can learn all over again! . . .

Albert Cullum

This chapter presents a reflection on what it means to have studied a caring classroom from the perspective of a pedagogue researcher. Being truly involved in the lifeworld of this classroom has made the essence of care more a part of who I have become. I was more than a participant observer. I was an integral part of the daily felt experience with these children. My life is forever changed by this association. I have grown in understanding, I have learned new questions to ask. I carry with me new friends and warm remembrances. My life is now interwoven with the thoughts and inspirations of Ms. Worth. We shared laughter, tears, frustration and planning. We shared the love of children. We shared books and learning. We studied together. We planned together.

We shared insights and helped each other sort through the complexities of classroom experiences. We giggled like school girls and turned off the record button more than once during the recorded interviews. And we have reflected together and separately. From reflection comes queries.

How is a caring classroom created? Is it created? Who creates it? Does it just happen? Who cares? Does it matter? What part do parents have?

Reflectively, care is not taught - it is lived, absorbed. In this classroom there is no conflict resolution program, no discipline plan, no token system of rewards, no blackline masters or lesson plans to promote prosocial behaviors. In this classroom, there is autonomy, community, mutual respect and literacy. Do these things give rise to care or is it that caring gives rise to these things? How can we tell? Is it the establishment of opportunities to practice caring and the genuine encounter of caring practices that ultimately lead to the creation of a caring classroom? Do autonomy, community, literacy and mutual respect contribute to the practice of care?

Autonomy - as it relates to care

The class was autonomous. It was self governing. The need for class rule creation never surfaced. Ms. Worth waited for the inevitable call for rules that had accompanied her prior classes. No one clamored for rules. The sharing of voice during class meetings and the knowledge that meetings could be called whenever and by whomever needed seemed sufficient. There was never occasion to establish a time out place or a reward system. Praise was also never used to get students to conform. Praise was given genuinely with delight, and then usually shared either on the spot or at an arranged time. It was believed that

Even our positive responses often merely addict students to repeating their most successful tricks. Both praise and blame set students to looking to other people for definitions of the self. Both discourage creative problem solving because you can't solve problems in new ways when you have an eye on what "they" might think (O'Reilly, 1993, p.49).

The lack of competitive practices was purposeful. This was due to the stated belief and philosophy of Ms. Worth. She was ever watchful that the spirit of competition was never a factor in her classroom. There were no contests or prizes. She did not participate in any of the common commercial programs that offered pizza for reading the most books or district spelling or geography bees. She never had the students enter writing contests. When the school had contests for selling goods to raise money for the PTO, she handled it professionally and matter-of-factly. She sent the information home to parents in the Thursday folder without taking class time to promote the sales or prizes. She did not announce the amount of sales that came in each day as some others did. She collected the envelopes and sent them to the PTO without announcements.

The students had a games area and sometimes chose to remain indoors during recess to play. Game playing was also a major part of the math program, but winning was never the focus and many of the games were non competitive in nature. She did not play Around the World or Quizmo with multiplication facts. The kids played cooperative games like Salute and War to learn Math facts.

The feeling of collaboration was promoted in this setting and the standard formula seemed to be that if someone needed something, they got it without having to compete. Attention was the most sought after item and it was

freely given whenever possible and by whoever was available. I feel strongly that the absence of grades and tests had a lot to do with the overall absence of competition. Assessment procedures that were used were conferences, anecdotal records, children's writing, projects and observations.

A spirit of collaboration and cooperation existed in a natural way. The cooperative efforts were never prescribed with a job and title for each member of an imposed grouping. Groups and partners were formed many times by interest even over more typically social reasons. This is not to say that some cliques did not exist in the room, or that boys chose to work with a boy more often than with a girl. But interestingly enough groupings were often a matter of who was next to whom. The children had many choices within the context of their day and their curriculum. The students assumed an increasingly independent decision-making role in their own education.

There were also procedures and routines that had been established by the group and were adhered to. The black book was one of these. The choice of jobs, time frames for each and what each entailed became a routine. There were specific time frames agreed upon for DEAR and it could only be extended, never shortened. Reading places for DEAR time were designated and agreed upon by the group. The procedures for math games were established by the players to be reliant on time rather than a per game format. If you wanted to play a game that someone else had you had to wait until their fifteen minutes was up. The procedures for writing workshop were set, too, unless you needed to be researching further or editing for content or mechanics. These were what we called loose procedures.

Class meetings were used to discuss discomforts and issues of injustice. Class meetings could be initiated by teacher or student and ended when

agreements were reached. Some of these meetings dealt with establishing procedures, others dealt with decisions that were controversial. I was witness to three such meetings and none ended in punishment or imposed consequences. Class meetings ended in agreements and accepted routines or procedures. The meetings were democratic in nature and each child had opportunity to be heard. Self governance was one key to the collaborative endeavors in this classroom.

Autonomy cannot be mandated. It cannot be taught. It must be lived and lived in relationship with self and others. Is autonomy created? In this classroom, autonomy was allowed to develop. Self-regulation was promoted by all members of the class. The teacher did not fix things, but she allowed them the time and setting to fix things on their own. She empathized with their feelings saying, " I'm sorry, do you think it would help to talk to_____. Please feel free to do that." One time I heard her ask, "Do you think that is something that needs to be fixed?" followed by "Who might be able to fix it?". The children engaged in discussion with each other and relied on agreements made with each other. In essence, they governed themselves, collectively and individually.

Would this constitute the creation or evolution of autonomy? And did the group dynamics result in individual autonomy? Was Jenny ever autonomous? Did she need to be? Is being autonomous synonymous with being caring? Having shared the lived experience of this place I would say that autonomy impacts caring in that children take risks toward growth. They take risks because that do not fear belittlement, sarcasm or imposed punishments. They experience the effects of their own choices. They take responsibility for their own decisions and blaming others is unusual. As in the case of Cara and

Mary, their decision to stay away from each other caused them more pain than the problem itself. They had mutually agreed on this and had to decide that it was a bad decision and then work together to find another solution.

Children in this room had choices to help with feelings and problems.

Part of being autonomous is the ability to see other perspectives and to understand that others have feelings and that some decisions impact others. It is this ability to take these factors into account when making decisions that generates caring attitudes. The narrative vignettes from this classroom help to support the idea that autonomy in the classroom does generate authentic encounters of care and establishes opportunities to practice caring.

Community - as it relates to care

Such a large part of the make up of day to day experiences included sharing and community. Students shared jobs. They shared poetry, pictures, writings and books. They shared the common language of picture books, class books and read-aloud chapter books. They shared their supplies. They shared their expertise and knowledge. They shared resources and memories. They shared space and time and presence and feelings. They cleaned together and decorated together. They shared their enthusiasm with other classes and they shared their written stories with parents.

And the teachers shared. We were an active and contributing part of this learning community. Our voices were heard sometimes in authority, sometimes as peers. Mostly, I found that we provided the organizational structure, but that was not always the case. Sometimes it really was necessary to defer to the activity in progress or the ideas generated in groups. We shared who we were and never stepped into the classroom in a role designated as teacher. Ms.

Worth is a teacher. It is not a role she assumes. She is a learner, open to new ideas and thoughts. She is a listener, willing to let her mind be flexible and spontaneous, willing to consider options proffered by others. She is these things and is not separated from them when she leaves the classroom. She is natural and genuine and sharing is a natural part of her life. “ ‘Great Artists,’ Margot Fonteyn once said ‘are people who find the way to be themselves in their art. Any sort of pretension induces mediocrity in art and life alike’ ” (O’Reilly, 1993, p.111).

The classroom resembled children’s homes in that children did not have to ask permission to have basic needs met. They were asked to wash their hands before meals. They were encouraged to be comfortable when reading and writing. They were naturally conversant and were not required to raise their hand and be identified before speaking. The room and its contents belonged to every member of the class and each individual was expected to take responsibility for the quality of life in the shared space. It was expected, though never voiced in those terms. Instead of school carrying the children away from home, this place offered the comfort of a home. Here in this place, we strove to promote “the concept of school as a domestic environment permeated by a family affection that influences not only the way activities are done in the classrooms but behaviors in the halls, the lunchroom, the playground” (Martin, 1992, p.132).

There has been much written about the creation of community in classrooms of late, and there have been guidelines and recipes and even blackline masters and books that offer activities that are written to help students become aware of the responsibilities of the community. There are programs such as Great Expectations and TRIBES and Waldorf schools that offer training

for teachers and steps to follow. One such program allows that teaching for caring is courageous and the book, Courageous Teaching offers:

In an easy-to-use format, this book contains: a curriculum of sequenced and developmental group process activities designed to make school meaningful for every student; practical guidance on how to become skillful in the art and science of facilitative group process; and step-by-step instruction on how to create a caring learning environment in which young people are simultaneously engaged on emotional and intellectual levels. (Andersen, 1995, p.viii).

Community in this classroom was created by the members of the community. It was democratic in nature and authentic. Children had a say in procedures established and developed the procedures together when the needs arose. The creation of community was not prescriptive. There was no plan to follow, rather the community arose from the bonding of shared experiences. It was a process resulting from the commonalities of the lived experience. Community is not made. It arises, it becomes, it manifests itself from the interactions and shared experiences of its constituents. Most teachers try to control the formation of community. In my judgment the tenets that formed this community of caring arose because the teacher entrusted the children with the basic construction.

Does the spirit of community help create a place of caring? I would have to conclude from my study that the formation of community establishes the opportunities to practice caring in authentic ways and leads to encounters with caring practices. The competence of children to interact is heightened by the experiences associated with community. Experiences of donating, helping, benevolence and consideration for other people contribute to community and

the essence of a caring classroom.

Literacy - as it relates to care

The needs of the community were met by integrating content with context. Literacy was the vehicle that enhanced the integrity of this community. The power of story was used to involve children in the realities of life. You could not live in the room and remain untouched by the influence of good literature. Books were everywhere. Books were treasured and cared for by everyone. There were places for special books and open faced bookshelves held the collection being highlighted. There was a bookcase that held books written by the students. There was time allotted every day for reading and sharing of books. Picture books reflected the content being addressed. Chapter read aloud selections also reflected the content and were chosen by the students. There were also books read that children just needed to share. They would beg for us to read a certain selection next because the book was just too good and needed to be shared.

Book talks were common, both formal and informal. Passion for story was discovered. When I asked about their favorite thing about third grade, books and DEAR were two popular responses. In fact, students were asked to list their top ten favorite things about third grade to share with their parents. Books or DEAR made it on sixteen of the twenty lists that were made. Picture books were shared daily at the comfortable corner and time was devoted to writing and author's chair. Story was the catalyst for conversation and curriculum. Reactions to different stories varied. Some stories caused anger. *White Socks Only* caused this reaction. The children were enraged by their understanding of Jim Crow laws. This led to more questions and the

introduction of *The Story Of Ruby Bridges*. Eventually this led to our study of the underground railroad, Harriet Tubman and the entire issue of slavery and the Civil War. This was the reading that led to the students deciding to write an historical fiction book during the writer's workshop and then was cause for an Author's Fair to share with parents.

One of the extraordinary aspects of this class was their incredible knowledge of books and authors! They know Eve Bunting, Mildred D. Taylor and Eth Clifford, they know Karla Kuskin and Jack Prelutsky. Two of the A-B-C books revolved around books and authors. Noreen chose the *ABC's of Children's Book Authors* and Amy did hers on book titles. The children clamored and campaigned to get certain books read. They always had a pile of "must reads" on the round table to be voted on at the end of each chapter read aloud. Every day after lunch there was a solid half hour that was never compromised for read aloud. If they were forced to give it up because of a school function, they would demand that time later in the day. On one day I was reading *Red Dirt Jesse* by Anna Myers and time was up, but they begged me to continue and finish the book. They promised to give up their recess, or even lunch, if I would just finish the book. I did, in spite of the fact that it took a little longer because I had to stop crying in order to finish. (It is without doubt a very powerful book on the theme of care and family).

Literature was the focus, the motive for query and concern, the catalyst for seeking understanding, for knowing more, for learning and relating to others. The integration of content organized around children's literature was powerful and meaningful. The common experiences with story led children into deeper issues, deeper understandings. Children were acquainted with cultures which helped them to develop and insure tolerance. They were presented with

shared dilemmas of friendship betrayal, sibling rivalry and the incomprehensible viciousness of racial prejudice. Through story, students shared the past and the future and were challenged to think for themselves and to search for their own truths. Ms. Worth fills her room with good books to cultivate children's understanding and expression.

Good books serve children in some specific ways. Good children's books can evoke strong feelings and come to stand for childhood emotions, much in the way a security blanket does. Good books can give children reference points for understanding their own experiences-- lessons that may last a lifetime. Good books may validate for children their own culture and open windows on to other cultures. Good books may help children understand how they and their neighbors think through moral issues and give them important experiences in clarifying differences and building empathy and compassion (Temple, 1998, p.6).

Mutual Respect - as it relates to care

Mutual respect is the two-way regard between teacher and student. Ms. Worth shows her respect by listening to children and validating their feelings and thoughts. She expresses her indomitable faith in the innate goodness of children and her practiced knowledge that children are both lovable and capable. Her knowledge of developmental practice, coupled with her ability to put her constructivist theory to practice helps in her efforts to be a good listener, and to ponder aloud in the presence of children. It guides her questioning technique and enables her to stretch the thought process. Her affectionate attitude toward children invites respectful exchange.

Ms. Worth understands developmentally appropriate practices and this

has influenced her classroom practices. It has guided some of the choices she has made for both space and time arrangements. She respects the pacing of individual students and their interests. She encourages exploration and fascination and realizes that conceptual learning comes at different times for different students. She is not in a hurry and provides manipulatives and discussion to allow children the tools they need for understanding. She respects their time frames. Her constructivist philosophy promotes the exchange of ideas and the ability of her students to have different activities taking place simultaneously. The room is decorated by students with student work and artifacts.

She sees herself as a co-creator with the children, allowing for respectful exchanges. Her interest and love of the fine arts adds another dimension often stifled by curriculum restraints in more traditional classrooms.

The pattern she has established for professional growth is a huge component of her attitude. Her thirst to become a better teacher has led her to study, to read professionally, and attend national educational conferences through her own investment. She belongs to several local professional groups that gather to reflect and share professional materials and book knowledge, as well as several national associations that keep her apprised of issues in education through journals and newsletters. She attends numerous workshops and is ever seeking opportunities to advance her own knowledge. She just recently finished her masters and is contemplating her next academic endeavor. The lure of library science may be more than she can deny.

Her passion is children - and books. Perhaps this was the tie that bound us in professional and personal friendship. The two loves of my life are the same as hers. Ms. Worth is indeed passionate about bringing books and

children together. She reads with fervor and animation. There is no distinction in the genre of the book that lessens her animation. She reads a book of poetry with the same intensity as she shows when she reads fantasy or realistic fiction. She draws her listeners into the story. She transports them into the pages, and they go willingly. Whenever the invitation is issued to the students to move toward the reading chair, there are few that ignore the summons and those that do, sit at their seats but their ears are engaged at the carpet. She is masterful and driven to share this power of story that has shaped her love of books and reading.

Children in traditional classrooms, historically, are expected to respond to teachers with respect. Those expectations are not at the foundation of this class. The teacher earns respect and affection in her daily relationship with children. The feelings that exist between teacher and student are mutual through the nurtured relationship. Relationship is at the heart of every theme that emerged in this study.

The essence of care is established through relationship. There was genuine care in this room. There was genuine care within each individual. Care for material things, for animals, care for the larger society, and care for each other. There was caring for self and for ideas. All six of Noddings (1992) categories of care were represented in the lifeworld of this classroom. The elements of care were not centers, and activities were not planned to promote the concept of care. The care and kindnesses shown and experienced were a natural outgrowth of being together, being with and for each other. Relationship, bonding, shared interest and interest in sharing created the essence of care that so completely enveloped this place.

Relationship was at the center of each theme. The ability of Ms. Worth to

encourage the development of autonomy by recognizing that each person can operate in terms of others, the application of literacy as an agent of empathy and the formation of the ideology of community all contribute to the two way regard that characterizes mutual respect and positive relations.

In my estimation, based on my my sustained interaction within this classroom during this school year, I have decided that a caring classroom is not created as much as it comes into existence by the very fact of being together. Factors such as autonomy, literacy and community profoundly impact the everyday spirit of the classroom, without necessarily creating the conditions for care. Furthermore, I am convinced that no one entity is responsible for the formation of a caring environment. The teacher cannot mandate care or perspective taking. She can certainly be an advocate of a caring environment and live the example, but she cannot create it. It takes the unity of purpose molded within the context to establish a caring community and it takes individual effort in collaboration with the collective.

Parents as Partners

This study shows conclusively that parents do think it is important that their children feel cared for and cared about in the school setting. They appreciate the efforts made on behalf of the teacher to care for their children and to be included as part of the classroom dynamics. It is important that teachers are sensitive to parents' feelings and concerns. Involving parents in the dialogue of school brings benefits to all parties involved.

Implications/Recommendations

I see the implications from all I have learned and experienced having

potential to manifest themselves in teacher education programs. Perhaps we need to reevaluate what we do. Methods courses are content driven and perhaps we might realign them to be context driven. The needs of children and society may be the curriculum that needs to be identified for preservice teachers. We need to recognize the importance of drawing deeper understanding of the affective domain. We might start with the primary focus on “who” we teach instead of “what” we teach. DeVries (1997) has a program entitled *Managing Today's Classroom*. She uses four basic principles of teaching for effective learning. They are:

- 1) Foster mutual respect
- 2) Promote self-regulation
- 3) Build a sense of community
- 4) Focus on long-term goals

The results from this study seem to support these elements and the idea that they could be incorporated with contextual integration.

An implication of this study may lead to a more elaborate role of literacy education. Sharing the power of story with preservice teachers must be a heightened goal with more concerted emphasis in the education program. Using the power of literature to help students experience their world must become a priority in teacher education programs. It will be important for teachers to know that the progression from active responses to more internalized understanding is necessary for moral development.

An implication of this study may lead to a more elaborate role of the study parent involvement issues in preservice teacher programs. Are preservice teachers made aware of the impact of the parent-teacher-child relationship? Can parental understanding of the concept of care in the classroom add a

component to children's understanding of care? This study indicates that preservice teachers can benefit from a stronger emphasis on parent participation in the curriculum.

An area to investigate further would be the promotion of acute awareness and thought to the existentials that van Manen (1990) has set forth. Educators can gain understanding by recognizing the need to focus on the lifeworld aspects of teaching and living with children in the classroom and promote a deeper understanding of the effects of their own time, space, presence and relationality. Teachers need to study the effects and potentials of each of these existentials in order to enhance the affective domain in the classroom. They need to be immersed in each concept and build an awareness of the effects of the existentials on the life experience.

An emphasis on becoming a more reflective practitioner may be a good beginning for Pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers need to be guided to reflect on their own lived experience as a student and allow their own lived experience to inform their practice as teachers. They need to begin seeing from another perspective, the student's perspective. They need to become aware of how feelings impact learning. Awareness is a beginning. Experience in the awareness is at the next level, but can be encouraged through an established routine of reflection.

I think that the schools have a priority to enhance the affective domain. Kamii (1990) has stated that autonomy should be the aim of education. Nel Noddings (1984) says, "The primary aim of every educational institution and of every educational effort must be the maintenance and enhancement of caring" (p.172). Can these two theories be interwoven as one? Does one depend on another or are they independent? Educators have to be able to convey the

understanding that for them the child, the learner, is more valuable and more important than the subject matter. Educators must accept the responsibility to nurture the ethical ideals of children and to establish opportunities to care along with the ability to confirm another human.

Confirmation, the loveliest of human functions, depends upon and interacts with dialogue and practice. I cannot confirm a child unless I talk with him and engage in cooperative practice with him...To confirm, I must see and receive the other - see clearly what he has actually done, and receive the feelings with which it was done (Noddings, 1984, p. 196).

Is it confirmation and care that give rise to autonomy or is it autonomy that gives rise to understanding other perspectives? Can you be autonomous if uncared for? Can you be cared for and not be autonomous? In an ideal world the two would work together to enhance an ethical perspective.

I would also recommend further study to investigate the effects of looping on the essence of care and relationality. I am convinced that the strong relational core of this group had its beginnings in the two years that they were together. This bond may have allowed for closer ties and deeper commitment to each other.

Another area of interest that arises from this study is a more complete understanding of the role of pedagogue researcher. It begins as a role and transforms to something more encompassing. It is more fully felt than the role of participant observer and broader than teacher researcher. It is both personal and professional. It is energizing and limiting. It carries a weighty bias. As the researcher becomes part of the lifeworld the ability to view from a distance is dissolved. The researcher becomes connected and the descriptions are filled with emotion and relation - caring. I'm inclined to say that the study would be

different taken from an objective view and yet the relevance would be less.

Perhaps the study of “care” should have the researcher remain unattached and yet would that not negate the understanding of care?

Concluding Thought

I can recognize the essence of care in a classroom. Can I capture it, replicate it, bottle it and sell it? No. However, I can set forth my observations and share my emergent themes and reflections. The rest is left to the reader. The readers may interpret the essence in their own lifeworld and strive toward their understanding, in their own space and in their own time. But they can be acutely aware, as am I, that presence, relationship and autonomy seem to be at the core of care and caring. It is the establishment of opportunities to practice caring and the genuine encounter of caring practices that ultimately lead to the creation of a caring classroom.

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APPENDIX A

MS. WORTH'S INTERVIEW

DATA 1

May 21, 1998

I asked the same question of your kids that I am asking you, now, which is, "What does it mean to care?" What I asked them specifically was, "If you were Mr. Webster and were writing the dictionary, what would you give as the definition of "care"? So, what does it mean to care? I want to see what they said! You'll get to see it when it's all written up, I promise. I'm curious, what were you doing up there in that library? Just talking, like this, so what does it mean to care?

Caring, I'm thinking is wanting what is best for them even if sometimes that's hard. I was thinking just like with one of mine the other day, you've got to love them enough to let them fall flat on their face and be there to pick them up and dust them off. Can you give me the specific incident? (without using a name).² When I was talking at conferences the other day, talking about Gary to his mom, saying, you've got to let go in order that he take on that responsibility. And just as his parent loves him so much, I've got to be able to say that I've done my part, and I'm not going to do it all for you or else I'll end up doing it every single time, and that's not caring. When I was at school today, thinking about this interview, I did wonder what the dictionary says about it. Most of it seems like worry or concern. Do you know what your kids said? No. To help. So does your definition fit that? Is what you just told me helpful? Well, essentially, I think I do help them, but I don't think at first that they might see that. They might think I'm evil and I never answer any questions, however, I think it works out for their betterment.

Do you consider it hard to care?, Would it be easier to just go ahead and do it? to tell them the answer? Sometimes I find especially when we are in a bind where I go, "This is going to take me a good ten minutes." There are times when I think, we can go the 30 second way or we can go the ten minute way and a lot of times, I think, I hope, that most of the time I say, "we are going to need to talk about this later" I've heard you say that. I don't want to get into the habit of saying the easy way out. Do you

actively think about the time constraints? When I have to confer, yes, but typically, I hope I've trained myself in that I can say I'm not going to go somewhere that's against what I want. I asked you once if you had a schedule. I have a plan for my day, sometimes I, (this is horrid) when I student taught it was, I kind of am a time oriented person, I realize that it flies, and that I have to break it down somewhere so there is a balance between things or I look up and the clock would be gone. So I remember student teaching, and I remember putting a schedule on this little board because I do like for them to know kind of what's going to be expected. Some of them (Owen this year) looked at it more than anyone this year. (Paul looked at it) "Are we going to computer today? It's 11:00." Very time oriented. A lot of times that 's helpful because I'll look up and if they didn't remind me, I, we, would have forgotten to go. But for student teaching, I put up on this board like 9:00 to 9:10, 9:15 to 9:30. I had it so regimented because I think part of that was me also wanting someone to look up there, my cooperating teacher to look up there and say - "Okay, she's got it all planned out, she's got it mapped out. There is a schedule, there is a pattern. What she's doing, they're learning. They're getting in Language, they're getting in math." So I wanted to make sure that she knew that, but it was so frustrating because the kids were always saying - "It's nine ten, and we're not doing *whatever!*" And I'd be like, "Now remember, we don't have to follow this exactly, It's just kind of a guideline." I told them that and by the end of student teaching I just wrote down the sequence, what we would be doing without the times. And that's what I write in my classroom today. These are the things we are going to try and get done with no time frames. There are certain things like Ms. Smith is expecting us to be at P.E. at one o'clock, so certain things do have times on them. Suppose P.E. time comes at one o'clock and you're not done with whatever you're doing, what do you do then? Well, there typically is a two to three minute time that we're late, so usually looking at the whole year, I'd say that there was maybe ten to fifteen times that we were actually on time, other than that we were typically there within two to three minutes after that. So usually it was. I'm one of those that looks at the clock and goes, "Oh, we should be there right now, let's quickly clean up and I'll meet you at the door." Have you ever said to them, "just leave that, leave everything the way it is"? Did you see their desks? (laughter). The way we had it, a lot of the specials were at one o'clock in the afternoon. We would read, and it was always that I would just stop at the end of a paragraph, to where it wasn't something that we would be right in the middle of. It was just wherever there was a convenient place to stop with the book that we were reading out loud. And so that would allow us to come back and start again tomorrow. So there was always a finishing time there. Did you ask for that, that your specials be in the afternoon, or was that just a gift? It was a gift, however

there were times at the beginning of the year there was confusion because I wanted mine all at the same time of each day, so that every day we would be going somewhere at one. Some other teachers in third grade didn't want that. They wanted it so that their special time would go right into recess time so that the planning period would be longer. I just wanted it the same cause it is helpful for me and for the kids. I could have chosen different times but I did want some stability there. Have you ever thought of having specials in the morning? That's not an option for us because of the way our PE is split. The PE teacher that we have only teaches in the afternoon. We have computer in the morning and we have music in the morning, while PE and library tends to happen in the afternoon.

Think of yourself now as a student, as a student in elementary years, in junior high, high school and college and tell me whether you liked school, what you liked about school, what you didn't like about it and do you have any strong memories, either good or bad? I can remember elementary school, first, second, third, fourth. Fourth grade was different, because throughout eighth grade, where you are in one classroom, well throughout sixth grade, I was in one classroom. Even sixth and seventh grade we only went to two teachers for different subjects, but we always had a home room. I remember, I have pleasant memories of everything. I only have, but it's so funny because I think I definitely have, I can't look back and say, oh yeah I have some favorite teachers, but really if I think about them, I think about it, they all had strengths, very nice strengths. And I even had my aunt for two months in third grade. I decided in third grade that I wanted to be a teacher. I can remember second grade, this is the only thing I think I really have bad memories about school. it wasn't even bad it was just... this will tell you an insight about who I am as a happy go lucky childhood. When I was in second grade, I was doing, I thought it was called phonics, actually it was named Phoenix because I was mispronouncing. I was probably taught totally different than the way I teach. Probably, for the most part: but then I think, there was a time where I was up, out of my seat in second grade, because our second grade teacher had phone books out and wanted us to do ABC things. And that just sounded so fun to me, so I went over to look. And I remember from across the room she said "Diane, what are you doing?" and I don't even think it was harsh, I think it was just "what are you doing?" and I remember thinking that everybody is looking at me! And I just said "Looking at the phone books." and she said, "Not Now." And I think oh gosh, I think I probably do that now, and I remember just being crushed. Thinking, "oh my gosh I'm in the wrong place at the wrong time." But other than that, I can think back now and I wonder about the ideal child, but I think also, I was one who blended in here and was a helper here. I don't know.

Were you a good reader? I think I read. I didn't like to read out loud, because I thought I would stumble and I didn't want people to know that maybe I didn't know every word. I remember counting, this is in eleventh or twelfth grade even, advanced English, and I remember having to read some Shakespeare junk, something, out of a textbook, and I remember counting people to see which paragraph I had. Even in high school I remember thinking, I don't want to read, these are my friends, I'm in a leadership role in my school and yet I'm worried that these other people will look at me and think I'm dumb.

Did you ever work in groups in your own school experience? It's so funny. One teacher that I would probably love to talk to right now. My Dad's military, so we moved, I don't have just one certain one school that I went to. We flipped flopped around. But one person that I would love to get back with was my fifth grade teacher. I barely even remember what she looked like. If I had a picture, I think I would know what she would look like. I look back and I think about all the things that she had going on in her classroom - community. Really? Yes. DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) time, class meetings. Do you remember where? Germany. There were animals, pets in the classroom. German was being taught to us. It was amazing stuff. I can remember finding a comfortable chair, propping my feet up and having DEAR time. In American schools we would never had done that. She was just before her time. Do you sort of pattern yourself after some of that? I never really thought about that until I was thinking about... I found an old picture of me with my feet propped up reading a book, and I thought, I wonder if a little bit of that carried over. Things like, once I was in my aunt's classroom for two months and my dad went over to Germany, and we came to Stillwater in order to stay with my aunt and her family and she was a third grade teacher in one of the schools here, and I remember kind of like the way I have it set up now where the bathroom breaks are not all together, those are taken individually, whenever you need to, she did that. You just signed out for it. She was caring. There were certain games that she would play. Hugging children, not afraid of touching. I think there's got to be some of that in me. I think back and I go, Oh Ms. Ralston, first grade, Ms. Wesley - uh. She was decent but I only had her for a little bit. Then Ms. Carr, I thought she hung the moon. She was the second grade teacher who called me down, but we all thought, Oh, Ms. Carr! Then, third grade having three different teachers because we moved that year. In fourth grade, I know she read the Hobbit after lunch to us, and I remember being enthralled with that book, and I just couldn't wait. But we all just sat around and listened. We were at desks. It's not one of my favorites now but I loved it then. Fourth grade was also the year where everybody in our school had to write a book. In Germany, we all, everybody, wrote. I think some people did them, kind of like what we do,

where it was just pieced together with construction paper, but I remember that was the year that Mom pulled out the cardboard and contact paper and sewing needles and did everything. It's fun because I can share that book with my kids now, saying, "I wrote this in fourth grade." I still have it, and I remember it being like we put all the books downstairs at this beautiful school. It looked like a shopping mall, very wide open and very much glass, and I don't remember what the celebration was but there were just books down on the foyer, and everywhere, by everyone who had written.

I see a lot of that in what you do with your kids having them write the books. I don't know if I would credit what I do to that experience, or to the Writing Project, it got me geared toward what I'm doing now.

How about college? Was that an overall good experience? College? Did you go right to college after high school? Yes, I always knew that I'd come here to OSU, I was raised knowing that. My mom was from Vinita, my dad was in the Army. So we had to go, but they both went here, everybody did, we'd move around but we always knew we'd come back here and we always knew we'd end up at OSU. I just remember that yes, I had some good teachers but mostly I felt like I had to get this out of the way. I remember undergrad not being any fun. I liked my poly sci class, hated biology. I always felt like I was in a mass of people, like I didn't count. I taught myself math, college algebra from what I learned in high school, got out all my old books and went through them and taught myself. I learned it from me.

When did you decide to be a teacher? Third grade. My mom was a teacher, two of my aunts, my cousin before me, my sister, but no one but me is now teaching. My sister and cousin are lawyers. How did they go from teacher to lawyer? Not enough money. It's funny because I've always said, "Oh yeah, I'm going to be a teacher", and then my cousin went to college, she was fiddling here and fiddling there, wondering what she was going to do, and finally in a phone call one night she decided to go into elementary teaching, like her mom, it was kind of like, "Oh, really?" Then my sister went off and she decided to be a teacher. I was thinking, "Everybody's doing what I want to do!" and now nobody's doing what I'm doing so okay, may be I'll be it.

And you never wavered, until now when you want to own a bookstore!!

Do you see your classroom as a caring place for students? I hope so. I hope they see it that way. How do you go about making it that way? I'm the baby of the family, and I think there's something to that theory of placement in the family and that part of me is sort of happy go lucky, the one that is laid back ., everyone is included, gets along easily. So I just think about all the times where I say to my sister teaching fifth grade, "go get 'em". But I'm more laid back and third grade is about my pace. You are early childhood, are you elementary, too? Yes. elementary as my

bachelors and the specialization of early childhood for my Masters. But I think more than anything, this has kind of hit me this year with my little cousin, being in third grade across town, how his experience has been this past year, about being with someone who does not give the benefit of the doubt and how my family has talked about that and his struggles and how he was home schooled for a bit and then went to second and then third grade, and third grade was really hard for him. I just keep him in mind when I think about the child who you need to say, "Oh did you mean to do that?" instead of saying, "why did you do that?". And instead of coming down harshly, give him the benefit of the doubt. You know, "I bet you meant to say.." To question so that they have a nice way out. I don't think my little cousin had much of that this year. I think he was more shy to allow himself to do that. I think it was just an experience that when he would venture out or risk, things did not work out to the way he wanted them to work out. It wasn't horrendous, but it was enough to make him go into a shell. I just thought that I needed to be very careful of that for his spirit. So you're aware of him and how he's been treated in thinking how you treat others. Yes, but I think, it wasn't necessarily him, because I can remember doing this two years ago, too. I can just think of when we are doing something, okay, prime example - we were teaching another class how to play math games, and so I said, "The game is called Product Shot, does anyone know what a product is? Do we need to get that out of the way?" and a kid raises his hand and says, "Yeah, it's what you buy at a grocery store." I said, " I know what you're thinking, you're thinking of produce, product, of course, okay there's also another thing that they use typically in math vocabulary, tell us if you know that one, or we can help you figure that one out." He just kind of sat back and I thought instead of saying, " No, that is not right," I said, "I know exactly what you are thinking of and that's right, that's one way of using that word the other way is what we're going to talk about when we play the game today." He was trying, he was risking, he was wanting to volunteer, and he wanted to appear smart especially when you are incorporating other classes into your room and they are supposed to be the experts. He didn't say what else it could have been, but the other kids said, "Oh yea, its also what you get when you multiply two numbers together." Hopefully, I saved his feelings. Sometimes I really have to stretch in order to understand, "What are they trying to tell me?" What is it that they know, that's in their world that they're trying to relate to, so sometimes it is a stretch and sometimes another child will clarify what they are wanting to say. You know, if I'm not getting it, if I don't understand. Do you ever have kids that just shut down then and won't say anything or do they continue the conversation in other words when you say to them that you don't understand what they are trying to say. I've had just a few that will say, "Oh no, never mind." Then I ask if they will help me out or I ask if anyone else can help me

understand, because that almost hurts my feelings when I think that they've tried to explain something to me and it's the best of their ability and I'm the one not getting it.

How do you plan? Like when you make plans for the writing or the science, do you consider how kids are going to feel or what kids can do it and what kids can't? How do you plan for kids to feel safe? I just assume they all can do things. Like if we're writing a story, I feel like we are going to talk about it so much and we're going to have mini-lessons and we talk about it and if I stumble upon the idea that this person doesn't know what I'm talking about then that's when I need to step in. But typically if I think that this person doesn't understand what we're going to be talking about with math games, I'll say, "Okay, who are our experts, who understands how to play this game?" Then I ask the experts to go with someone who is not perfectly clear. So you don't plan for different levels or anything like that? I think the levels will show, and I'll need to take into account what their levels will be but everybody is capable of doing at least part of what we're doing, if not everything. Everybody can at some level. That's a different way to look at your classroom. Do you ever have remedial lessons? Handwriting, we needed to review some printing things before we move on. So I had these booklets for those that felt they needed to be reminded, I told them that in order to learn cursive it was helpful to know what the printed one looks like because usually it is somewhat easier if you just show how the for instance o came from this and they added a loop so you can transfer onto another letter. It's helpful to know where they start, but remedial...I had a really neat group and they didn't need it. It's amazing to me. The first year out, I had seven gifted students who actually went out to gifted classes for that, seven of twenty. This year I've had six. I also have a lot of them that are this close to qualifying, and I think that maybe that's why I don't plan for that because I just think... we can do it or you'll be coupled with someone who can help you along.

How about the design of your room? How did you come up with that? Are you talking about the square, where they are all facing each other? I started off with a circle. Because I liked (names another teacher) room. It was like a semi circle, almost like a closed circle. I liked the fact that everyone was facing everyone else. And then I went through a couple years ago when they were in clusters - it drove me nuts. Why? There was so much squirreling. People who are naturally prone to gather things and make little rats nests. They drove everyone else at their table group crazy. And the tables were all at different heights because the kids were all different sizes and I would just look out and I was not happy, it did not look orderly to me, it was just not peaceful. And I think that some of the kids who couldn't see, there was always someone

with their back to me, where they would have to turn around in their chair to be able to see. I was just like, ugh, no matter where I was. There again you can travel and be anywhere in the room but somebody always had their back to me and I didn't like that. So then, this year in my Writing Project, we had kind of a semi square with just the front not there. I kept thinking that with the circle there are gaps there, the pie pieces where nobody is using the space, it's a big waste of space and since we had twenty-one this year and I needed to fit it in a small space, it worked out better with the square. For things like when we did the castles, we moved into table groups so that they could have a big space in which to work. But there again, I think that I like the feeling of everyone seeing each other and the fact that we are all looking in. How did you decide who sits next to whom? Did you assign seats? I didn't my first year, I let them pick, but I would say boy/ girl /boy/ girl. Because if not you'd get little girls all together over here and little boys over there. Anyway they got the choice but I found that every single time they were choosing to sit by the exact same people, just reorganized. I think they did it for comfort level and they didn't want to branch out. So then I went to this. The very first two days of school, I said, "Pick a place where you'd like to sit", so typically they sit with whoever was with them last year. Funny how everybody who was in (teacher's name) class last year would be all together in the same row. What I did this year was, I put them into writing groups, or clusters of kids from the different rooms but still boy/ girl/ boy/ girl, trying to get them with people they had not been with last year. I definitely saw clusters of girls that were isolating themselves and leaving out others. I thought, "Not if I can help it." So in a way that is part of your community building. And I had the kids that were two years together who were close and that was ten, ten of them out of the twenty and then Rusty came and that made twenty-one. That was half of our classroom, half the side of the room. In a way it's a good thing, but it causes problems, too. In the very beginning of the year, I wrote a note home to the families saying please write to me about your kids so that I know where they are coming from, what you see in them and I remember that N. (another teacher) had done that and I remember in college thinking that that was a great, great idea. So you write a letter to the parents saying that: I'm (teacher's name), this is who I am and what I've done this summer, I can't wait to meet you in person etc. please write to me including... and I had three or four things that I was hoping they would include such as how your child learns best, how you see them as a learner, likes or dislikes, things that I need to know, interests and any other things that I need to know as a teacher. I always get a very good response on that. You know sometimes its Dads who write and sometimes its Moms who write. And that lets me know right in the beginning of the year I had one family who said that three children have been in the same situation ever since

preschool. We'd like for her to get out and know other people, and unfortunately they still stuck like glue the entire year, but at least I knew that was going on and it was such that I could put them in different sides of the classroom and involve them with different people and get them out and about because that was kind of a touchy issue. I had one who was isolating herself and this helped her to undo part of that. I've also had a parent not write the letter and she said she just wanted me to get to know her daughter, but I also found that that was one, it was funny because it almost worked in the reverse way. It's bad to say but I didn't know that much about her and she was shy enough that I didn't get to know her that well at the very beginning. It's true, I think it would have helped me if I had had a parent viewpoint. When it's early on in the year it's helpful to say, "she's scared of taking responsibility". I knew one child in my room this year was very aware of appearances and liked everything to be neat and tidy and another I met with the family before school started because it was a child who needed to be on one side of the room because an eye problem. Things like that, you say, special circumstances kept it so that he remained in one row the entire year because of that. He was having to work on the eye muscles on the right side, and so because everything was happening basically to his right that would strengthen the eye, if he would have been placed on the other side of the classroom it would have weakened that eye. Things like that need to be accounted for. I got to thinking at the very last of school that they really haven't had choice as much this year as to where to sit. Sometimes I would even move them, prime example, Bonnie and Jerry. Boy, they were near each other one time and it drove me nuts! They still communicated across the circle, I'd see them doing sign language, and I'd remember that I taught them that! I was thinking that I couldn't be mad at them for using something I taught them. They were problem solving!

That was one of the things that several of your kids mentioned on their interviews. They got languages this year: Spanish, Japanese, German and sign language. They recognized that they got all of that. I changed them randomly with no pattern. Well, one time I know I changed them after I had a conference, after we conferred one time because something was brought to my attention that I had no idea. I remember I came in one day and they were all changed, it confused the dickens out of me! There were certain times when one of the kids was having trouble sitting near another and it's sad to say but a lot of times that's when I'd find out certain things and then I'd wonder why I didn't know.

How do you establish a caring classroom? Would you call your classroom, do you think of it as a caring place?
 More than others. Do you work at making it a caring place? Probably. First of all, I know we learned in college that touch was going to go out

because of liability purposes and I said, "No, it won't." So I think that's one thing, I try every morning and thank goodness we have Opening. I think that's one thing that we have to help community, people seem to be facing everybody else and we are all there in the whole building and I really like that. And each morning if I don't catch them in order to say, "Good morning, how are you" then definitely as walk up the stairs each one of them as they pass I greet and touch. I think that the first communication, that first thing in the morning needs to be there. Some days I'm not in the classroom when they come in and so at least I get them right before Opening. And there is always a hug or a handshake on the way out. And to tell you the truth, this year I did not say, in the past two years I've come down on the carpet and asked what we need to have to have a good classroom this year. What do we need to do to have one where everyone can live with it and be safe and happy and everything? You know they gave me the old things that tend to be on walls and this year I just let it go! I decided to try something a little different and I didn't even bring it up and so it was during our first class meeting that we all really started to talk and it came about because people were having some issues that were coming up and I just waited for it to happen. So you didn't have an initial class meeting? We had one to start out with it but it was just, the first thing we did the very first day of school, they started off with a scavenger hunt. You know - find things around the classroom and then right after Opening they got five or ten more minutes just so all the parents would find their way to different places so we could just be together. I knew that most parents come up on that first day and stay for Opening. So that they wouldn't have to necessarily come in and do Work on a piece of paper. There are some that chose to do that too, but I also say let us settle down and get situated, find a place to sit and then we start out with a class meeting, but it was like "Hello, I'm (Teacher's name) and this is something about me, and what my favorite thing is ...what you'll want to know about me is..." and then pass the gavel. Do you do your Student of the week thing, too and put yourself up there? Yeah, but I didn't start with that, I left it up there for about a week or two and then I was the first friend of the week so I took my pictures and took ten minutes on a Thursday or Friday and told them that I wanted to share about my pictures before they come down.

How did you know about classroom meetings? Is this something you've always done? No, No there have been times, I remember the first year where I would call class meetings and just say we need to talk, I'd say, "Huddle up!" I've gone through the things where it was, "Here's your sheet of paper for time out", the first week of school I was borrowing other people's...it was like a time-out sheet and then I thought that time out is not me, so I called it "planning period". I said teacher's have planning periods. You know where they just take time to reflect and they get it

every day, and so if you need time where you just sit down and think about what you need to do, that's great, too. Typically, those sheets of paper were not helpful. My planning sheets even said, wherever you are, take time to reflect, what are three other choices you could have made, come back to the group whenever you are ready. Things like that. Did you just hand them the sheet? Yeah, but normally it was because I was upset for some reason or another, something was detracting from what we were doing. It was something where I needed to say - You need this. I was trying to figure out, what's something that would help them come to the realization that it is not just me. So then I went to one of the Constructivist Meetings that we held at Olive Garden, or wherever, and it's funny because my roommate's sister-in-law was the one who brought the book, and I had no idea who she was at the time. Which book? "Positive Discipline in the Classroom" and it was working in her first grade classroom. So since then I read it and decided this was meaty, this has stuff in it that talks about why people do what they do and is for attention, is it because they feel frustrated? It gave me a lot of background, you know you can talk to kids about that, so they start to realize why is that person doing what they are doing, they might just need for you to say, "how are you doing?" "Okay." They may just need to be recognized or they are feeling frustrated with you or feeling frustrated with other people, or frustrated with themselves. They think why are people doing what they are doing. So you are looking at instead of how you feel, you're looking at how they feel? Absolutely, there's a reason behind everything. But still, I remember trying, trying, trying at the very end of last year, it was hysterical, right as I got the book, I was reading it and I was loving every second of it and so I brought it in and I gathered all my students together and I said, Okay, I've read this fabulous book, they looked at the title and went "Oh My Gosh!! Discipline in the classroom!!(laughter). They were just UGH, but I said, but you guys it talks about why people do what they do, it makes double sense. Anyway, it was just kind of lost on them, I don't know but it didn't work. I think it was probably too that I had done something very different to start with. I just thought I'd start fresh this year, and so we started off for the very first time. And the very first class meeting had nothing to do with discipline, nothing had to do with any of that. It was more like Get -to-know you. But it set up the whole agenda of the gavel, as far as saying. "If you have the gavel you speak, if you don't you don't." We started off that way saying, who has the gavel? When you introduce yourself, say something that you want everybody to know about you. You also have a policy that it goes around the first time and everybody says something positive, was that from the book? Yes, they suggest weekly meetings, but the class meetings we had could not have been done weekly or else we would have cut out reading!!! So we just had one when it came up or whenever.

Who called these meetings? Technically, I never called for one. It was a couple kids who said, "we need to meet". We need to talk about this and I said, "like a class meeting?", and they said, "yes". And so after the first one, where we said this is a class meeting, get your chair on the inside of the square, we're all sitting down, we starting off by everybody saying something positive that has happened with someone else, being very specific, it has to be something that affected you, going around the first time. You can pass but it will come back to you. So every child was forced to say something. Typically some were short and sweet, but still their voice was there. Then we went around and started talking. Our first real discussion where we had a hash out time was because of three people who were making everyone's life miserable. I gave them a days warning and told them if they had anything that they wanted to write down that you would like to talk about tomorrow, if you don't write it then it may not get addressed depending on our time, but if you write it down we will discuss it. So did they hand the slips of paper to you? No, they handed it to me in the morning so I could see what was going to come up. I told them to put them on the circle table, I don't think they knew that I was going to look at them. I thumbed through them and three names cropped up every single time, because that was the issue at hand. Did it make you nervous that you were going to be pointing fingers at the same three people? No, to tell you the truth, it...Did it make me nervous? No, I was more thinking, "I hope this gets straightened out today", because I was doing most of the "I need for you to be doing this, what do you need to be doing? What are we doing right now? Are you there yet?" I was doing a lot of patrol. And I was wanting to get out of that. So I thought if we're all helping, I even told them that I felt like a policewoman and I didn't even go to policewoman school. I went to college to become a teacher, please don't make me feel like that, but it didn't stop much, It was very valid and then when we went around that's the one where it was always the three of them, I did feel bad for them, oh I did, because I thought no one likes to be grilled, but, you got to love them enough to let them suffer. It's going to be a hot seat, but hey, cut it off now and your problems will be fewer in the future, and sure enough it worked out that way. It's still not done, there were still some issues. By the end of the year it was pretty close to none, we hardly had any names in that book, in fact the last month of school, we didn't. There were still times where people would say things to them like , "C'mon" but it was not, "Go write your name in the book. Go tell what happened".

On the class meeting that I sat in on, it came it came to light that Donald had taken everything that was said to heart and his awareness was heightened and when the others voiced that he had improved so much, it was almost more than he could take. I thought, nowhere else could this have happened like this. He was proud and every one was

proud of him. I don't think they wrote in it after, and I think some people let some get away with some stuff that I probably would have called them on but I ended up talking to them quietly. there were still minor things, but they were minor compared to the first. I told them (the two boys) "you've gotten a lot of pencils sharpened these first two days of school, and you got a lot of visiting taken care of". I tell you what, that's my memory of the first two days of school. They were back at the pencil sharpener just hashing it out. The two of them and little by little, Donald's flightiness brought him in. Kind of like, "Oh what are you two doing?" And I was just thinking, "what am I going to do?" I had two that will absolutely not join the group. And I was so glad that someone else had called the need, and I still love the whole fact that...I mean that's what I brought up on our last day of school, that, this makes me proud, because you did talk through what you wanted for the notebook, I'd never heard before for myself.

Please explain for this tape what that is. How did they come up with the idea to have a notebook? Actually, it was funny because when I said that, they asked and said, "Who did come up with that" at our last class meeting, "Who did come up with that notebook?" and Noreen raised her hand and said, " I did" and Mary kind of raised her hand and said, "I did." but I said, I think we all talked about it and we all talked about it. I think it may have started with a couple of people, but we all figured out the entire system. I remember, I think it was Noreen and Mary who did say, Why don't we just have a notebook, and it ended up being black, that was just terrible, I went over to the shelf and pulled one and it was black! Is that not hysterical!? It just happened to be the BLACK notebook. And the funny thing is, nobody for math notebooks, or other notebooks that we had on the shelf, nobody wanted that color any more. The color of the silly notebook. It is interesting because they did run through the whole gamut of ideas for time out and names on the board and they said, yeah, so and so did it last year. And then they said we could have those sticks that people turn over, you have red and yellow and green and on and on. I was sitting there in a panic. If we have to do this, I'm not going to be happy, and I was thinking and finally said, "Guys, this has to be something I can live with, too. I started off by saying, "Does that work, Did that work?" And what happens if you do have to turn sticks? They told me, If you're green you're good and yellow that means you've been in trouble once and red means go call your parents. They knew the whole system. Then they went through and I think it was Linda who said."What if people come in our room and they see that on the board, what if they see our popsicle sticks that are red, how embarrassing, oh my gosh! Oh I was so thankful for her she's a brain child! She is, she is pretty incredible, when she said about the book that we made the other day about the friendship book, she leaned over to me

and said, I think we need our friendship book, I couldn't believe it and when she opened it to the page that said we need to compromise, I nearly died! I'll take her home! I know, me, too. She's a neat child. And then we started talking about when people come into the room, people don't need to know what's going on. That'd be embarrassing for somebody, who really wants to see their name on the board, "to tell you the truth guys, I don't want to look up on the board and think why are those names, why is that person's name, oh yeah it's because of what they did!" I said, "I don't want to see that, I don't want to be reminded of it. What can we do?" Then someone said what if we just had a notebook that sat on the circle table and then we could put our book numbers in there so people wouldn't even really see our names. But then we could write down whenever something came up that we needed to talk about and have a class meeting. Oh, how do you like this, I even tried. "This was called the agenda book." but they didn't go for it at all, I don't know why they didn't. I think I pushed too hard. Maybe it was my idea rather than theirs. Now I'm going, How do I do this again next year? The funny thing is... Jobs at the very beginning of the year, when we said what to do. We had come up with jobs the previous year ones that they needed to have accomplished. They wanted President, they wanted Secretary, they wanted certain titles, poet, mathematician. So I did a lot of brainstorming such as the person who checks the temperature is called the meteorologist, that's what they call them on TV. So there was some of that that I did, but at the very beginning, I said. "Guys, what do we want to do about jobs, you know there are certain things that have to be taken care of in our classroom and if I tried to do them all they wouldn't get done. If one person tried to do them all, they wouldn't get done. It's going to take all of us. I just kind of flashed the other list and I didn't hold it up for very long at all. I just said last years they came up with 20 different things that we all could do,

They wanted President, Secretary, they wanted big titles and I put it to the side and asked what we wanted to do. So they couldn't dwell on it. Do you know what Noreen said? "They've already done it for us, why can't we just take what they've done and adapt it a little?" Not adapt, she said change it, in other words why reinvent the wheel? Take what they did and alter it a little, it's beautiful! And I was like, "Well that sounds like a good choice, should we vote on that? Okay, Let's bring out the other list." They added things like coat clerk and there were only sixteen and we had twenty this year, so we had to add four jobs. We saw that we needed substitutes, because we knew that sometimes people were going to be gone. So that was something we added and that was nice.

How did they decide who got what job? Actually they said, maybe I stepped in on this one, I just know that the previous year we had said, I'm going to pick a clothes pin and you decide where you want to be first,

and then we rotated it. So each clothes pin had a child's name on it? But then I had a little girl last year that wanted certain jobs but not other ones, so she'd change them to fit what she wanted them to be. And someone would look up there and see that they had already done a job and that they were out of order. It was behind our backs, she would change, and so I thought that it needs to be something that we can all keep track of. If they do fall off or get out of order that we can get them back in an order so everybody will get to do every job. Is that how you presented it, that everyone would get to do? Yeah. That's different then everybody has to do! A lot of times I really watch that. I really watch how I phrase get to and have to. But, they said the book orders are in, last name, alphabetical order, because that's the easiest way to do for me, to pass things out alphabetically, and then that way when we gathered up books and number eight was missing, I wouldn't have to say oh, who's number eight this time. I'd just know who number eight was. And to tell you the truth, I don't like the idea of them being a number, cause I know certain rooms where children are a number, my cousin was a number, and so I wanted them to feel like they were who they were but at the same time I did need organization in that I had to keep track some way and I wanted it stable so as much as could be I put their names up everywhere and so with this job chart we did initials. We organized it by first names instead of last name. A started off, Alice was our first President. So it was something different, they weren't on the same order. But I thought about poor Hannah, she always at the end, and this way she wasn't going to be. So how did they get a number? It was because of how I started when we first started our first multiple copy books. I wanted to pass out something and the books had numbers on them. The books from our library have numbers on them, they are numbered one through twenty. And so I said, if Alice was number eight, she got the number eight book all year long. So at the very end it was nice. Oh. I wish I had done that in my room! It's funny cause there are certain ones that I definitely know their numbers, because their things would get lost more than others. So I always knew that Gary was number seven. And I always knew that Donald was number one because of the A name. But there are sometimes where if you were to ask me who twelve was, I wouldn't know. But 14 is Blaine. There are certain times when I know and certain times, and it's funny cause there are a lot of times the kids would know who they were. Toward the end of the I'd ask whose number so and so and the kids would go so and so. I tried as much as I could to make them initials ... so they didn't feel like a number. There had to be something though. I went nuts the year before and I lost books and had to pay for them. I decided I'm not doing that again. I learn from my mistakes, too.

So on the job chart you just rotated them if you were President this week then next week you were Secretary? They went from president to

substitute, so once you got to be President you went down to substitute, and then you worked your way up. It's so funny though. Did you ever have a person who did not do their job? Oh yeah. So could you write down in the black book if you saw something like that? You know I could have, but I didn't. So how did you handle that? Normally I would find that it was typically the person that was already at the carpet waiting to like do our Pica Fermi(math) game at the end of the day or the person that was hanging out and visiting that I'd go "What's your job?" And they 'd go "Oh, I'm President" and I would say "Oh, come with me and let me show you." What does President do? They are typically the person who leads our line to go different places, if there are things I need from the office, errand type runner, anything, kind of like second teacher, but I don't want to say that either cause it sounds like I think that I'm THE, but do you know what I'm saying, if there's anything else that needs to be done, I will ask "Who's President?" That would be the person to go to. Also this sounds really silly, we needed someone to sharpen pencils, too, so we are not beyond the manual task of it being done. You've got to also be a servant!(laughter) - If you're going to lead, you have to serve. I think part of that was getting everybody prepared for the next day, the responsibility there.

How did they define this? How did you know that the President was also the pencil sharpener? I wrote it down on a little sheet to the side and the Secretary, this is the thing, too. Secretary had grandeur, visions! Secretary is in charge of doing lunch count and taking it to the office, and I had visions of grandeur that they would just naturally go over there and change the clips and get them ready for the next day and they would change the date on the board and they would flip everything and make all the changes. It was like that would say, "I'm Secretary, I don't have any job to do". That's when I would invite them to come with me. And they'd change weekly and by the time I got one doing these things, I'd get a new one. The good thing is sometimes people would say this is what I did last week and they'd help. I don't know how other then to say to teach the new person the job. We did discuss it at the beginning, but if you're fifteenth from being President you don't pay much attention to it. Librarian has a definite job that is very tangible, and artist, too. Those are daily jobs. The others like - door holder - I know we don't really have a door! Owen wanted that one! But that person, when I am on duty, unlocks the door, brings the key back, holds the door open for everybody things like that. It could be once or twice a week type job. So that person is a little bit laid back this week. It would get harder next week.

Teacher Interview Protocol

These questions will be used in the teacher interview protocol:

- 1) What does it mean to care?
- 2) Was your school experience, as a student, a pleasant experience overall?
- 3) Do you see your classroom as a caring place for students? In what ways?
Is this by design? How do you plan for this?
- 4) How do you establish a caring classroom?
- 5) How do you see caring demonstrated by your students?
- 6) Are the affective components of your classroom a part of your curriculum?
- 7) Do you have classroom rules and consequences? What are they? Do these
effect the atmosphere of care in your classroom?

These questions may need to be adjusted somewhat as the interview proceeds in a conversational manner.

Question for Teacher Protocol Writing

Please write about your personal memories of how you experienced care as a student and as a teacher.

APPENDIX B
PARENT SURVEY AND CONSENT FORMS

- 1) Parent survey
- 2) Letter to parent with sample questions on student interviews
- 3) Teacher consent form
- 4) Parent (for child) consent form

Letter to Parent Giving Sample Questions from Student Interview

Dear Parents,

I will direct your child's interview toward school issues. The following is a sample of the questions that your child will be asked during their interview:

- 1) What does it mean to care?
- 2) Can you give me an example of caring?
- 3) Can you tell me about a time that a teacher has shown care? Please explain how this made you feel.
- 4) Can you tell me about a time when another student has been caring? Please explain how this made you feel.
- 5) Can you remember a time when you were really kind to someone else here at school? How did that make you feel?

Sincerely,

Karen M. Rogers

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHER

Project Title: The Essence of Care in the Classroom

Researcher: Karen M. Rogers

I, (print name) _____ hereby authorize and direct Karen M. Rogers or assistants of her choosing, to perform the procedures listed here.

- A. Purpose: This study is designed to investigate thoughts and feelings about care.
- B. Procedures: In participating in this study you will be asked to do the following things:
 - 1. Participate as the teacher in the classroom and share some planning ideas.
 - 2. Complete an interview about your thoughts on care in the classroom.
 - 3. Do a protocol writing about your experience of care as a student and as a teacher.
- C. Dateline of participation: This study will begin in January of 1998 and be finished in May of 1998. The researcher will be in the classroom approximately six hours a week. The writing and interviewing parts will require 60 to 90 minutes.
- D. Confidentiality: All information that you provide will be kept confidential and will not be released except in the most extreme circumstances. Data from this study, including questionnaires, interviews, protocol writing and audio tapes will be stored in a secure place and, along with the computer files, will be deleted or destroyed at the end of the study. Results from this study may be presented at professional meetings or in publications. Your anonymity, however, will be preserved.
- E. Risks: There are no risks in this study that would exceed those ordinarily encountered in daily life.
- F. Benefits: The benefits of this study will be realized as themes emerge through narrative which can inform and assist other teachers in considering the implications of the practice of care in the classroom.

I have been fully informed about the procedures listed here. I am aware of what I will be asked to do and of the risks and benefits in this study. I also understand the following statements:

I certify that I am 18 years or older.

My participation is part of an investigation entitled "The Essence of Care in the Classroom". The purpose of these procedures is to examine thoughts and feelings about care in the classroom.

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty.

Consent form for "The Essence of Care in the Classroom". - - - page two

I understand that I may contact any of the researchers at the following address and telephone number should I desire to discuss my participation in this study and /or to request information pertaining to the study's outcome.

Karen Rogers or Dr. Kathryn Castle at the School of Curriculum and Educational Leadership, 245 Willard Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078. (405) 744-7125. Additionally, I understand that I may contact Gay Clarkson, IRB Executive Secretary, 305 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK. 74078. (405) 744-5700.

I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form has been given to me. I hereby give consent for my participation.

.....
Signature of Participant

.....
Date
Time:.....AM PM

.....
Signature of Witness

.....
Date

I certify that I have personally completed all the blanks in this form and have explained them to the subject before requesting the subject to sign this consent form.

.....
Signature of Project Director or Authorized Representative

PARENT CONSENT FORM FOR STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Project Title: The Essence of Care in the Classroom

Researcher: Karen M. Rogers

I, (print name) _____ parent of _____
 _____ (print child's name) authorize and direct Karen M. Rogers or assistants of her choosing, to perform the procedures listed here.

- A. Purpose: This study is designed to investigate thoughts and feelings about care in the classroom setting.
- B. Procedures: In participating in this study you are asked to give permission for your child to do the following things:
1. Be observed in normal classroom interactions about two times each week for sixteen weeks.
 2. Be interviewed by the researcher in an individual conversation for 10 to 15 minutes in the hallway adjacent to the room, or in the library or other location designated by the classroom teacher, and at a time that would not interfere with the normal classroom schedule.
 3. The researcher will obtain verbal consent from the child, being certain to let the student know that he/ she may decline to participate at any time.
- C. Dateline of Participation: The study will begin in January of 1998 and be finished in May of 1998. The researcher will be in the classroom approximately six hours per week. The interviewing part will require 10 to 15 minutes.
- D. Confidentiality: All information that you or your child provides will be kept confidential and will not be released except in the most extreme circumstances. Data from this study, including surveys, interviews, audio tapes and student documents will be stored in a secure place and, along with the computer files, will be deleted or destroyed at the end of the study. Results from this study may be presented at professional meetings or in publications. Your child's anonymity, however, will be preserved.
- E. Risks: There are no risks in this study to you child that would exceed those ordinarily encountered in daily life.
- F. Benefits: This study will contribute a rich description of care in a classroom to the professional literature on care in education. Your child may indirectly benefit from the attention of the researcher.

I have been fully informed about the procedures listed here. I am aware of what my child will be asked to do and of the risks and benefits in this study. I also understand the following statements:

I certify that I am 18 years or older.

Consent form for "The Essence of Care in the Classroom". - - - page two

My participation and that of my child is part of an investigation entitled "The Essence of Care in the Classroom".

The purpose of these procedures is to examine thoughts and feelings about care in a classroom setting.

I understand that participation of my child is voluntary, and that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, for myself or my child, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation, for myself or my child, in this project at any time without penalty.

I understand that I may contact any of the researchers at the following address and telephone number should I desire to discuss my participation in this study and /or to request information pertaining to the study's outcome.

Karen Rogers or Dr. Kathryn Castle at the School of Curriculum and Educational Leadership, 245 Willard Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078. (405) 744-7125. Additionally, I understand that I may contact Gay Clarkson, IRB Executive Secretary, 305 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK. 74078. (405) 744-5700.

I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form has been given to me. I hereby give consent for my participation.

.....
Signature of Participant

.....
Date
Time:.....AM PM

.....
Signature of Witness

.....
Date

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject before requesting the subject to sign it.

.....
Signature of project Director or Authorized Representative

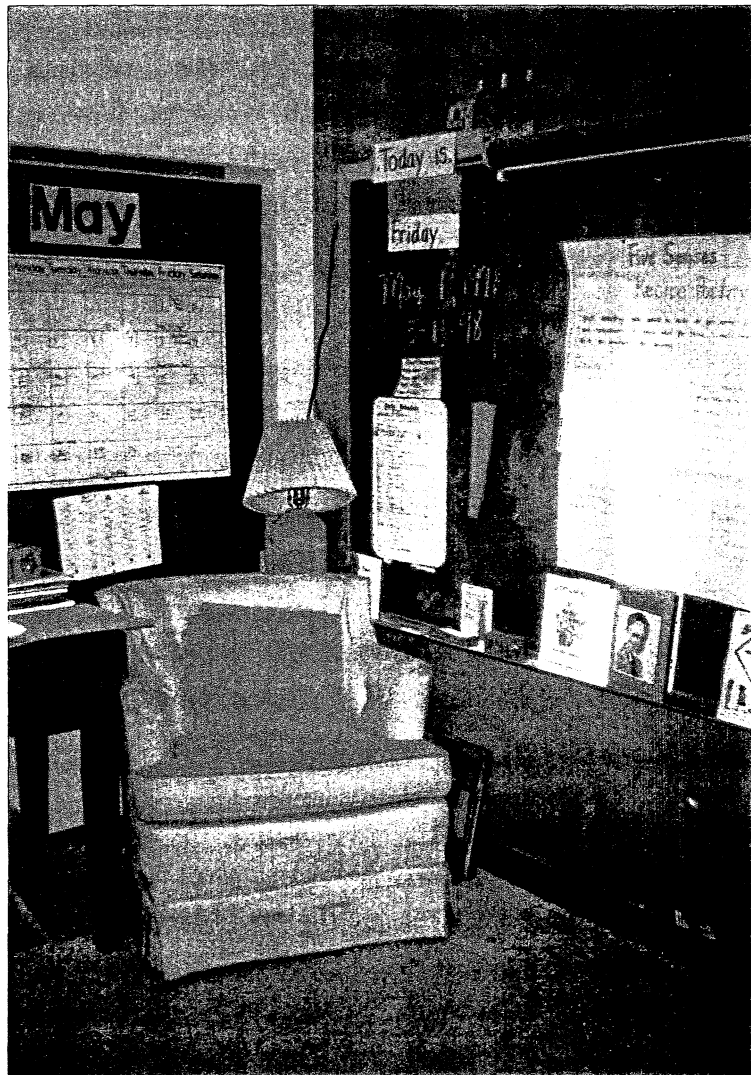
APPENDIX C

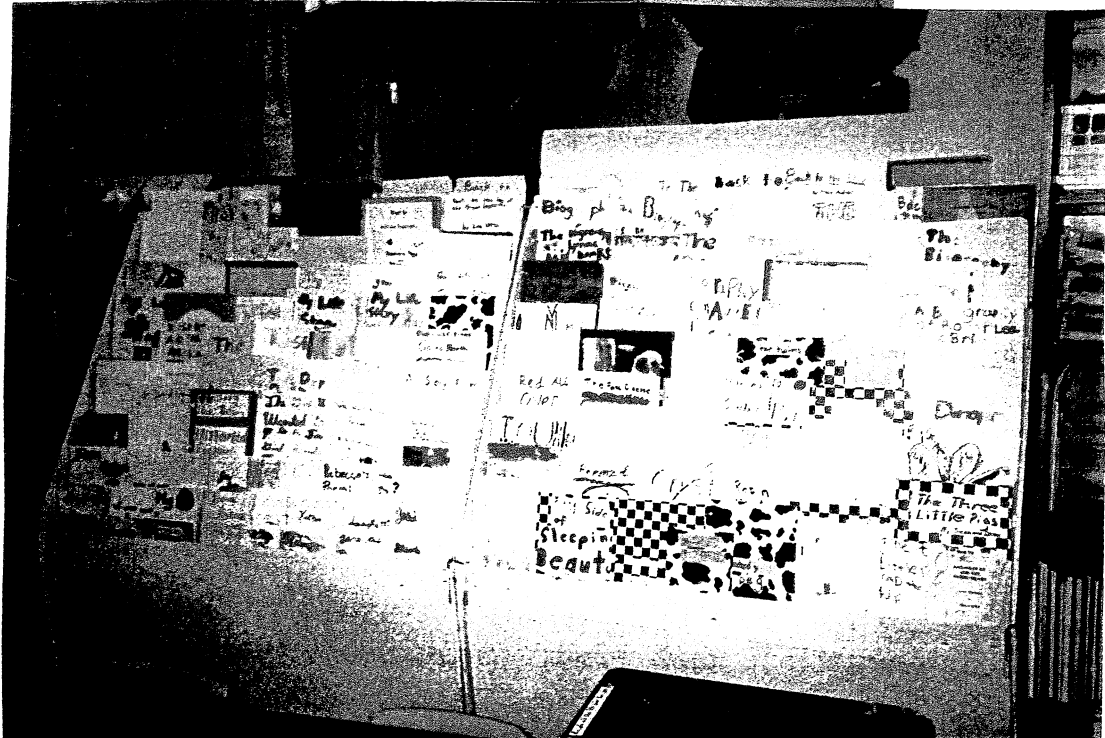
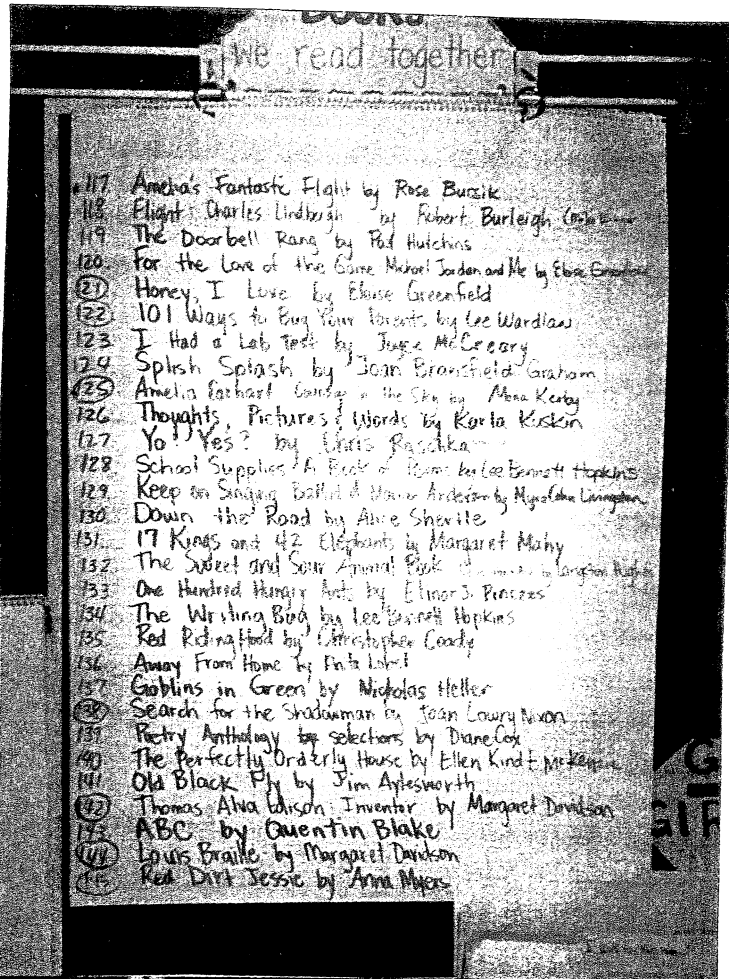
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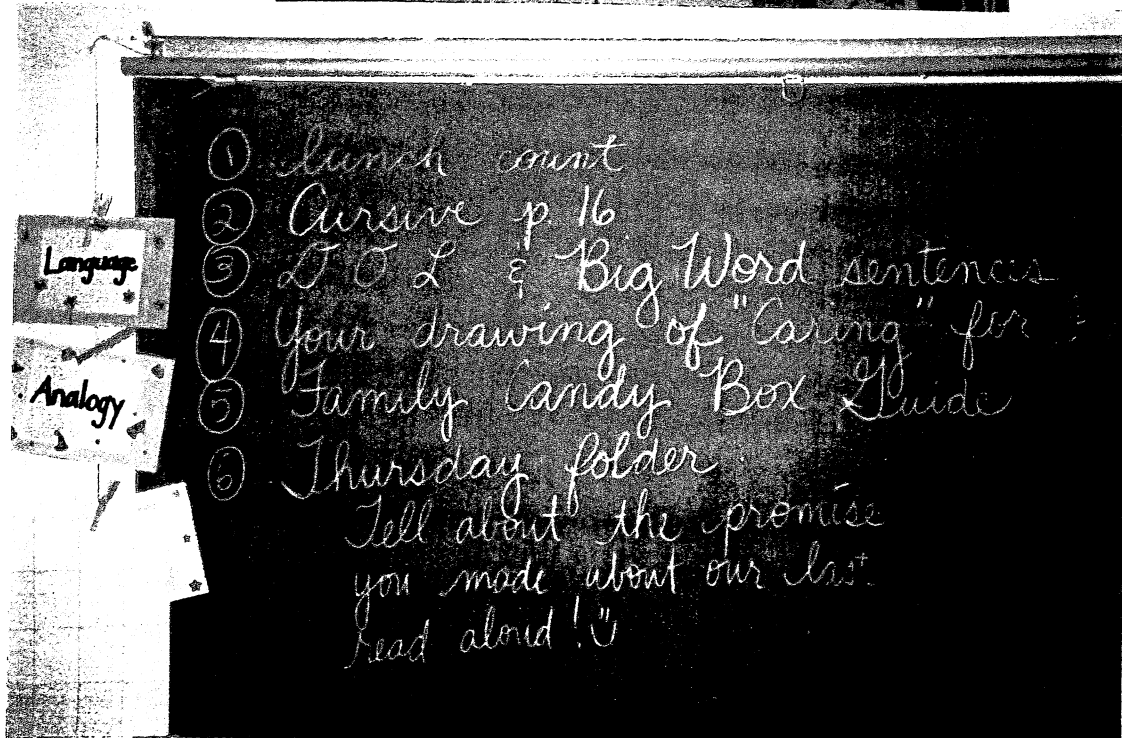
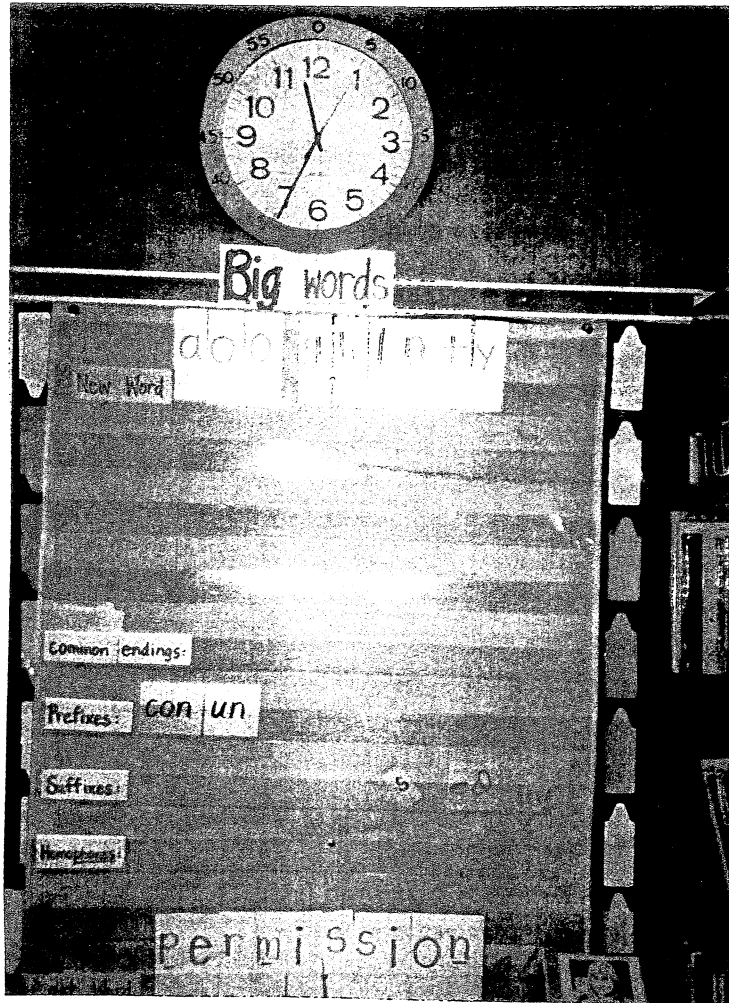
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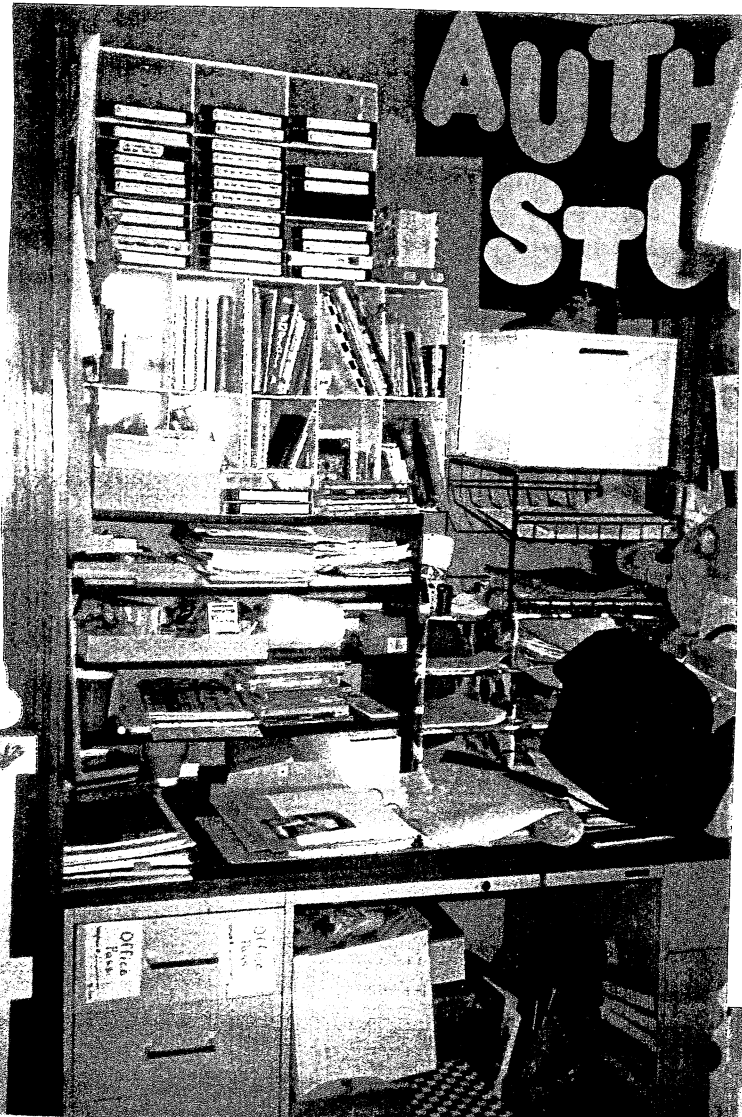
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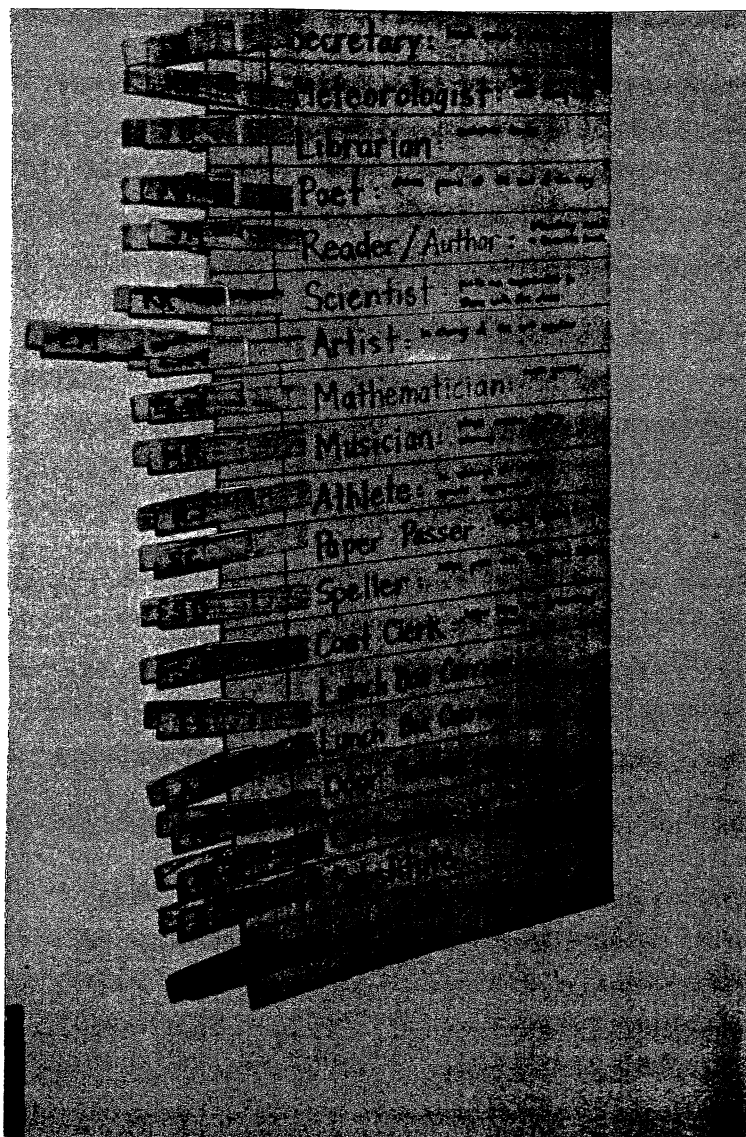
CHILDREN'S STORIES











1. President Chair
2. Secretary Desk Miss
3. Meteorologist Sink
4. Librarian Library
5. poet Computer desk
6. reader author author chair
7. Scientist Friend of the web
8. Artist by Big words
9. Mathematician math games
10. Musician where paper is
11. Athlete Computer Desk
12. Paper Passer stairs
13. Speller by graphing
14. Costumer Breeze way
15. Lunch Box carrier
16. Lunch Box carrier } Concert of
17. Door holder by Door
18. Enstorian by Books
19. Submitter by Books
20. Submitter } Circle table

Chapter Books Read by 3rd grade 1997-98

1. The Green Book by Jill Paton Walsh
2. Encyclopedia Brown Boy Detective by Donald J. Sobol
3. Castles by David Alderton
4. Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls
5. Write Up a Storm With the Polk Street Kids by Patricia Reilly Giff
6. The Big Lie: a True Story by Isabella Leitner
7. Night Crossing by Karen Ackerman
8. Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher by Bruce Coville
9. Love You, Daddy by Amy Hest
10. Mick Harte Was Here by Barbara Park
11. Hiroshima by Laurence Yep
12. Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes by Eleanor Coerr
13. A Dog Called Kitty by Bill Wallace
14. The Big Wave by Pearl S. Buck
15. Back to the Day Lincoln Was Shot by Beatrice Gormley
16. Titanic Crossing by Barbara Williams
17. The Kid Who Ran For President by Dan Gutman
18. George Washington Carver by Eva Moore
19. Frindle by Andrew Clements
20. Rosa Parks by Eloise Greenfield
21. Jennifer Murdley's Toad by Bruce Coville
22. Honey, I Love and Other Poems by Eloise Greenfield
23. 101 Ways to Bug Your Parents by Lee Wardlaw
24. Amelia Earhart: Courage in the Sky by Mona Kerby
25. Search for the Shadowman by Joan Lowry Nixon
26. Poetry Anthology selected by Diane Cox
27. Thomas Alva Edison: Inventor by Margaret Davidson
28. Louis Braille by Margaret Davidson
29. Red Dirt Jessie by Anna Myers

Picture Books Read by 3rd grade 1997-98

1. The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polocco
2. The Memory Box by Mary Kay Stanley
3. I'm in Charge of Celebrations by Byrd Baylor
4. The Patchwork Quilt by Valerie Flournoy
5. The Memory Box by Mary Bahr
6. Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold
7. Firetalking by Patricia Polocco
8. Aunt Chip and the Great Triple Creek Dam Affair by Patricia Polocco
9. Appellemondo's Dream by Patricia Polocco

10. Georgia O'keefe by Mike Venezia
11. Rechenka's Eggs by Patricia Polocco
12. Mrs. Katz and Tush by Patricia Polocco
13. Rumpelstiltskin by Paul O. Zelinsky
14. Rumpelstiltskin: My Side of the Story by Diane Cox
15. Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge by Mem Fox
16. Lon Po Po by Ed Young
17. Somebody and the Three Blairs by Marilyn Tolhurst
18. Jim and the Beanstalk by Raymond Briggs
19. Length by Henry Pluckrose
20. The Fourth Little Pig by Teresa Celsi
21. The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig by Eugene Trivizas
22. How Big is a Foot? By Rolf Myller
23. The Principal's New Clothes by Stephanie Calmenson
24. Gutenberg's Gift by Nancy Willard
25. Capacity by Henry Pluckrose
26. Walter the Baker by Eric Carle
27. Count Your Way Through Germany by Jim Haskins
28. The Three Little Pigs by Steven Kellogg
29. That Awful Cinderella by Morton Botel
30. Sidney Rella and the Glass Sneaker by Bernice Myers
31. Merl and Jasper's Supper Caper by Laura Rankin
32. Prince Cinders by Babette Cole
33. Princess Smartypants by Babette Cole
34. Pumrelstiltskin by Diane Cox
35. Dinorella by Pamela Duncan Edwards
36. Little Red Riding Hood : A Newfangled Prairie Tale by Lisa Campbell Ernest
37. Whinnie the Lovesick Dragon by Mercer Mayer
38. The Good-for-Something Dragon by Judith Ross Enderle
39. Colors of Germany by Holly Littlefield
40. Dragon Feathers by Andrej Dugin
41. The Knight and the Dragon by Tomie dePaola
42. The Mountain that Loved the Bird by Alice McLerran (Carle)
43. The Lamb and the Butterfly by Arnold Sundgaard
44. How Much is a Million? By David M. Schwartz,, Kellogg (ill.)
45. Library Lil by Suzanne Williams, Kellogg (ill.) —
46. Brown Bear, Brown Bear by Bill Martin, Jr., Carle (ill.)
47. Pigs Will Be Pigs by Amy Axelrod
48. The Hallo-Wiener by Dav Pilkey
49. Paul Klee by Mike Venezia
50. Money by Kathy Barabas
51. The Greedy Triangle by Marilyn Burns
52. The Grateful Crane by Hiroko C. Quackenbush, Ph.D.
53. My Hiroshima by Junko Morimoto
54. 'Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving by Dav Pilkey

55. The Paper Crane by Molly Bang
56. The Crane Girl by Veronika Martenova Charles
57. December by Eve Bunting
58. A to Zen by Ruth Wells
59. Count Your Way Through Japan by Jim Haskins
60. A Cloak for the Dreamer by Aileen Friedman
61. Until I Met Dudley by Roger McGough
62. Cleversticks by Bernard Ashley
63. Tree of Cranes by Allen Say
64. Stranger in the Mirror by Allen Say
65. From the Heart of Christmas by Robert Glover, Jude Tolar (ill.)
66. The Trees of the Dancing Goats by Patricia Polacco
67. 'Twas the Night Before Christmas : African American by Melodye Rosalas
68. Cajun Night Before Christmas by James Rice
69. The Night After Christmas by Jandra Cox
70. The Gettysburg Address by Abraham Lincoln
71. Abraham Lincoln: A Man for All the People by Myra Cohn Livingston
72. Norman Rockwell's Americana by George Mendoza
73. Dear Rebecca, Winter is Here by Jean Craighead George
74. Ouch! A book of Cuts, Scrapes & Scratches by Melvin Berger
75. The Food Pyramid by Loreen Leedy
76. Miss Nelson Has a Field Day by Harry Allard
77. America the Beautiful by Katherine Lee Bates
78. Rainbabies by Laura Kross Melmed
79. More Than Anything Else by Marie Bradby
80. Each Orange Had 8 Slices by Paul Giganti, Jr.
81. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Myra Cohn Livingston
82. The Great Migration by Jacob Lawrence
83. The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles
84. White Socks Only by Evelyn Coleman
85. Minty by Alan Schroeder
86. Harriet and the Promised Land by Jacob Lawrence
87. Betsy Ross by Alexandra Wallner
88. Wilma Unlimited by Kathleen Krull
89. Eleanor by Barbara Cooney
90. Ruby Bridges: the Girl Who Conquered Hate (play) by Barbara Pitts
91. Brave Bessie: Story of Bessie Coleman by Reeve Lindbergh
92. Mary McLean and the St. Patrick's Day Parade by Steven Kroll
93. Click! A Book of Cameras and Taking Pictures by Gail Gibbons
94. Count Your Way Through Ireland by Jim Haskins
95. Amelia's Fantastic Flight by Rose Bursik
96. Flight: Charles Lindbergh by Robert Burleigh
97. The Doorbell Rang by Pat Hutchins
98. For the Love of the Game, Michael Jordan and Me by Eloise Greenfield
99. Honey, I Love by Eloise Greenfield

100. I Had a Lab Test by Joyce McCreary
101. Splish Splash by Joan Bransfield Graham
102. Thoughts, Pictures, and Words by Karla Kuskin
103. Yo! Yes? By Chris Raschka
104. School Supplies: Book of Poems by Lee Bennett Hopkins
105. Keep on Singing: Ballad of Marian Anderson by Myra Cohn Livingston
106. Down the Road by Alice Shertle
107. 17 Kings and 42 Elephants by Margaret Mahy
108. The Sweet and Sour Animal Book by Langston Hughes
109. One Hundred Hungry Ants by Elinor J. Pinczes
110. The Writing Bug by Lee Bennett Hopkins
111. Red Riding Hood by Christopher Coody
112. Away From Home by Anita Lobel
113. Goblins in Green by Nicholas Heller
114. The Perfectly Orderly House by Ellen Kindt McKenzie
115. Old Black Fly by Jim Aylesworth
116. ABC by Quentin Blake
117. Yours Truly, Goldilocks by Alma Flor Ada
118. The Secret Knowledge of Grown-Ups by David Wisniewski
119. Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse by Kevin Henkes
120. Whoever You Are by Mem Fox
121. Oh! The Places You'll Go by Dr. Seuss

The Story of Ruby Bridges

by Robert Coles

Ruby Bridges Hall reenacts her famous walk up the steps of the William Frantz Elementary School.



Barbara Henry, Ruby's teacher at William Frantz Elementary School

On November 14, 1960, Ruby Bridges crossed the threshold of William Frantz Elementary School and single-handedly initiated the desegregation of New Orleans's public schools. She was six years old.

Her teacher, Barbara Henry, was teaching in Europe before relocating to New Orleans to join her husband, who was working there. She was in Germany and France for two years and taught elementary students in the U.S. Air Force Dependent School System. Upon her arrival in New Orleans, she applied to teach in the public school district. She received a call from the superintendent; he asked if she could teach first grade. She said yes and asked if it was an integrated school. He told her it was.

After her experience in Louisiana, Henry got involved in the METCO program in Brookline, Massachusetts. METCO was the first program in the state whereby selected students of color from the Boston school system were invited to attend suburban schools.

An angry mob greeted Ruby on her first day at William Frantz Elementary, and it remained there for months. Federal marshals escorted her to school, and white families withdrew their children in protest. Ruby faced threatening shouts and empty classrooms.

"She was this adorable little cherub," Henry says of Bridges. Now a school administrator in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, Henry still remem-

bers how Bridges "never seemed lonely or cried. She always had a sense of purpose. I think that's what carried her through."

The Story of Ruby Bridges, written by Pulitzer Prize winner Robert Coles and illustrated by George Ford, tells of Ruby's strength and faith, using language and pictures just right for young children—children the same age as Ruby when she stood up to racism and misunderstanding. This book has put Ruby (now Ruby Bridges Hall) on the front page again, spreading her message in newspapers and magazines across the country (including a feature article in *People*); in an honorary degree ceremony with Dr. Coles at Connecticut College; on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* (with Barbara Henry) for a special Martin Luther King, Jr. tribute; and on *The Late Show with Tom Snyder*.

Today Ruby Bridges Hall is back at William Frantz Elementary School as a parent liaison, getting parents more involved in their children's education. "When I integrated the school system," she says, "people were there for me, for my parents. The whole neighborhood got involved. But somewhere we lost that."

Her efforts also include founding the Ruby Bridges Educational Foundation, a New Orleans-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to interface between parents and students to further educational advancement for all children. "You have to be concerned with everyone's children," she says. "A good way to do that is to get involved with your own children."

Name _____ ^{week} #4-3 date 3-30-98

BigWord letters for the week: aaei lnprs

I figured out the BigWord!! It is: _____

I made _____ new words using the letters of the BigWord.

2 letter words	3 letter words	4 letter words	5 or more letters
1. Al	are	ears	learn
2. an	ear	pear	pears
3. as	sip	real	learns
4. E.R.	pal	seal	earns
5. in	sea	peal	pearl
6. is	pea	peas	raise
7. pa	pie	pies	pearls
8.	lie	lies	lanes
9.	lip	slip	planes
10.	sap	lips	plains
11.	lap	pals	plain
12.	rap	plan	plane
13.	ran	sane	plans
14.	ail	rain	sprain
15.	I.R.S.	pain	rains
16.	air	pail	pains
17.	ape	sail	pails
18.	pen	rail	rails
19.	pin	nail	nails
20.		sale sale	spine
21.		line	splat
22.		liar	Spain
23.		Neal	leans
24.		Lane	
25.		Earl	
26.		earn	
27.		lain	
28.		lair	
29.		apes	
30.		pens	
31.		pins	
32.		lean	

(7) + (19) + (3)(2) + (23) (60) + (12) + (9) 81

Science Journal Page

Ready to Fly? Try These!

Name _____ Date _____

This is an autogiro.

1. Hold your autogiro above your head. Let it drop. Write 2 things you saw happen.

*it spun
falls over when it hits the ground
Wait time for spinning.*

2. Try it again. Can you count the number of turns? Estimate the number of turns.

3. Hold the object upside down. Will it fly? Yes No

4. Place the paper clip on the bottom. Does this make any changes?

Yes No If yes, describe the change _____

*The paper clip flips the
autogiro over.*

5. Cut and fold the second pattern. Label the first one A; the second one B. Which reaches the floor first? _____

14 paper clip //

6. Try this 2 or more times. Does the same one always reach the floor first?

Do they seem to turn at the same speed? *paper clip faster*

7. Be prepared to describe any observed differences. _____

8. What are some variables that control the flight of the autogiro? *paper clips*

*tissue paper, construction
size paper, height, position
construction rips*

Science Journal Page

Analysis

Name _____ Date _____

9. Analyze the way the weight affected your autogiro.

Heavier it will go faster

10. What materials did you use to make your autogiro?

*regular paper
tracing paper
construction paper*

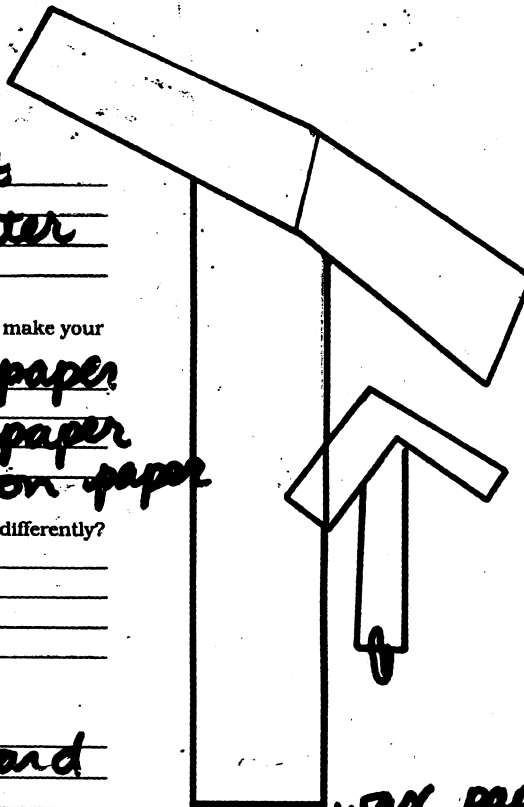
11. Next time, what would you do differently?

*cloth
Kleenex
cut slits
plastic*

12. Why?

*foam
paint
laminated paper
clay (play dough)
wood*

*wax paper
tail*



3-25-98

248

1. It falls and drops.

2. 10 times?

3. No

4. Yes

5. Neither

6. No

7. They both reached the floor at the same time.

8. I ~~don't~~ know. The yellow finishes before the white.

1. Cut along all solid lines.

2. Fold back Part A. Fold Part B forward.

3. Fold Part E up along the dotted line.

4. Fold Part C on the dotted line toward the middle.

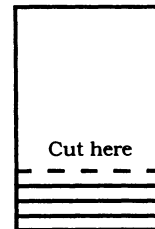
5. Fold Part D toward the middle so C and D overlap each other.

Make a Parachute

Students can make a parachute like this that really works. They will need a pair of scissors, stapler, a piece of cloth, a piece of plastic, and a clothespin.

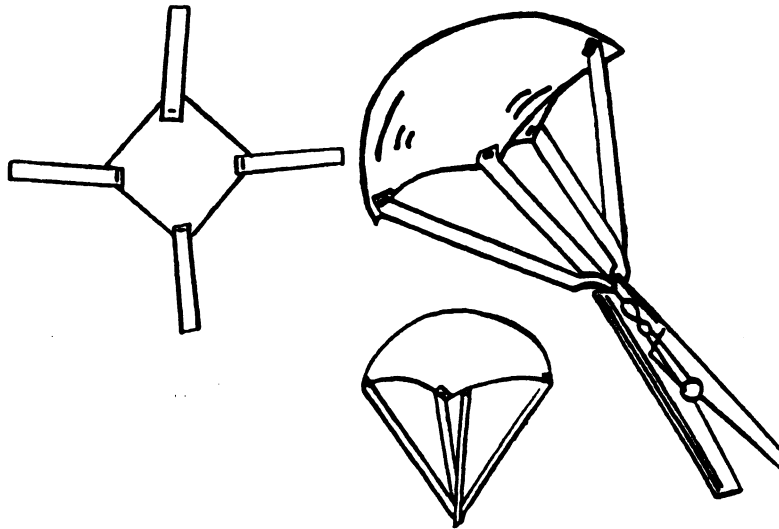
Directions:

1. Each student should have a sheet of paper.
2. If they are making a **cloth or plastic parachute**, use this paper and measure a piece of cloth or plastic the same size (9" x 11"). Cut it out if it is not already precut.
3. Cut out 3 sets of 4 strips of paper, making all strips the same width and length (Use these sets of 4 paper strips on the paper parachute, cloth parachute, and plastic parachute).
4. Staple the 4 strips to the corners of the parachute tops.
5. Staple the 4 strips of paper together at the bottoms.
6. Fasten a clothespin to the bottom of the strips on each parachute.
7. Drop the parachutes. Watch them fall to the floor.

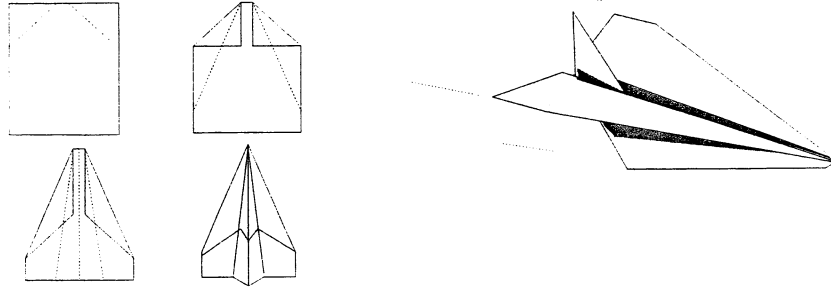


Structuring Question:

Do you know why your parachute works?

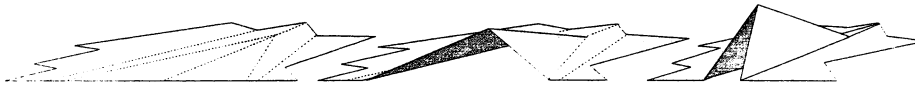


Instructions



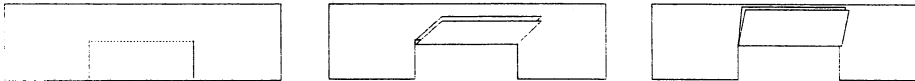
THE PLANE

- Flip the paper over so that the printed fold lines are facing down.
- Turn the corners back to the outside fold lines and crease. Repeat for the next set of folds.
- Fold up along the center line so text is inside and graphics are on the outside.
- Finally fold down each wing.
- Throw briskly and slightly angled up.



THE STICK-UP TAIL

- Bring the two angled fold lines together.
- Crease along the top.

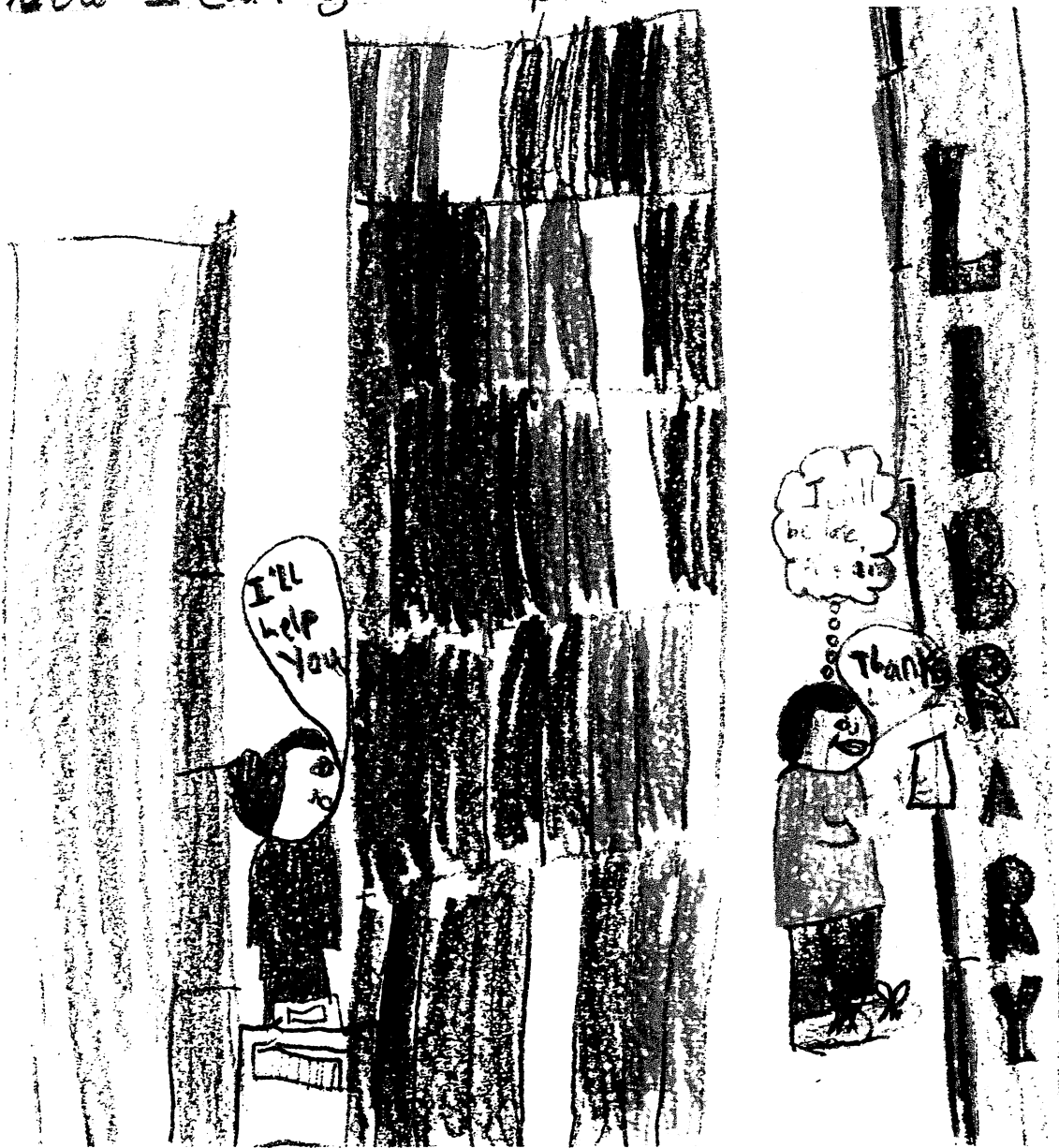


THE FASTENING CLIP

- Cut on the sides.
- Fold to one side to hold the plane together.

Books

I have all these books to put away
whata day what a day, its nice and clear
that I need some help over here!
Oh Lora hi, will you helpme? Thank you!
wow it is all done thanks again!
Now I can go to piano.





1

When I walked
by _____, I tickled him in
the ribs. But he never said
that it distracted him before
he told. _____ said I was
yelling across the room, but I
was only talking to _____. I
was passing notes to _____
I poked _____ in the
bottom with my eraser,
and the led on the other
end, and it poked me, too.
I was hitting _____ with my sleeve.

Recipe

Kindness

Ingredients

- 2 cups of care
- 3 cups of helpfulness
- 1 cup of friendship
- 5 cups of understanding

Directions:

pour in 5 cups of understanding dump in 3 cups of helpfulness blend while sifting in 2 cups of care. Then sprinkle with 1 cup of friendship. Serves 2 people and best if eaten together.

Recipe Kindness

10 cups niceness
 4 cups of generosity
 3 cups of not being mean

Bake at 375 Till Golden
 BROWN

Kindness is yellow
 it smells like freshly cut grass
 and tastes like chocolate
 it sounds like a song
 and feels like a soft dog.

Kindness is yellow,
 and tastes like candy.
 It smells like a daffodil.
 It sounds like an angel,
 and feels like a pillow.

Kindness is loving
 it smells like a
 flower, it
 tastes like
 sweet chocolate
 it sounds like a
 choir, and feels
 soft and
 huggable

Five Senses

Poem

Kindness

Kindness is a light pink color!
 Kindness smells like cinnamon!
 And it tastes like a sweet
 apple!
 It sounds like a soft tuned
 bell!
 And feels like silk!

Author's Celebration...
B
Celebrating ABC books and
D
Every book written this year by 3rd
F
Graders in class,
H
Including Fairytales, Realistic Fiction, Biographies and Fantasy. We
J
Know you will find each of our *nine books* special.
L
Meet us on **Monday, May 18th** for
N
Our Final Author's Celebration of 1997-1998.
P
Quite unusually, we will begin at 11:00 a.m.
R
So plan to stay and hear many
T
Unbelievably wonderful authors.
V
We hope to see
X
YOU!!!
Z

1. Cursive
2. Books
3. Kater coming
4. Big word
5. Jobs
6. Songs
7. Friend of the week
8. Miss
9. The class
10. Art

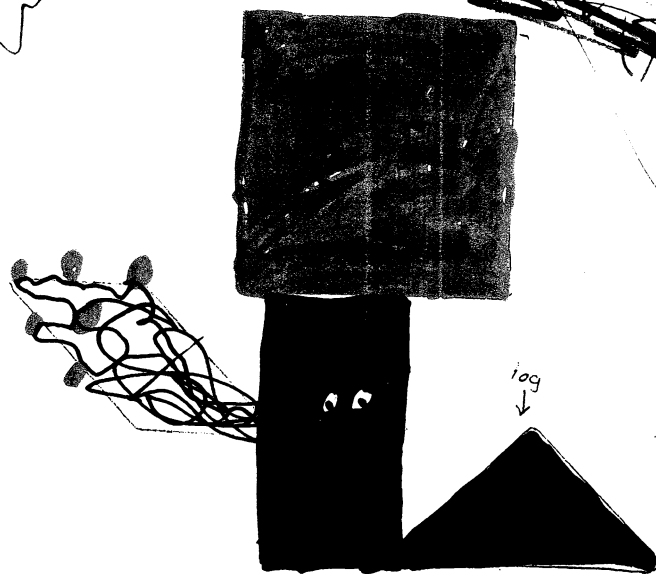
Injured
animals!



Once there was a girl named Nicole-
Jane Rogers in her nautique dress.



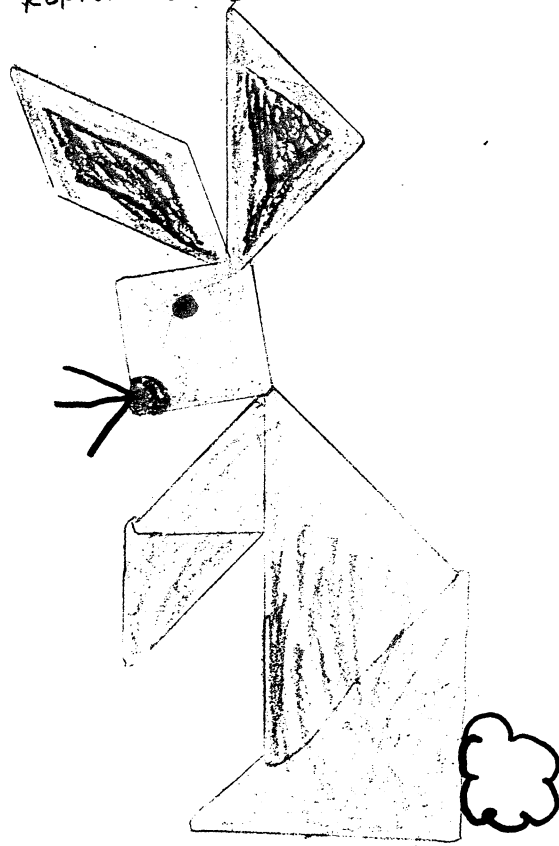
Nicole loved to search for
animals that were injured,

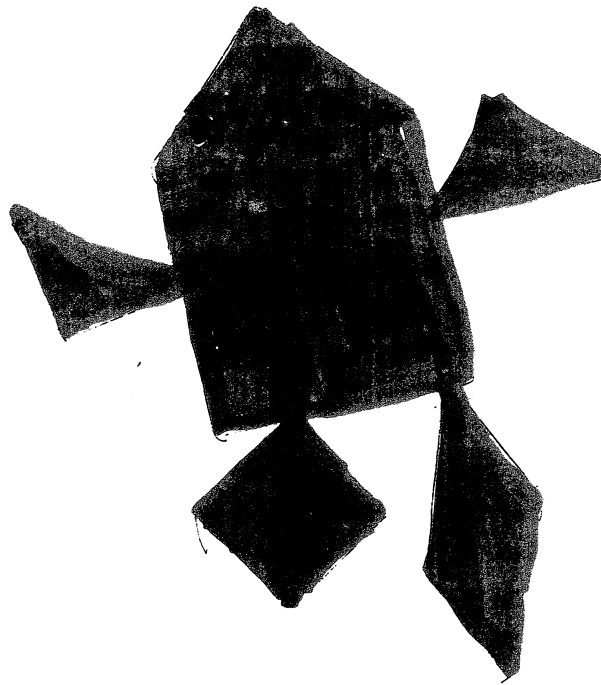


This is the house, that is a animal
has pill. Ware Nicole work, all of
the animals together.



It looked like it was fine
but it kept coughing.

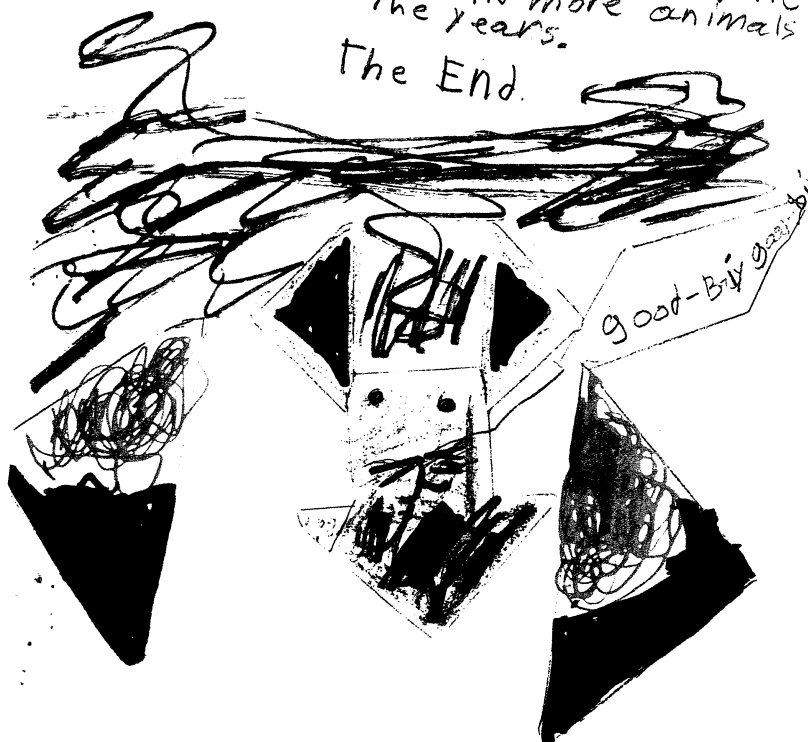




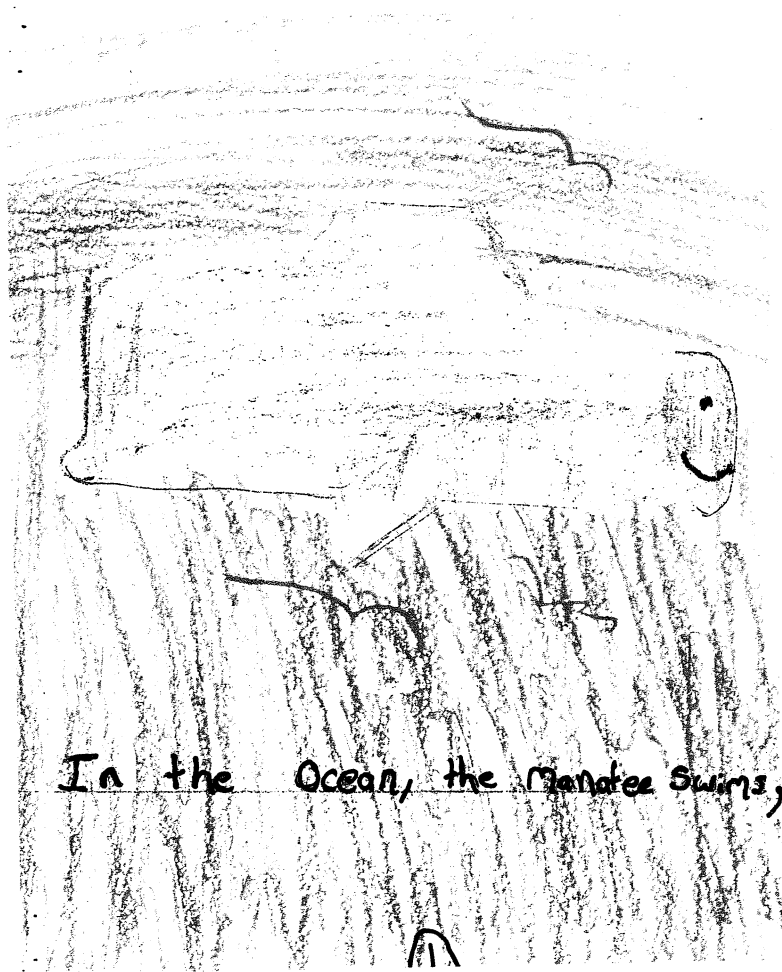
This is a frog named Polly wog.
The frog is named Polly wog.

The mouse that Nicole rescued
was well on its way to go home
even though the frog was not
heather was the rabbit. Even
though the mouse ad left everyone
was very happy and more animals
came over the years.

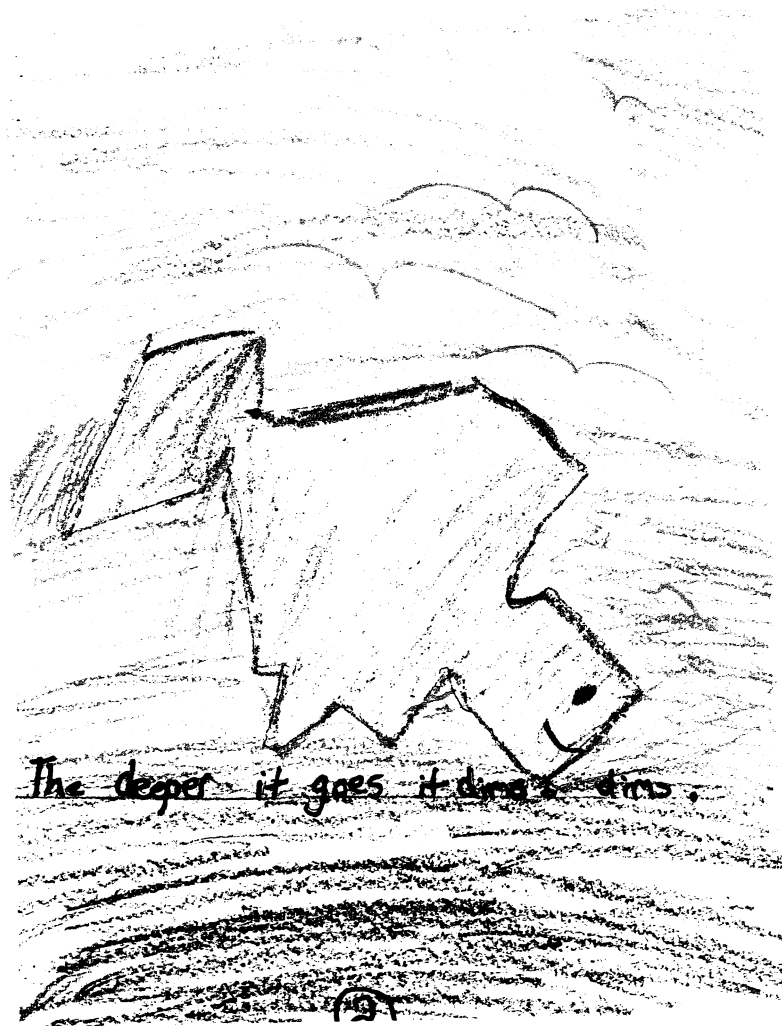
The End.

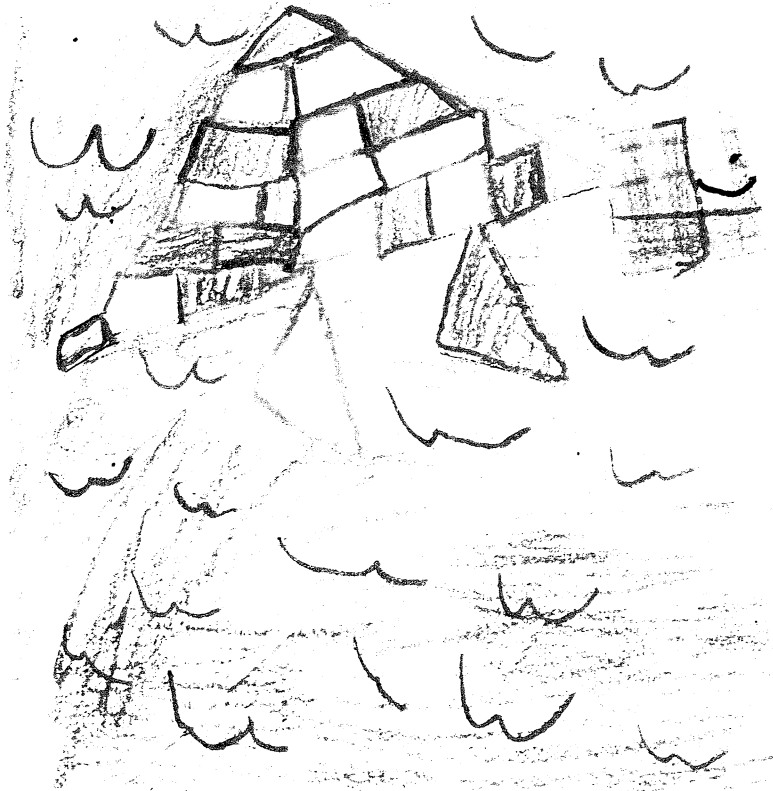


As the
Manatee swims
By



In the Ocean, the Manatee Swims,





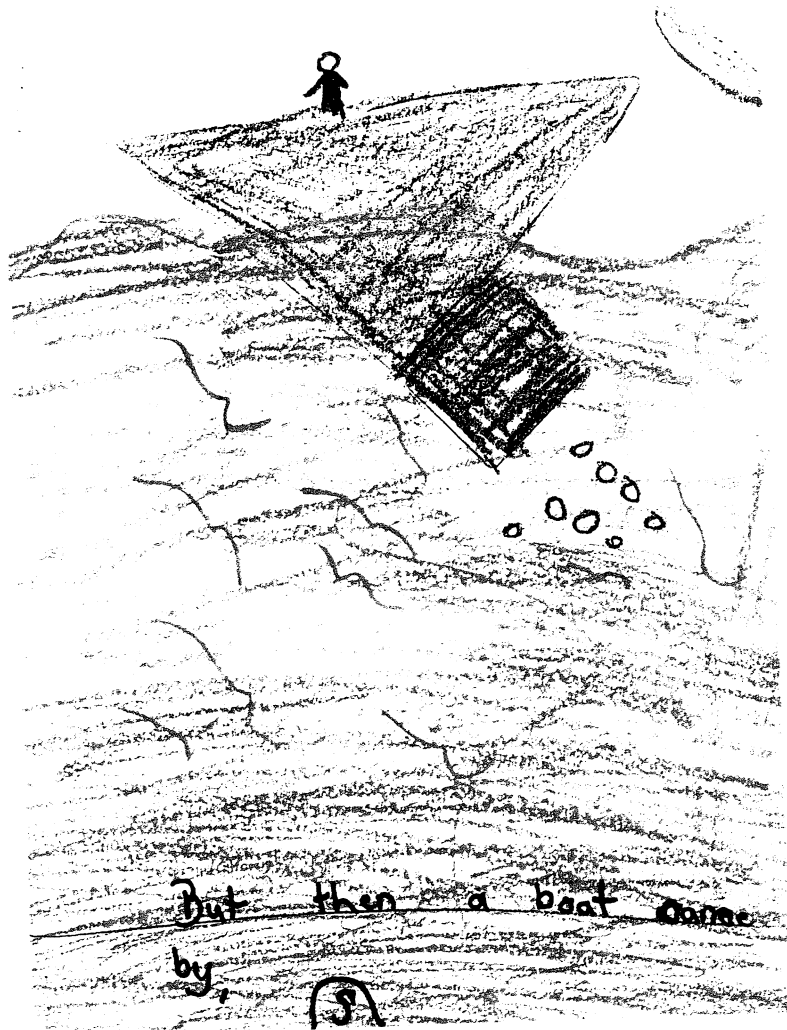
the manatee saw a
turtle swim by.

③



So he decided to sayhi.

(4)



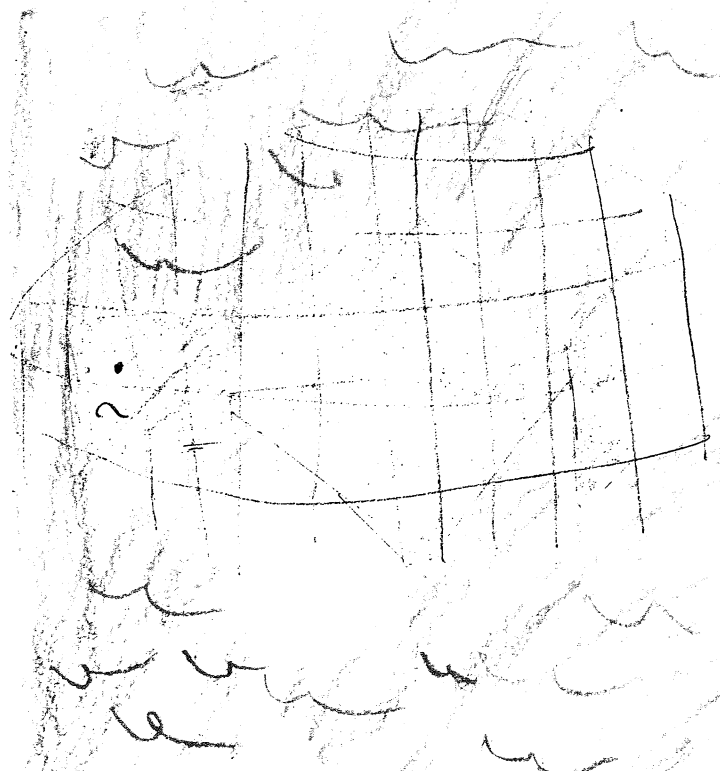
but then a boat came
by

(S)

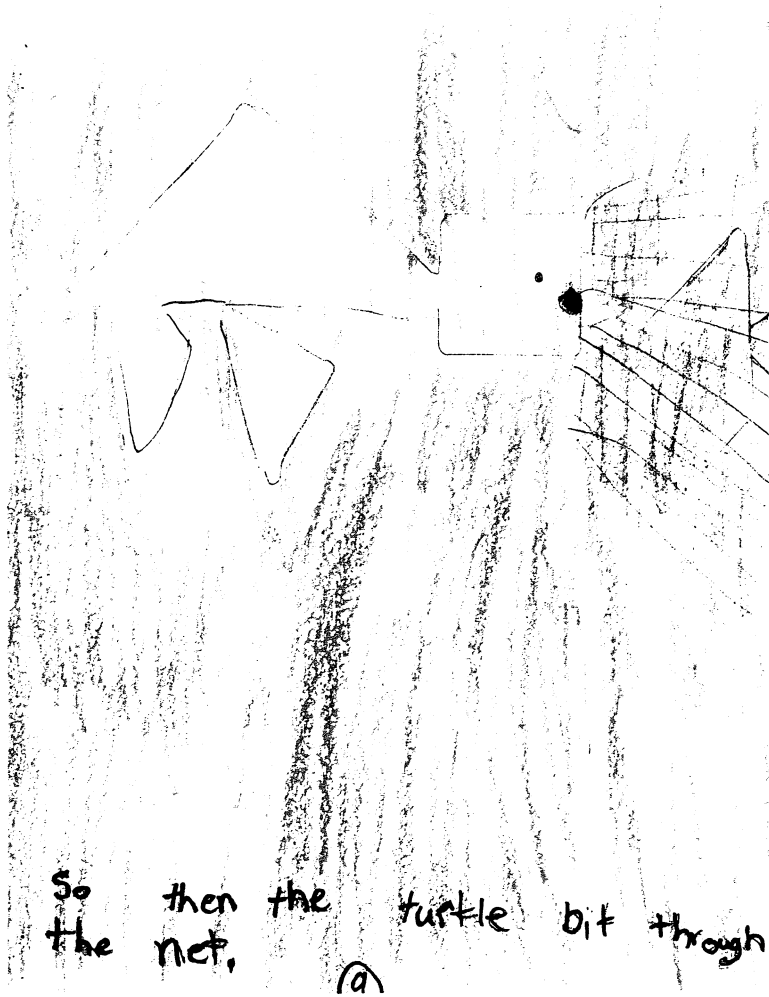


then a net dropped

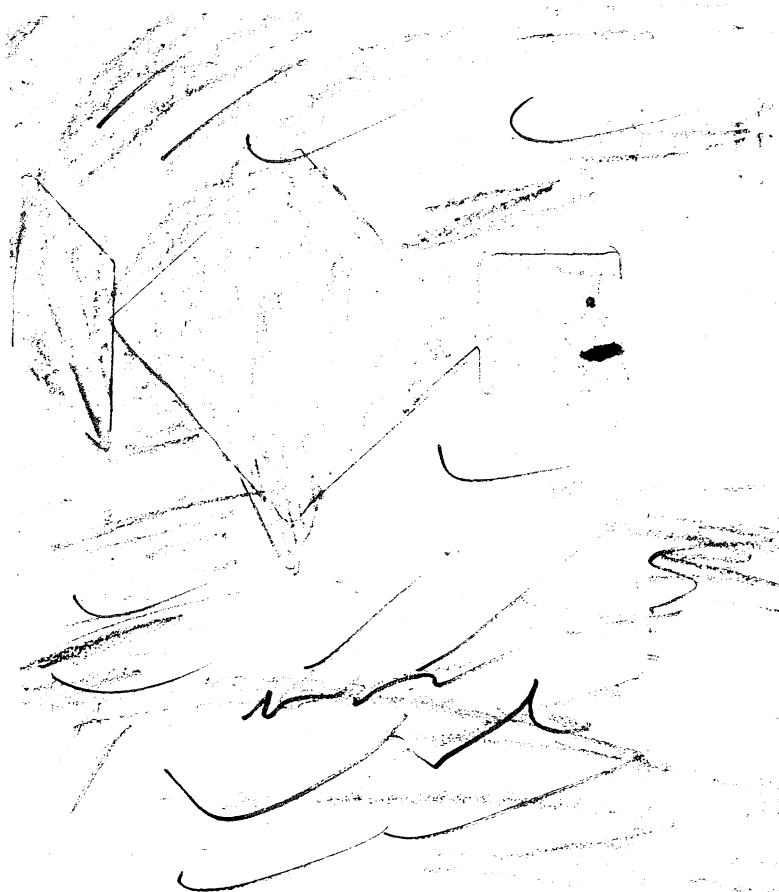
on the manatee that said
hi! (b)



to help the manatee
that said, "Hi"
(B)



So then the turtle bit through
the net, (a)



So he could save the manatee
that he ~~money~~.

The
End

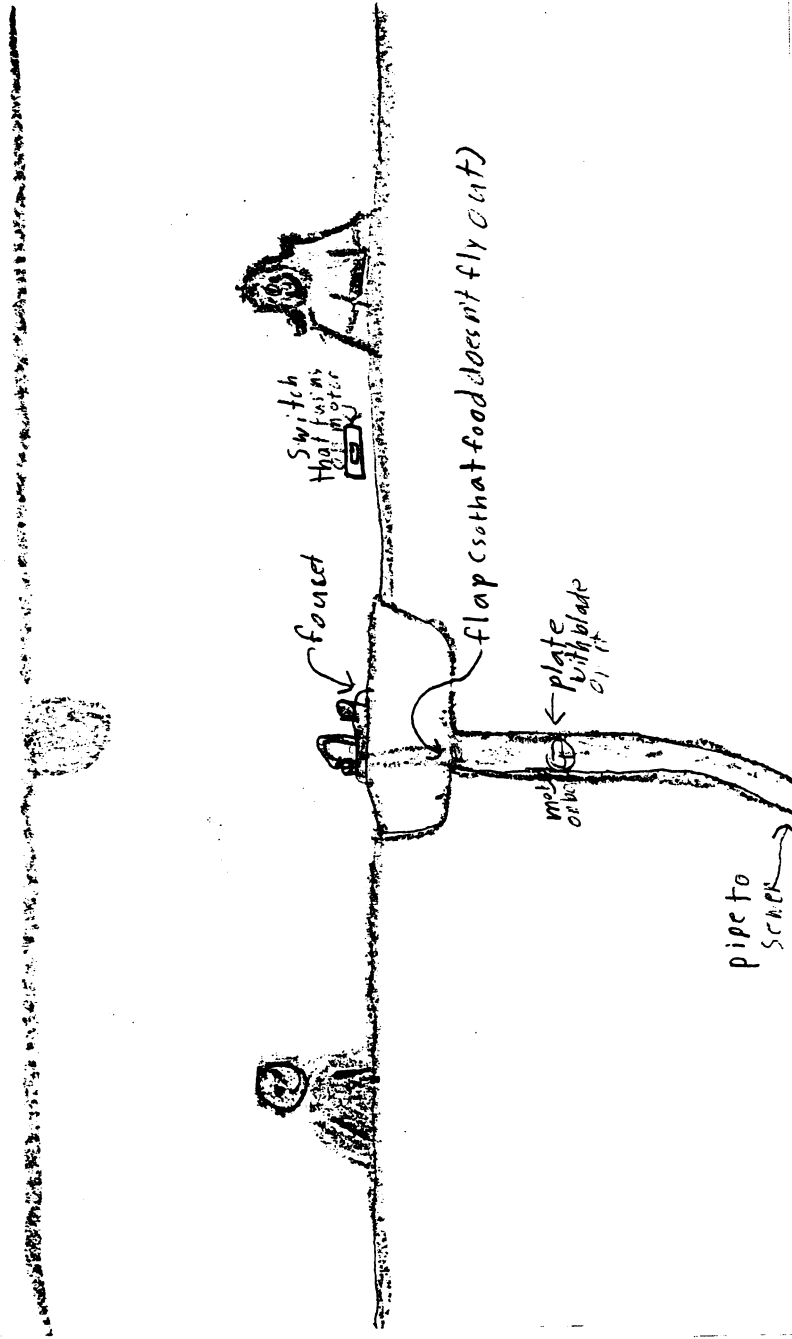
Before I met Dudley I thought this was the way
 a garbage disposal worked.
 You put food down there but it isn't really a tube
 it's the trunk of an ancient elephant. When you
 turn on the switch it alarms the elephant to hook
 up his trunk. And it sucks the scraps down into its
 mouth and eats them, the annoying sound is because the
 elephant is sucking so hard. His tail is hooked up to the
 sewer system so that it doesn't smell or get fat. Some of
 his favorites are mouldy softeners, dried up ketchup
 and half eaten microwave dinners.

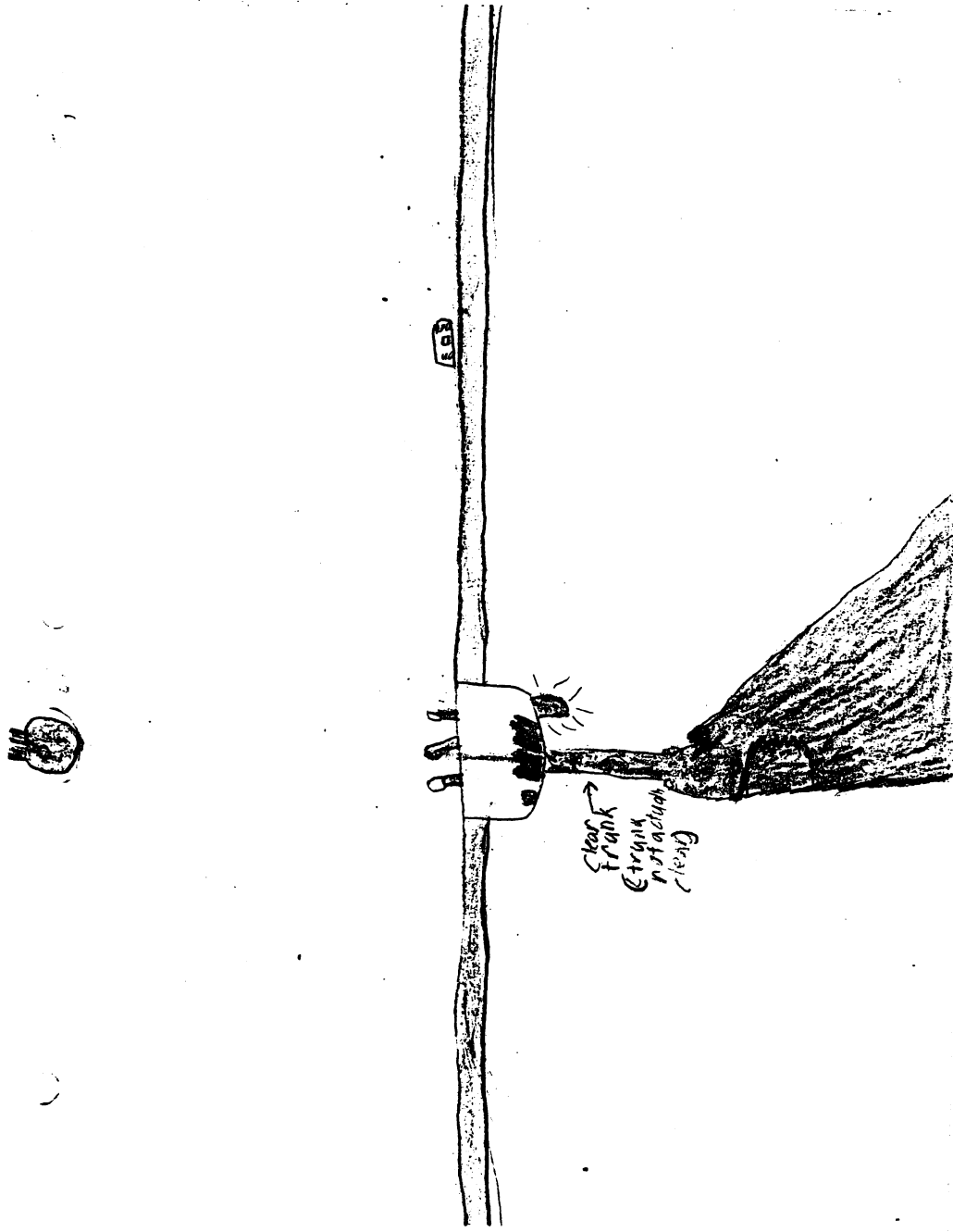
The real story of the fox "Machine"

You insert the paper into the slot. The machine turns your letter into a code, and sends it by telephone wire to the place where it's supposed to be. The other fox machine decodes the code, and turns it back into a letter to be read by the receiver.

Food C

Food goes down the pipe and mixes with water and gets chopped up by the blades. When you turn the switch it turns on the motor with turns the blades

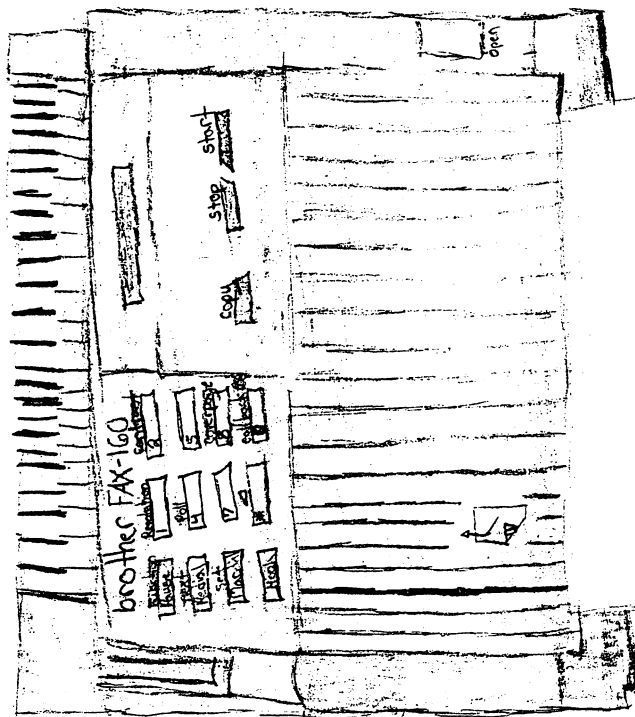




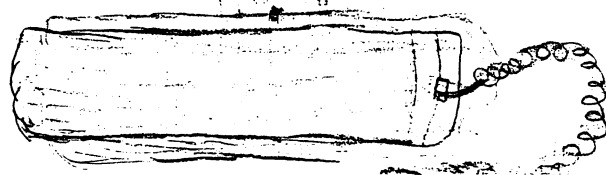
The Fax Machine

Once upon every day there lives an evil elf that recives messages from the fat Rogers family. Since he has so many letters he decided to hire a kangaroo to steal little people from little York City. Then the kangaroo puts the little Yack people in her pouch. She takes the back to the evil elf and he ties their feet together and sticks a stamp onto each of their feet. Then when the machine sends a message the elfs copy it by jumping when the evil elf calls their alphabet letters. When the letter is finished the evil elf signs the big persons signature. Then he whistles for his cost Rombo, to come pick the letter up. When the cat arrives the evil elf tells him the adress and he delivers it to the other elf in the fax machine at the destination. The elf there pushes the letter through the slot and yells, "Beep, Beep, you have mail."

FAX MACHINE



වැරදි සහ අනවශ්‍ය වැරදි සහ
 සියලුම සියලුම සියලුම සියලුම
 සියලුම සියලුම සියලුම සියලුම



Back To The Day
Johnson became
President

By

My name is My
friends Jake, Jordan, Gody
and I are interested in time
travel. We have built a time
machine we named the TAGC.
That stands for Time And Space
Connector. Today it's my turn
to pick the Adventure. I
chose November 22, 1963. That
was the day Lyndon Baines
Johnson became the president
of the United States. "So, guys,
are we going back in time or what?"

"All set and ready to roll, Dillon!" said Jordan. So we all climbed in the time machine and on the count of three Cody flipped the switch and we were off!

"Wow! I'm sitting in the back seat of a car, close to vice president Johnson. In the front seat is president and Mrs. Kennedy. We're not moving very fast, I think we're in a parade. All the sudden there was a shot, well at least I heard one!"

I threw myself on the vice pres.
and pushed him into the floor of
the car as it rushed to the hospital.
Johnson kept telling me to get
off him, but as a Secret Service
Agent it was my job to protect
him. I heard Mrs. Kennedy screaming
but didn't know what had
happened. When we arrived at
the hospital they rushed the presi-
dent to the E.R. (Emergency Room.)
Johnson tried to comfort Mrs.
Kennedy while they waited for the
news.

The news finally came that president Kennedy had been shot and killed by a sniper. Vice president Johnson ordered me to get Air Force One ready to fly back to Washington D.C. That is where he took the oath of office, becoming the thirty-sixth president of the United States. "Wow that's about all I've had for one day," Wi-z-z, I was back in time sitting on my bedroom chair.

THE THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF

told from

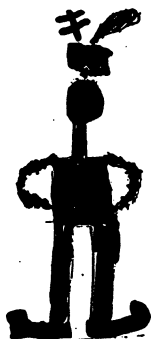
THE TROLL'S POINT OF VIEW

(THE REAL STORY)

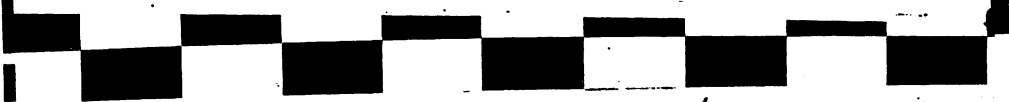
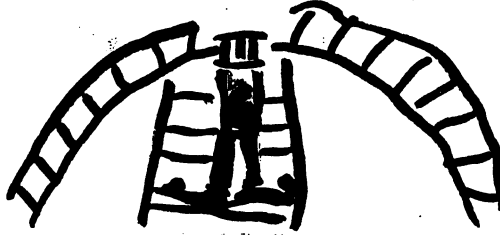


WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY

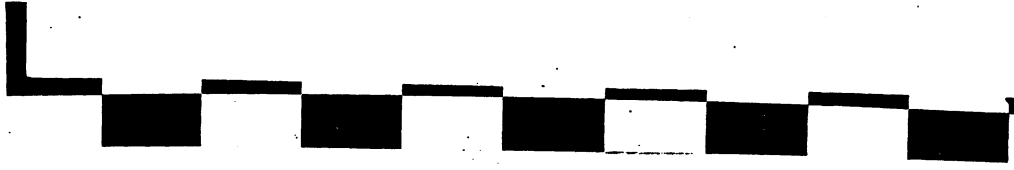
Hey, are you listening to me? Everyone says I want to eat the goats. Right! I was just doing what I had to do. Besides, they were going to break my bridge and you wouldn't like it if somebody was going to break your house.



This is the way it really went. Once there lived a peaceful troll. He was kind to everyone who crossed his bridge. Even the goats, even though they were mean! They were very mean and they broke my bridge. Now I have to fix it.



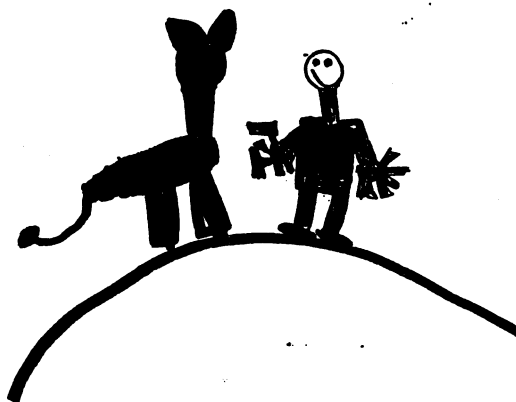
Uh-Oh, here they come. I'd better bet my hard hat on. Trip trap, trip trap. Yikes! Do you remember the little toll? Oh yow, here's the grass. You may cross.



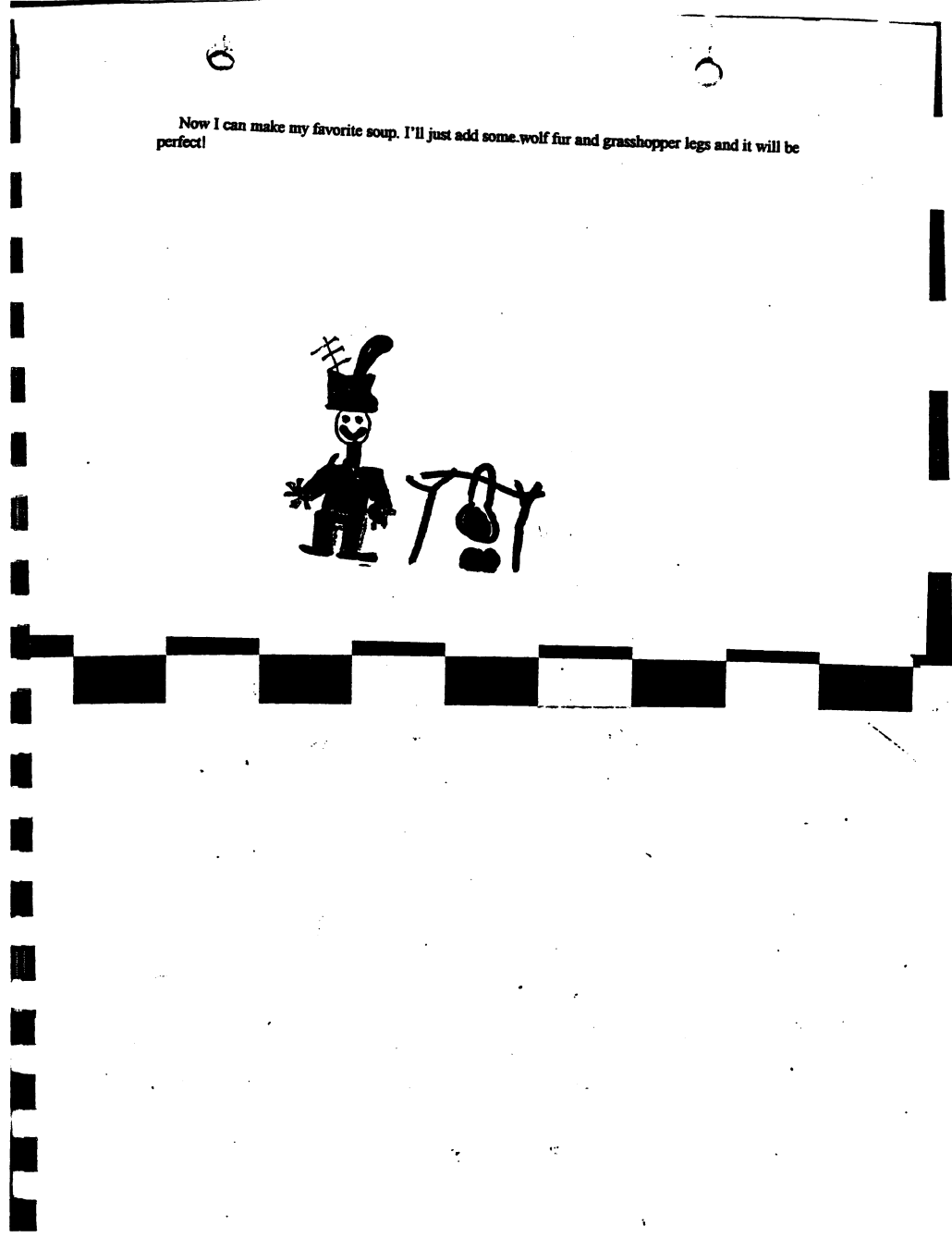
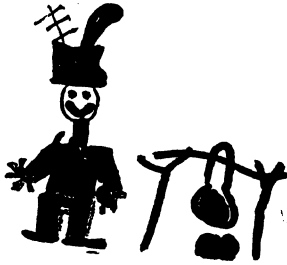
Here comes Bigger Billy Goat. Do you remember the toll? Oh yes, here are the cob webs. You are free to cross.



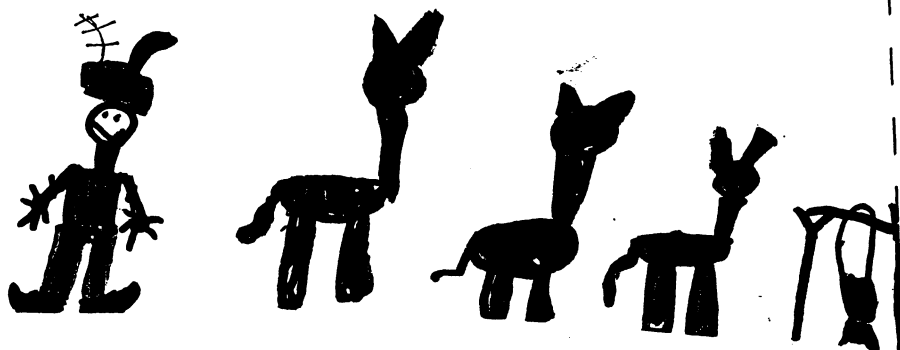
Here comes BIG BILLY GOAT. Do you remember the toll? I have the lizard tongues, here they are.
You may pass.



Now I can make my favorite soup. I'll just add some wolf fur and grasshopper legs and it will be perfect!



Here come the Billy Goat Gruffs. I wonder what they want? May we join you for some of that delicious smelling soup? Why certainly. I'd love to have you.



APPENDIX D

IRB FORM

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: January 30, 1998

IRB #: ED-98-056

Proposal Title: THE ESSENCE OF CARE IN THE CLASSROOM

Principal Investigator(s): Kathryn Castle, Karen M. Rogers

Reviewed and Processed as: Expedited/special population

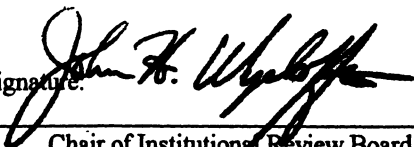
Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING, AS WELL AS ARE SUBJECT TO MONITORING AT ANY TIME DURING THE APPROVAL PERIOD.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR A ONE CALENDAR YEAR PERIOD AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.

ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

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

Signature: 

Chair of Institutional Review Board

Cc: Karen M. Rogers

Date: February 3, 1998

VITA

Karen M. Rogers

Candidate for the degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: THE ESSENCE OF CARE IN A CLASSROOM

Major Field: Curriculum and Educational Leadership

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in St. Mary's, Pennsylvania, June 19, 1950.

Education: Graduated from Mynderse Academy, Seneca Falls, New York in June 1968; received Bachelor of Science degree in Education from University of Central Oklahoma in May, 1986; received a Master of Education degree in Special Education from the University of Central Oklahoma in May, 1988. Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree with a major in Elementary Education at Oklahoma State University in May, 1999.

Experience: Employed as a paraprofessional in public school elementary in Rockford Illinois for seven years. Taught public school elementary in grades 1-5 for ten years, in Edmond, Oklahoma. Employed by Oklahoma State University as a graduate research and teaching assistant for three years.

Professional Memberships: Phi Delta Kappa, Kappa Delta Pi, Delta Kappa Gamma, International Reading Association, Association for Moral Education, Oklahoma Higher Education Reading Council, National Council of Teachers of English, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Association for Constructivist Teaching, American Association for Teaching and Curriculum, The Exchange