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An autoethnographic account: A description of nine young children's literacy learning experiences in a summer camp

Melinda G. Adams
University of South Florida

An Autoethnographic Account: A Description of Nine Young Children's

Literacy Learning Experiences in a Summer Camp

by

Melinda G. Adams

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Childhood Education
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Co-Major Professor: Susan Homan, Ph.D.
Co-Major Professor: Janet Richards, Ph.D.
William Young, Ed.D.
Suzanne Quinn, Ph.D.

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Dedication

Dr. Homan once told me, "You are fortunate to have Dr. Richards on your committee because she is a true student advocate." I agree wholeheartedly. Dr. Richards has been by my side, taking my side, throughout the dissertation process. I am indebted to her. She is one of the most intelligent people I know. She provides advice that is so poignant, so on point; I know I am in the presence of a genius. I would not be graduating this semester if it weren't for her. She is a wonderful professor, and I thank her for her hard work in getting me through this dissertation.

Did you ever meet someone's family and think to yourself, "No wonder she is such a good person! Everyone in her family is wonderful!" That's how I feel about Dr. Homan. After meeting her sister, mom, and dad, I can see where she gets her welcoming, kind, and gentle nature. She is the kind of person every student needs to get through school. God gave her the gift not only of teaching but of counseling and soothing people when they most need it. I respect her work and the person she is. I thank her from the bottom of my heart and I wish her a wonderful retirement in the spring!

My husband, Eric, was there for me when I decided to start my Ph.D., when I had to study for the GRE, and through eight years of tears, joy, papers, homework assignments, and stress. I counted on him for taking time out of work to watch the kids on numerous occasions while I took care of school matters. I hope he knows I could not have made it through this Ph.D. program without him. He is a special man.

Acknowledgements

Dr. Quinn agreed to stay up until 10:00 P.M. for my final defense. She is in a different time zone and we interacted through skype. I will forever be grateful to her for this. Her kindness and expertise in early childhood were tantamount to my successful defense.

Dr. Young came through for me many times and had such a unique perspective in the final defense. I couldn't have asked for a more passionate individual.

Dr. Shapiro was the outside chairperson for my final defense. He made me think through some implications I had not thought of before. He is a brilliant and compassionate man.

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ABSTRACT

My research assistant and I employed participant observation to study graduate tutors and

children in a literacy camp setting. Research questions were: What types of literacy

instruction do nine children receive from graduate education major tutors in a community

of interest summer literacy camp? How do nine children respond to literacy instruction

they receive from graduate education tutors in a summer literacy camp? We collected

data once a week for six weeks. We observed and took notes to determine what

instruction graduate tutors offered and how children responded. I used autoethnographic

methods to reflect on my former teaching practices. Ellis and Bochner (2000) say that to

be an autoethnographer you must be introspective about your feelings, observant about

the world, self-questioning, and vulnerable. Data consisted of observation notes, writing

samples, and my introspection regarding teaching practices. I found, through constant

comparison analysis, that graduate tutors provided supportive, meaningful instruction to

children and as a result the children felt empowered. Based on these findings, I suggest

that teachers remain mindful of the benefits of supportive student-centered pedagogy.

Future endeavors may include bringing these instructional techniques into the classroom.

Chapter One -- Introduction

Rationale and Context for Study

[I don't sweat very much as a general rule. However, on this particular day my armpits and my shirt were soaked. It was the day of my proposal defense. I was concerned about my proposal and concerned about passing out. I have been known to pass out in frightening situations. I did not pass out and my committee signed my title page, which indicated that I passed this portion of my dissertation process.] Here is what my first five slides looked like:

Slide one
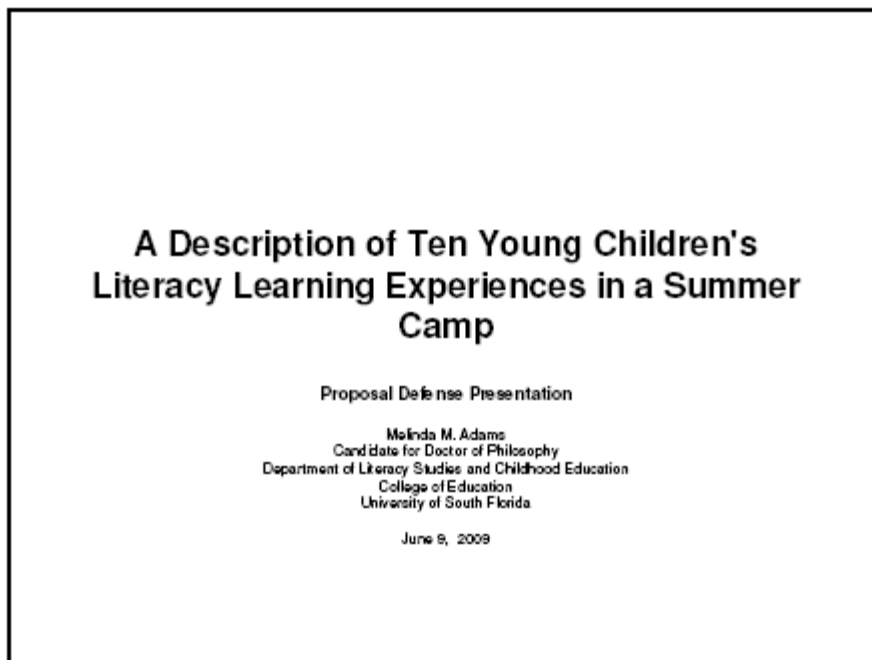
A Description of Ten Young Children's Literacy Learning Experiences in a Summer Camp

Proposal Defense Presentation

Melinda M. Adams
Candidate for Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Literacy Studies and Childhood Education
College of Education
University of South Florida

June 9, 2009

The purpose of this study is to describe teaching and learning events that occur between ten young children and their tutors in a community of interest summer literacy camp. [The idea for the study came about from my experiences as a former primary teacher who, in retrospect, did not think enough about my literacy teaching. This really had an impact on my children's literacy learning.]

The number ten concerned me. I hoped I could find ten young children whose parents would sign the consents. My next slide was as follows:

Slide two

*Camp Setting

*Small Graduate tutor to child ratio

I think these features are very important to my research. The features make my research unique.

Slide three

*Children learn literacy

*Observations and dialogue journals

*Pilot study and extant literature
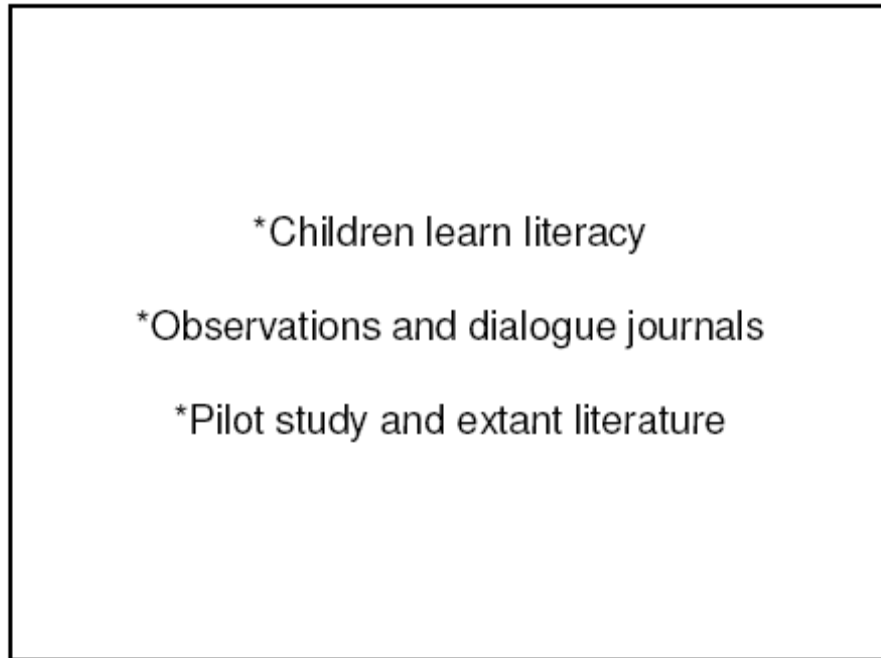
I hope to discover how children engage in literacy events by using observations, writing samples, and introspection. The graduate tutors and children will communicate back and forth using the dialogue journals. I have assumptions. I base these assumptions on the pilot study I did last summer and the extant literature.

Slide four

Schools:

*Could be impacted

*Determine best practices

I believe I could impact schools through this study. I may be able through this study to help schools determine best practices in literacy instruction.

Slide five

Community of Interest
(Pavey, Muth, Ostermeier, & Davis, 2007):

* Unite resources and energy

* Plan for future

The graduate tutors work together and learn together in what is called a "community of interest." The tutors disband when the camp is over.

There were many other slides I showed in my proposal defense. I will not present these as slides, but as the remainder of chapters one, two, and three.

Background of the Researcher

[I graduated from Florida Southern College in 1992 with a B.S. in elementary/early childhood education. I was a fairly good student; I was a tenth of a point away from graduating cum laude. I had taken the usual four years to complete my degree,

having taken my first education class in my freshman year. I was determined to be a teacher.

One of my favorite classes was classroom management. The instructor had taught for many years and was confident and self-assured. I was sure that what she said was gold and that I would have the "withitness" that she said was so important to have as a teacher. She taught assertive discipline and I wanted to use assertive discipline, as well.

I am a rule driven person who follows rules. I am on time to appointments. When I am not on time, I am literally pulling my hair out. The other day I had to pick up my son, who is three, from school at 2:10 P.M. In order to get to the school, I leave at 1:45. I get there about fifteen minutes early so I go and wait on a bench in front of the school. I had been waiting since 8:00 A.M. for a repairman to come and fix the washing machine. The repair center had told me they would arrive between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 12:00 P.M. I called the repair center at 11:45, 12:15, and 1:00 to check on the status of the repairman. The operator told me she would keep calling the repairman, but she wouldn't give me the repairman's phone number so that I could call him myself. At 1:15, the repairman showed up. He could not find a problem, so I told him to tell me what the amount was that I owed him. His van was directly in back of my van, so I could not move. It was 1:50 and I started panicking. He told me the amount. I wrote the check, and then he told me there was tax. I ran into the house, screamed, and ran back out with the new check. I told him to leave the receipt on the door. He backed up with me right behind him. This is to say, I follow what I believe is "right" to a tee. This story portrays my exact nature.

Back to the past. I got my first job in Ocala, Florida teaching first grade in 1992. I was nervous! I was living with my grandma and grandfather at the time. My grandma took a picture of my first day of school and I look at it with fondness, but it still makes my heart skip a beat to visualize the extreme amount of trepidation I had. I used assertive discipline in a very strict sense and found success. When my principal asked me to apply for something called, "Rookie Teacher of the Year." I complied.

Six weeks later, I interviewed with the school board for this award. Eight weeks later several members of the board came to observe my class. I was pleased to note that not one child talked out of turn the whole time the board members were there. This was not unusual for my class. Ten weeks later, on Abraham Lincoln's birthday, the school board came into my classroom with balloons and a plaque. I had won the "Rookie Teacher of the Year" award. I got to be in a TV commercial and, no lie, people would stop me in stores to ask if I was the woman who won the award.

Several weeks later there was a banquet when the "Teacher of the Year" award was given. I got to make a speech. I was most proud that my parents came back from a ski trip to watch me accept my award and that my grandma, grandfather and boyfriend were there, too. I feel sure that most of the reason I received the award was the way my children complied with me in the classroom.

To become a better teacher, and perhaps someday an administrator, I got my masters at Florida State University in educational leadership in 1996. I will admit that another reason I got my masters was that I was in a bad boyfriend relationship in Ocala and I needed an "out." Going to Tallahassee was a good way of "getting out." I regret the masters that I got because I don't think I'll ever try to be in an administrative position.

I would have done better to get a masters degree in early childhood education so that I could have learned how to better teach children earlier. I substituted during my time at FSU and also taught one year of kindergarten. After I finished my masters degree I got married, moved to Tampa, and started teaching first grade in Plant City after that.

When I entered the PhD program in 2001, I was married, teaching first grade, and wanting to be a mother very badly. I still remember the first class I took, "Trends and Issues in Education." I felt undereducated that first night and I thought that I might not be ready to be a Ph.D. student. It was a general education class so there were many students who were high school teachers, USF instructors, and even several nurse educators. As we introduced ourselves, I learned many of the students were already graduate assistants. I didn't know what a graduate assistant was. I visualized a student who interviewed for the position and only got the position because he or she was great at researching. I felt inept. I got a migraine and had to throw up when I got to my home in Valrico. It's humorous to think forward to when I finally did get the graduate assistant job in the fall of 2007, and the spring of 2008. I think I got it by e-mailing one of the professors and simply telling her I was interested.

On the second night of my first PhD class I made it my goal to find out who else in the class was an elementary teacher. I found two students. I think they could feel my nervousness because they asked me to sit with them from there on. I remain friends with them today. During one of the classes they asked me what I would like to research some day. It felt nonthreatening because we were in such a small group setting. I told them I thought I would research assertive discipline. I think the only reason why this came out of my mouth was because I knew that if nothing else, I was good at assertive discipline. I

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could tell by their response that this was not going to be a viable topic to research. They were nice enough, but I could tell they were not impressed.

As I began to take more classes, I became aware of different ways of viewing literacy. I was excited to learn how research can drive classroom instruction. It seemed so elementary, but yet I hadn't really thought about it before this time. I took a "Survey of Writing" class and became convinced that children need to talk while writing. I discovered that some researchers, like Vygotsky, look at conversation to observe what is being learned. I also met Dr. Holland. She was kind and encouraging. We were mutual friends with someone I know at church and that always helps with introverts like me. I asked her to be my major professor and she has encouraged me all along my educational journey.

My instructional practices in the classroom were being challenged. I was finding out some things I did in the classroom were not the most effective ways to teach first graders. However, while teaching first grade, I did many positive things such as teaching community service and helping others. I spent many hours eating lunch with small groups of children in my classroom as incentives for behavior. I team-taught with an outstanding teacher who had trained under scholar Gaye Su Pinelle.

And yet, I had so much to learn. As mentioned previously, I allowed no student to talk during writing time. If I heard so much as a whisper, I would have the child change his or her colored card. This was my behavior system. If the child followed all of the rules his green card showed. If a rule was broken the child would move the green card to the back so that the yellow card showed. This was a warning. The system went on to include consequences from a warning to going to the principal's office.

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I relied heavily on scripts from a basal reader during reading instruction. I remember so vividly one day when I was feeling really blue about my infertility. It was a field trip day, as well. I didn't like field trip days in particular because it was really loud on the bus and my day was not routine. A co-worker came in to tell me the buses were at the school. What she found was me, teaching from a script, in a very monotone fashion. I was very embarrassed.

I used worksheets on a daily basis. Sometimes I would use them for centers, sometimes for daily work. Looking back, I realize I could have been much more creative with my instruction.

Once a year the first grade children took the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT). The first grade team would pass around previous years' materials a few weeks before the SAT so the children could practice. Even though I felt lukewarm about standardized testing, I practiced with my children so they wouldn't feel nervous about the format. I did not voice my opinions with the other teachers.

When my first grade children were finished with a unit in their reading basal books, I would administer a test. The test was from the reading book and was multiple choice or true and false. Many times the children would get the answer wrong because they were confused about the place in which I was reading.

Finally, I had as few teacher conferences as I could because parents made me nervous. I had the mandatory two a year and those were on conference nights when I could squeeze in one every ten minutes.

Once I had completed all of my coursework at USF, it was time to take the comprehensive exam. I passed and then began work on my dissertation. I had a very

tough time getting started. I was passionate about service-learning, so I decided to present the ideas for the dissertation to my committee. The meeting went very poorly and I cried at the end because I was nowhere near to being ready to begin. Dr. Reynolds, one of the professors on my committee, suggested that I come and observe her summer literacy camp and do a pilot study.

The pilot study was an incredible experience. I learned so much, from doing an IRB (Institutional Review Board) to understanding how to code data. I went back to the committee and presented my findings from the pilot study along with ideas for a new dissertation concept. The meeting went much better and I began the monumental task of writing a dissertation.]

My Notes

10/16/08

[Thank you, Lord! The meeting went exceptionally well. I am so happy and relieved, excited and relaxed! I get my massage at noon, too! Everyone had good suggestions and the suggestions are really going to be helpful!]

10/20/08

[I have so many ideas swimming in my head! I'm overwhelmed but excited! I'm free!
*As a side note, my three year-old son, who we adopted at birth, had just started school. He had been with me at home for two months and we had some good times. However, I

was to the point where I was recognizing that being a stay-at-home mom was not for me. That fact could have been part of my feeling "free."]

10/21/08

[I just read Todd's (a former Ph.D. student) chapter one. I made an outline of the main points in each section. I am feeling inadequate as I read his dissertation. He uses really big words and sounds so academic! Will I be able to pull this thing off?]

10/22/08

[I don't know-I just have this drive like I can't remember ever having before. It's great! I know God is helping me out with this!]

10/23/08

[I went over the tape from my concept meeting with my committee. I can't stand the way my voice sounds. I don't sound very smart. I have got to get over that! I circled the suggestions the professors made. That will help me focus on what I need to accomplish. The professors mentioned three graduate students to whom I should speak. That will be easy because I have two out of three e-mail addresses. I'm glad I was friendly and went out of my way to be outgoing to several people in the program. That was hard for me.]

Statement of the Problem

10/26/08

[I need to start thinking about some problems I had in my classroom teaching first grade, six years ago. What did I do to the detriment of my children?   One problem was that I drilled for standardized tests. Just the other day I received a paper home from our first grade daughter, Catherine (whom we adopted at birth). She made an "S" on a reading test she had. I looked at the title of the test and it said "FCAT Format Weekly Assessment." She got ten out of thirteen correct. I don't know why she missed the first one because the directions stated, "Listen while your teacher reads the directions." It was a fill in the bubble with options A, B, C.

The second question she missed was a story about a frog. She had to look at one side of the stapled paper to determine what sentence had no mistakes, and then transfer her answer to the fill in the bubble on the other side of the stapled paper. The third one was much the same with Catherine having to fill in the bubble for proper nouns that needed capital letters.

This brought up painful memories for me, having taught first grade. During the Stanford Achievement Test, I had first graders in tears because of all the directions. It broke my heart that the children couldn't emotionally stand the rigors of standardized testing. I physically cringed when that paper came home, bringing back those painful memories of giving standardized tests to first graders. So I would say I have discovered a problem.]

Owocki and Goodman (2002) say that standardized testing does not serve instructional purposes. They further explain that these tests do not reveal what children can do in everyday school and home settings. Additionally, many students' cultural experiences differ from those experiences depicted on standardized tests.

[In my concept paper meeting, one of the professors suggested I read material from Clay on observation survey.] Clay (1993) agrees that standardized testing may be a problem if used in isolation. She states that in the first two years of schooling, observation records are more useful than standardized tests because they provide the teacher with a closer look at what the child really can do. Observations inform the teaching process.

[Another problem when I taught was that I followed a reading curriculum from a basal reader that had scripts for teachers to read while teaching reading.] Dyson (2001) states that this kind of linear teaching has no place in a classroom. Children expand possibilities by adapting, blending, and differentiating "cultural resources" (p. 36) and "textual exploits" (p. 35).

[The third problem I have encountered is boring, esoteric research.] One professor suggested I read material from Carolyn Ellis because my idea was to write an autoethnographic piece for my dissertation. I checked out a book entitled, *Composing Ethnography*. In the book, Ellis says that the public wants to know why what researchers do matters (Ellis and Bochner, 1996). She criticizes social science and says too often researchers are "boring, esoteric, and parochial."

I hope my dissertation is not boring, esoteric or parochial. I hope my piece can show readers that research can be done through emotions, storytelling events, journal

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entries, and observations.   Richardson and Adams-St. Pierre (2005) say that writing as an inquiry is a viable way to learn about the topic you are studying and the self. I agree. The reflections I have made this far have me thinking about who I am and who I want to be.

Purpose of the Study

10/29/08

Now that I have identified the problems, I need to restate the purpose for studying literacy moments with young children. My purpose is to describe literacy teaching and learning events that occur between ten children and their tutors in a community of practice summer literacy camp. Why is this worth pursuing?

[I have always been a poor test taker. I did well in school but always got very nervous about taking tests. That's why I am so enamored with the kidwatching process.] Kidwatching lets the teacher see the children's day-to-day learning instead of the end result of one broad, general test. I appreciate the sociocultural approach, as well, because I am a firm believer in the idea that development can only be understood by looking at the process of change and not as an end product (Miller, 2002). [When I took the GRE in 1994 I did just well enough to get into FSU graduate school to work towards my masters in educational leadership. However, six years later when I applied to the USF Ph.D. program the score was not only stale (five years is the cut-off) but also not high enough to get in the program. I decided to dig my heels in and study hard. My husband, who is an excellent test taker and math-intelligent, helped me enormously. We set aside every Thursday night to study the math portion of the test. I still remember huddling up around

our computer every week. The computer was right beside our bed in our bedroom. The desk was just about the same width as the computer, so it really wasn't a lot of room for one six foot six man and one five foot two woman to study together. Sometimes he would give me something to work on while he lay on the bed and read.

I took the GRE again and did really well on the math section and average on the reading section. However, my score pleased the College of Education graduate program committee so I got in the program. I am not sure what the score said about me and how well I would do in the Ph.D. program. I felt like my husband spent hours and hours "teaching to the test." This time could have been spent more productively.]

I think students and researchers want respect and that is what kidwatching and autoethnography will provide. When Ellis writes autoethnographies, she thinks about the public and what the public wants to know about the research. To whom does it matter (Ellis and Bochner, 1996)? I see this as the significance of the study, to convey that children need good literacy moments. Children need respect. Teachers need interesting research to know about how children learn. Researchers need to know further paths to follow up on.

10/30/08

[I think it is in my future to go back into a public school classroom and redeem myself. That is what ultimately drives my research. I need to "make good" on a promise I made to myself in college to be an outstanding teacher. Through this research I hope to accomplish this goal and I also hope to provide other researchers with the information I

learn so that they can understand the relevance of a former teacher making good on past deficiencies. Researchers need to know what is actually happening in classrooms.]

I choose the community center from my pilot study as a site for this research because I have confidence that what the graduate students learn from Dr. Reynolds is research-driven and is proven to be good practice in literacy learning. Graduate students committed to excellent teaching will tutor the children at the community center. That says a lot to me. It is hard work getting a masters degree and only committed individuals will complete the program.

10/31/08

I take a sociocultural perspective on development assuming there is merit in understanding human behavior through interaction (Miller, 2002). I also believe a culture defines what a child needs to know and skills that a child needs to acquire.   Vygotsky believed the smallest meaningful unit of study was the child-in-activity-in-cultural-context. He determined that intelligence is what you can learn with help. Miller criticizes some studies and says that to be a truly Vygotskian study, one must do five things. 1. Look at both the adult and child behavior and how each adjusts. 2. Assess what a child can do alone and with an adult's help. 3. Look at the gradual shift in responsibility from adult to child. 4. Assess how the adult structures the learning process. 5. Examine how the culture and its history shape the nature of the parent-child interaction. These five essentials will guide me in my observations.

11/1/08

[Scene: A hotel room in a luxury hotel in Orlando, Florida. The room is divided into two parts: One north part contains two double beds, a TV, a bedside table and an alarm clock. The south part of the room holds two couches, one desk and chair, a TV, a sink, a small refrigerator, and a coffee table. Clothes and suitcases are strewn out and there are four bags of Halloween candy from the previous night.

I walk into the south part of the room with my son, James. My sister, Elaine is in the south part of the room with a bowl of cereal and a glass of water. Her husband, Chris, is in the shower and my daughter, Catherine, niece Darlene and nephew Harrell are in the north part of the room watching TV and eating bowls of cereal. The TV in the north part of the room has the Disney channel on. The TV in the south part of the room has CNN on and Barack Obama is the featured story. Election Day is three days away.

Melinda:	(Holding James' hand) Good morning! (Releasing James' hand. James goes into the bed part of the room with the other kids.)
Elaine:	Good morning! How did James sleep?
Melinda:	(Rolling eyes) Oh, he was up at 5:00. How did this crew sleep? (Sitting down on the adjacent couch).
Elaine:	(Taking another bite of cereal) Well, the girls had to be reminded several times to go to bed. I think they finally fell asleep around 10:00.
Melinda:	I'm sorry. Catherine should have slept in with me.
Elaine:	(Taking another bite). Well, that was our next option. We threatened that. Hey, how is the dissertation?
Melinda:	It's actually going really well so far.
Elaine:	What's your subject?
Melinda:	Kidwatching.
Elaine:	(Nods her head) Now tell me what that is again.

Melinda: It's a way of documenting literacy by closely observing what children can do and how children construct and express knowledge (Owocki & Goodman, 2002).

Elaine: Isn't that what all teachers do?

Melinda: (Laughing)   I guess they should. But it's more than just "watching." It's documenting what you see and how the students construct what they learn, and then using the information to plan instruction. You don't just use a prescribed curriculum because each class, each group of students you could have from year to year is different. (Catherine comes in and interrupts. She tells me she is still hungry. I tell her she can have more cereal if she wants.)

Elaine: But what about the FCAT? How does that play in? I guess Harrell will have to take that next year.

Melinda: Kidwatching is sort of an alternative to standardized testing. Kind of the opposite is how I see it. (I tell James to hand the toy duck back to Darlene). While standardized testing in Florida is criterion-referenced and measures how well a child knows a general body of knowledge, kidwatching is child-specific and gets to what that particular child knows.

Elaine: (Shakes head). MMMM. So which children will you be watching?

Melinda: It will be the literacy camp children, just like I did last summer. I will be watching the children in all kinds of "literacy moments." Last summer I saw plays, lots of books, songs, journals, so many things. The children were very motivated to learn. I tried to find out, through observations and conversations if children were motivated (Kim & Lorsbach, 2005).

Elaine: (Gets up from couch, dumps bowl and spoon into garbage can, sits back down) What age are the children?

Melinda: I'll be observing young children, probably ages five through nine if it was like last summer.

Elaine: Oh, you'll have to let me know what you find out. It might help my two.

Melinda: Sure. I'm hoping to see if the instruction in the camp is functional.

Elaine: What do you mean?

Melinda: Well, functional literacy just means that the literacy is natural. It is mostly used for informational or communicative purposes. Functional literacy incorporates children's outside lives into the classroom (Labbo, 2006). A child would naturally want to share a story, or plan his birthday party, or take leadership roles in the classroom. A teacher brings out these naturally occurring events and utilizes them for learning. I always think of computers. There are so many things a computer can teach a child that he wants to know and it will also help him in the future.

Elaine: (Putting shoes on) Did you find a lot of functional literacies happening in the summer camp last summer?

Melinda: Yes, I did. The one thing I didn't see a lot of was instruction that was culturally sensitive.

Elaine: You mean like appreciating diversity?

Melinda:	Yes. I think it also means that we see how different perspectives impact the world. I saw one group with a theme all last summer that incorporated multiculturalism with nearly every activity. That was cool!
Elaine:	Did you know that Timberlane (Harrell and Darlene's school) was named a Blue Ribbon School?
Melinda:	That's great! (All four kids rush in, arguing about who took whose ducks. James is crying)
Elaine:	OK, I think we need to head to Disney.
Melinda:	(Laughing) Let's go, guys!]

This scene was chaotic and serious at the same time. But, then again, so is a young children's classroom. I take this scenario as an example of what a young children's classroom looks like all day. Additionally, it is similar to the literacy camp in my pilot study. There was chaos at times but true learning took place constantly, at every turn.

Significance of the Study

11/02/08

I think I refer to Carolyn Ellis a lot, but her work has touched me. Through reading her book *Ethnographic I* (2004), I feel she is one of my personal friends. That is the kind of reading material I enjoy so why not write like that, as well? When taking most of my Ph.D. courses, it was difficult to read the material assigned in class. Ellis was a joy to read. My husband looked at me in a funny way when I told him I enjoyed reading the book. When Ellis writes she focuses on how her writing can help people live better lives (Ellis and Bochner, 1996). That idea makes me think of significance. What is the significance of what I want to write? [The first thing that jumps into my head is that if children are positive about education and feel valued, they will feel respected and be

smarter. Wait, this doesn't sound as academic as some of the dissertations I have read so far. Is that OK? This autoethnography is fulfilling to write, but it leaves me with questions as to how the professors are going to go along with this format. I hope I can be strong in my convictions.]

Questions Guiding the Study

11/03/08

[I have noticed that each day I work on another piece of the dissertation. This goes along, I guess, with my personality. I am very linear. My husband commented the other day that I developed my own packing list for trips. I explained it was easier for me to think about what I wanted to bring before I actually had to pack. Then, following step-by-step while I actually packed was easy because I knew everything I wanted would be right there. I even kept a file on the computer for next time. I feel more comfortable and less anxious if I have everything I need. It seems like the last couple of trips I have had to run to a local pharmacy or store to get something I forgot to pack.]

I will use different questions this summer than I did last summer in the pilot study. These questions are:

1. What types of literacy instruction do ten children receive from their graduate education major tutors in a community of interest summer literacy camp?

2. How do ten children respond to the literacy instruction they receive from graduate education tutors in a summer literacy camp?

[James, my son, was in a performance tonight. His pre-k class danced to "Wheels on the Bus" by Jack Hartman (Keyframe, 2008). It is a rap version and the kids were very enthusiastic about that! James is in a pre-k class at an elementary school to help him with some speech delays. I wondered why James kept coming home saying "Suey! Suey!" That's what the farmers on the bus say in the song. For a group of boys who for the most part have difficulty with speech, I was struck by the teacher's exemplary choice of using that song. I guess the teacher agrees with me in the value in reaching kids through literacy which is considered "different" from the wide-held belief that literacy is just reading and writing.]

11/06/08

[When I took Qualitative Methods I with Dr. Reynolds she talked about a science student named Sierra. Sierra just finished her dissertation and wrote in the autoethnographic style. I am not usually good with names, but this time I remembered. I found out from library staff how to find dissertations. I read parts of Sierra's dissertation (2006) and it helped me understand how to write in this style.]

11/07/08

[This was the day of my repair appointment with the washer repairperson. On the positive side of things, I got to read Ethnographic I (Ellis, 2004), uninterrupted, for five hours. I called my sister and explained that I would use an autoethnographic approach for my dissertation. I explained that this method is sort of a storytelling method for

researching. It is interpretive and narrative in nature. I asked her permission to let me use parts of our conversation in Orlando. She agreed.]

11/09/08

[I met with Suzanna (a library consultant) today about researching tips. I stayed for about an hour. Boy, is my head spinning. I don't think she understood why I wanted to tape record what she was telling me. I needed to tape her directions because once I get back to my own computer by myself I get lost. It takes me so much more time than most to try to navigate my way around the computer. I'm glad I went to this meeting. I feel more relaxed now.]

11/14/08

[I'm reflecting on the counseling session I had the other day. I decided to go to a therapist to try to make it emotionally through this dissertation process. I have heard a lot of people get divorced through this period in their lives and I don't want to be one of those people. The therapist was sympathetic to my writing a dissertation because she had to write one, too. She suggested a vitamin for me to take and also suggested exercise. I do need to get back to the gym.]

11/17/08

[Dr. Reynolds suggested I ask Rosie (one of my fellow Ph.D. students) for her dissertation. I e-mailed Rosie and asked her for her chapter one. I don't think she is done with the entire dissertation and I didn't want to cause her too much trouble. She tried to

send me her chapter one and I couldn't open the attachment. She tried another time and I still couldn't open the attachment. She tried it in pdf version and that time it went through. I try to imagine myself at that stage in my dissertation, days away from final defense. I get excited but nervous.

I read Rosie's first chapter and I am feeling very down. I don't have enough information in chapter one so far. Of course, it doesn't seem like Rosie is doing an autoethnography from the looks of her chapter one. But, still, I need to delve deeper. Rosie has statistics and numbers to validate her study. Will mine be "valid" without numbers? I need to go back and take another look at my "problem" section. I also need to remember to have a dual-entry journal when I read an article. I forgot with the last article I read. An e-mail popped up just now. It was like manna from heaven. The Qualitative Report on how to do an autoethnography. . . .]

11/19/08 (8:15 A.M.)

[I have a sinking feeling that I went in the wrong direction a couple of days ago. I started really fixating on standardized testing. I copied numerous articles (from peer reviewed journals, no less) on standardized testing. It is quite a heated debate but not really what the literacy camp will prove is good or bad! I need to redirect my thinking. I am hoping to see effective literacy instruction: motivational, functional, and multicultural. What were my personal problems with these three when I taught in the classroom?

Motivational- I followed curriculum guidelines and spent a lot of time looking at the curriculum and making plans to teach this set curriculum. Sure I had guided reading

groups but most of the centers for the children who weren't reading with me were not tailored to my students. This could have happened with more observation by me. This is something I could research further-observation in the classroom.

Functional-this is a term that stands on its own. It would be a simple search, using the terms, "functional" and "instruction" and "young children." I did some good things in my classroom with functional literacy. There was a school-wide mailing system at the school where I taught first grade. Children could send mail to anyone in the school. My students wrote constantly to me, classmates, and other students in the school. My class had a lot of mail going in and out. Additionally, my students had pen pals from a local nursing home. Looking back at Owocki and Goodman's (2002) list of oral functions, which lists functional ways to teach literacy, I would say again that I did a pretty good job with this.

Multicultural- I tried to represent other countries and ethnicities in the literature I read and through the various holidays. However, when Goodman (1996) speaks of a multicultural framework, I find that my teaching fell very short of what it should have been. She indicates to have a multicultural framework there must be mutual respect, recognition of similarities, debates about multiple perspectives, acceptance of differences, and involvement in the exploration of the strengths that people all over the world have. I'm getting closer to the right path; I feel it! It's amazing how excited I get when I'm back on the right path. Standardized testing is interesting for some but not for me. I was supposed to do some dissertation work last night and couldn't bring myself to do it. I'm feeling exuberant and happy to be back researching topics I love! It's good to be me!]

11/19/08 (8:55 A.M.)

[I keep Ethnographic I (Ellis, 2004) in my car and read it whenever I get the chance. I read one part about a guest speaker she had in one of her classes (in a fictional setting). The speaker, Laurel Richardson (1992), read a poem she had written. In the poem an unwed mother talks about being from the south and how this defines who you are. Immediately I thought of me and who I am and what defines me. I am from the south, but I don't think that defines me nearly as much as being a Christian. I find every day, all day, I am a Christian. Let me describe one such scenario.]

11/19/08 (9:00 A.M.) Great American Teach-In-Mabry Elementary

[Rats! I started to write it in a script format and stopped myself. I can't write in the students' responses without an Internal Review Board (IRB). I'll just describe it. I was a speaker at my daughter's school. I was there for three reasons. One was that I wanted my daughter to be represented. The second reason was that I wanted the kids to know the importance of community service. The third reason was that my brother-in-law's mom is sick with cancer in the hospital and I thought that kids' artwork might cheer her up. I found myself referring to my church a lot because that is where I do most of my community service. My church is always doing for others. That is one of my favorite things about my church, the fact that we help others and that there are so many opportunities to do that. I also have extreme sensitivity to students' responses. I know there are teachers who are very sensitive to others and are not Christians, but I find that it is a natural response to my Christian values.

When it was time for me to go, my daughter's teacher said something very thoughtful. She said she was thankful I came and also that she was glad I had the discussion part because she learned so much about me, my daughter, and our family. That struck a positive chord with me because of this method of autoethnography. It seems that's one of the main reasons for autoethnography-to share a part of your life with others. And look at the positive response it got! I think I have been so quiet around my daughter's teacher that she hasn't gotten the opportunity to get to know me. That's the beauty of settings in which I am comfortable. I can be myself and tell about myself. Like the writing outlet. . . .]

11/19/08 (9:45 A.M.)

[I wonder if other teachers struggle with the same struggles I had as a first grade teacher. I wonder if the teachers want to teach well but they don't have the research to show what good teaching should look like.]

11/20/08

[I took ballet for nine years as a child. So when I read Dyson's (2003) description of a New Yorker cover about ballerinas, I was very interested to know how she would relate the cover back to education. Dyson explained that the cover shows a neat row of ballerinas coming out onto the stage. However, the background shows clothes that have been strewn around and the children who haven't gone onto stage yet. These children are slouching, playing down the aisles, and falling down the stairs. She indicates that the juxtaposition of the two groups of children, the order and the liveliness shows the

meaning of the cartoon. After reading this, I thought of my linear way of doing things. Of course I went by the curriculum guidelines when I taught first grade. It was a part of my personality and what I felt comfortable doing. Of course I would write my dissertation in a linear way, it's what I do. And finally, ballet was a wonderful sport for me as a child. But wasn't attempting to write a dissertation in the autoethnographic method a good choice for me? It is going to change my life and I hope it will impact other's lives, as well.]

Limitations

11/23/08 5:44 P.M.

[My husband, daughter, son, and I have just been to a friend's birthday party. The party was at a small lake-side park north of Tampa. It is a twenty minute drive home. My husband and I sit in the front while my daughter and son sit in the back seat of our white mini van. The kids are eating sticky candy canes and pretzels that my husband has placed in a paper cup. My son hands the pretzels one by one to my husband.

Eric: (glances at his pretzel) Wow! That's sticky.
Melinda: Does it taste like a candy coated pretzel?
Eric: No, none of the flavor of a candy cane. Just sticky. What do you have to work on tomorrow at USF?
Melinda: My "limitations" section.
Eric: (Takes another pretzel from my son) What is that?
Melinda: Well, in social science, it's just the part near the end that tells how this research may have limits to it.
Eric: Oh. What kinds of limits will your research have?
Melinda: Well, it will be a specific location, the northern part of a larger city southeastern city, and it will be with specific children at the literacy camp. It's hard to generalize to other locations and children.
Eric: Yeah, what else?

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Melinda:	Well, the summer literacy camp is only six weeks for two hours each time. I guess that might be a limiting time period.
Eric:	Yeah.
Melinda:	(Daughter starts asking a question. I cut her off and tell her that Dad and I are almost done with our conversation. Can she hold on one minute? She grudgingly says, "Yes"). And I guess another limitation might be the extreme subjectivity of the researcher. I don't know if that would be a limitation or not, though, because I will tell the reader that it is an autoethnography.
Eric:	I hope your office isn't so cold this time.
Melinda:	Me too! O.K., Catherine, what did you want to say?]

I'm so glad to have the support and recommendations of my committee. After one of my professors read this part, she made a poignant comment. She said that she took the sticky pretzel part as an analogy to the educational process. She thinks this is sticky business-this teaching literacy to young children. I thought that was brilliant! It is sticky business, I agree! There are so many opinions out there about what makes a good education. I'm glad I am doing this research to find out more.

Site

The community center where this research will take place is a center located in the middle of an inner-city area. Surrounding communities are socially and economically vulnerable. The center provides activities, programs, and services. The center is a state-of-the-art complex that helps to increase economic development and affordable housing in the area (University Area Community Development Corporation, 2005).

Summary

The purpose of this study is to describe literacy teaching and learning events that occur between ten young children and their tutors in a community of interest summer

literacy camp. When I taught in the classroom, I had negative issues with linear thinking. I frequently followed curriculum guides and standardized test material without wavering to fit the needs of the specific children in my classroom. The end result will be research that has implications for schools.

The research questions I will use to guide my study are the following:

1. What types of literacy instruction do ten children receive from their graduate education major tutors in a community of interest summer literacy camp?

2. How do ten children respond to the literacy instruction they receive from graduate education tutors in a summer literacy camp?

Chapter Two – Literature Review

Rationale and Context

My rationale for this literature review is to examine what I consider to be exemplary practices to determine how it affects children's literacy learning. I will look at effective practices by viewing a variety of topics. First I will look at multicultural literacy. I do this because in the literacy camp last summer Dr. Reynolds tried to encourage the graduate students to teach multicultural sensitivity but few graduate students did this. Second, I will look at literacy instruction since the focus of my research is literacy. Third I will look at summer learning because the camp takes place in the summer.

02/12/09

[Catherine: What if I fall down?
Melinda: Get back up.
Catherine: What if I cry?
Melinda: I'll come and help you.

It was a defining moment in my life as a mom. It was at a fundraiser for Catherine's elementary school at a local skating rink.. Only weeks after her seventh birthday, Catherine was learning how to skate on her own. The five earlier skating sessions in her life had been fun, but strained. Catherine could skate fine but clung to my hand like it was a lifeline. Then, when she would fall she would forget that I had wheels

strapped to my feet, too, and would get angry with me for not stopping on a dime to help her. Sometimes I accidentally rolled over her fingers.

Perhaps this is the time for a confession. I never really learned how to stop while skating. Well, I can stop, somewhat, but I have to do a little turn in order to stop. I felt irritated with Catherine; I was doing the best I could. But, I have to admit skate wheels feel awful when they roll over your fingers. I came up with a solution – Catherine should skate alone. The next day at school, Catherine's assistant principal called her the "famous skater" because of Catherine's ability to fall down gracefully and get right back up.

Catherine's skating experience makes me think of myself and this dissertation process. This chapter makes me nervous. I have done literature reviews before, but this is "the big one." I went to an inservice given by Dr. Haynes (2006) regarding literature reviews. I kept all of the information from his PowerPoint presentations. This information has helped me sort through what a good literature review looks like. Wish me luck!]

02/15/09

[I had my first experience in the emergency room today. My husband, son, daughter, and I went to church at 9:30 a.m. My husband and I dropped the kids off at their Sunday school classes and went to the contemporary worship service. Ten minutes into the service, our son's Sunday school teacher found us and told us that James had fallen and was bleeding. My first inclination was to play it down; I was considering not going to see about the situation. Bumps and bruises are standard fare in our family. His Sunday school teacher insisted I come. When I first saw my son, I wanted to cry. He was badly cut above his right eye. But, for the sake of the sunday school teachers, I tried to

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play it cool. The male-half of the husband and wife teaching team was sweating profusely; I'm sure he felt so sorry and scared for our son. We immediately found a doctor who was teaching a fourth grade sunday school class in the same building. It only took a quick inspection before he determined that James needed stitches. So, off we went to the emergency room.

I won't go into the gory details of the hospital visit, but I did want to note two "literacy events" in the emergency room. I keep library books in the car for James because, after I pick him up from school, he has to wait in the car with me for a long period of time when we pick up his sister from school. We took those books into the hospital -- one fire truck book and one book about many different types of trucks. While we were waiting to be seen by the nurse, I started reading the books. I could tell another boy in the waiting room was interested in the books. So I turned the book so that the other boy could listen to the books. I felt so teacher-ish! It felt good!

At the end of the visit a nurse invited my son to go to the "treasure box," a rectangular, plastic bin with goodies in it. There were plastic farm animals, monster trucks, legos, dragon-looking things, and books. James was so close to selecting the monster truck when, lo and behold. he chose the fire truck book! I was so proud! We read it twice before even leaving the hospital, and another ten times within the first twenty-four hours after leaving the hospital!]

02/16/09

[My son, James, is really on my mind this week! I cancelled a dentist appointment for James today. His pediatric dentist would not allow three year-olds to

come in for afternoon appointments. Mornings only. My son is in a special program for children who need help with speech. My research has revealed that many children who have speech delays also have difficulties with reading. This freaks me out! I want James in school as many hours as possible, to equip him with the tools he needs. I found another dentist who will let him come in the afternoon.

The "dentist, no afternoon appointment issue" has me looking through my "mommy lens" while researching literacy. I am using Refworks to store citations for my dissertation. I created a file folder named, "James." Recently I downloaded an article called, "Developing Oral Language in Primary Classrooms" (Kirkland & Patterson, 2005). I thought I could kill two birds with one stone and use the article for my literature review <u>and</u> my son. The article provided helpful hints which I probably already knew but needed to be reminded of -- having a print rich environment, providing picture clues and schedules, listening centers, and shared reading.]

02/20/09

[Today I find myself researching on behalf of my son more than my dissertation. Conference night was last night. The classroom teacher and speech teacher were very positive and supportive, but I'm reading more and more about how children delayed in speech and language are also delayed in learning to read. I am on the warpath with James' education. I have dedicated one cabinet in our house to educational games so that they are easily accessible to my husband and me. I have declared 6:30-8:30 P.M. as family time. My husband doesn't read and I don't "busy" myself with household tasks. We just interact as a family.]

Goal of the Literature Review

Enough about me. The goal for this literature review is to inform practice, provide comprehensive understanding about early childhood classroom practices, and look for solutions to effective classroom teaching. I hope to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize the current literature pertaining to literacy for young children. Specifically, I intend to research three areas. The first is multicultural instruction (see Appendix A); the second is literacy instruction (see Appendix B), and the third is summer learning (see Appendix C).

Problems in Education Represented in the Literature

The problems in schools today are significant. There are problems regarding culture and the disparities our schools face. Children have to learn the cultural expectations of school, often when these expectations are not in line with the communicative practices of children's lives (Dyson, 2008; Christ & Wang, 2008). Children and teachers come to school with prejudice and bias but many teachers neglect to stimulate meaningful conversations about both (Lee, Ramsey, & Sweeney, 2008).

There are also problems regarding literacy instruction and the struggles children have in negotiating their way through school. Children come to school with different skill levels (Downey, Hipple, & Broh, 2004). When children are labeled struggling readers, educators frequently forget that this label may be a cultural construction (Triplett, 2007). If it is a cultural construction too many children are being labeled and may not be getting appropriate instruction. We still have a lack of consensus on how to teach effectively (Graue, 2008; Stipek, 2004). Teachers face numerous decisions on how to provide

instruction for students who are at risk for failure (Helf, et al., 2008). Government

accountability mandates leave little time for play (Wohlwend, 2008).

And finally there are problems with the way our school calendar breaks for the

summer. Most children in the U.S. still experience a long break from school during the

summer (Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2007). Some children backslide during the break

and return to school unable to read as well as they did in the past school year. And when

the accountability systems ignore the summer losses, they stack the deck against high-

poverty schools (McGill-Franzen & Allington, 2006).

03/6/09

[Wow! Researching one topic takes a lot of time. In my case, it was like

researching three topics! The thought about how many topics I involved in my research

is daunting. I e-mailed one of my committee members with a rough outline of the topics,

and she e-mailed back that the outline looked good and to go forward with it. So I did! It

has already involved a lot of hard work, but I am sure that the work is not over yet. I read

the articles regarding multicultural education first. I began with this topic because it was

the one area that was underrepresented in last summer's literacy camp instruction.]

Multicultural Instruction

Discussing Multiculturalism. The U.S. Census Bureau, in 2002, estimated that by

the year 2050, people of color will make up nearly 50 % if our nation's population. I

found this amazing! But why, when I think of multiculturalism, do I think only of race?

Johnson, Musial, Gollnick, and Dupuis (2005) created a visual that looks to be an oval-

shaped puzzle. The puzzle represents "cultural identity" (p. 47). The puzzle includes gender, exceptionality, ethnicity, age, geography, class, language, and religion. It goes to reason, then, that if all of these components are pieces to the puzzle representing one's cultural identity, then all of these components need to be introduced and discussed in multicultural education to ensure culturally sensitive instruction.

Through my research, I have found a continuous theme in multicultural education. That theme is the use of multicultural literature in the classroom. Sutherland warns that, although multicultural literature helps a student see himself in the curriculum, the student will only see himself if the characters in the literature are like the student (Sutherland, 2005).

Sutherland (2005) conducted a study of high school African American adolescent girls who discussed a book entitled, *The Bluest Eye* (Morrison, 1994). She wanted to determine how the study of literature shapes African American girls' identity construction as they studied literature. She found two themes that connected the participant's life stories. One was that African American women regarded a Eurocentric view of beauty as a boundary in their lives. The second was that African American women regarded others' assumptions about who they were as another boundary. My rationale for looking at this particular study was that young girls are a part of the focus of my research and this dissertation, and they eventually become young women. I know that young African American girls must experience feelings similar to those described in the Sutherland study from an early age. Sutherland claims that based upon the findings of the study, literacy and identity are interconnected. She found that when students had

opportunities to talk about literature in a small group setting, they "shared salient social positions and related life experiences" (p. 397).

Triplett (2007) also finds value in discussing literature in small group settings. She researched first, second, and third graders in reading intervention pull-out programs to determine how student struggles are socially constructed within literacy contexts. The children in the study were labeled "struggling readers." The cultural difference that defined the children was socioeconomic status. The children did not come from middle class families. Triplett found students who were labeled as "struggling" in some social contexts, such as a regular, whole class grouping, were not labeled as "struggling" by a pull-out teacher in a small group setting. Triplett noticed another difference in the pull-out children and the children who stayed in the classroom all day -- the pull-out children never wore the school spirit shirts while the other children wore the shirts the day after they went on sale. [It makes me feel a bit guilty because I am one of those parents who buys the school spirit shirt quickly. It also makes me want to raise funds at both of my children's schools so that nobody ever has to go without a school spirit shirt if they want one.

When I taught first grade, I taught my students that Christopher Columbus was a hero, never mentioning the mistakes he made along the way. I have come to see the error of my ways. I still believe Christopher Columbus made significant achievements. However, there is another side to the story. If I taught public school again, I would change the way I taught my students about Christopher Columbus.] Henning, Snow-Gerono, Reeds, and Warner (2006) studied how a group of fourth graders negotiated lessons about Christopher Columbus. I found it intriguing that these students were

"literature detectives." In this activity students scoured literature about Christopher Columbus in order to compare who speaks in the book, what is shown, what is described, and what the author's perspective was. The students used three different books. The students made comparisons to their current world situations and demonstrated a high level of thinking. I only wish the Henning et al. study had been on a larger scale and published in a journal that was peer reviewed so that results might have been more reliable.

Literature circles, literature detectives, and other instructional practices are beneficial because they stir up discussions. Sutherland (2005) agreed with Tatum (2003) when they found out that discussions encourage us to further our efforts for conversations about race, gender, social class, and intersectionality. In her research, Sutherland relayed a comment from one of the female participants, i.e. that her mom had told her it was a white man's world and to act like you're worth something or you won't be. This reminded me an opinion piece by Jeane Copenhaver-Johnson (2006), where she discussed the silent messages which classroom teachers send, i.e. that white is normative because we don't discuss it. According to Jeane Copenhaver-Johnson, families of color talk about race because it is a necessary discussion, but Caucasian families don't take the time.

[This brings up thoughts of when my daughter Catherine was coughing really hard in the middle of the night. I knew she was awake; I was too. I went in to read to her because it was the only thing I could think of to do. She has reactive airway disease. We had already used her nebulizer the hour before, which made it impossible to use it again for another three hours. Catherine had checked out three books at the public library, all

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with characters who were African American. The books had a strong family message; reading them made both Catherine and I more relaxed. I decided to lie down beside her when I was done reading. She kicked a leg over me, and within fifteen minutes we were both fast asleep. While the discussion did not occur that night, it will take place in the future.]

Triplett (2007) found that merely talking about books, i.e. book talk, was enough to get children engaged and interested in discussion. "[B]ook discussion can be a pedagogical pathway to identity-even for young readers" (2006, p. 122). Triplett notes that book discussion is a necessary comprehension strategy.

Several other ways to spark discussion in an educational environment emerge in the literature. One is the use of art, and another is the use of games. Lee, Ramsey, and Sweeney (2008) conducted a small scale study on the effects of conversations with kindergarteners. There were thirteen children in the class. One child was Asian, one was biracial, and eleven children were White. The authors found that after the teachers engaged the children in conversations and activities related to diversity, the children expressed more ideas about race and social class. While the validity of the study could be called into question based upon the sample size and un-triangulated data, the premise and concept were worthwhile. The teachers used cards with colored photographs of racially diverse children on the cards. In the featured classroom the teacher asked the children to make their own drawings using skin-tone markers and skin tone paints. The children thought very hard about which tones to use in their drawings. Teachers used the diversity cards to play the game Concentration with the students. This sparked discussion, because

at first, the children did not see the differences in the children depicted on the cards. After discussion, however, the children became more aware of the differences.

[This brings me to a reflection, one of which I am not very proud. The first class I taught at the University of South Florida was a bridge class for high school graduates entering college. I was informed the majority of the students would be African American. I told my husband that I expected to have trouble with remembering the names of the students because of their ethnicity. I am ashamed to say that because most of my students would be darker in color than me I thought they would look similar to one another and not as unique as my Caucasian students. My husband acted confused. Upon reflection, I determined my comment was racist. As it turned out, I was able to keep up with the names of my students in this "bridge class" as well as I could keep up with the names of students in the predominately Caucasian, children's literature class which I taught in later semesters.]

Storytelling is another way to prompt classroom discussions. Even though the next study involved college-age students, I believe the use of storytelling can be effective with young children, as well. Perry's (2008) research includes the "lost boys of Sudan," a group of boys who are refugees and were relocated to Michigan when they were young boys. Perry interviewed and observed three participants. The boys talked about the cultural importance of storytelling in their lives. Perry believes that storytelling is a powerful form of sense-making. In fact, for this group of boys, storytelling was linked to political purposes; one of the lost boys told his story at the United Nations about the atrocities in Sudan. Perry writes that all refugees, young and old, could benefit from storytelling. Storytelling is one avenue for language and literacy learning; it may be a

motivation for engagement in print literacy practices. For the "lost boys of Sudan," storytelling provided motivations to use literacy, both for written and oral purposes. Several of the boys whom Perry interviewed had written short, autobiographical accounts. The "lost boys of Sudan" had prior experience with poetry and drama. In the refugee camps a program was set up to help children write poems and short stories to depict their lives. The boys felt valued when they could talk about their culture. One of the relocated "lost boys of Sudan" relayed this story to Perry. Some of these have been published.

Similarly, Taylor, Bernhard, Garg, and Cummins' (2008) participants felt valued. The study focused on published works by families with dual languages. The entire class was involved, but the authors presented only two of the kindergarten portraits. Family members interacted in making books with each other. The print in the books was in each child's dual languages. The children shared the books with the class. Since the books were about their own lives, the children were able to find personally and culturally relevant parts of their identity, which enabled meaningful discussion within the family. The children formed new relationships. One student's grandmother found she could finally help in her granddaughter's education through writing the book. All of the findings were seen through the parents' eyes, however. I would have learned more if the research results were portrayed through both the parents' and the children's' eyes and if interviews and observations with the children had been recorded and cited. The study was also missing any meaningful discussion of how the data was analyzed.

In contrast, Christ and Wang (2008) included dialogue and meaningful discussion of data from many student observations in their study of first graders who hailed from

low socioeconomic backgrounds. The children took part in student-led discussions about facts they could find in literature. The students were grouped in a configuration which included various levels of expertise in literacy. The authors found in these kinds of student-led groups, students became enculturated into the school literacy culture. This was demonstrated when the authors coded their data. They developed codes based upon what cultural knowledge was apparent, what underlying habitus was apparent, what context did this knowledge come from, what type of impact did this cultural knowledge have, and what use of cultural knowledge was aided/hindered in some way? The authors found there was a need for this enculturation and that teachers may need to aid in this process by co-constructing classroom procedures with children. Being able to use procedural practices, e.g. how to get a pencil if yours breaks, is an important part of a child's education. Effective use of procedural practices influences a child's ability to participate in literacy activities in the classroom. On the other hand, teachers need to learn to understand and respect different practices from cultural contexts. I took exception with one of the authors' statements, when he wrote that the researchers did not alter the classroom activities by observing. I disagree. Anyone who is in the classroom, physically or through the use of video camera, affects the classroom activities.

Sutherland (2005), who was physically in the classroom she studied, found persons must engage in these difficult cultural dialogues if we want to get multicultural education "right." This work must continue to ensure the interconnectedness of culture and literacy. The process is not about finding easy answers, only a deeper understanding of difficult issues. Sutherland highlighted complexity and tried not to homogenize her participants' experiences.

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Living Lives Outside the Classroom. The reason I chose the heading for this section is because I found so much in the research that points to the benefit in considering how children's lives outside the classroom impact school learning. The difference between experiences outside the classroom and those valued in school presents difficulties (Compton-Lilly, 2007). In fact, this issue is discussed significantly in the current literature on multiculturalism in the classroom. Lazar (2007) conducted research on preservice teachers and their mindsets about teaching in urban communities. She found that (a) if literacy courses in colleges provide opportunities to discuss issues of White privilege, race, and racism, and (b) if preservice teachers have direct experience with children in urban settings, there is a greater chance that preservice teachers will opt to teach in urban schools. Further, Lazar maintains that the courses must validate the literacies children bring to school from outside lives. I thought of three things I would change about the study. First, Lazar was the instructor for the class, which might have affected her study. However, her students were told their grades would not be altered. Second, the data sets lack diversity. I would have liked to have seen interviews for person-to-person accounts. And finally, after the research, preservice teachers still did not discuss out-of-school literacies and how these might affect the children's literacy practices.

One way that preservice teachers may be able to become aware of out-of-school literacies is through listening to children's storytelling. Storytelling is an outlet for the children to reveal social goals and cultural practices (Heath, 1983; Hymes, 1996; Ochs & Capps, 2001). In Perry's (2008) study, the "lost boys of Sudan" used storytelling to reflect their status as orphans, as well as their status as people working hard to maintain

their status in their new community. Zhang (2007) describes the crossing of literacies from home, community, and school as "border crossing."

Schools should consider that sometimes children have multiple homes. For instance, in Taylor et al.'s (2008) study, one of the children had previously lived in Houston and India, and currently resided in Canada. She had relatives all over the world. Taylor, et al. maintains that schools are not aware of the importance of children's multiple homes and identities. Also, schools may be unaware of children's family resources and influences. Family members can help in children's education if their status is valued; a primary example is the case in Taylor et al.'s (2008) study where the child and her grandmother wrote a book together. In uniting in the process of writing a book, family members can be requalified resources and educators. This changes the way power exists, no longer existing only in the hands of the teachers, but transferring to the family.

Living Lives Inside the Classroom . Yes, it is helpful to consider childrens' outside lives, but we also need to consider ways that lead to better learning inside the classroom as well. When children connect their literacy lives with personal interests, literacy skills become more attainable (Triplett, 2004). Consider the study regarding book talk (Triplett, 2007). When the pull-out teacher talked with the children about books, she discovered things about the children she would not heave learned otherwise -- one wanted to be an animal doctor, another had a wonderful sense of humor, and a third was very interested in art. The teacher was able to take this knowledge and find books that were more appropriate for each of the children's interests.

Davis (2007) studied gender relationships in reading discourses in a primarily Caucasian, working-class town in England. She went to three schools of varying

socioeconomic levels - one hard-pressed, one of moderate means, and one relatively privileged. Davis studied how seven and eight year-old children discuss reading enjoyment, contrasting the boys and girls. Her findings were opposite those in some literature; in both the hard-pressed school and the moderate means school, the discourse was gender divisive, where boys had negative views of reading. In the privileged school, boys were more positive about reading. Davis begins the study with a comprehensive literature review. In this section she describes Calkins' (1994) view that teachers need to help children bring outside lives into the classroom. This may be difficult because some children want to talk about what some may deem inappropriate for the classroom, such as violence, sexuality, and racism (Schneider, 2001). In all three of the schools in Davis' study, there was very limited "deviant" dialogue in the discourse (Davis, 2007). The boys and girls had developed ideologies that boys were worse readers; they assumed that this was just common sense. Davis' study contained rich, detailed accounts of observations, but it was difficult to pin down the research question.

When children are away from school, they construct discourse and knowledge that they bring into the classroom (Davis, 2007). Radical solutions are required at the policy level to accommodate community discourse in order to bring classroom pedagogy in line with community discourse and to create respect for discourse constructed outside of school. Storytelling may be one way to accomplish this. Ochs and Capps (2001) propose that the most important function of storytelling is to construct identities and to navigate worlds. This may be one way to tap into boy's interests. Kendrick and McKay (2004) state that to improve boys' engagement with literacy, teachers will have to provide

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more room for boys to "move." This room includes the ways in which boys are present in the classroom, as well as the way boys operate with texts. (See also Newkirk, 2000).

Triplett (2007) directs attention to school as an institutional force. She shows this in her work with pull-out groups and regular classroom practices. The children in her study are different learners, in different physical spaces. Gomez, Johnson, and Gisladottir (2007) also demonstrated this institutional force in their study of ten primary teachers, and two reading specialists from one particular school. The teachers and specialists initially met with two faculty members from a university to discuss children whom teachers had identified as being struggling writers and readers. The teachers and specialists then went back into their school and closely observed their children. They brought samples and observational notes to the next meeting. The university faculty members also went into the classrooms. The authors found that the figured world of the school came primarily from the principal, who held standardized tests in high regard as determinative of which students were struggling and which students were not. The authors had a hunch that a cultural model of literacy was emerging while they researched the school. They want school personnel to encourage cultural models of learning because it facilitates discovery of the dimensions of students as learners. The authors maintain that there was a problem with the cultural model of this particular school because children who fail to show expected progress were automatically labeled as special learners. The study was not well grounded in evaluating the literature relevant to the problem. [Also, the study made me think of the tough issue of being a researcher and micro-analyzing participants' classroom instruction. I would not have wanted to be a participant and have to read the conclusions to this study.]

Empowering. Race labels, or identity markers, may not describe individuals as well as the label suggests (Sutherland, 2005). However, if we don't consider the role that race and gender play in the lives of people, we act as though race and gender have no bearing on curriculum or classroom pedagogy. Lazar's (2007) study on preservice teachers in urban settings is a good example of this. She determined that these teachers needed opportunities to study and reflect on diversity and social justice. Lazar added that preparing these teachers would require many intensive and personally satisfying experiences in urban communities.

[This makes me think of a class of preservice interns whom I taught in the fall of 2008. One of the schools I asked to accommodate these preservice interns was an urban, predominately African American elementary school. One of the preservice teachers I assigned to this school was Caucasian. She was paired with a seasoned teacher who had a reading pull-out program. I didn't find this out until the preservice intern came to me with a problem. She said the seasoned teacher spent half of her day doing office work and told my preservice intern to go to the library and do homework during this time. I talked to the assistant principal and she said she would reassign the student. That assignment failed, as well. I eventually had to reassign the preservice intern to my other school, which was a suburban, predominately Caucasian, middle-class elementary school. I wish I had done a better job with all of these preservice interns with difficult discussions about multicultural issues. This would have been a good place to start. I only think about this example because of Lazar's point that the experience should be personally satisfying. I don't think it was personally satisfying for that particular preservice teacher.]

Delgado-Gaitan (1993) uses the term "disenfranchised groups." She appreciates ethnographic studies because they enhance our understanding of people's real conditions in their communities. Delgado-Gaitan says these groups deserve a voice and they deserve to change their historical circumstances. She wants to see more "Ethnography of Empowerment" (p. 16) so that researchers can have an insider's view for instigating change in the underrepresented groups of the world. Taylor, et al. (2008) also wants to see this empowerment. These authors determined that the kindergartners' dual language books shifted the power from a teacher-led curriculum to a family-led curriculum. Family members were able to demonstrate all they could do and all that they are Sutherland's (2005) study of adolescent girls gave participants opportunities to represent themselves and opportunities to assert their power. Perry's (2008) participants (Sudanese refugees) became empowered when they had creative, authentic learning opportunities. Their stories helped them to gain their own voices after experiencing significant trauma. The "lost boys of Sudan" continued to work for peace and social justice. Triplett (2007) found that pull-out programs were both disempowering and empowering. Disempowering because students in pull-out programs remained in their own social class group, never circulating into the predominately middle class group. Empowering because the students were getting help in reading.

Literacy Instruction

  Using Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP). I now enter the next

section of the literature review. Teachers can help children read by utilizing

developmentally appropriate practices. My review will now focus on literacy instruction

for young children. In 1997, the National Association for the Education of Young

Children (NAEYC) published the second edition of a book outlining a position statement

on DAP and research regarding how children learn (Bredekamp & Copple). In addition,

the NAEYC suggested practices that were most supportive and respectful of children's

development. I wish NAEYC would publish an updated, third edition; when it does, I

want to have a copy for my regular reference. Most of the authors in the literature I

studied refer to this NAEYC text for guidance in their research. One section of the

NAEYC text provided specific descriptions and examples of appropriate and

inappropriate practices for three age groups; I reviewed the six to eight year-old section

to find out how I rated as a first grade teacher. So-so. Graue (2008) defined DAP (child-

centered instruction) and standards (educational ends) to demonstrate that what is

"missing" is teaching, i.e. the interactions between teachers and children. Graue is not

opposed to either DAP or standards, but wants readers to consider how teachers play an

important role in the early childhood classroom. I disagree with this statement. I think

many studies focus on the teacher's role in early childhood classrooms. While I read the

section of the NAEYC text regarding DAP, I thought mainly about how I, as a teacher,

interacted in the classroom. Of course I thought about the first grade children I taught, as

well, but I did not exclude myself or think of myself as "missing," as Graue suggested.

Stipek (2004) conducted a study to find out the differences in teaching styles, e.g.

didactic or constructivist, while looking at school characteristics, such as classroom characteristics and teacher characteristics. Stipek included kindergarten and first grade classes. She maintained that constructivist teaching looks more like DAP. She found that the proportion of children below grade level was the strongest predictor of constructivist teaching. In other words, the more children working below grade level, the fewer constructivist teaching methods. When the proportion of low-income and African-American children was eliminated, the proportion of children who were below grade level did not predict the amount of didactic teaching. I don't think Stipek's study is entirely valid because of the small sampling of minority teachers in the study. For instance, Stipek developed one possibility as to why teachers in classes with large numbers of African-American children used didactic teaching methods -- these teachers' rated African-American boys as more aggressive. This, in her opinion, could lead to teachers imposing stricter control in the classroom. If there had been more African-American teachers, perhaps this aggressive rating would be altered which in turn could alter Stipek's opinion.

Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, Morris, Woo, Meisenger, Bradley, and Stahl (2006) were also interested in researching instructional strategies. They compared two reading instruction techniques to a control group. The children were all in second grade. The first technique, the fluency-oriented reading instruction (FORI), is a program that scaffolds repeated reading of one grade-level text each week. The second technique, the wide reading approach, used scaffolding and the reading of three different grade level texts each week. The authors found that the benefits were similar but superior to control approaches where practices included round-robin reading, whole group instruction, board

work, textbooks, and worksheets. Additionally, there were small amounts of partner reading and teacher read-alouds.

[When I think of coding during research I think of a study I read that involved two parents teaching their son how to write. I know it sounds contrived for me to think of this. The reason I think of this is because at one time I thought about doing research on how my daughter learned how to write. I abandoned this idea because it was too difficult to be her mom, her teacher, and a researcher simultaneously. I found this out through our daily homework. It is difficult enough to try to help her with homework because of the parent/child dynamics.]

Neumann and Neumann (2009) taught their son how to read using the multisensory approach to learning letters. They recorded their son Harry's writing from the time he was 2 ½ years old until he was 6. They found that the scaffolding approach coupled with environmental print and a multisensory approach supported early literacy skills. [This study was enlightening to me because of my burning desire to make sure my son can read at an appropriate stage in life. Any research that helps me understand how I can better help him is interesting to me. I found many developmentally appropriate practices in this study.] For example, at every turn one parent was scaffolding activities to provide just enough, but not too much, guided participation to scaffold the child's movement.

Rodgers (2004) looked at scaffolding from a teacher's perspective, but still on a one-to-one basis, as in the Neumann and Neumann (2009) study. Rodgers chose two exemplary teachers to teach Reading Recovery lessons and keep running records (a method of checking off correctly read words and noting reader's miscues) on four

students. Rodgers found a teacher must decide what miscues to attend to and what level of help to provide. She stated it might not be about the teacher making the right move, but about the teacher making a move, observing the child's response, and then making another move to accommodate a better fit. [This study empowered me as a former teacher; it was refreshing to hear an author validate the teacher's tough job. The other day my daughter's first-grade teacher, who recently learned that I used to teach first grade, commented that she thought I had probably done a lot better at staying organized than she does. I averted my response and said, "It is so much to keep up with! I used to go home exhausted!" And it's true. Every moment a teacher must make quick decisions. Each decision could really impact a child's success in school.]

These decisions are getting more exhausting, but more beneficial with the emerging notion of multimodal literacy. Siegel (2006) defines multimodal literacy as literacy that uses a wide array of modes and media. I said "exhausting" because now, even more than before when I taught first grade, there are so many ways to teach. Technology is not my *forte*, but if I go back to teaching, it will have to be. In Dyson's (2008) study regarding first graders' interpretations of official writing practices, she found that certain aspects of school literacy are important -- a practice view of literacy, a dynamic view of the basics, and a multimodal vision of textual production. Tied to this study is an opinion piece by Wohlwend (2008) about the benefits of play. Wohlwend contended that, with the government accountability mandates for standardized testing, play is being driven out of instruction.

Both Dyson and Wohlwend believe multimodal play provides a space for children to play with meaning and to achieve school goals. Teachers who teach multimodally look

at numerous modes of literacy, including drawings, play, games, discussions, imaginations, drumming, voice, movement, drama, and sign-making (Siegel, 2006). Dyson (2008) found a tension when children in her study tried to write in multimodal forms but were held back because of constraints in the classroom. She says multimodal teaching is a requirement for a re-visioning of the classroom, where some rules are changed and children are freer to use different forms of writing. Dyson encourages drawing, which she says frequently shows spatial relationships better than writing. I see multimodal practices as being not only developmentally appropriate, but also a way to naturally lead children to functional forms of literacy.

Using Functional Literacy. Exemplary teachers use functional literacy in the classroom because children need to use reading and writing for real purposes (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). One of the functional writing forms Dyson (2008) highlighted was a list of birthday invitees. The list resembled play more than writing. The child thought this literacy exercise was actually associated with recess time and more a function of play, than for school writing time. Other highlights were love notes, maps, playing teacher, pickets, poetry, and family presents, all of which were completed at recess time. Thus, the children wrote personal plans to socially play. The teacher in the study could have done better if she had focused on additional resources, such as making personal plans, to consider future instruction in her class writing time. Labbo (2006) wants teachers to consider technology and the functional role of computers in the classroom. Just like Dyson, Labbo considers children's outside worlds a major part of what goes on in the classroom. She states children who want to go outside, but can't because of the weather, can learn about the weather from computers. Communication and information can be

woven into the curriculum. Of course children would be disappointed if they couldn't go outside to play but teachers can incorporate events such as this to communicate to children why they can't go outside, perhaps because there is lightning. Teachers will inform young children about what they are doing and why they are doing it. Labbo concluded the best teachers she knows are leaders who also observe young children. This finely fits in with DAP (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997) and kidwatching (Goodman, 1996).

Nolen (2007) conducted a study about effectively following young children to enhance writing abilities. She studied motivations to read and write by following first, second, and third graders through the subsequent years in school. Nolen conducted interviews with the children and the teachers and observed in their classroom. She found motivation was socially constructed and the properties of autonomy, creative control, and interest can be determined by the classroom community and how children identify with the classroom community. The two experimental groups used different ways of teaching writing. One group used teacher-controlled instruction that held little relevance for the students. Motivation was low for these children. The children in the other group viewed writing as something one does to improve one's ability to communicate or entertain. This is an excellent example of a "functional" literacy. Motivation was high in the latter group, because the teacher provided supportive and interesting instruction.

Related to motivation is the concept of self-efficacy. Kim and Lorsbach (2005) found that high efficacy children put forth effort, persistence, and perseverance. They conducted a study that looked at how kindergarten and first graders judge their competence in writing. High self-efficacy children defined writing as a way to communicate what they are thinking. I see this as a direct correlation to functional

literacy. Low self-efficacy children defined writing as knowing the alphabet. I now see how children could struggle with functional literacy if this was how the children see writing.

Kim and Lorsbach (2005) used observation and interviews with both the children and the teachers to determine how writing self-efficacy beliefs can be described by young children. The authors found that observations and conversations in fact do help teachers identify low and high self-efficacy in young children. Teachers would do well to try and look at reasons why the children have low or high self-efficacy. The authors found that for the most part teachers exhibit accuracy when determining children's perceived self-efficacy level. By knowing characteristics of students with high self-efficacy, teachers can employ several strategies in the classroom.

Using Prior Knowledge. What makes a child want to put forth effort, persist and persevere? Dyson (2008) notes if a teacher wants to create a school literacy culture where children learn, the teacher must situate official school practices within the communicative practices of children's lives. For instance, children use different graphological symbols to link to familiar concepts. One example is a writing sample where a child wrote "GI JOE" in all capital letters. The child had seen it written like this on a toy. In this way, Dyson suggests children should be the impetus for stretching a curriculum. Their communicative, symbolic, and cultural materials should be extended to organize official school practices. Responsiveness to all classroom community members is important.

Although Dyson's (2008) studies focus mainly on writing and Kuhn, et.al's (2006) on reading, Dyson and Kuhn, et.al would not have peaceful discussions about the

best ways to teach children. Kuhn et.al's study did not mention situating official school practices within communicative practices of children's lives. In fact, in this study, only word reading efficiency, oral reading of connected text, and reading comprehension were noted as being elements of a child's reading ability. I think instead of using a control group and utilizing such antiquated notions as round-robin reading, the control group might have used an approach that followed children's unofficial worlds. That would be an interesting study. The study did find that the extended time children spent with connected text did help in reading development, measured by word reading efficiency and reading comprehension. In contrast, Dyson saw teachers aiding children by recontextualizing their experiential, linguistic, and textual resources into new activities; Kuhn, et.al primarily looked to the teacher's role in providing feedback and modeling.

Motivating. Teachers using Kuhn et.al's approach or Dyson's approach might use motivation research to find out if children are motivated more by one approach or another. In Nolen's (2007) research on motivation, she found that social context played an important role in how motivated children were in reading and writing. Teachers in School One who showed positive growth in reading enjoyment and a steady growth in writing enjoyment normalized individual differences and gave instructions to the children on how to coach others. Nolen concluded that this made the children feel that fluency was attainable by all, resulting in children at school feeling more motivated to read. In School Two, children showed a decline in reading and writing enjoyment because the teacher emphasized the need to finish work before recess, which may have privileged fluency and contributed to the negative views of slow readers. In both schools, there was positive growth in reading interest. This is another case in which social factors may have played a

part in the study results. The children's interviews demonstrated part of what sustained children's interest in both schools was that, by third grade, popular books by the same author in the same series were provided to hold children's interests. Nolen states that reading and writing are rich areas for motivation research because of the social nature of literacy and because there are so many reasons for engaging in both. Drawing and talking are also meaning-making strategies for young children (Dyson, 1982, 1989; Hubbard, 1989; Matthews, 1999). Dyson (2008) suggested that educators need to rethink the basics of literacy because children use writing to engage in a relationship-filled life. She criticized contemporary curricular policy for failing to include a conception of writing as social practice.

Summer Learning

Providing Support. In this last section I will review the literature regarding summer learning. One contemporary curricular policy is the No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB"). Helf, Cooke, and Flowers (2009) base their study on the NCLB and ways to maintain student proficiency within NCLB. They maintain that in order to accommodate children who do not meet the requirements to read proficiently on grade level, educators must delve into possibilities such as small group instruction to practice skills and receive increased feedback from the teacher. Their study looked at one-on-one tutoring and compared it to one-on-three tutoring using the Early Reading Tutor intervention. Participants were trained classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, tutors, and fifty-four first graders. DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) tests showed that the small, one-on-three group configuration worked just as well as the one-on-one group,

with comparable progress and gains in reading. The authors think the one-on-three configuration should be the preferred method because it uses resources, such as time and staff, more efficiently. However, the DIBELS test mainly focuses on areas such as word reading and phonics skills.

This brings me back to Stipek's (2004) study on constructivist versus didactic teaching methods. Stipek went to great lengths revealing literacy experts who advocate constructivist teaching and conversely literacy experts who find that didactic teaching methods have improved basic skills for low-income children (Wiesberg, 1994; Adams & Engelman, 1996) and children with learning disabilities (Adams & Carnine, 2003; Lovett, Barron, & Benson, 2003). The didactic methods may, however, have some motivational draw-backs. I wanted to critique Helf, Cooke and Flowers' (2008) study but I think most of my arguments come from my constructivist bent on teaching. For instance, there was (a) teacher directed instruction with skills and script-reading, (b) a timer, and (c) remediation with all students, not just the ones who needed remediation. These are contrary to my constructivist bent because I believe that script-reading is not the most effective teacher practice, a timer makes children nervous, and remediation should be used when specific children need remediation.

Brown, Morris, and Fields (2005) also conducted a study on tutoring. They looked at only one-on-one tutoring with teachers, paraprofessionals, and tutors working with second through fifth graders using the Next Steps reading intervention. Supervisors were also part of the study and helped with implementation. Pretests and posttests were given to the children to measure results. Results showed (1) children who were tutored fared better than children in the comparison groups on each of the posttests; (2) the

children tutored by the paraprofessionals outperformed the children in the comparison group; and (3) the children tutored by the certified teachers did not fare significantly better than children tutored by paraprofessionals. The authors found that one of the most important elements in the study was the role of the supervisors in leading the teams of tutors. The most important role of the supervisor was in the pacing of the tutors' lessons.

[I am so glad I wrote the section on multicultural education first. It gave me a new perspective to write the rest of this dissertation.] As I read this study by Brown, et al., I discovered the authors chose stories from basal readers published from 1975 to 1986 for primer levels through late second grade. Their reasoning was that these readers contained many high frequency words. I don't like the practice of choosing older texts because older books may contain White bias, a form of racism (Anderson, 2006). I hope Brown, et al. (2005) kept this in mind when choosing older texts. The study gave specific titles of books used for the children who were reading in late second grade levels, but not for earlier levels.

Rodgers (2004) suggested that scaffolding is important in tutoring experiences. She noted that tutors should provide opportunities for errors, and that tutors should vary the support they give children, including telling, demonstrating, directing, and questioning. Her study is in direct opposition to Brown, et al.'s (2005) study in that she opined that paraprofessionals cannot be as successful at tutoring as trained teachers. Rodgers maintained that scaffolding involves making decisions on a moment-by-moment basis about the kind of help to provide and requires specialized knowledge which paraprofessionals probably have. When research supports contradictory opinions, the outcome can be confusing. Go with one-on-one tutoring; no, go with one-on-three

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tutoring. Go with certified teachers, no, go with paraprofessionals. It seems the research has conflicting conclusions. Stipek (2004) has an interesting opinion that it is important to address teachers' beliefs about the purpose of education if we intend to influence the teaching strategies they use. In her study, nearly half of the variance in using didactic approaches was explained by the teachers' goals, the ethnicity of the children, and the perceptions of the parents' ability for involvement in their children's education. I think Graue (2008) would agree. She sees DAP as a metaphor for child-centered and standards-based education as a metaphor for educational ends. Instead of these foci, Graue wants to see more qualitative research focusing on the interactions that occur between teachers and students, something she sees lacking in most of the current literacy studies.

Using Summer Learning to Improve Achievement. Many researchers who conduct current literacy studies regarding summer learning use quantitative methods. Lauer, Akiba, Wilkerson, Apthorp, Snow, and Martin-Glen (2006) is one such example. The authors conducted a meta-analysis of out-of-school time ("OST") programs. There were thirty-five studies, including math and reading achievement. The OST programs included programs for summer school, after school, Saturdays, and holidays. The authors found that OST programs have positive effects on reaching achievement.

Downey, von Hipple, and Broh (2004) studied kindergarten and first grade scores on the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort of 1998 to 1999 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002) in order to find out if schools act as equalizers to reduce disparities in academic achievement. This was another study without any qualitative data. The authors found that learning rates were less variable during the school year than during the summer months. During the school months, learning rates

demonstrated decreased inequality, but during the summer months, learning rates demonstrated increased inequality in regards to the achievement gap.

There is one important exception to this, however. The gaps in cognitive skills between African American and Caucasian children grew faster when school was in session. The authors maintain that family and neighborhoods are responsible for the inequality in cognitive skills when school is out of session. But even disadvantages in neighborhoods were found to be greater than disadvantages at poorer schools, so, by comparison, schools gave these children a greater boost.

Alexander, Entwisle, and Olson (2007) agreed with this assertion. In this study the researchers looked for summer achievement loss and achievement gaps. The study included fall and spring testing for the beginning of first grade through the end of elementary school. The results showed that children's lives outside school over the preschool and elementary years account for the majority of the achievement gap, separating low and high SES (socio-economic status) children at the beginning of high school. The authors found that disadvantaged children slip back, relative to better-off children, when school is out for the summer. The disadvantaged children gained a few points in achievement tests some summers and lost a few points in other summers. This has been named the "summer slide" (p. 19). The Alexander, et al. (2007) study was engaging because of the longevity. However, anytime a study shows that children are suffering because they are slipping back, I want the study to be discontinued in favor of another study that is more helpful to children. For instance, the authors stated that during their study there was no mandatory summer school so their data was not "clouded." I didn't appreciate that statement because it seems like all the authors care about is the

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results and not the children. I thought it was horrible. However, I did appreciate the fall and spring testing.

McGill-Franzen and Allington (2006) chastised some studies for only testing from spring to spring. They say that testing in this way produces lower estimates of school-related gains. This ignores the summer reading losses on achievement of disadvantaged children. In their opinion piece, McGill-Franzen and Allington called this and other practices "contamination" in educational accountability systems. They stated when politicians looked at school effectiveness and forgot to count in summer reading loss, they mistakenly criticized targeted schools for not being adequate. It is no wonder that high-poverty schools have difficulty retaining teachers and principals.

Borman, Benson, and Overman's (2005) research also included fall and spring testing. The authors found factors associated with summer learning gains. They discovered that voluntary summer schools developed to negate the summer slide can have positive effects on summer learning. The study began in the spring of 1999 and ended in the fall of 2002. In 1999, the children had just finished kindergarten or first grade. The summer program was called "Teach Baltimore." The researchers employed numerous measures, including reading achievement scores, student and family background data, summer school participation information, and parental resources. Two hundred and forty college students were the teachers in the summer school. Even though the authors wrote that the college students were trained for three weeks, it was difficult to determine what three weeks of training really meant -- three weeks, for an hour a day; three weeks, all day long; or three weeks, meeting every other day

Stone, Engel, Nagaoka, and Roderick (2005) identified the critical role certified educators take in summer learning. This study included qualitative data, as well as quantitative. At last! The authors wanted to go beyond achievement scores to examine classroom processes in a program called "Summer Bridge." The participating children were in grades three, six, and eight, but only the sixth and eighth graders were interviewed. The authors wanted to find out how summer programs operate when there is a high-stakes testing context. The summer program gave the children another opportunity to pass the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills so that they could proceed to the next grade in the fall. The Summer Bridge program provided a climate in which certified teachers provided a supportive academic press and personalism. These two attributes, press and personalism, were coined by Sebring, Bryk, Roderick, Camburn, Thum, and Smith (1996) and are viewed as critical components of well-functioning schools. Over half of the students interviewed characterized their experiences as more positive in the Summer Bridge program than in the school year.

I had a lot to think about with Stone, et al.'s (2005) study because of the interviews. The youth in the study gave some telling answers to some of the interview questions. One portion of the study especially resonated with me. The authors wanted to determine who in the study had any major problems or extenuating circumstances which might interfere with learning. Of the 25 youth who considered the program a positive experience, only two were identified with such interference difficulties.

[This discussion of interference difficulties led me to reflect on my own major problem through writing this dissertation. I had some pain in my left breast one night, in the middle of the night. I was scared so I went to my gynecologist. She sent me for a

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mammogram. The mammogram led to an ultrasound. The ultrasound is now leading to a

needle biopsy in the near future. I am scared, but not freaked out. Yet! I am mortally

afraid of needles. I asked the RN if my husband could come in with me and she said

"No." I hope the staff will give me something to calm my nerves because I will almost

certainly faint. As it turned out I did not faint and the results were good. I don't have

anything harmful in my breast after all.

How did this difficulty affect my writing? I was more distracted, though still I

knew there is a deadline to finish this chapter. Children go through a lot more than I am

going through, without the maturity or resources to combat the stress. I feel for these

kids.]

Making Summer Learning More Effective. This reflection brings me back to the

notion of personalism and its place in the classroom. Stone, et al. (2005) found

personalism and academic press were more present during the summer learning program

than during the regular school year. Sebring et al. (1996) stated that personalism included

teachers listening to children, caring for children, noticing if children are absent, and

taking an individual interest. The authors said that, while personalism is important, by

itself it does not foster academic development. The combination of personalism and

academic press will lead to higher levels of engagement. Stone, et al. (2005) had a similar

finding. The authors found that individualized instruction led to larger student gains,

which may have been because of the personalism and academic press the youth reported.

The authors indicated that the teachers tailored the instruction to the youth's learning

capacities and needs in the summer program. This could have been due, in part, to the

small class size. During the summer program, the class size was only 16, instead of 30 during the regular school year.

Lauer, et al. (2006) found the same trend in their analysis of out of school programs. They found one of the highest effect of class sizes was in the positive relationship to student achievement in reading with one-on-one tutoring. The authors only saw tutoring in the after school programs, however. None of the studies they analyzed had summer programs with tutoring as an option. That will change with my current study, if the summer literacy camp is similar to last summer. The teacher to child ratio was small so children got a significant amount of individualized attention.

The summer literacy camp will involve children from kindergarten through eighth grade. I'm glad we start with kindergarten because Alexander, et al. (2007) said the kindergarten year and the first grade year are critical times for children for the retention of basic skills. In their study, they found the largest gain differences in summer school learning from disadvantaged children to better off children occurred in the first two summers after schooling began. Entwisle and Alexander (1992) agreed. They maintained children's achievement should be studied early in their academic years because young children are most sensitive to home and school influences. Additionally, cognitive growth rates are higher when children are in their first few grades.

Perhaps the higher level of cognitive growth rate is why I loved to teach first grade. [However, I wish I had known the research on providing access to books during the summer months. I would have tried to find a way to provide this access. In fact, at one time I had an idea to start fundraising to build a public library in Wimauma. Wimauma is a small, rural town in central Florida. Most of the people who live there

work in the fields as migrant workers. I have volunteered at a mission project there on several occasions. I haven't followed through on the library idea yet.]

Alexander, et al. (2007) suggested educational policy should increase access to books in the summer months. This is based upon their study which indicated checking out books predicted summer gains in achievement. Likewise, McGill-Franzen and Allington (2006) call for easy access to interesting and appropriate books to level the playing field. They cite Neuman and Celano (2001) who found in high poverty, urban neighborhoods, there is little access to print.

Kim and White (2008) said just providing reading material is not enough. They conducted a study with third, fourth, and fifth graders in four conditions. In the first condition, children took home eight books of their choosing and read them, without any scaffolding or tutoring. In the second condition, children took home eight books and were coached on oral reading of the text with scaffolding help from teachers and parents. In the third condition, children took home eight books and were coached on oral reading and comprehension. The fourth condition was the control condition. The authors found that on a standardized posttest the children in the two scaffolding conditions scored higher than the control and books only groups.

[It was report card day yesterday. My son is in pre-K, so he didn't get a formal report card this nine weeks, only an Individualized Education Plan ("IEP") update. This outlined his progress in speech and his developmental progress as far as pre-reading skills, pre-writing skills, and self-help skills go. There was also an insert. The insert was titled, "Frequently Asked Questions." The questions all related to the Extended School Year ("ESY"), which is our county's version of summer school. I paused to look at some

of the frequently asked questions and couldn't help but think of this dissertation. I am looking forward to James getting extra help this summer, to avoid a fall into the "summer slide."] As Lauer, et al.'s (2006) Meta analysis suggested, OST programs can have positive effects on the achievement of at-risk students.

Conclusion

I think it is exciting to read all of future studies these authors have determined are useful for this body of knowledge!   These three foci- multicultural instruction, literacy instruction, and summer learning, helped me understand the current literature for young children's learning. I now recognize the need for further studies, as well. Davis (2007) was eager to examine classrooms in disadvantaged communities to better understand the circumstances in which community discourses influence classroom practices. Perry (2008) wanted to explore how storytelling may be utilized effectively in schools to increase academic achievement. Borman, et al. (2005) thought to advance theory and practical knowledge, educators need to develop a better understanding of the family characteristics that explain differences in summer school attendance. Graue (2008) wanted to use qualitative research to depict the experience of meaning, context, and power in the experiences of young children. And finally, Nolen (2007) wanted to find out at what age ego concerns increase and affect students' willingness to write.

[I look to these accomplished authors to think about my own future endeavors. Right now the only future endeavor I have is this dissertation. However, I am sure that what I find out from this study will help spur my interest in many future studies regarding

young children's literacy. How different my first grade classroom would look if I taught

first grade today!]

Chapter Three -- Design

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to describe teaching and learning events that occur between nine young children and their tutors in a community of interest summer literacy camp. The idea for the study came about from my experiences as a former primary teacher who, because I did not have all of this knowledge I now have, had an impact on my children's literacy learning.

This inquiry focuses on literacy learning in a summer camp setting. The study is unusual because it combines a literacy camp setting and autoethnography. In the literacy camp last summer when I did a pilot study, the child to graduate tutor ratio was almost equal and so children had an opportunity for one-on-one tutoring. Unfortunately, in a regular school year this opportunity does not occur.

I will be observing the children to find out ways children learn. Dr. Reynolds uses a community of interest model as a framework for the camp.

1. What types of literacy instruction do nine children receive from their graduate education major tutors in a community of practice summer literacy camp?

2. How do nine children respond to the literacy instruction they receive from graduate education tutors in a summer literacy camp?

One of the few things I know about writing is this: spend it, shoot it, play it, lose it, all, right away, every time. Do not hoard what seems good for a later place in the book, or for another book; give it, give it all, give it now. The impulse to save something good for a better place later is the signal to spend it now. Something more will arise for later, something better. These things fill from behind, from beneath, like well water. Similarly, the impulse to keep to yourself what you have learned is not only shameful, it is destructive. Anything you do not give freely and abundantly becomes lost to you. You open your safe and find ashes.

Annie Dillard (1989)

[This quote spoke to me. So many times in my previous writing I have disregarded ideas because they did not "fit" with the requirements of the intended assignment. Now, I feel freer to experiment with new writing experiences. Reflexivity is one such experiment.]

"Reflexivity, then, is ubiquitous. It permeates every aspect of the research process, challenging us to be more fully conscious of the ideology, culture, and politics of those we study and those we select as our audience" (Hertz, 1997, p. viii).

Ubiquitous: "existing or being everywhere at the same time; constantly encountered" (Merriam-Webster, 2009). I had to look up the definition of this word because I didn't know what it meant. Instead of putting the word "reflexivity" in a heading and defining it underneath, I decided to put it in the beginning of my design section as an introduction. Why, you might ask? It is because of the previous quote from Hertz (1997, p. viii). What she said resonated with me.

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From the beginning of this inquiry, I have been reflexive. I have not just reported facts but I have actively constructed my interpretations of my experiences and then I have questioned how my interpretations have come about (Clifford & Marcus, 1986, Rabinow, 1986; Van Maanen, 1988). I intend to continue doing this for the remainder of my qualitative inquiry.

Pilot Study Findings

When I conducted research in the pilot study last summer I found the literacy camp was a fertile place for learning (Appendix.G). [That is why I am excited to again find out what literacy learning will take place this summer!] The environment was caring and the children felt safe to take risks. The children worked with challenging material, were relaxed, and had fun. The literacy instruction was appropriate and functional. Graduate students said they wished they had included more opportunities for multicultural instruction so I hope to look at that feature of the camp more closely. Kidwatching was an important part of my pilot study. I will again use this process because it fits in beautifully with observing young children in a camp setting. Ultimately, I found observational research can illuminate remarkable abilities and teacher's care and concern for children.

In the pilot study I found children showed multiple examples of knowledge about language. In the dialogue journal one child wrote about going fishing over the weekend: "I don't know what I'm going to do this week. I just rebmemeber I going fishing. from. Mr. Seleres."

There were many examples of settings in the camp that promoted literacy use. One setting was outside the center where the children took pictures during a "wonder walk." There were several examples of settings where children needed additional support with literacy. One child said a connection meant "respecting" a book. And there were many settings where children showed success with literacy. One child explained the tutor didn't need to help him be a good writer because he was already a good writer.

From the pilot study I found literacy comes in many forms. I discovered children can show literacy knowledge in more ways than just reading and writing. The wonder walk proved that! I also learned children can be motivated by small group settings and the summer literacy camp setting is a fertile place for literacy instruction. The findings will inform my dissertation by giving me a background for the camp and by providing me with opportunities for further observations.

Qualitative Inquiry

I will use qualitative inquiry methods for my research. In searching to define the scope and purpose of this qualitative inquiry, I sought the guidance of those who have traveled before me. I found myself following the voices of Schwandt (1997), Denzin and Lincoln (2005), and Patton (2002). Schwandt (1997, p. xiv) defines qualitative inquiry as a set of practices with different ways of speaking. He says the ways of speaking in qualitative inquiry are something like a "constellation of contested practice." It is not a survey-able order. There are multiple sources.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) get more specific when they describe qualitative research as a situated activity. Qualitative inquiry locates the observer in the world. The

practices are interpretive and material and transform the world. Field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and self-memos can be included in qualitative studies.

Patton (2002, p. 5) explains the "fruit" of qualitative inquiry is "the themes, patterns, understandings, and insights that emerge from fieldwork and subsequent analysis." When researchers use qualitative methods, findings are full of depth, detail, understanding, and a very personal level of experience.

Qualitative researchers examine the "constraints of the everyday social world" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p. 12). In this way, researchers may come up against these constraints when they direct attention to particular cases. Researchers may be compelled to take political action as the feelings of participants are revealed (Patton, 2002).

I choose qualitative research methods because that is the most appropriate way to answer my research questions. [When I think of quantitative methods, my hands start to sweat. I have flashbacks to my anxious preparations for the mathematic portion of the GRE, followed quickly by painful memories of my post-graduate statistics courses. While I ended up getting A's in both statistics courses, the mental anguish associated with it all was intense. Where did all of that knowledge go? Most of that knowledge has evaporated because I haven't reviewed and "brushed up" on the skills in many months. To be frank, I am not passionate about quantitative research. I have a passion for situating myself and others in the world. I am an emerging qualitative researcher and ethnographer!]

Ethnography

"Ethnographic inquiry takes as its central and guiding assumption that any human group of people interacting together for a period of time will evolve a culture" (Patton, 2002, p. 81). In the application of "applied ethnography," the understanding is that the culture is of the utmost importance, especially if change efforts will be implemented. This cultural perspective makes the ethnographic method distinct.

Ethnographers use participant observation as a method for research. The researcher maintains the role of participant observer by immersion into the culture under study (Patton, 2002). Schwandt (1997, p. 44) calls this a "firsthand field study." He says ethnography puts together process, product, fieldwork, and written text. He notes culture is not tangible or visible. It is constructed by the act of ethnographic writing. Schwandt maintains writing culture is a critical concern for ethnographers.

According to Schwandt (1997), fieldwork and ethnography may be considered synonyms. This is because ethnographers spend so much time in the field generating descriptive data, developing rapport with the participants, using multiple data sources, and making field notes. It will be challenging for me to develop rapport with the participants. I have a tendency to gravitate toward people whom I know and who I know like me. If I find myself getting nervous about this during fieldwork, I will need to remind myself of something Hammersly and Atkinson (1983, p. 107) wrote -- "[T]he expressive power of language provides the most important resource for accounts. A crucial feature of language is its capacity to present descriptions, explanations, and evaluations of almost infinite variety about any aspect of the world, including itself."

How can I prepare myself to be an ethnographer? I will look beyond what I think I know about the children and the graduate students at the literacy camp. I will think about culture, such as, how the group organizes itself. Culture surrounds us, in every aspect of life, but sometimes we are too harried to observe our surroundings. [When I am considering the importance of culture, it reminds me of the group of men I see on a local road every time I drive to my doctor's office. This road is a well-travelled, two-lane road. Six men are sitting at a round table in metal chairs and playing a card game. The men look comfortable with each other and smile broadly as I pass. I imagine this card game has been taking place in this very spot for many years. I become curious to observe or even participate in their group, with the hopes of experiencing what looks to be a great camaraderie. When I drive past this long-standing card game and think about the group of men, I think like an ethnographer.]

I will feel tension when I write about what I have seen in the field. Goodall talks about this tension. "The tensions that guide the ethnographic writer's hand lie between the felt improbability of what you have lived and the known impossibility of expressing it, which is to say between desire and its unresolvable, often ineffable, end" (2000, p. 7). But Goodall offers hope for the resolution of this tension. He notes ethnography is not a magic gift. It takes a lot of reading, "disciplined" imagination, hard work in the field, and solid research skills. The researcher crafts all of these into compelling stories, narratives, or accounts.

[Reading? Check. Hard work? Check. I've got those down pat. I find myself having more and more imagination. I like how Goodall put it when he said, "disciplined imagination (2000, p. 10)." That explains me. I never thought of myself as having much

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of an imagination. Upon reflection, Goodall has adeptly described my imagination -- a "disciplined imagination." My use of autoethnography has also stretched the previous boundaries of my imagination.]

Autoethnography

Ellis and Bochner (2000) define autoethnography as an autobiographical genre. It connects the personal to the cultural. Autoethnographers "gaze" through an ethnographical lens and then inward through their own lens. They find distinctions between the personal and cultural (p. 739). The autoethnographer is revealed through action, feeling, thought, and language.

The primary data source in autoethnographies is one's own experiences and introspections (Patton, 2002). These creative narratives are addressed to academic and public audiences (Goodall, 2000), and the challenge is to find and own one's voice (Patton, 2002). The text that is created in an autoethnography is "a world in a state of flux and movement -- between story and context, writer and reader, crisis and dénouement. It creates charged moments of clarity, connection, and change" (Jones, 2005, p. 764).

Autoethnography is not easy. Ellis and Bochner (2000) identified some of the hurdles and challenges in using the autoethnographic voice. They say not many people can do autoethnography well. You have to be introspective about your feelings, observant about the world, self-questioning, and vulnerable.

[Autoethnography. After first stumbling upon the concept of the autoethnographic inquiry, I knew I had found my voice and my style. Some accuse autoethnographers as being narcissistic. Could this be true? Am I a narcissist? When I talk of myself, my pen

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flies across the paper. I get excited others might benefit from my musings. Maybe I am a narcissist. I first formally used the autoethnographic voice in my pilot study. The funny thing is I did not even know I was using this autoethnographic method until Dr. Reynolds helped me come up with an appropriate title. The writing of the pilot study was fulfilling for me, especially because Dr. Reynolds liked the pilot study so well that she wanted to publish it in the journal The Journal of Reading Education. Dr. Reynolds is the senior editor. She did publish it and it was exciting to see my work in print! Writing an autoethnography is fulfilling. I feel smart, smart in a way I've never felt before. Previously, I've always felt other professionals are smarter than I. Not to pick on an obvious target, but lawyers are a good example. My family is full of lawyers -- the good kind, not at all haughty or know-it-all, but smart. Now, after finding my autoethnographic voice, doors have opened in my mind. I have discovered a stronger ability to conduct research and understand other's research. The text, Ethnographic I solidified this confidence. Carolyn Ellis' book (2004) was the most fascinating research I have ever read. I want to write like her! In fact, some day I will write an autoethnography about my infertility experience. I will study myself and how I went through the emotional rollercoaster – from anguish to joy, from grief to euphoria -- all in one given day, and sometimes in less than an hour.]

Self Study

"Self study points to a simple truth, that to study a piece is simultaneously to study a self: a study of self-in-relation to other" (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001, p. 14). This form of writing has become more commonplace in research. As Lageman and Shulman

(1999) write, the "keeping of journals in written or video formats, the writing of autobiographies, and the presentation of research in other narrative forms is now more and more commonplace." (p. xvi)

Ross Mooney, who wrote a seminal piece entitled *The Researcher Himself* in 1957, wrote research is a personal venture. Research is worth doing because it has direct contribution to one's own self-realization. He hopes all beginning writers know the personal joys he has had from writing and finding out about himself.

Mooney goes on to say a writer will find a richer fulfillment in his or her life from moving into a self-creative position. A writer will find also a richer fulfillment in others.

Bullough and Pinnegar (2001, p. 15) explain there is much to be gained from private experience. They say biography and history must be joined together in social science and in self-study research. When they are joined and when the issues in the self have a relationship to the context of time, self study transforms into research. Bullough and Pinnegar state there has to be a balance between private experience and public issues with public theory and private trial. This is a challenge for researchers who choose self-study.

To effectively join biography and history, the author must strike a delicate balance (Bullough and Pinnegar, 2001). If research is too biographic, tipping too far to the self, the research is simply a confessional. If the research is too historic, tipping too far the other way, the researcher has produced traditional research.

[I have tried to keep the balance, but this methods section has made it difficult. It has been my inclination to keep putting in definitions and direct quotations. I have found

it challenging to include my insights. No offense to methodology, but the subject matter has made it difficult to be creative in my writing.

I was watching a small television today that was connected to my elliptical machine at the gym. Sweat dripped down my face as I watched "The Today Show." The screen was filled with a teaser for an upcoming story about an inspiring man. The video was accompanied by the words, "Everyone has a story." I thought, "Exactly! That is what this qualitative research and ethnography stuff is all about!" I think if all researchers added something of their life, their biographies, and their histories, research would be more meaningful to their audience and, possibly, more meaningful to them, as well.]

I leave this section with one more parting thought from Richardson and Adams-St. Pierre (2005, p. 962). They say, "Nurturing our own voices releases the censorious hold of 'science writing' on our consciousness as well as the arrogance it fosters in our psyche; writing is validated as a method of knowing." I feel empowered by this statement. My research is not occurring in a vacuum. I am part of the dynamic environment. I'm glad I will be a participant in the study, as well as inviting others to be participants.

Participants

Researcher's Lens. [During my initial dissertation meeting, one of my professors asked me what my role would be in the research. I replied I would be an observer. She quickly remarked she thought I would change the setting, just by being there, so I would be more of a participant-observer. I can see her point. I will filter everything I own

through my own lenses. Additionally, I will have another Ph.D. candidate, Jay, help me with observations, recording notes, and looking through writing journals, personal dictionaries, and camp notes written by the graduate tutors.]

Patton (2002, p. 265) describes a participant-observer as one who "employs multiple and overlapping data collection strategies: being fully engaged in experiencing the setting (participation) while at the same time observing and talking with other participants about whatever is happening." Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p. 21) state "Poststructuralists and postmodernists have contributed to the understanding there is no clear window into the inner life of an individual. Any gaze is always filled through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity." My research will be filtered through "Melinda's lenses."

Language. I begin my explanation of "Melinda's lenses" with the first lens Denzin and Lincoln list. [I am monolingual. I only speak English. The three years of Latin in high school do not count, unfortunately. While Latin might help me with the etymology of certain words, it is a dead language, as far as communication is concerned. I feel angry with myself that I selected Latin. If I had taken Spanish and continued my Spanish studies into college, it could have helped me teach children in Tampa who only speak Spanish.]

Gender.[I am a female which will affect my research, as well. Even though I probably shouldn't, I look at female and male students differently. When I was teaching first grade, I used to groan when I looked at my roster and saw a majority of boys in my class. That didn't necessarily mean my class was going to have a lot of behavior

problems, but in my mind, if the majority of the class was boys, it was going to be a more difficult year.]

Social Class. [I grew up in a middle-class family in Tallahassee. My dad is an attorney and my mom, who has her degree in nursing, has been a stay-at-home mother for most of my life. Even though my dad started out his career with very little money and a lot of college debt, he achieved success and, today, owns his own practice with thirty partners and associates. I always had a good meal on the table at dinner time, wore modest but trendy clothes, and had my own car when I turned sixteen. With the assistance of my parent's financial support, I attended a small college in Polk County and held jobs only during the summer vacations when I didn't have school. My socioeconomic class stands in stark contrast to many of the children participating in the literacy camp.]

Race / Ethnicity .[I am a white, Anglo Saxon protestant. For that, I admit, I feel guilt. I know I have had advantages not available to others, as a result of my race, socioeconomic status, and religion. I cringe when others talk badly about people of other races. Racist jokes make me feel very uncomfortable. I talk to my daughter often about racism and how it affects people. And then I look around at most of the settings she is in. Her school, her church, her playdates. They are mostly centered on other children similar to her in color, socioeconomic status, and religion. Catherine came home at Christmas time telling me a friend of hers, who is Jewish, doesn't believe in Jesus. I told her different people believe in different things and that is all OK.   I hope she will grow up believing this, too.]

Teacher. [I am also a teacher. I look at education differently from people who have never taught. My sister once called and asked me what I would do in a certain situation. She was on a committee at school which was trying to decide what to do with the money the school had received for being an "A" school. My sister needed advice because the teachers wanted a larger part of the money to go toward teacher compensation than the parents wanted. I thought it was considerate of my sister to call and ask a teacher's perspective on that matter. I wish that would happen more in educational decisions, i.e. committee members asking informed educators their thoughts in educational matters.]

Researcher. [Currently I am immersed in research. I know that lens will affect how I observe the children in the literacy camp. Everything I see will have my mind going back to what I have researched and what I have learned in my coursework.*]*

Mother. [My role as a mother has changed how I approach education. When I taught kindergarten and first grade, I was not a mom. I had a mom growing up so I understood vicariously about a mother's role.. And I taught young children so I got the sense of what moms might do in regards to having a first grader. However, being in these two roles did not prepare me totally to become a mom. I would tell the parents of some first grade children how wonderfully behaved their children were and the parents sometimes would say something like, "Are you sure you are talking about our child?" I see what they mean now. The home life is so much more than just a finite time period where the schedule is dictated by bells and lunches, specials and assemblies. It can be tough being a parent. I wonder if being a mom will influence how I select the children I

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observe? I want to take this into account when the time comes to select the participants. Now I am more attuned to the social situation of being a mom.]

Jay. [As I mentioned before, I will have an additional participant observer. He is a friend of mine from the Ph.D. classes I have taken at USF. He was actually one of those who I mentioned earlier from my very first class at USF. He is at the same place I am in the program-a Ph.D. candidate. We have taken several classes together, written papers together, and presented assignments together. He is experienced in teaching kindergarten. He has published a paper on "play" in the classroom. He and I have a good rapport and I am so glad he chose to help me with this research. After I analyze the research I will ask him to be my second reader. We can determine if what I am coming up with is indeed what he observed in the classroom and we will try to come to a consensus. I will talk to Jay every week following the literacy camp sessions and we will e-mail frequently to one another. I will analyze the data myself, however.]

Purposeful Sampling. Patton (2002) describes purposeful sampling as cases for study. These could be people, organizations, communities, cultures, events, or critical incidences. The cases are studied because they are "information rich" (p. 40). The cases are illuminative and offer "useful manifestations" (p. 40) of the interest. The cases provide insight about the phenomenon, not generalization from a sampling to a population.

[During the initial meeting about my dissertation topic, several professors were interested in the number of students who I observed in my pilot study. During the pilot study, I tried to focus on ten children. I ended up observing fifteen children, because several of the children did not consistently attend every session. I was encouraged to

choose a similar number for this research and I wanted to focus on ten children instead. I like this idea because I might have the same problem as before in the pilot study, with children coming for some sessions and then not showing up again. If some children come for one or two sessions, skip a few sessions and come back I will probably leave those children out of my data set. This is because I won't be sure of what happened to the children outside of the camp for those missed sessions. Readers will note I ended up with nine children in the study. This was because I had trouble finding ten children who were the right age and who came consistently for most of the camp sessions.]

I found out there are many types of purposeful sampling. The type that most fits my research is called theory or concept sampling. This is a purposeful sampling strategy (Creswell, 2002). Individuals or sites are sampled because they can help the researcher. A researcher can generate or discover a theory or concepts.

I will select the participants by choosing the two groups of graduate students who will teach the youngest children at the literacy camp. Dr. Reynolds separates the graduate students the first night of class before the literacy camp begins. There are four classes with only the graduate students so the graduate students can prepare for the camp. After the four classes held on campus, the literacy camp begins. I will talk to the graduate students about the study and entice their help. I will get a consent signed by each graduate student I will observe.

The children arrive at the center not knowing in which group they will work. Dr. Reynolds separates the children upon their arrival by age. I will select the children from the two youngest groups. I will meet the parents, explain the study, and get a signed consent from the parents so I can include their child in my study.

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Data Collection

     Fieldwork / Participant Observation. As shown in Table 1, I will be a participant-observer in the literacy camp. Flick (2006, p. 220) said that as a participant observer, a researcher will "…dive headlong into the field. You will observe from a member's perspective but also influence what you observe owing to your participation."

     I will employ the following collection strategies – analysis of documents, observation, and introspection.

Table 1

Methodology Chart

Method	Purpose	Recording Method
Observations of children	Document what children know and can do. Document ways of constructing and expressing knowledge	Check sheets, anecdotal records, field notes
Observations of graduate students	Document how graduate students use instruction to teach literacy	Check sheets, anecdotal records, field notes
Introspection	Explore how I am being transformed in the process	Journal
Writing samples	Explore how children use writing to learn	6 weeks of journal entries and personal dictionaries by 9 different children; 6 weeks of camp notes by graduate tutors, 1 case report for each of the 9 tutors based on the progress of 9 children

Documents. [When I hear the word documents, I think of official paperwork, like marriage or birth certificates.] In the sense of this study, the documents involved will be far less formal. As shown in Table 1, I will analyze dialogue journal messages young children and graduate students write to one another, and I will analyze case reports tutors compose. The dialogue journals are journals in which graduate students write letters to the children and then the children respond to the graduate students. This best practice is done for each of the six sessions. There will be six weeks of journal entries by nine children. Each dialogue journal will look different because each tutor will modify the journal entries so each child can receive instruction on his or her appropriate level.

Dr. Reynolds assigns case reports because she thinks all teachers have to write case reports and read case reports, they should practice writing them. The reports portray information about one child and how they do in reading and writing weekly. The reports contain examples of student work and a synthesis of the information. The tutors have to come to conclusions, such as recommendations for literacy instruction. The tutors have to turn in one case report about one child during the last session of the literacy camp. Dr. Reynolds also learns about the children and the on-going learning of the tutors.

Scott (1990) generally defines documents as any written text. He says documents "may be regarded as physically embodied texts, where the containment of the text is the primary purpose of the physical medium" (p. 13). Modern documents can be classified according to the authorship and access that is used to obtain the material. In my research, I will be using personal documents (from the children) and the documents will be restricted. This just means the documents will be available to me because I will secure permission from IRB (the Institutional Review Board) to examine and analyze them.

Hodder (2000) explains documents provide "mute material evidence" (p.706) for an adequate study of social interaction. He maintains documents can provide patterned evidence can be reviewed to compare with all of the information gathered. Hodder supports document usage because he says it "endures, it can continually be reobserved, reanalyzed, and reinterpreted" (p. 712). Hodder makes one point that struck home with an introvert like me. He says material culture (or the culture that comes out of material evidence) is often a source in which muted voices can be expressed. What a treasure trove for an introverted researcher.

Organization. This summer Jay and I will have a folder for each group. In the folder I will make copies of each Owocki and Goodman observation sheet (see Appendix D) so there is cumulative information for each child. We will put checkmarks or written notations when we see a child accomplish particular literacy tasks. We will take the folders every session so we can build upon the information we have. This change in the way we use the observation sheets stems from a problem I encountered last summer. I had to juggle information in bits from each session. My new way of handling the Owocki and Goodman observation sheets is that I will keep the sheets on each child and write on the sheets, rather than keeping a laminated copy of the sheets and referring to it for each child. This provides an opportunity to keep each child's information neatly together.

In the group folders I will also keep an observation sheet I have developed called the "Summer Literacy Camp Observational Form" (Appendix H). The first section will contain information such as the child's name, the date, anyone who is present during the observation and the physical setting where the observation takes place. The second section will contain the research questions, just so we can refer to them often. The third

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section will contain the biggest section to write observational field notes. The fourth section will include my feelings, personal meanings, and personal significance that pertain to observations at the literacy camp (Patton, 2002).

I will keep the syllabus Dr. Reynolds gives to the graduate students (Appendix I). Additionally, Dr. Reynolds prints up "Camp Notes" each week that prepare the graduate students to teach in the literacy camp. These notes are used at the beginning of the literacy camp in the time period before the children arrive. The notes provide useful tips and also Dr. Reynolds' reflections about how the summer literacy camp is going. I will keep all copies of the "Camp Notes" in the folder.

I will keep the Institutional Review Board (IRB) documents handy just in case anything comes up that needs verification. I also need to keep some blank notebook paper in the folder to write down any notes we need to take about the observations.

Research Questions

1. What types of literacy instruction do nine children receive from their graduate education major tutors in a community of practice summer literacy camp?

2. How do nine children respond to the literacy instruction they receive from graduate education tutors in a summer literacy camp?

For both questions we will observe children in each of the six sessions to find out what the children come to the camp knowing about literacy. We will use the "Kidwatching" observation forms (Owocki & Goodman, 2002) to make written notations

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on children's literacy knowledge in various contexts. The forms I used last summer for my pilot study were: Spelling Knowledge, Informal Observation of Book Knowledge, Book-Handling and Print Concepts, Talk Concepts, Oral Language Functions, and Interactional Competencies. I will use these forms again for this study, adding one more. The addition will be the form that helps me to observe Written Language Functions. This form lists numerous examples of functional literacies. I will add this because it provides a variety of activities that are considered "functional." On occasion last summer I was so immersed in what I was observing I lost sight of important data. If I had some functional literacies in front of me I could remember what some examples are.

I intend to use dialogue journals, prediction logs, personal dictionaries, and the camp notes the graduate tutors write each week for writing samples when I delve into both questions. I will explore how children use writing to learn. I will do this by determining what knowledge children have about writing and what they are learning about writing in the summer camp. These writing exercises are requirements for the class Dr. Reynolds teaches to the graduate students. One of these writing exercises is the dialogue journal.

Last summer during my pilot study I did not use the writing exercises; I merely wrote down what I saw the children write during the session. This was tedious because I had to write fast to catch everything! This way I will have it written down so I can look at the material later

For both research questions we will observe to find out what the children learn in each of the six sessions. We will take observational notes with the "Summer Literacy

Camp Observation Form" I created. Additionally I will use Dr. Richard's syllabus to gain insight into the manifestations of the syllabus requirements.

Finally, I will use the writing samples again for this question to determine what the graduate students have taught in that particular session.

Analysis

Constant Comparison.

Analysis is my favorite part of the research process. It is the part where themes emerge and insights abound. I hope the data I find this summer is as exciting to put together and break apart as the pilot study was last summer. I will do a descriptive study using constant comparison to compare incident to incident (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Corbin and Strauss maintain a qualitative study is incomplete unless a researcher locates the experience within the larger conditional context. Additionally, the researcher should describe the process of action, interaction and emotions that arise as well as the problems that occur to inhibit action or interaction. The researcher takes the data apart, conceptualizes it, and develops the concepts further. One analytic tool Corbin and Strauss recommend is the journal. They recommend researchers use it to keep a record of thoughts, actions, and feelings that arise. [I started with a journal and then turned to my computer for journal entries. I need to go back to using a journal because when I hand write I come up with more poignant thoughts.]

I will look at data and write memos or generate diagrams that pertain to the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Memos are written records of analysis. Researchers use memos to connect complex thoughts, ideas, directions, descriptions, themes, and concepts from

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the data. Diagrams are visual depictions of the relationships between concepts. I am a visual person so the use of diagrams is enticing to me. The goal of both diagrams and memos is to make sense of the data by internalizing or feeling it.

I will break down the data, further reflect on the data in memos, and conceptualize what I think the data indicate (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). I will bring structure and process into the analysis. I will look at patterns of action/interaction/emotion. Once this has been done, I will be able to "paint conceptual pictures that add to the understanding of the experience" (p. 262). I will integrate by sifting and sorting through memos to fit the categories together. To do this, I will reread memos, create a story line, and create some diagrams. I will compare incident to incident. For example, last year in the pilot study I found several actions that denoted success with literacy. I grouped these together under one concept, "Settings that Promoted Success." This was one of my codes. In this way I brought out different aspects of the same phenomenon (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Constant comparison helped me grasp the meaning of events, examine my own assumptions (what constituted "success"), examine findings, and discover variation (2008).

Atlas.ti. I will utilize Atlas.ti (2009) software to analyze the data. I looked on the website for Atlas.ti to get a better understanding of what it provides and whether or not it will suit my analysis. Of course, the software company is trying to sell me its product, but, objectively, it looks to be a great program. Dr. McCarthy, one of my committee professors, uses it and likes it very much. From an inservice given by Dr. McCarthy (2008) I found out it can manage qualitative data, allow me to code text and audio recordings, and allow me to graphically represent relationships in my data.

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Atlas.ti states it provides the "tools to manage, extract, compare, explore, and reassemble meaningful segments of data" (2009). The company provided an acronym to describe its product: VISE. "V" is for visualization, "I" is for integration, "S" is for serendipity, and "E" is for exploration. I was struck by the "E" in the acronym; the author of the website used humor to confess he or she used E mostly because it fit the acronym. [In that moment, I thought about qualitative research and the more personal bent it has.]

Findings. Based upon the pilot study I conducted last year I will look for the following behaviors and practices: Motivation, self efficacy, changes in children's attitude regarding literacy, "aha" moments, changes in children's behavior, multicultural instruction, functional literacy, developmentally appropriate practices. However, I do not know exactly what I will see. I will use the observations and dialogue journals for further insights.

Quality. I will use constant comparison (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to help ensure the quality of the research. In addition, I will have another competent judge, Sarah, help me verify my categories make sense and my data have been arranged appropriately in the category system (Guba, 1978). Merriam (2002) finds issues regarding rigor and trustworthiness are best understood once the researcher is involved in the study. Immersion in the process is the way of dealing with these issues.

Subjectivity. Even though Merriam (2002) thinks a researcher can best understand issues during data collection, I need to take a firm stand now in this chapter on how I will address subjectivity to enhance the quality of my study. Krieger (1991) believes we should acknowledge honestly our studies are "reflections of our own inner lives." Ellis

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(2004) agrees. She gives advice to one of her fictional graduate students on autoethnography by commenting on the notion of subjectivity and the struggles autoethnographers have. Ellis says the best thing to do is to confront the issue head-on in your writing. Bring up the issue before anybody has a chance to bring it up before you. Just say you are "intentionally contaminating" the data (p. 89).

[So, here goes. Contamination! I am intentionally contaminating my data -- putting in my beliefs. There is much to be gained from contamination. This study will intentionally be a reflection of what goes on in my head.]

Credibility. Goodall (2000) compares writing based on personal relationships to writing derived from speechmaking. He says, "[w]here writing derived from speechmaking gains its authority from the principles and practices of argumentation and debate, writing based on interpersonal relationships gains authenticity from the quality of personal experiences, the richness and depth of individual voices, and a balance between engagements with others and self-reflexive considerations of those engagements." (p. 14). I like how Goodall gives credence to both forms. [Argumentation and debate were never my strong suit. I am relieved for another expressive outlet.]

Huberman and Miles (1998) say for research to be credible, it must include second readers, feedback to informants, peer review, and adequate time in the field. I will have a second reader because I will ask Jay to read my work. My informants -- the graduate students -- will offer feedback about the research. I will also recruit an outside reader, Sarah, to read and review observational notes and look at my preliminary and final categories (Janesick, 2004).

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Alternatives to Validation. I am stuck! Now I know and understand why my committee members told me this dissertation writing can be hard. I can't decide how I want to show this study is valid. Triangulation will be best because I can make the study valid by using three forms of data collection- documents, introspection, and observational notes.

"Triangulation is less a strategy for validating results and procedures than an alternative to validation, which increases scope, depth, and consistency in methodological proceedings" (Flick, 2006, p. 390). In fieldwork, Patton describes several ways triangulation can be carried out (2002). He says a researcher can collect different types of data: interviews, observations, documents, artifacts, recordings, and photographs. I intend to use observations, documents, and personal reflections. This way, I can hopefully find that different data capture different things (Patton, 2002). This will help me attempt to understand the reasons for these differences. I have internalized Richardson's (2000) criteria of quality in regards to ethnographies and will strive to attain these:

1. Substantive contribution. Does this piece contribute to our understanding of social life? Does the writer demonstrate a deeply grounded (if embedded) social scientific perspective? How has the perspective informed the construction of the text?

2. Aesthetic merit. Does this piece succeed aesthetically? Does the use of creative analytic practices open up the text, invite interpretive responses? Is the text artistically shaped, satisfying, complex and not boring?

3. Reflexivity. How has the author's subjectivity been both a producer and a product of this text? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgments about the point of view?

4. Impact. Does this affect me? Emotionally? Intellectually? Does it generate new questions? Move me to write? Move me to try new research practices? Move me to action?

5. Expression of a reality. Does this text embody a fleshed out, embodied sense of lived experience? Does it seem a "true" -- a credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the "real"?

Conclusion

[To say I learned a lot from writing this methods section would be a gross understatement. Writing this section is going to prepare me to go into the field and begin my journey as a novice ethnographer and autoethnographer. The process was stimulating and enlightening. On a recent trip to Tallahassee to see family, my mom said, "People keep asking me how your dissertation is going. I keep saying, 'She is having a great time!' People don't believe me. They have never heard of that!"

Also, I went to two parties this weekend and talked to many attorneys. Usually, I stay quiet and don't talk very much. At the parties I felt interesting and smart. I spoke to new people who I had not met before. I felt a transformation! I am an ethnographer. There's no stopping me now!]

Chapter Four – A Portrait of the Community Center and Literacy Camp

[My committee members brought to my attention some readers may not know how the camp runs and wouldn't be able to picture the literacy camp and its setting. That would be a terrible oversight on my part. Time to paint a mental picture. Here, I will give you a frame of reference for the camp, kind of like a story of what was taking place with some environmental context.]

To get to the community center from where I live I have to take a left off of a major, four-lane road. At this intersection I can see two gas stations, a pawn shop, a seafood store, and a McDonalds. The avenue on which the community center sits is a two-lane road. During the last year I have been going to the community center, there has been lots of road construction -- cones, construction trucks, detours. The city is changing what was a straight avenue into a curved avenue.

There is a health center immediately on my right. It is a newly built facility, very clean with pristine landscaping. Next I see an elementary school sign. The school sits far back from the road, but I can see it if I crane my neck. Many of the children from the literacy camp go to this school. Next, on the left, I see single family homes that appear to be thirty to forty years old. Many are well-kept, smaller houses with chain link fences. On the right are single-story apartment complexes. As I approach the facility I see a huge sign designating the campus. The sign says the community center is owned by the county, but operated by the community center development corporation. Lush landscaping surrounds me as I enter the one-hundred yard long community center driveway. The

medians are filled with foliage. To the left are a large playground and a small parks and recreation building.

I drive directly into a large parking lot that holds about two hundred cars. I park my car, get out, and walk towards the sidewalk. As I move towards the facility, I see a huge entrance structure with four red brick columns, green, metal, criss-cross patterns near the top, and a pyramid shape at the very top. I go under the structure and head for the covered walkway, where the red brick walls are interspersed with colored tiles. The south wall of the building, which I can see from the covered walkway, is also covered in red brick and colored tile. Two blue doors mark the entrance. There is a button for people who need assistance; next to the button is a sign that tells people to only use the button if it is really needed.

[I thought the structure outside was beautiful and spectacular! But when I get inside and see the rotunda gallery, I am even more in awe of this community center!] The ceilings are very high and right in the center is a three story-tall, round sky window which lets in lots of natural light. The sky window is decorated with strings and over-sized confetti hanging down. The walls are painted with colorful confetti pictures to match. On the inside of the sky window, there are three pieces of contemporary artwork in primary colors. Two plaques on the wall designate a listing of names -- "Friends of the Center" and "Patrons of the Center." Similar to the brick walls outside the community center, the tile floor is interspersed with colored tile. Along the east wall is an art display case that features the children's work.

When I look directly to the right, I see the offices of the community center staff. Turning around counter clock-wise, I can see the gymnasium, the break room, the

security office, the multi-purpose community room, and the corridor leading to the classrooms, day school, art studio, music studio, and computer labs. At the very end of that corridor is a playground. The multi-purpose community room is a versatile space which can be split into three sections using a collapsible wall. The multi-purpose room is usually set up with two of the sections open and the other closed. From now on, I will refer to this room as the 2/3 multi-purpose community room. Beyond the multi-purpose community room, there is a lighted patio/deck. Beyond the gymnasium there is a health and fitness center, stage, dance and martial arts studio, locker rooms, loading dock, and make-up room.

[On the day I went to the center I got really lucky. I checked by the office when I arrived to say who I was. The receptionist said it would be OK for me to look around and take notes. So I began. As I took notes a man approached me. He said, "Can I help you?" I explained who I was and what I was doing, and I assured him I had checked in at the front office. He introduced himself as the manager of the community center. I introduced myself as well. He asked if I would like a map of the facility. My eyes lit up, and I said yes. He gave me a map, and instead of my making a copy, he said I could keep the one he showed me. I was elated! The map has been invaluable. Some days things really go my way!]

At the beginning of the day, the parents park their cars in the spaces provided in the parking lot. The parents and children walk into the facility. They go into the 2/3 multi-purpose community room. Each parent finds his/her child's name in a large notebook and signs the child into the center. The television is on so the children have

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something to keep them "occupied." On two occasions, I saw one child take a blanket, put it on the floor, and go back to sleep.

The parents are allowed to drop off the children as early as 6:00 A.M. at the beginning of the summer. However, as few children came this early, the staff informed the parents that they could not drop the children off until 7:00 A.M. The staff laid out breakfast for the children when they arrived. On the mornings I was at the center this early I saw selections like cereal and breakfast bars. At the end of the day, the process is similar. The parents park, come in to the community room, sign out their child or children, and return to their cars. Pick up time was generally from about 4:30-6:00 P.M., but this varies as I discovered from my multiple adventures to the community center in an effort to obtain signed parental consents.

I wish I could tell you definitively what rooms the literacy camp tutors utilized. However, the rooms varied from time to time. One week all groups were in the 2/3 multi-purpose community room. Another week no groups were allowed in the 2/3 multi-purpose community room because the staff was hosting a reception of some sort. But for the most part, all of the multipurpose community rooms were utilized, two of the classrooms, the patio/deck, and the art studio.

The older group stayed inside for most of the camp but occasionally went outside on the patio/deck. For five of the six sessions this group was in the 2/3 multi-purpose community room. They stayed against the east wall. The children either sat on the floor on colored sheets of construction paper, or in chairs pulled up to a table about one foot away from their floor space.

Prior to 10:00 A.M. the children were in the gymnasium playing ball. At 10:00 A.M., the children came in the door in a line led by the staff. The first session was different than the rest. Dr. Reynolds had to put each child into a group. No small feat! She asked the staff to put the children in one line from youngest to oldest. Then she and her graduate assistant asked the children what grade they would be in the fall. According to their answers, Dr. Reynolds placed the children in a group with similar aged children. The first grade group was large and the second grade group was small so some of the first graders got to be in the second grade group.

By the second session the children knew the faces of their tutors. The children walked right up to the group, sat down, and looked to the tutors for instruction. The older group started with the camp notes (Appendix F) the tutors wrote to the children. Then the tutors started teaching. At 12:00 P.M. the tutors wrapped up instruction, gave out the work they wanted the children to take home, and led the children to the staff for pick-up.

The younger group stayed inside the building the entire time. For five of the sessions they were in the 2/3 multi-purpose community room, close to the east wall, but further north than the older group. For the last session they were in one of the classrooms. The children and tutors sat in two areas. The tutors pushed two tables perpendicular to one another so the tables made an "L" shape. Then they spread blankets on the floor inside the crook of the "L." The children went back and forth from the blanket to the tables about three times each session.

The younger group started off singing a good morning song. Then they talked about the camp notes. Dialogue journals were next. It was helpful to me, and probably the children and tutors, to see the schedule listed so everyone knew what was coming next.

At 12:00 P.M. the tutors handed out papers and led the children to the staff for pick-up. At this time all of the tutors in all of the groups packed up their belongings and headed to the 1/3 multi-purpose community room to reconvene with Dr. Reynolds. It was during this time that tutors shared strategies they were teaching in the literacy camp with other tutors. This time was part of the graduate class the tutors were taking to get masters level credit.

[It was enlightening for me to explain to the reader where the center is, what it looks like, and what the literacy camp procedures were. For instance, I didn't know the facility had a dance and martial arts studio. Additionally, I had forgotten some of the procedures until I went back and looked at my observational notes. I'm glad I got the opportunity to write this chapter.]

Chapter Five -- Data Analysis and Findings

Introduction

The first part of making sense of the literacy camp experience is a narrative of what happened before the camp met. Many of these pre-camp experiences involved the graduate tutors who prepared to teach the children.

The second part of making sense of the literacy camp is an account of the camp sessions, in chronological order. [Dr. Holland directed me to one of my previous professors' manuscript which was comprehensive on details about coding (Schneider, 2003). Dr. Holland appreciated how this particular professor wrote about how she analyzed data about children's writing moments. The manuscript is called, Contexts, genres, and imagination: An examination of the idiosyncratic writing performances of three elementary children within multiple contexts of writing instruction. I was glad Dr. Holland mentioned the manuscript. I found it helpful and I appreciated the graphic. After reading her manuscript, I developed a graphical representation of my own coding, as shown in Table 2.]

Table 2

Data Analysis Categories for Summer Literacy Camp

Theme 1 – Happenings		
1.1	Assimilate	Behaviors or samples that indicated that children changed the ways they thought about literacy.
1.2	Connect	Behaviors or samples in which children related text to other texts, themselves, or the world around them.
1.3	Construct Knowledge	Behaviors or samples that determined how children built their knowledge about literacy.
1.4	Inquire	Behaviors or samples in which children asked questions to understand.
1.5	Invent	Behaviors or samples that signified that children made mistakes with intent.
1.6	Interrupt	Behaviors in which children had misbehavior or caused a pause in instruction.
1.7	Respond	Samples that demonstrated that children answered questions.
Theme 2 – Cooperation		
2.1	Meaningful Instruction	Behaviors or samples that illustrated that instruction was relevant and related to the child.
2.2	Support	Behaviors or samples in which children or tutors were helped.
Theme 3—Reaction		
3.1	Empowerment	Behaviors that provided evidence that children felt good about themselves and had power over the situation.
Theme 4 -- Framework		
4.1	Literacy History	Behaviors or samples that illustrated what the children knew about literacy.
4.2	Personal Language	Behaviors or samples that signified how children communicated.
4.3	Social Worlds	Behaviors or samples that indicated children's outside worlds.

I collected data using observational field notes, writing samples, and introspection. I transcribed the data. To appraise the data, I identified thirteen categories (see Table 2) to show what occurred in the literacy camp. I then wrote memos about the data to help me understand about how the literacy moments affected the children, tutors, and me. I grouped the categories into themes by drawing diagrams. I went through several diagrams before I created a diagram that represented my data well. The themes in this last diagram (Appendix L) are: (1) happenings, (2) cooperation, (3) reaction, (4) framework. *Happenings* (see Table 2) refer to the actions that took place in the literacy camp. *Cooperation* (see Table 2) means the tutors provided instruction and the children were feeling supported by the instruction. *Reaction* (see Table 2) refers to how the children reacted to the literacy camp instruction. And finally, *framework* (see Table 2) represents everything the children brought to camp-their literacy histories, personal habits, and social lives.

[I wanted to go back to the concept of intentional contamination (Ellis, 2004) I discussed in chapter three. Since I am writing an autoethnography, I am intentionally contaminating my data. Readers will take what I say in different ways. Whether the reader agrees with what I say or disagrees is not the point. The point is that I get the reader to engage in what I am writing and put herself into the situation.]

Data

05/13/09

[Tonight was the first night of the combined reading and writing classes for graduate students who will serve as tutors in the literacy camp. I prepared a script of things to say about the research I will be conducting during the summer literacy camp. I already selected the kindergarten and first grade groups because the youngest children will be in these groups. Dr. Reynolds let the tutors put themselves into groups from youngest to oldest. I saw her do this last summer so I knew it would be easy to spot the tutors of the youngest children.

When Dr. Reynolds introduced me to the class I wanted to be ready and say everything I needed to say. I'm not usually comfortable with speaking to adults, so I needed a prepared script. This is what I said, verbatim, to the two groups of graduate students -- the kindergarten group and the first grade group:]

> Tutors of young children, I'll be talking to you because, for my dissertation, I'll be observing young children during the summer literacy camp. The title of my study is, "A Description of Young Children's Literacy Learning Experiences in a Summer Camp." In addition to interviews, I will also review dialogue journals. My colleague, Jay, will be observing, as well. I won't be looking at many groups, just kindergarten and first grade. I just wanted you to have a 'heads up.' (By 'heads-up' I meant I wanted to let the tutors know, give them some forewarning).

[I felt nervous when I had to explain to the whole class about my research. I always feel this way when I speak in front of adults. Dr. Reynolds wanted to introduce me to the whole class so everyone would understand why I was at the literacy camp. Everyone seemed receptive to the observation. I'm happy I wrote down what I would say ahead of time.

Something unusual happened. I went to get a stapler for Sarah (Dr. Reynolds' assistant) and saw floods of water gushing down the basement stairs leading to our room. It had started to rain heavily and water was seeping in the automatic doors at the top of the staircase. I told Sarah to come and see. We took off our shoes and waded through the water to close the two automatic doors. It was no use. The rain stream was too strong. The doors remained open. We went back to the classroom to tell Dr. Reynolds. She advised us to find the university's emergency phone and call for help. We made the call and the campus police informed us, "People were looking into it." That was no help to us, however. Water came through the doors and spread the entire width of our quite large room. We weren't going to let a little water stop us! Dr. Reynolds kept right on teaching until we smelled smoke; then, she released the class. But how was I going to get to my car with this downpour. I did not have an umbrella. Sarah gave me a plastic bag to cover my laptop because I was scared it would get wet and I would lose all of my dissertation materials. So, with my laptop safe inside a plastic bag, I took off my shoes and ran as fast as I could through the parking lot to my car. I got drenched and, to top it off, I lost one of my favorite black shoes. Bummer!]

05/20/09

[Dr. Reynolds showed some reading and writing strategies to the graduate students (Appendix F). I am re-learning some important strategies in her class. Observing this class has served as a wonderful refresher for me. I have been out of the classroom for so many years!

I need to read Dr. Richards' book entitled, Literacy Tutoring that Works: A Look at Successful In-School, After-School, and Summer Programs. (Richards & Lassonde, 2009). It sounds like a book I could use with my own children, as well. I will see if the university library has it.]

05/26/09

[I am writing these pieces as a journal accounting. One of the analytic tools Corbin and Strauss (2008) recommend is the journal. They recommend researchers use the journal to keep track of thoughts, actions, and feelings. Since I am doing an autoethnography, I must include my own thoughts, actions, and feelings as well as those of the participants.

Tonight I went to the community center to distribute parent consents. When I called to find what time would be the best time to distribute parent consents a staff person indicated from 4:30 to 6:00 P.M. would be the best time because that is usually when the parents pick up their children. Things started out great; all of the parents seemed receptive to signing the consents. Then, a woman walked in to sign her daughter out. She listened to me speak briefly, and then proceeded to interrupt me, saying I would have to get the consent approved by the research liaison in our school system and the coordinator

of the after school program for our school system before I could get my consents signed.

This parent was very confrontational so I decided to tell her I would look into it. I

panicked, but stayed the course and handed out additional consents until 6:00 P.M. I left

with a sense of dread. Where had I gone wrong?]

05/27/09

[Once the tutors split into their groups I passed out the graduate student consents.

Since I had already talked about the study, and since the tutors needed to talk with each

other about lessons, I got straight to the point. I distributed the consents, asked them to

read and sign the consents over the upcoming week, and indicated I would pick them up

the following Wednesday. One graduate student said jokingly (or at least I hope it was

jokingly), "What if we say no? Will you cover your eyes and not look at us?" I didn't

know if she was kidding, so I decided to give her the IRB's answer, i.e. I would still

observe but not take notes on that particular person's interactions.

The graduate students had to present reading and writing strategies while

introducing a piece of children's literature. I loved it so much I wrote down all of the

literature. I want to check them out for my kids this summer!

Dr. Reynolds passed out a newsletter highlighting African American children's

literature (McNair, 2009). The newsletter listed numerous books that have characters who

are African American. As part of this course, she is emphasizing culturally sensitive

materials in the hope the graduate students will carry these materials over into the literacy

camp, as well (Appendix F).

I got the chance to talk to Dr. Reynolds about the consent confrontation at the community center. She told me the parent was mistaken and the literacy camp has nothing to do with the school system. I was relieved to hear I had done nothing wrong and I could proceed with obtaining additional signed consents next Tuesday.]

06/03/09

[Marsha (the community center's director of community service and events) confirmed what Dr. Reynolds told me; the literacy camp has nothing to do with our school system. Marsha is going to contact the after school program coordinator to notify her of the study. Because of this, I am prepared to inform the confrontational parent that the community center has informed all related personnel.

Last night I went to the community center to obtain additional signatures on the parent consents. I'm so excited! Nine children's parents have signed! Some of the children are in second grade, and may be placed in an older age group. We won't be observing them because we will just look at the two youngest groups. In addition some of the children will go to summer school so I will only be able to observe them once during that first week before summer school begins. It's a start, though! The confrontational parent was not there last night; thankfully, her husband picked up their daughter. One person from the community center staff helped me and gave me a clandestine hand signal with her hand cutting the air briskly so I wouldn't ask him for a signature on a consent form. The staff person was sitting a table away from me on my right, so I caught the signal. Whew!]

06/04/09

[Both groups of graduate tutors signed consents tonight! I am so relieved to have those signatures! I am ready for next Wednesday when the kids come to the camp!]

06/09/09

[Today was my proposal defense. I feel great about it! The committee signed the title page, and all is good. I had to make a few minor adjustments, but nothing major. I celebrated by taking my family to the ice cream place for dessert after dinner!

I am nervous about tomorrow when the children arrive at the camp. I hope it all goes smoothly. I am nervous because I have concerns about not getting enough data, having data that is not meaningful, and the dread that something will happen that will stop the camp altogether. I am generally an anxious person. I can worry about any small thing.

As I stated previously, Jay is my observation partner. I talked to him on the phone tonight; he is confident everything will go very well! Jay is a Ph.D. candidate. He will soon finish his dissertation and graduate, like me. He is an early childhood major and has had many years in the classroom as a kindergarten teacher. I am not worried about his role. I admire his abilities and his confidence.]

06/10/09

[Today was the first day of camp. I was excited to begin, but nervous, once again, something would go wrong. Jay came with his observation hat on; he wrote furiously

about the children he observed. I knew I picked the right man for the job! The children

are adorable, of course, and the time just flew! It was a wonderful experience all around!

I have found a very effective way to answer my research questions. I am

transcribing what the students say and do in the literacy camp, and what the graduate

tutors say and do in the literacy camp. This takes a week and is an easier task because of

Atlas.ti. I can manage the data a lot easier and extract the most meaningful data to use in

my dissertation. I am extracting data that answers my research questions.

After transcribing, I code that information and write memos to keep track of my

thoughts and ideas. From Corbin and Strauss' (2008) recommendations on grounded

theory, I process the action, interaction, and emotions the children and tutors have as well

as the problems that happened which inhibited the action or interaction. Writing memos

helps me process the interactions, actions and emotions by interpreting what I have seen

and writing about my impressions.

When a new idea hits me about how to organize the data, I draw diagrams to help

me understand the data more fully. I draw these pictures to keep a record of my concepts

and relationships between the concepts (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). In this way I collapse

the data into the most meaningful parts. The data continued to make sense to me when I

kept drawing diagrams. The diagrams constantly kept my work on track. Using

transcribing, memo writing and diagram drawing I hope to see the literacy camp more

from the view of the participants.

Unfortunately, I will only include nine children in my research. Several of the

children I got consents from did not come back to the camp or had sporadic attendance. I

had ten children in mind when I found out one of the children's parents only spoke

Spanish. I decided I couldn't ethically ask the parents to sign something that was in English. I will have to only use data from observations and writing samples of nine children.

The children I will observe are diverse in race, gender, and socioeconomic status. Four children are Caucasian, three are African American, one is Hispanic, and one is of mixed race. There are six girls and three boys. I would say six of the children are from low socioeconomic backgrounds. I say this because they are in the after school program that is affiliated with the neighborhood schools. This could be wrong, however. Wait-that was my own assumption. One of the children's parents works at the community center. One of the children's parents is a tutor in the camp, and one of the children's parents was a tutor in last year's literacy camp.

The graduate tutors are not so diverse. Out of twelve graduate tutors, two are African American. The other ten are Caucasian. It is hard for me to tell what the tutors' socioeconomic status is. I would surmise the tutors are from middle class backgrounds because most of them are currently classroom teachers striving to obtain a masters degree in education. All twelve of the tutors are female.]

Narrative Introduction

The second part of making sense of my data is the narrative account of what the children and graduate student tutors said and did during the literacy camp. The codes are alphabetical. I did make one change, however, that threw off my alphabetical order. I changed the code, "misbehavior" to "interruptions." I have found the order was helpful to me as a writer because I knew which code was coming next. I delineated most of the

codes from reading Kidwatching (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). I reread the first two chapters of Kidwatching to help me remember what Owocki and Goodman consider kidwatching. There are elements to kidwatching that fit into what I observed during the first literacy camp session. I used some of these as codes. These are: assimilate, constructing knowledge, empowerment, invention/miscue, literacy history, meaningful instruction, personal language, social worlds, and support. I used other codes as I observed unique situations in the camp. These were: connections, inquiring, interruptions, and response.

[Let me get more specific about the decisions I made for the codes I chose. There were some codes, such as assimilate, construct knowledge, and support that have always been in my vocabulary when I think of effective teaching. Back ten years ago, before my Ph.D. program and my enlightenment, I would have used those codes, as well. However, terms such as empowerment, meaningful instruction, personal language, social worlds, and connections are newer concepts for me. For example, I didn't think of empowerment as one of the main objectives for teaching young children. Now I do. What I think of now as meaningful instruction and what I thought of ten years ago differ quite a lot. Additionally, I didn't give much thought to a child's personal language or social worlds. I dictated most of what children read and wrote. And finally, I definitely had literature discussions which included connections but I never named them as such and my children and I didn't focus on connections. So you could say my evolving perspective on teaching is represented in my choice of codes.]

Of course foremost I chose the codes from the data. When I developed the codes I had certain data in mind that would fit into the codes. For example, in the first session I

saw children writing in interest inventories about their social worlds and literacy history.

I saw children constructing knowledge through cloze passages. I witnessed children

designing art to make connections from a book to themselves. Additionally, I observed

children writing in dialogue journals and assimilating to the way the tutors wrote in their

dialogue journals.

This is a phone call that took place between Jay and me after I created the codes

for my data.

[Melinda:	Hey Jay. How are you?
Jay:	I'm OK. How are you?
Melinda:	I'm excited! I have developed some codes for my research. Mind if I run them by you?
Jay:	No, not at all.
Melinda:	Well, the first one is assimilate. I see that as how the children are watching the tutors and changing some of the ways they think about literacy. Is that how you see it?
Jay:	Yes. And it not always causes a change but more often an expansion of the knowledge they already have- Assimilation helps fill in the gaps and hopefully initiates a self-reflection in the ways they view literacy.
Melinda:	Umm. Good. Yes. The next one is constructing knowledge. I see this as building knowledge about literacy and expanding strategies in reading and writing. How does that sound?
Jay:	That sounds just fine. Construction is building and the strategies are the tools that make it sound.
Melinda:	Then there's empowerment. I think it means feeling good about yourself and feeling like you have power over the situation. What do you think?
Jay:	Exactly and it's amazing to see that in action- that moment when a child realizes something for the first time (has that aha moment) and knows-just knows- it is something he can handle and use again to his benefit. For the teacher it can be a reciprocal phenomena- seeing a child empowered "revs" you up to keep trying with the next child.
Melinda:	That's exactly right! Now how about invention/miscue. I have trouble with this because I know it is how children learn, by doing things such as inventing their own spelling, but sometimes I just want to call them mistakes.
Jay:	I think it is ok to think of them as mistakes in a sense but they are mistakes with intent. The child has an awareness that a certain strategy or rule is

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going to facilitate their reading or writing but not yet totally confident about which one to use to solve their problem. There is an attempt and that attempt is what gives us insight into what needs strengthening in their literacy "arsenal". It lets the wise teacher see where the gaps are.

Melinda: Yes, I think some readers will get confused when I say miscue/invention. I will have to be explicit that Owocki and Goodman (2001) call mistakes miscue/invention. How about literacy history? I think it means everything the child brings to class about what he knows about literacy. Is that about right?

Jay: Yes, and again it can cover quite a broad spectrum- literacy history can be affected by their culture, previous exposure to literacy events, home environment, nutrition… Where we want to take them is usually the easiest part. Literacy history gives us an idea where they are when we first set out.

Melinda: Meaningful instruction? I say meaningful means relevant and that the instruction strikes a chord almost in the learner, it relates to who the learner is.

Jay: Many traditional teachers (read that older) have a hard time with this one. There are those thematic lessons they feel they must do every year and they often go full speed ahead without ever assessing whether that instruction is relevant to their standards, curriculum and yes, most importantly to the group of learners which changes every year. It goes back to that lack of self-reflection by many teachers, especially the veteran ones. I recently read that a teacher should constantly ask three questions- What? (As in what have I taught?) , So what? And now, what?

Melinda: Personal language. I think it means how the child communicates what she knows. It can come from home, school, any place the child goes.

Jay: Yes and it may not always be verbal- it can be in a look, an attitude, demeanor, willingness to participate, etc. Teaching seems to be getting more complicated than ever and we have so much more to be aware of in our children in order to instruct them optimally.

Melinda: Probably my favorite is social worlds. I love to hear children talk about where they come from and what they bring into the classroom. I love to hear the outside worlds come through in education. It makes teaching interesting.

Jay: As you know, I am in a Title One, predominantly Hispanic school. Two thirds of my class is ELLS so I have to really work at getting them to comprehend as much as I have to work at understanding them. An example- Tara brought in snack the other day- apples and peanut butter. I knew that apples in Spanish was manzanas. But when I asked her how to say peanut butter in Spanish her answer was just as quick- peanut budder! Asked her again to say it in Spanish this time and she said peanut budder again. So I accepted that for the time being but checked later with our bilingual aide how to say it; she looked at me and said, "We just say peanut budder- it's too long and hard to say the right way. She knew it was

butter but it translated budder. I find episodes like this fascinating! And it does make the learning much more enriched.

Melinda: Great example! Support is the last code. I see support as meaning help or facilitation.

Jay: Yes, and again it can involve many forms, not just another person- it can come through a friend or the teacher and more often will, but it can be a book, a song, a game an activity, sometimes even a memory of something previously done.

Melinda: Well, thanks so much. I don't want to keep you and I know you are at the beginning of your school year, so I will let you go. Jay, I can't tell you how much help you have been with this literacy camp. I couldn't have done it without you.

Jay: It was my pleasure. I had fun watching the teachers as much as the students. Thanks for the opportunity.

Melinda: Take care. Good luck with your school year.

Jay: Thanks. Good luck to you. Bye.]

Narrative Analysis

   Code One – Assimilate.

06/10/09

   All of the names in this dissertation, barring mine, are pseudonyms. For a quick reference, here are the children I observed and took notes on: The younger group included Laura, Jeremy, Melissa, Sally, and Diamonde. The older group included Cynthia, Tabitha, Caleb, and Calvin.

   Today I jotted down some key points from Kidwatching (Owocki & Goodman, 2002) as a reminder about why I am using kidwatching in the first place. Then, I circled key words from these points to use for coding purposes. For instance, on page xii of the Owocki and Goodman text, it says, "Finally, tests reveal little about children's approaches to learning and ways of constructing knowledge." I wrote that in my notebook. Then I circled the words, "constructing knowledge." After I did this with most

of the codes I added the codes connections, inquiry, and responses. I added "connections" because this was a large part of what Dr. Reynolds taught the graduate students last summer (Appendix F).

Owocki and Goodman (2002) maintain that children will take what they already know, ask for help, and seek the information they need to expand their model. I will look for instances of assimilating.

I noted Sally is trying to expand her model of letter writing. When writing in her dialogue journal, she asks a question, just like her tutor did, and then gives a telling sentence to tell the tutor more about herself.

> Tutor: Dear Sally, Welcome to camp! I am so excited to meet you. What
> kind of books do you like? I love to read funny books. Sincerely,
> Ms. Jones
>
> Sally: Dear JonesDo you like to read BooK. I like skaerre Book Sally

Caleb wrote in a similar fashion. His letter was:

> Caleb: Dear Miss Judy, I like to exsersiz and do pushups. from CaleB.
> What do you like to do?

It amazes me how much children will accommodate their writing techniques to go along with the model they see. Therefore, it is essential a child sees such modeling and experiences the writing techniques often. I think of Calkins (1994) when I write about modeling writing behaviors. Her writing workshop begins with teachers modeling authentic writing. Calkins says to teach writing we must demonstrate "the power and purposes writing has in our lives (p. 31)." Calkins advises teachers to remember memories of times when we loved writing and to model and draw on those memories.

6/11/09

I talked to Sarah today about my codes. I wanted to make sure I had a peer debriefing because I want to make sure my research is valid and credible. I was also concerned I was going in a wrong direction with my data coding. She looked over my work and commented I was very organized. Sarah said she thought they looked good. It felt good to have some dialogue about my dissertation. For most people I just gloss over the high points. I don't think they seem very interested.

06/24/09

[I have to go back to the Owocki and Goodman (2002) book to see how they refer to "assimilate."] They give an example of a student who notices the word "they" in print. She says, "What does this say because I know T-H-A-Y spells they (p. 4)?" [OK, I have now memorized the page this description is on, so now I hope I can remember "assimilate."]

On to the data.

Caleb enjoys the challenge of a cloze passage. A cloze passage is a strategy whereby tutors take out words from a passage in a text so that children can find the correct word from the text. Richards (1993) maintains when children discuss alternative choices for deleted words, their oral language abilities are enhanced and their vocabulary and concept development is expanded.

I chose this particular data because the process of assimilation was clear to me. The reason it was clear is because Caleb made three changes, or assimilations, when he tried to fill in the cloze passage blank.

The cloze presented ideas about how the people in *Listen to the Wind* (Mortenson & Roth, 2009) made a school for the children in Korphe, Pakistan. Caleb guessed the word (1) "water" should be placed in the blank to complete the phrase, "_____" the cement. He then changed "water" to (2) "stir" – "stir the cement." Then, Caleb looked in the book and changed his answer to (3) "mix" – "mix the cement." In this way, he expanded his knowledge to find the right answer.

Cynthia also expanded her knowledge today. While writing in her dialogue journal, she left out a closing word, "sincerely." The tutor asked Cynthia what was missing from Cynthia's letter that was included in the earlier letter the tutor wrote to Cynthia. Cynthia found the missing word, "sincerely" and expanded, or assimilated, her knowledge to understanding letter forms.

07/01/09

After the group read *Hunter and Stripe and the Great Soccer Shootout* (Elliot, 2005), the tutors asked Sally to write in her personal dictionary. The dictionary word was "opponent." She came up with the sentence, "My friend was my opponent." Sally listened to the story to determine that at the end of the story, Stripe beat Hunter at soccer so she wrote in her journal:

Sally: Stit Bet Hntr The at soaccr.

This group of tutors chose a wonderful book to help children predict about the outcome of a sports event. There were unpredictable parts in this story, like when Hunter and Stripe were opponents in a soccer game. The one thing I noticed, however, was the tutor who was reading the story asked the children to predict what would happen at the very beginning of the story, not at a turning point. She would have done better to ask for predictions at the climax, or the problem in the story. Dr. Reynolds told the tutors about predicting and the most effective way to teach predictions when she met with the graduate tutors in the beginning (Appendix F). Some of the tutors did not remember this advice.

[I do love the way this group's prediction logs are so open-ended.] Each time the children predict, the only starter is, "I predict that…" Then after the story is read, the starter is "What really happened." I am pleased with this open-ended approach because there are no prompts or hints. Children must use their brains and imagination.

Code Two – Connections.

06/10/09

Throughout my Ph.D. program, I have learned of the importance of making connections with literature. [In my first grade classroom we discussed the books we read but we didn't explicitly talk about the word "connections." Through my work in the literacy camp, this summer and last summer, I have come to be a firm believer in explicitly talking about the numerous kinds of connections -- text to text connections, text

to self connections, and text to world connections – with an emphasis on the word "connections."]

The older group (the first grade group) is using rainforests as a theme. Cynthia looked at some birds in a rainforest book. She made the connection to the group there were birds in the book she had seen before.

The tutors in the younger group wanted the children to make text to self connections, as well. They read *Chrysanthemum* (Henkes, 1991) to go along with their theme of "All about me." Dr. Reynolds required the tutors to write about how they were offering culturally relevant instruction. One tutor wrote, "We did read a book that talked about our different names, and we discussed and drew pictures about the differences in our families."

[Good for them! I like those kinds of discussions about connections from text to self and others.] Another tutor wrote, "We used the theme, 'All About Me' so students would be able to relate the activities to themselves and their lives."

It's a good start. If the literacy camp were longer, they could explore the possibility of having a theme about the class as a community, "All About Us."

06/17/09

The younger group made connections through an art project that went along with the story *Is Your Mama a Llama*? (Guarino, 1989). The children were supposed to draw the people who live with them. Melissa made the text to self connection by drawing herself, her mom, her dad, and her brother. After she drew her picture the tutor said,

"Who lives in your house?" Melissa said, "My mom, dad, brother and sister. Actually, I don't have a sister."

Any time a child can relate personally, or connect, to text he or she will find the text more meaningful. [When I read a novel, I feel the same way. I am reading a novel now called The Time Traveler's Wife (Niffeneger, 2003). The main characters grew up during the same decade in which I grew up. When the author mentions songs and discusses music of that era, I relate to that music. The main characters in this book were a couple battling infertility; I found a text to self connection here because my husband and I had a similar circumstance.]

Back to connections. The older group tutors shared the book *Listen to the Wind* (Mortenson & Roth, 2009). In the assignment from Dr. Reynolds, the tutors again wrote about what they were doing in the sessions to provide culturally relevant instruction. One of the tutors in this group wrote, "Yes, we have read stories such as *Listen to the Wind*. This book is based on children of a small village in Pakistan and their struggle to build a new school." [I am so glad the group used this book. It is a fantastic book. However, I think the tutors could have brought up more text to world connections to make the children more aware of diversity in the classroom and beyond. There was no discussion about diversity, and the book really lends itself well to this discussion.]

06/24/09

I found connections in many places this week! Laura got to connect the story *Is Your Mama a Llama?* (Guarino, 1989) to herself in the literacy log. She got to explain that she didn't like the story very well, because she doesn't like llamas. This group of

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graduate student tutors is very effective at getting the children to write. The tutors ask the children what they want to write and ask them if they want some help adding more details or words. The children are getting some great instruction. By this I mean the tutors are modeling what good writers do-write, add details, write some more. The tutors constantly asked if the children wanted to write more to get the children to elaborate on the ideas the children were writing about. To me that is a skill that will help the children as writers in the future.

The tutors for the younger group continued with the great instruction during the reading of the book *First Day Jitters* (Danneberg, 2000). Jeremy got to write in his personal dictionary the word "nervous" from the book. He gave a sentence for his word: "Getting shots makes me nervous." This connection was real for Jeremy. This connection might have also been very real for others in the summer literacy camp; quite a few children get upset when it is time for shots. I made the decision to include this connection because it showed very clearly Jeremy was connecting with the word nervous. It was clear he had felt nervous in the past, just as the character in the book had felt nervous.

07/01/09

Two tutors led activities that provided many opportunities to connect text to self. One activity was a scavenger hunt. The older group participated in a scavenger hunt around the room. The tutors placed stuffed animals in various areas around the room. With the animals were (a) charts that gave a fact about the rainforest, (b) a connection the tutor made to the rainforest fact, (c) a question about connections directed to the children,

and (d) a clue about where to find the next stuffed animal. Throughout the scavenger hunt the group read *If I Ran the Rainforest* (Worth, 2003). It was amazing to see Calvin and Caleb (the only children present that day) write so much in such a small period of time! One of the tutor's clues was "a hummingbird drinks from a flower." The tutor gave her own text to self connection, and then asked if this reminded the children of anything. Caleb wrote, "It reminds me of a creack" ("creek"). Another stop in the scavenger hunt included the clue: "The rainforest is steamy and wet." Caleb wrote this reminded him of times "at the pool." For other stops Caleb wrote, "a noisy canopy remids me of a lot of people screaming," and "a sticky thang remids me of a stickers."

Calvin had many scavenger hunt responses, as well. He is usually reticent about writing, but not during this activity! When the tutor asked about a "sticky" connection, Calvin wrote, "ArbQ nre frr og" ("a tree frog"). You can see why Calvin is reticent. His invented spelling does not approximate standard English spelling as well as most children who are about to enter second grade. For instance, one of the benchmarks the state of Florida uses for first graders who are completing their first grade year is the children should be able to edit for correct use of common spelling patterns and edit for conventional spelling of high frequency words (Florida Department of Education, 2005). Calvin did not show he was able to spell common spelling patterns and use conventional spelling of high frequency words.

For a hummingbird drinking from flower, Calvin's connection was "A wal hsoswob rot us Qsol." ("A whale shoots water out of its hole"). Calvin was not slow when he wrote this and he was not afraid to make miscues. He was empowered to write. The scavenger hunt was meaningful to Calvin. It would be wonderful to find every

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student's "scavenger hunt" moment! In a class of 15 to 18 children how many children would have focused with the intensity of Caleb and Calvin? It's a teacher's responsibility to find such moments for every child. Kidwatching helps with the endeavor by requiring teachers to observe and document children's ways of constructing and expressing knowledge (Owocki and Goodman, 2002). The observation is intense and the curriculum is planned based upon the individual's strengths and needs.

I looked at the case report of Calvin that was turned in by the tutor who predominately worked with Calvin. The tutor had some opinions of Calvin that were dissimilar from mine. The tutor must have been focusing on the whole and I must have been focusing on a part. The tutor wrote, "From the start of the sessions, Calvin did not want to participate in any of the activities, especially the writing activities." She wrote the only parts of the tutoring sessions Calvin got excited about were when they painted or colored. The tutor was there the day of the scavenger hunt so I don't understand. She also wrote Calvin shut down for most of the writing activities, if not for all of them and did not want to participate. Calvin did have some challenging behaviors, but I was very confused about this case report. Two different teachers can see the same things and come away with very different opinions. What does this mean? It means different teachers are looking through different lenses when they look at children and what children can do. I am focused on kidwatching and watching for children being successful. Other teachers may have different lenses.

[It is such a fascinating dynamic that each year (for the most part-there is some looping) a new teacher is with a new group of children. I know I think much more about this now that my kids are in public school. Every year a new teacher is looking through

his lens at the children in his class. It is scary, too, for me. Will the teacher think my child is smart? Will the teacher think my child is well-behaved? I know it seems silly to worry about this, but I do. Each teacher's lens is different. It can be a positive thing, as well, but I worry too much about the negative.]

Another tutor's report of the fifth session at the literacy camp contained an opinion about Calvin. "In the last sessions, (Calvin) has been quite vocal and has demonstrated his imaginative thinking and comprehension abilities. We are all very proud of him, as well, as we are proud of all of our tutees!" Another positive rendering of Calvin's progress!

The younger group read *Hunter and Stripe and the Soccer Showdown* (Elliot, 2005). Before the story was read one tutor asked the children to predict what would happen in the story. Jeremy got confused with the directions. He wrote a connection from text to self instead of predicting, as directed. He wrote, "I whoad Get 1poot and these othr raccoon waod Get No Poots" (Translated: "I would get one point and these other raccoons would get no points"). I also included this segment in the "miscue/invention" segment because it fits under both codes.

Later, using the same book, the younger group did an activity that asked for connections using text to self. After reading *Hunter and Stripe and the Soccer Showdown* (Elliot, 2005), the group made a Venn diagram. The tutors asked the children to make two intersecting circles. One circle represented them and one circle represented a friend. The tutors asked the children to write things that were the same and different about their friend. Diamonde dictated thoughts about her and her friend. Diamonde said she had a dad and the friend did not. This led Diamonde and one of the tutors into a lengthy

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discussion about dads. I enjoy talking about my thoughts and discussing my thoughts in relation to other's thoughts. [I am always thinking about comparison because of the emphasis in constant comparison. In this case I thought about how I can relate, or be compared to, the children in the study. I have compared myself to the tutors, but this is one of the first times I have put myself in the place of the children. In comparing myself to the children, I see we are the same. The children like to talk about themselves; I chose autoethnography to write my dissertation. Obviously I like to talk about myself, as well. It is empowering to make connections to yourself! I think children say more than adults when they make connections because they don't have as many inhibitions as adults.]

Code Three – Constructing Knowledge.

06/10/09

[My main hope as a teacher each day was that the children in my class would construct knowledge, i.e. take what they already knew, build upon it, and learn something greater than the day before.] Jeremy put it very succinctly in his interest inventory (Reynolds, 2005) (Appendix F) when the tutor asked the question: "What's the best way to become a good reader/writer?" He said, "Read hundreds and thousands of books." What a very knowledgeable young man! I think it's wonderful he already knows to become a good reader and writer you have to read a lot of books. I wonder who taught him that.

Jeremy is a good example of how the children learned and responded in a positive way! The children in the older group responded in a positive way, also. The older group

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reviewed the story *The Great Kapok Tree* (Cherry, 1990) today. They completed a cloze activity, filling in the missing blanks with words the teacher had deleted. After the children had gone through and determined words that make sense for all of the blanks, the teachers gave the children time to look back in the book for any words they would like to change. Cynthia found one of the blanks that had been completed incorrectly. She raised her hand and told the correct answer from the text. I have never done a cloze passage with my first graders; it is an effective way to help children remember the story and expand their vocabulary. Richards (1993) maintains when children discuss alternative choices for deleted words, their oral language abilities are enhanced and their vocabulary and concept development is expanded.

06/24/09

The tutors in the older group helped the children construct knowledge with another unique strategy. The group started writing using a strategy called, "Write a sentence; make a story." The children only had the time to write two sentences. Tabitha wrote, "One day I saw a tapir. He had a pig face." Tabitha is constructing knowledge about animals in the rainforest. I laughed when I read her sentences. I wish in all regular classrooms children had experiences to just be children and write about what they want to write. I have seen some classrooms where everything the children write is dictated by what the teacher wants them to write.

I chose this next data because I could see clearly Caleb was constructing knowledge; he was learning more about literacy and a word meaning-genre. Caleb's tutor wrote to him the genre she enjoyed most was mysteries. Then, she asked Caleb what

genre was his favorite. Caleb responded he liked "mack beleve" the best ("make believe"). *I was intrigued by this dialogue back and forth.* I e-mailed the tutor, and asked her if Caleb already knew the word "genre" before the two wrote back and forth about this concept, or if the child learned about genres with the tutor. The tutor responded back and said Caleb did not already know the word. The tutor used the journal as a way to introduce "genre." Caleb was curious about the meaning so the two talked about what genres are and the tutor used the word in few sentences. What a great way to learn new words, through dialogue writing back and forth. Hannon (1999) found her kindergarteners wrote in dialogue journals with the impetus to compete for a moment or two with their teacher. The children enjoyed the one-one-one time with the teacher in dialogue. I think this has a lot to do with why the children in the literacy camp found the dialogue journals meaningful. The one-on-one time the children spent with the tutors encouraged the children to learn more about writing.

07/08/09

Tabitha constructed knowledge about vocabulary through dialogue, as well. In the book *Edwurd Fudwupper Fibbed Big* (Breathed, 2000), Tabitha wanted to talk about one of the pictures. She said, "She looks like a standing pole." The tutor said, "Yes, a statue."

I saw Sally trying to construct knowledge when she wrote in her dialogue journal. She was trying to write, "I do watch Animal Planet." Instead, she wrote, "I Do Who Animal planet." She wrote "who." Why? "Who" is a high frequency word; so she knows how to spell it and that probably influenced her choice because she knows how to spell the word. She is constructing knowledge because she is using what she knows in

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new situations to build her knowledge of writing. [I am a changed woman. In past years I would have pulled out my red pen and circled the word, written the correct word above it and moved on. What a different teacher I will be in the future with my kidwatching skills!]

Code Four – Empowerment.

06/10/09

[One of the best feelings I used to have as a teacher was joy at watching my students feel empowered.] Owocki and Goodman (2002) say in kidwatchers' classrooms children feel empowered because they revalue themselves. I got to witness this sense of empowerment at the first literacy camp session. During the interest inventory, the tutor asked Sally who was the best reader/writer she knew. Sally said, "Me! I read everyday!" Jeremy was elated he finished his personal dictionary entry first. He yelled out, "I'm done!" Tabitha completed the Garfield reading and writing attitude survey (Kear, Coffman, McKenna, & Ambrosio, 2000) with gusto. When she got to the question asking, "How do you feel about reading at school? She lunged forward from her sitting position on the floor with a huge force and circled the happy face.

Caleb felt empowered when he was able to read the entire interest inventory by himself. He filled out the inventory without conversation. He was completely immersed in the process. He read each question carefully and answered without help from the graduate student tutor. Then later Caleb got very excited about the camp notes the graduate student tutor shared. He yelled out, "I want to read them! Can I read them?"

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06/17/09

Caleb was empowered because he knew how to read well. Laura was empowered
for an entirely different reason; her tutors found a way for her to communicate
successfully -- drawing. Laura is a child who likes to draw answers instead of writing
them. She is a beginning writer and had not started kindergarten yet so she has been
having some trouble responding. But, when given the chance to draw her response, she
flourishes and conveys the answer she wants to give. When she was asked what would
happen next in the story, Laura immediately drew a picture to show what happened next.
It is wonderful to see children growing and feeling good about what they can do.

Jeremy also felt very comfortable in the literacy camp setting. His group was
completing a cloze passage about the story *Is your mama a llama?* (Guarino, 1989). The
teacher left out the word, "no." She said, "I thought this was going to be a hard one!"
Jeremy said, "That was the easiest one for me!"

Calvin feels comfortable and he feels like he has some power over situations in
the group. He told his teacher to cover her eyes while he responded to the dialogue
journal. She complied. The entire time Calvin wrote he had a smile on his face. I assumed
he felt good about the writing and about the idea he got to tell the tutor what to do. I
coded this particular data as empowered because Calvin felt good about what he was
doing and also he felt the power in a writing situation.

Sally's face lit up when her group sang the song, "Hip Hop Tooty ta." (Jack
Hartmann, 2009) Here are the lyrics: "Hip hot, Tooty Ta. Hip hop, hip hot Tooty Ta.
Let's do it. A tooty-ta, a tooty-ta, a tooty-ta-ta. A tooty-ta, a tooty-ta, a tooty-ta-ta." After

each time of singing this, the children add a physical movement. The movements are as follows: thumbs up, elbows back, feet apart, knees together, bottoms up, tongue out, eyes shut, and turn around.

Sally knew all of the lyrics and movements to go along with the words. It seems like a simple task to sing a song with a child, but for some this may be the only activity with which the child is comfortable. [I used to feel like some of my time was wasted just singing in the classroom, but then I remembered singing was, for some, a lifeline, a skill, a literacy moment. For some reason, I was struck with the song "Tooty Ta," It is a very silly song, but the children were very involved in trying to say all of the silly words with their tongue out.] This has to be good for language and also self-esteem. Even Laura, who hasn't had any elementary schooling and struggles with writing, was smiling broadly and trying all of the motions and succeeding.

06/24/09

I'm glad the tutors have decided Laura should be able to draw answers if she feels better about drawing. So, in her dialogue journal, when the tutor asked Laura how she feels today, Laura merely drew a smiley face. I could tell Laura felt power in being able to do this so well. Just the fact the face was smiling says a lot about the summer literacy camp.

Caleb smiled and showed excitement and expertise in the summary activity the older group completed. He constructed knowledge about the story elements in the book he read. The tutor asked for a character in *Listen to the wind* (Mortenson and Roth, 2009). Caleb very confidently yelled out, "Dr. Greg" and wrote it on a sticky note as fast as he

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could. When the tutor asked Caleb for a solution from the book, Caleb wrote the solution, yelled, "Done!" and stood quickly to give it to the tutor."

07/01/09

I didn't see Calvin writing a lot during the summary activity last week. Calvin, like Laura, was sometimes reticent about writing. He is similar to Laura, too, in that he feels very positive about drawing. He does well verbally expressing what is in his drawings. His favorite thing to draw about is Sponge Bob. His pictures are detailed, and I can tell he remembers minute features about the show. When he writes he holds the pencil very close to the tip. He grips the pencil firmly. His eyes are close to the paper and his concentration is intense. His body language tells me he is concerned about drawing the details of the picture very accurately because of this acute concentration.

07/08/09

I enjoy watching the children's body language! Their body language tells me the children are attempting to construct knowledge. Melissa was eager to read one writing assignment. It was a strategy called, "Four words, make a story" (Richards, 2009). One of the tutors read the book *Parts,* by Tedd Arnold (1997). The tutors took these four words from the book: outside, fell, eyeballs, and worried. Melissa's sentences were: "I like to play outside. I fell off the tree. Outside my house there were eyeballs everywhere! I was worried!" Melissa read her sentences with a broad smile on her face. She read with vigor! At the end of her reading, she used a louder voice and held the clipboard away from her body, with emphasis. She smiled a huge smile when she was done!

It's great to see children so empowered with writing!

Code Five – Inquiring.

07/15/09

[I am just now creating the code inquiring because it popped up. It seems a little late because this is the last session of the literacy camp.] This week, I saw several children ask very relevant questions about the literature the tutors were reading. The older group read *Edwurd Fudwupper Fibbed Big* by Berkeley Breathed (2000). In the middle of the story Tabitha said, "What is a bikini?" The tutors explained a bikini is a bathing suit with two pieces. During the reading of Strega Nona (DePaola, 1998), Sally asked, "What is a wart?" The tutor told her what a wart was, and Dr. Reynolds explained, as well in a complete sentence. Melissa was inquisitive when she completed the Garfield reading inventory (Kear, et. al, 2000). She wanted to know what the scoring sheet was at the end. The tutor tried to explain it was a sheet to write down her scores. The tutor explained it was not about how good or bad she did on the inventory, but her thoughts about reading. I am finding out how important children's questions are. The first two questions by Tabitha and Sally signified the children were attentive to the books and comfortable about asking questions. The second question by Melissa indicated she was focused on the Garfield inventory and curious about a sheet at the end that had numbers and blanks.

Code Six – Invention / Miscue.

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6-10-09

When looking for children's literacy progress, it means sometimes observing what Owocki and Goodman (2002) term "miscues" or "inventions" (p. 8). One tutor asked Laura what her address was. She said, "303." Laura also wrote in her dialogue journal, "AM 5 5I." Tabitha said, "I know how to spell pen. P-I-N." Although I put these into the invention/miscue section, these children are also showing what they do know. Laura possibly knows part of her address and how to convey the message she is five years old. Tabitha knows p-i-n spells pin but probably doesn't know it is a word that can be spelled two different ways.

06/17/09

Caleb made few miscues and got somewhat frustrated when others did make miscues. While the first grade group completed a cloze activity, a child chose a word that did not fit into the blank, Caleb looked put out and made a sound like, "Wha?" He dropped his mouth open. The teacher said, "It's OK." It was hard for Caleb to hear a miscue. The teacher did well to sit right beside him and encourage him to be encouraging to others. [When I reflect on my feelings about miscues, I admit I used to consider miscues something children should try to avoid. However, children learn from miscues and I do too. When I make a mistake and have to fix it I am so much more likely to learn from my mistake.]

07/01/09

Some miscues could have been pinpointed as such because of the small group of children. Jeremy got a little confused with the directions for prediction logs. One tutor held up the book *Hunter and Stripe and the Soccer Showdown* (Elliot, 2005) and asked the children to predict what the book would be about. Jeremy wrote, "I whoad Get 1poot and these othr raccoon waod Get No Poots" (Translated: "I would get one point and these other raccoons would get no points"). Jeremy may have been putting himself into the story somehow, or making a connection. You can't blame him for getting excited about connections but I consider it a miscue because his entry was not really a prediction. I also included this segment in the "connections" code because it fits into both categories.

Sally's miscue was another case in which the writing was excellent but not quite on target with what she was supposed to be doing. In her dialogue journal, Sally's tutor wrote, "Dear Sally, I do love to read books." Then the tutor went on to ask Sally what her favorite book is. Sally wrote back, "Do you like to read Book." I think Sally likes to ask questions with words she knows how to spell. She felt comfortable with all of these words so she decided to use them. She felt comfortable with these words because she has seen them before. She can also copy the words from her tutor's writing in the dialogue journal. I coded this as "miscue" because I wanted to value Sally's constructions. Owocki and Goodman (2002) like to use the term miscue and invention instead of mistake or wrong because they, too, want to value children's constructions.

07/08/09

Jeremy had a little trouble with the "Four words, make a story" (Richards, 2009) strategy. He was supposed to include four words, "outside, fell, eyeballs, and worried." He got two of the words in but missed the other two. His sentences were, "When my

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eyeballs started to come out, my mom was worried." Or, as he wrote it, "When MY eyeballs saartet to come ota, MY MoM was worried." I thought his sentence was creative and thoughtful, but the requirements were to include all four words. Unfortunately, the tutors didn't say a word about this and did not even mention it in the case report on Jeremy. I don't know why the tutors did not catch this. It might have been that since I was sitting back observing and taking notes, I could process the instruction without having to teach the children. The tutors had to weigh the time constraints as well as determine on the spot whether or not to draw attention to the fact it was a miscue.

07/15/09

I got considerable information from the case reports the tutors turned in to Dr. Reynolds. I found it interesting to get someone else's perspective on things I had observed but had never written down. For instance, Caleb used many capital letters in the middle of words. His tutor analyzed his journal and found on the first journal entry Caleb wrote his name with a capital B. The tutor surmised this was because the b and the d are so similar Caleb found the capital easier to remember. But, then later, she wrote in her case report "… he may just have a habit of using capitals in the middle of words." I think she is right. I think part of the miscue is Caleb loves to write and wants to get as much down as possible, omitting conventionalities once in a while because he is so focused on the content. I would much prefer a writer to enjoy writing and make a few miscues than be super cautious about doing everything "right." Nolen (2001) found through her research with kindergarteners that the children in one teacher's classroom were successful because they used writing first and foremost to tell about their own

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experiences. The teacher considered conventional correctness a secondary concern for the children's writing.

Code Seven -- Literacy History.

06/10/09

Owocki and Goodman (2002) believe children have literacy histories. The children know about literacy from past experiences. For instance, Jeremy knew the title was on the cover. He demonstrated this when he yelled at the graduate tutor to stop taking away the book because, "I'm looking at the title!"

Laura declared, "I like to write but I don't like to read."

Jeremy circled the frowning face for reading aloud.

And, Caleb said he "likes to read all day long!"

Sally knew her favorite genre. In the interest inventory the tutors administered today, the tutors asked Sally, "Do you like to read/write? Why or why not? Sally replied, "I like to read because I like reading silly books." Sally's mom is a teacher, and I just wonder if some other teachers have influenced her love of reading along the way.

[Perhaps this is a good time to share some of my own literacy history as a writer. I was not very sure of myself as a writer until high school. One high school teacher was very complimentary of my writing. I needed this encouragement at the time in my life. I was fair at math, science, and social studies. I did excel, however, in reading and writing. After this high school teacher showed interest, my writing improved. In college, I took another self-esteem plunge in regards to my writing. It took me until I was 38 and in my

pilot study last summer to regain confidence in my writing. Dr. Reynolds had a large part in this surge towards confidence in writing. She encouraged me to try autoethnography and my writing started to soar. My life is a testimony to how several teachers, even teachers separated by decades in a student's life, can impact a student.]

I wonder about the supportiveness of Jeremy's classroom teacher. Is Jeremy just naturally a child with high self-efficacy, or did his teacher help him along this path? In the interest inventory today, Jeremy's tutor asked him, "Do you like to read? Why or why not? Jeremy's response was, "Yes. Both. I write good and read good." I only wish all children beginning first grade had this high self-efficacy. What a great beginning to literacy! Kim and Lorsbach (2005) found when children write on a high level it indicates and influences the level of writing self-efficacy. In their study the more children gained reading and writing skills the more confident they were and the higher their self efficacy was. This seems to be true of Caleb, as well. As one of my professors pointed out to me, this is in stark contrast to Nolen (2001) who found contends writing should first and foremost tell about the child's experiences, using conventional correctness as a secondary concern.

[Which do I believe? It seems before beginning the program at this university I would consider Kim and Lorsbach (2005) to be in line with my teaching practices. But now I am more in line with Nolen (2001) and the way she sees writing. I know I would much rather see my daughter write a long story (which she does almost weekly on her own) than be painstakingly cautious about writing conventions.]

06/17/09

Speaking of a great beginning to literacy, Laura has not yet begun elementary school and had six weeks of preparation in the summer literacy camp. Her literacy history includes writing on lines. Laura learned somewhere to write on lines, not in the white spaces. She decided to change the look of her paper today and make lines to accommodate her writing. I made the decision to code this data as literacy history because even though Laura has not started her public school education yet, she has a literacy history. In fact, I say a newborn has a literacy history. He hears talking, sees books, feels textures, and many more. This is his start to literacy.

Caleb's literacy history includes reading daily. In his dialogue journal he was asked the question, "What would you like to do during our sessions?" He responded, "I want to Read 3 books a day. From CAleB!" I saw Melissa using her two fingers to save a small space between words. Her literacy history includes keeping words apart so they are legible

07/01/09

In observing what Jeremy knows, I found another instance where I was glad I was kidwatching. The younger group talked about the word, "opponent" in *Hunter and Stripe and the Soccer Showdown* (Elliot, 2005). Jeremy wanted to show what he knew when he yelled out, "Hey! That has eight letters!"

I love to hear children talk about the words they know and can spell, proving to others they can spell words with a lot of letters in them. It is almost like a competition – the more letters, the greater accomplishment. [My daughter, niece, nephew, and two

second cousins had a discussion about this very thing over the weekend. One of my second cousins said, "I can spell supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!"

Wow. Thirty-four letters. That made me giggle.]

07/15/09

Melissa likes reading. This is part of her literacy history. I could tell Melissa liked reading when she completed the Garfield reading inventory (Kear, et.al, 2000) in the last session of the literacy camp. However, she was unsure when her tutor asked a question: "How do you feel about reading class?"

Melissa said, "I don't think I've been to reading class." Her tutor said, "You know, a class where you read, like this one." Melissa stared blankly at the tutor. The tutor said, "Like here, where we read books. Do you like it?"

Melissa said, "yeah." She eagerly circled the happiest Garfield face.

Sally knows how to edit her writing work. This is part of her literacy history. In a case report about Sally, her tutor wrote, "Most of the time when she reread her sentence and it did not make sense, she would catch her mistake and correct it.

Code Eight – Meaningful.

06/10/09

I'm looking for meaningful activities with the children. What I hope to see is instruction that is relevant to the children and relates to what the child wants to learn. Owocki and Goodman (2002) find when children are engaged in meaningful activities they are most apt to show us what they know and can do. Caleb explained a desert is a place with no water, lots of sand, and hardly any living things. Wow! I don't think I could have come up with that accurate of a definition!

Caleb finds reading meaningful. When a tutor asked him a question from the interest inventory, "If I gave you one hundred dollars to buy whatever you wanted, what would you do with the money?" Caleb replied, "Buy a car and a book." I don't know many children who would say they would use money they received to buy books.

06/17/09

In addition to the interest inventory questions, I am finding the dialogue journals are very meaningful for the children. The children get the opportunity to show what is important to them. It is empowering. Laura got to write about her favorite book, "BROWBAR" ("Brown Bear, Brown Bear") and her favorite thing to do, ",COLR" ("color").

Here again, when the tutors and children write in dialogue journals, I get a sense of the children's literacy history. The first day of camp, Cynthia mentioned a baby and her mom. Her graduate tutor was confused and didn't know if the baby had already been

born. So the graduate tutor wrote back, asking if the baby had been born. Cynthia got to write back and say, "The baby is stel in her tuemmy" ("The baby is still in her tummy"). Now the graduate tutor knows a big piece of Cynthia's life. I chose this data for coding because it was relevant to Cynthia's life. Cynthia can relate to the story and the writing of the story because it is all about her.

In her dialogue journal, Melissa got to write about what she does for fun. "I woct LiBrare Moves With My dad. sumtimz I Go to the Comonudesetr. ("I watch library movies with my dad. Sometimes I go to the community center"). Love Melissa."

06/24/09

The prediction logs were meaningful for the younger group this week! The story was *First day jitters* (Danneberg, 2000). The story lent itself for predicting because it had such a unique ending. Throughout the book, the reader thinks a child does not want to go to the first day of school and then, at the end, the reader finds out it is in fact the teacher who is so reticent about it! Great book!

Another great book is *Listen to the Wind* (Mortenson & Roth, 2009). Caleb found the cloze strategy that went along with this book meaningful. He gave his full attention to finding the correct answers to fill in the blanks. When another child found an answer before he could, he said, "Aw! She got it!"

Calvin also found the summary strategy meaningful. The tutor asked the children who would write "they didn't have a school" as the problem in the story Listen to the Wind. The tutor chose Tabitha. Calvin said, "Can I write it too?"

Cynthia is still finding the dialogue journal meaningful and still talking about her mom having a baby. This week she told about her mom having four kids and one in her tummy. In response to her tutor's question, Cynthia shared her sister is the oldest.

07/01/09

Why participate in activities, strategies, or lessons if they are not meaningful to the children? I saw so many meaningful moments this week! I don't know if Jeremy loves to write in any situation, but he loves to write in literacy camp! During one writing strategy he stretched his neck up and said, "Oh, my neck hurts." The tutor asked him if he slept on it funny. Jeremy said, "No. Because I'm writing so hard!"

I can see why his neck hurts. He is concentrating so hard on his writing he hunches down, almost in a fetal position.

07/08/09

Just last week I spoke of Jeremy's love of writing. Jeremy's case report, written by the tutor who predominately worked with Jeremy, contained contradictory information. Jeremy's tutor said, "When it came time to write Jeremy didn't want to write and complained of his backache." What a different view from mine! Jeremy's tutor also mentioned she would have liked for Jeremy to elaborate on his writing, take time to write neatly, write slower, and think about his writing. That's funny. I thought Jeremy was a creative, funny, intentional writer. The tutor said, "I would like to see the student elaborate on those ideas and really enjoy writing." [I found Jeremy smiling, participating, and writing up a storm.]

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Calvin found writing a class story was meaningful. He generated the problem of the story. The problem he came up with was the jaguar lives on the ground. All of the other animals live in the trees, and the jaguar will eat all those other animals. I am fascinated about what Calvin finds meaningful. At times he is disruptive, but when he finds an activity meaningful, he gives it everything he's got. This implies his teacher must find meaningful activities for Calvin.

All four of the children in the younger group found the story *Parts* by Tedd Arnold (1997) meaningful, perhaps because it was gross and funny. The children were immersed in the prediction logs. The children thought long and hard about what might happen at the end of the story: he will have a loose tooth, he is breaking apart, he is getting sick, and he thinks he is falling apart. The children were meticulous in creating pictures that went along with the predictions. When Sally found out at the end the boy in the story found ear wax in his ear, she drew a picture of ear wax coming down a boy's cheek. Melissa drew a picture of a person holding an eyeball. I think this book will be memorable to the children. I admire the tutors for selecting such an appropriate book for this age group!

07/15/09

The older group produced a class book about a jaguar. In the beginning of the book there was a biographical section about all of the authors -- the children. When the tutor read Tabitha's biographical information, Tabitha lit up with delight. She breathed in quickly and smiled. I implied from this that Tabitha thought the fact she was one of the authors was meaningful to her.

Caleb found a KWL, or **K**now, **W**ant to Know, and **L**earned (Ogle, 1986), chart meaningful. Calvin did not. Before the older group read *If I Ran the Rainforest*, (Worth, 2003) they completed a KWL chart. Caleb completed the majority of the columns by himself. He knew different animals live in the rainforest, tree frogs have sticky toes, and no human size cats live in the rainforest. He wanted to learn what kind of animals live in the rainforest, whether peacocks talk, whether tree frogs have read spots on their toes, and whether jaguars climb trees. Calvin was off task and didn't contribute anything to the KWL. The group did not complete the L section this session. I think they ran out of time. Maybe that will come next session.

Caleb and Calvin found the scavenger hunt meaningful. They were both very excited about finding the animals from the clues the tutors gave. Calvin eagerly and enthusiastically found the monkey after a clue was given. He was so interested in the scavenger hunt! He became completely immersed. The thing I enjoyed the most about this experience was it was authentic. If the children could read the clue and look carefully they would find the next animal.

[Several years ago, I wrote a case study for a doctoral class. The focus of this case study was a second grade class field trip. I then presented the case study at a conference in San Antonio, Texas. The mediator at the conference noted my case study was the only one, of all of the Ph.D. student,s who wrote about an authentic writing experience. I took that comment to heart and will strive to teach authentic writing experiences as often as I can.]

Research supports authentic learning experiences. Perry (2008) found her participants, Sudanese refugees, became empowered when they had authentic learning

experiences. Calkins (1994) encourages teachers to model authentic writing when they are beginning the writer's workshop.

I think of authentic experiences as real-life experiences. Children can take these experiences and use them in their daily lives. The experiences are not contrived or made to be "busy" work. [It was more difficult for me, when I was a teacher, to think of authentic writing experiences. I had to be creative, not conform to my basal reader guidelines. I think of play when I think of authentic writing experiences. My children love to play restaurant. This is wonderful for me to watch because they always get out a pad to write down what I want to eat. Additionally, they hand me a book from our bookself to use as my menu. I pretend to pick something off of the menu to eat. Not only are my children learning writing is important for careers (such as waiting tables), but reading is important.]

When the older group read *If I Ran the Rainforest* (Worth, 2003), they got to a page that asked the reader to find five hidden pictures. Calvin intently did this and put his full attention into it.

Sally found the "Good Morning" (Scelsa, 1978) song meaningful. She was very confident when the tutors asked her to stand up front and lead the hand motions. The lyrics are: "Good morning. Good morning. Good morning to you. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning to you. The day is beginning. There's so much to do. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning to you."

Code Nine – Interruptions.

06/17/09

It is wonderful the children get so much one-on-one interaction with the graduate student tutors. One student, Calvin, needed assistance with settling down. He needed lots of reminders to stop interrupting other children. On this day he did not work cooperatively during read aloud. He was not attentive to the story <u>Listen to the Wind</u> (Mortenson & Roth, 2009)<u>.</u> He had to be monitored throughout. [When I was a classroom teacher, I always had one student who had a hard time settling down. It was hard when so many other children needed assistance. A small group setting should be helpful. The graduate tutors are doing a good job of keeping him on task as well as they can.]

Code Ten -- Personal Language.

06/10/09

Each child is unique and has his or her own "personal language" (Mickleson, 1990). I want to discover more about each child's personal language.

In the first session, all tutors in both groups administered paraphrased questions from the *WISC-R Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised* (Weschler, 1974) to the children. In her case report, one tutor mentioned when she asked Cynthia the question, "If you were given 100 dollars, what would you do with it?" Cynthia's answer was, "Buy a house." The tutor thought this was a very mature response considering most her age would want a toy. This might be important to this child because she might not have a house right now.

Jeremy called a chrysanthemum a "banana flower." If you have ever seen a chrysanthemum, you know Jeremy is accurate in thinking the long, yellow parts of the flower look like bananas. Tabitha said her first name was Tabitha, middle name was Babitha, and last name was Kabitha. The graduate tutor said, "So your name is Tabitha Babitha Kabitha?" Tabitha shook her head yes.

07/01/09

During a cloze strategy about the book *Hunter and Stripe and the Soccer Showdown* (Elliot, 2005), the children focused on a section in the story about the two main characters playing basketball together. The tutor asked the children to finish a phrase "_____ a basket," Jeremy raised his hand enthusiastically to finish the phrase. When the tutor called on him, Jeremy said he "lost his mind." Another child answered for him, "shoot a basket."

07/08/09

Jeremy's personality and personal language were clearer than most of the children I observed because he was animated and talkative. After reading a portion of the book Parts by Tedd Arnold (1997), a tutor asked the children to predict what the rest of the book might be about. When a tutor asked Jeremy to share his prediction, Jeremy shook his head and then held his head in his hands. He said, "It's so funny I can't read it!" Then eventually he read what he wrote: "He thinks he is going to fall apart." The picture was of a sideways boy. One arm and one leg were in the air, with one arm and one leg on the

ground. I chose Jeremy's reactions and coded them as personal language because his reactions showed me one of the aspects of his personal language-humor.

Code Eleven – Respond.

06/17/09

I developed the code, "respond" because I wanted to show how a group, in the first case and an individual child, in the second case, responded in an unusual way.

The children in the older group were literally touching knees with the adjacent group, but everyone was on task. This lends credence to the graduate tutors who worked so hard to keep the children's attention. This is unusual because my experience has been when children are so close they can touch they tend to misbehave.

07/01/09

I paid special attention to Diamonde's picture in her prediction log. Diamonde predicted Hunter and Stripe (main raccoon characters in the story) would play soccer. She told what really happened at the end was "srip wun the Gam" ("Stripe won the game.) The interesting thing about her picture was both raccoons were frowning. Diamonde's response was so accurate because even though Stripe did win the game, neither one of the raccoons was very happy about it because through the game their friendship had suffered. I loved how Diamonde picked up on that unusual response. This shows Diamonde was listening to the story and has great comprehension skills.

Code Twelve -- Social Worlds.

06/10/09

I am using a sociocultural, developmental approach to these observations. Owocki and Goodman (2002) determine this kind of approach is based on the premise children construct knowledge in their own social worlds. Jeremy wanted to bring his social world into his dialogue journal. The tutor asked the question, "What do you like to do?"

He wrote, "I like to play with toys." Calvin wanted to tell about something important to him in the interest inventory that was administered today. The tutor asked, "If you had a hundred dollars, what would you do with it?" Calvin replied, "Pizza and Chuckie Cheese." This makes me think of Calvin in his free time, eating pizza at Chuckie Cheese. He must really like it if he thinks of it first when he thinks of found money.

06/17/09

Jeremy wanted to tell about his social life at home. He wrote in a family picture, "My famly likes to Be laze. We like to wach TV." ("My family likes to be lazy. We like to watch TV"). Cynthia wanted to tell about what her family likes to bring camping -- marshmallows. Caleb likes to bring lots of fruit when he camps.

Calvin did attempt to write again this week, showing me once again that he likes Sponge Bob. The teacher wrote down what Calvin read to her. He wrote, "I Lilc pu BOB Sxa r Pans. Nod that s my nsou thoj. lik. ("I like Sponge Bob Square Pants. And that is my show that I like"). I was proud Calvin attempted to write! [It was at this point I knew I was getting involved with the children. I felt like I was Calvin's advocate and wanted so

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badly to tell him I was proud. I should have. I felt I couldn't, however, because I was just supposed to be observing. On the other hand, it wouldn't have hurt anything to give him a pat on the back or encourage his writing. It's hard for me because of all of my years as a teacher, encouraging. Additionally, I am a nurturer. I take my son to school every day. He is three. He and I have developed friendships with four girls and one boy at the school. We all sit together at breakfast and talk. I know they think Scott is cute, but I have a feeling they like me, too. Sometimes the children have problems in the mornings. One day one of the girls cried because she missed her mom. I consoled her until a teacher came and lovingly took her to her classroom to chat. My heart breaks when a child is sad and my heart soars when a child is successful. So it went against every grain of my being to refrain from congratulating Calvin.

This part of observation will be tricky for me in the future. I will have to negotiate a lot of different circumstances as a researcher. Sometimes I will have to negotiate circumstances just to be asked back into a research site. There will be tension in these situations. But what made Calvin's situation important to me was the fact he did not get encouragement at that point and I thought he should have.]

06/24/09

Calvin and Jeremy constructed knowledge this week by using their "unique social worlds" (Owocki and Goodman, 2002, p. 3). Calvin drew a picture in his dialogue journal about Sponge Bob. His tutor told him through the dialogue journal she liked Sponge Bob, too. The tutor asked Calvin if he had seen the episode where Sponge Bob becomes a hamburger cook. Calvin answered back with a picture of Sponge Bob making

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crabby patties. I am impressed by this tutor's knowledge about Sponge Bob and her ability to use that knowledge to connect with Calvin. Did she watch the show independently? Or did she watch it just so she could respond to Calvin? If she watched it just for Calvin I am impressed. I can't stand the show but maybe I could make allowances if I have a child in my future class who loves the show. Regardless, I made the decision to code this data as social worlds because I can see Calvin loves Sponge Bob and this may be his entry point into literacy (Schneider, 2001).

Jeremy created his own sentence to describe the word "nervous" in his personal dictionary. He wrote, "Getting shots makes me nervous." Later the group made nervous faces out of clay.

07/01/09

[I enjoyed getting to know Jeremy better.] He reveals so much about his personal life through his conversations and writing. During the discussion on *Hunter and Stripe and the Soccer Showdown* (Elliot, 2005), Jeremy made a connection from text to self. He said, "My friend and me playing war games on the computer and we were on different teams." This was related to Hunter and Stripe being on different soccer teams. When Jeremy's tutor wrote to him, "I hope you got that toy you wanted," he wrote back, "I bid Get the toy I wanted. The toy was called BakuGan."

07/08/09

Cynthia talked about her world outside of literacy camp in her dialogue journal. Her tutor asked her where she was the previous week, because Cynthia was not at the literacy camp. Cynthia wrote, "I was at my geapens home I spnedte nite at my gmese homt to I Love them Love: Cynthia." ("I was at my grandparent's home. I spent the night at my grandma's home, too! I love them!"). It just sets up another clue about how to reach Cynthia through her outside life. Dyson (1995) comes to mind whenever I find out more about a child's outside world. She urges teachers to think of children as not just learners. Children are people living in the complex world, living day-to-day lives. Teachers need to consider children's interactive lives because children's ways of writing reflect how they interpret their own social place.

07/15/09

Jeremy's social world includes cartoons. Jeremy's tutor wrote in the case report about Jeremy's writing. She said Jeremy wrote a speech bubble the correct way. He saw it in a cartoon. I love it! Literacy moment and social world come together to create something the child finds important -- cartoons! [I looked at a paper just this morning a teacher at my daughter's school gave me. The sheet contained activities for parents to do with their children over the summer. One was to cut out cartoons from the newspaper and put them in the right order. Great idea! Cartoons are a fun way to teach sequence! I need to save the cartoon section next Sunday. My daughter loves cats so I can find a cartoon about cats. I will cut up each frame and tell her to put the frames in order. She can read now so she should be able to do this.]

Code Thirteen – Support.

06/10/09

Kidwatching fulfills assessment's ideal function, which is to support student learning (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). In a literacy camp like this one, I knew I would find many instances of support from the graduate tutors. One such instance was during the prediction journals that were part of the teaching session. Laura decided she didn't want to write her own sentence so the graduate student wrote while Laura dictated.

Support comes in many shapes and forms. Today the tutors gave the children interest inventories. The tutor asked Jeremy, "What does your teacher do to help you learn to read/write better?"

Jeremy said, "Seat work."

Yuck! Oops-sorry, that was the first word that came out of my head. That is a personal opinion. I wonder if this is Jeremy's impression or if in kindergarten they did a lot of "seat work"? If I had been Jeremy's classroom teacher, I would have been embarrassed by his response.

Sally showed her support for others. On the interest inventory the tutor asked Sally, "Do you know someone who can't read/write? How would you explain reading/writing to that person?"

Sally said, "My friend Gina. I would teach her to point to words."

06/17/09

This week I saw graduate students supporting children and children supporting children. For instance, Jeremy and his group were playing the Simon Says game. One of the children stood up when Simon didn't say. Jeremy tried to save the other child by saying, "No, don't!"

One of the graduate students supported Calvin when he had trouble writing in his reading log. Calvin wrote he didn't like the book. The graduate tutor encouraged him to write why he didn't like the book. The tutor started the sentence, "I do not like all" and then Calvin finished with "thepajis" ("the pages").

During one instance this week, there was an opportunity for support that was missed, as a result of classroom distractions. Caleb was looking at a map in the cover of *The great kapok tree* (Cherry, 1990). He saw a two-dimensional map of the world, pointed to both sides and said, "Look, both of them say Pacific Ocean." The tutors were distracted and didn't respond. This could have been a great teaching moment to discuss the shape of the earth and how it wraps around itself.

06/24/09

[When I was a classroom teacher, I frequently had trouble supporting late-comers to my classroom, especially if I was in the middle of a lesson or teaching strategy. However, in the literacy camp one day, Laura came in late, during the time when the children were writing in their dialogue journals. She jumped right into it, there wasn't any transition problem. The tutors did an excellent job of being patient with her and providing her the support she needs.]

Diamonde was new to the camp this week and joined the younger group. Her group decided to make name poems. The children were to write different words that described themselves using each letter of their names. The children read these aloud in front of the other children and tutors. When Diamonde read hers, she forgot the e word (last letter in her name). Her tutor silently shook her hands and smiled a very big smile. Diamonde took the hint and remembered "exciting" was the word." I thought the gesture showed support. I decided to code this data as support because I saw the tutor was helping Diamonde. She supported without even using words.

Support can come in written form, as well. One of the tutors had to turn in a camp report for the third session. She wrote, "Our group decided to use a schedule with name cards to divide the tasks among the tutors. We can rotate the names each week so we have the opportunity to do each task at least once."

[I loved this idea! Not only could the teachers keep themselves on track but the children could also know what was coming next. I liked it for selfish purposes, too! I knew what I was observing!]

07/01/09

This session there was even greater than one-on-one support! In the younger group there were six tutors and three children. Diamonde wrote in her dialogue journal and came to a word she needed help with -- "good." She asked her tutor how to spell "good." Her teacher made the \g\ sound. Diamonde said, "g?" The tutor smiled broadly and clapped. Diamonde spelled good "Gud." When it came time for her literacy log, she asked that the tutor write, while Diamonde dictated. The tutor complied.

There were two children in the older group today with six tutors. Caleb read out of the book <u>If I ran the rainforest</u> (Worth, 2003). He read some very challenging words. This was the phrase he passage he read: "These vines and ferns grow where it's dim and it's hot. Spider monkey lives here and the wild ocelot."

He only needed help with the last word -- "ocelot." The tutor knew the word and a little something about the ocelot, so she explained what an ocelot looks like and eats. I was impressed! I don't know anything about ocelots. I commend this tutor for being well prepared!

07/08/09

I commend one tutor for supporting another tutor to begin a task. Calvin finished his dialogue journal early. He sat and waited for the others to finish so his tutor could administer the Garfield Reading and Writing Inventory (Kear, et.al, 2002). Evidently, one of the other tutors thought that just sitting around waiting was not good for Calvin. She reached over to Calvin and said, "You're going to do the Garfield. Listen to your tutor for directions." I found this fascinating. I thought the guidance was needed and I was glad the other tutor stepped in.

In the younger group, the tutors asked the children to write original sentences with four specific words. Diamonde wrote her sentences and included all of the words. When Diamonde shared her work, her tutor said, "Good writing Diamonde! You used all those four words!" The tutor patted Diamonde's leg with appreciation and praise. Diamonde beamed! It's amazing what a little, harmless physical touch can do to a child's morale.

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07/15/09

I found a situation where I wished one of the tutors had made a different decision and supported a child's eagerness. Cynthia was eager to read the newly published (by the tutors) class book. She started reading aloud while the others were silently looking through the books. One of the tutors stopped her because the tutor wanted to read it herself to the children. Cynthia slammed the book and put it in her bag. The tutor started reading. I don't know if the tutor saw Cynthia's distress or chose to ignore it, but I wish Cynthia had gotten an opportunity to read at least part of the story. It was important to her.

On the other hand, another of Cynthia's tutors wrote in her case report Cynthia "would always look at my entry to copy the formatting, which was a tool I shared with her on the first session." That kind of support can be so meaningful to Cynthia because she needed it to write a letter in the right format.

Caleb's tutor wrote that Caleb appeared to be able to go back into the tutor's writing to find words he would like to use. Caleb could copy them into his own writing. This is another way to support writers in dialogue journals. Dialogue journals are a necessity in the classroom.

Melissa wrote in her dialogue journal while her tutor helped her. Melissa tried to copy the word "activity." She copied the word letter by letter, which took a while. Her tutor suggested Melissa copy three letters at a time instead of one. Sounds like a simple thing for a child, but Melissa may not have thought of it herself. The tutor did well to introduce Melissa to this helpful hint.

Child by Child Data Analysis

At this point I used Atlas.ti to extract, compare, explore, and reassemble each individual child's data. I did this by taking four sheets of notebook paper. On each sheet I wrote one to three children's code names (the first one or two letters of their names), their real names, and their pseudonyms. Then I chose the function in Atlas.ti that searches for patterns or strings in my primary text. I typed in each child's code name and searched throughout all of the data for patterns or anything that struck me as changing from session to session.

Atlas.ti made this so much easier than if I would have had to look through all of the documents on my own. If I needed a certain session, I could toggle back and forth with ease. If I needed a certain phrase which I knew the child had said, I could toggle for that, as well. I am so glad I had Atlas.ti to work with. After a while of using the code names, I learned it was easier to just toggle back and forth between sessions than to hunt for code names. For instance, I looked for Diamonde, whose code name was A. There were way too many A's and Atlas.ti highlighted them all.

Jeremy. I will begin with Jeremy and focus on the the trends in his data, from session one to session six. Jeremy began his writing in the first session with these sentences: "I like to play with toys." and "I like to read." He was merely answering the questions the tutor had provided in her dialogue journal. However, by the sixth session, he wrote with such energy and enthusiasm his back started hurting. He wrote more words in his work, and the words were not provided for him. He sound spelled the tougher words with confidence. He started adding humor to his work; in session five he couldn't read his response because he was laughing too hard. Jeremy started trying out question

marks in session four. In closing his entry in his dialogue journal he wrote, Sincerely, Jeremy Waite?

Melissa. Melissa had an added advantage in the literacy camp. She had just finished kindergarten and her teacher in kindergarten was also one of the literacy camp tutors. [This made me think of the concept of looping. Wouldn't it be great to start out a school year with the same group of children you had the previous year? It would be easy to start up where you left off.] Melissa consistently used her imagination and smiled throughout all of the camp sessions. The only change I could concretely see was during the sixth session when her tutor taught her how to copy words three letters at a time. Melissa tried to copy one letter at a time before this session and it took a long time.

Laura. Laura was the child who had not begun kindergarten yet. During the first session she seemed worried she was not writing as the other children were. But then the tutors encouraged her to draw pictures. In session two, she immediately started drawing and did not write words. In session three she decided to try writing again. The tutor who was writing to her in the dialogue journal asked her how she was feeling. With the tutor's help she wrote "DEARMSJOHNSON (picture of a smiley face) LAUrA." At another time that day, she wrote about how she feels about her family. The teacher sounded out each letter and helped with every word.

Sally. Sally was asked at the beginning of the camp who was the best reader she knew. She said, "me!" She was inquisitive and loved singing. She was frequently asked to show others the hand motions to the song. She stood up front and demonstrated the motions with confidence. I did, however, notice a trend in her writing. She wrote in session two, "Do you like to read Book." The tutor answered yes, she did like to read

books. Then, to the same tutor, in session four she wrote, "Do you like to read Book." In session three the tutors asked the children to write down if they liked *Is your mama a llama?* (Guarino, 1989). Sally wrote, "I like It becos It whos fun. [I thought it was interesting Sally wrote the same thing twice and then wrote she liked a book because it was fun. This led me to a thought about my former classroom. My children loved to write words with which they were familiar. The most used word in my classroom was fun. It is easy to spell. It was a struggle to get the children to write other descriptive words. Some just wanted to write everything was fun.

Diamonde. Diamonde did not arrive until the third session. She raised her hand to answer a cloze passage question and then, either lost her nerve or forgot. She had to ask a friend to help her out with the answer. In session four, however, she answered a cloze passage question with confidence. In session three and four, Diamonde needed extensive help from the tutor in writing in her literacy log. By session five she wrote two lengthy sentences in her prediction log by herself. She wrote first to predict, and then to tell what really happened, in the end of the story *Parts* (Arnold, 1997).

Cynthia. Cynthia was enthusiastic during most activities. In session one, she wrote about her love for her mom and her new tutor. In session two, she showed comprehension skills when she answered summary questions correctly. Similarly, she showed she comprehended the story which was read in session three when she made predictions. She wrote again about her love for her tutor. She missed session four, but in session five, she wrote about her love for her grandparents. She gave many contributions for a class book which the group was putting together. In session six, she wholeheartedly painted a mural and sang a song about the rainforest. But then it happened. Cynthia was

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very excited about reading her group's published class book. She took it out and began

reading. The tutor stopped the reading and told Cynthia she (the tutor) would be reading

the book instead of Cynthia. For the rest of the session, Cynthia sat with her head in her

hands, rocking back and forth. She did end up cuddling up to another of the tutors who

rubbed her back.

Tabitha. Tabitha was the only child who was interested in who Jay and I were

and what we were doing. Once, we asked her if it would be OK to watch her learn; she

was OK with it. She refused to participate in a discussion on story elements and a

stretching break in session three. In session six, she refused to participate in a song. She

told the tutors she knew the song but she just didn't want to participate. Towards the end

of the sixth session, however, I saw a new side to Tabitha. When the tutors brought out

the class book, the tutor read the biographical information about the children on the first

page of the book. Tara lit up and smiled broadly. Then after the class book was read

Tabitha participated wholeheartedly in a book discussion. She asked a clarifying question

about the text and she made a remark about one of the illustrations that a statue looked

like a "standing pole."

Caleb. On to Caleb. First, literacy was important to Caleb. I won't go session by

session because data about Caleb are interspersed throughout the sessions. I just couldn't

find a sequential improvement in his literacy learning. In the paraphrased questions based

upon the revised *Weschler Intelligence Scale, Revised* (1974), the tutor asked Caleb if she

gave him one hundred dollars to buy whatever he wanted, what would he do with the

money? He said he would buy a car and a book. The tutor also asked him if he liked to

read. He said, "I read all day long!" He commented in his dialogue journal he liked make

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believe books. Caleb is a fast writer! One of the tutors asked for a character in one of the books they were reading. Caleb yelled out an answer and wrote his answer on a sticky note as fast as he could. In another session, he wrote a solution to the book's problem, yelled he was done, and stood to give it to the tutor. Caleb was an eager child. The first time the tutors read the camp notes he got excited about them and yelled, "I want to read them! Can I read them?" When a tutor asked him in a dialogue journal if what he would like to do in the remaining literacy camp sessions he wrote, "I want to read three books a day!"

Calvin. For the most part, during sessions one, two, and three, Calvin was not interested in the strategies the tutors modeled. He wouldn't participate, needed reminders to stop interrupting, talked over the tutor, paid little attention to the stories that were read, and stood during times when everyone else was sitting. But then came session four. One of the tutors planned a scavenger hunt where the children looked for clues that included animals from the rainforest. It seemed that this activity was a turning point for Calvin. In my observational notes, I wrote these words to describe Calvin on this day: eager, enthusiastic, interested, immersed, and intent. "He wrote like crazy!" Then in session five, he generated a lot of information for the class book. He insisted that the jaguar get eaten.

Summary

My research questions were: What types of literacy instruction do nine children receive from their graduate education major tutors in a community of interest summer literacy camp? How do nine children respond to the literacy instruction they receive from graduate education tutors in a summer literacy camp?

I found a treasure trove of data when I observed these two groups of children! I was able to successfully show the types of literacy instruction the nine children received from their graduate education major tutors in a community of interest summer literacy camp. These were: dialogue journals, personal dictionaries, artwork, literacy logs, cloze passages, songs, scavenger hunts, acrostic poems, case reports, literature discussions, connections, story elements, class books, picture drawings, Garfield Inventory (Kear, et al., 2000), Interest Inventory (Richards, 2009), KWL, WISC-R (Weschler, 1974), and Venn diagrams.

Additionally, I was able to show how nine children responded to the literacy camp instruction. The children assimilated, connected, constructed knowledge, felt empowered, inquired, invented, interrupted, responded, and were supported.

Nearly one half of my data is from observational notes. I decided to use so much of the observational notes because I felt a part of that data. I loved being there and seeing the surroundings, the interactions, and the activity going on. I know Jay helped me with the observational notes so I wasn't physically present for all of it, but I asked him for clarification when I needed it. The other large percentage of data, documents, was helpful as well. I liked the concrete part of this data. The work was not subject to question because it was written down permanently. Then the smallest percentage of data

came from introspection. [I had trouble with chapter five because I didn't want to put myself in the data. But then I remembered it was an autoethnography and I had to insert myself. I thought I was almost tainting the data and the children's responses when I wrote about myself. It was so much easier in chapters one, two and three. That was before I met the children and was committed to telling their story.

I was very pleased with the amount of data I found and even more pleased when it came to me how I was going to organize this data. I think of the many exercise classes I have been involved with over my teenage through adult years -- more on this to come in chapter six.]

Chapter Six – Conclusions

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to observe and describe literacy teaching and learning events that occurred between nine children and their tutors in a community of practice summer literacy camp. In chapter five, I employed constant comparison and writing memos. I analyzed these literacy moments and those which were similar in nature, constantly comparing events and individuals, by session, for similarities and differences. I also wrote memos to talk about how the literacy moments affected the children, tutors, and me. Now I will discuss the diagrams, which evolved over the time I observed in the literacy camp. The diagrams helped me make sense of the data.

06/11/09

From the beginning of this study I have made rough diagrams that show what the codes mean to me and how the patterns of action, interaction, and emotion come together to make up the literacy camp. My first diagram was just a spider-map of all of the preliminary codes (See Appendix H). I grouped thoughts in one category with examples, actions in another, and feelings in the last. This initial diagram is a very basic spider-map, which shows I don't have very much data. It also shows I am still developing my own interpretation of the data because the subheadings -- actions, thoughts and feelings -- are not fully developed thoughts. The subheadings come from Corbin and Strauss (2008),

who say researchers should describe the process of action, interaction and emotions. I did, however, incorporate what I saw in the third-tier bubbles (i.e. assimilate). It is fascinating to me that all of my findings in the third tier bubbles can fit into Corbin and Strauss' components of grounded theory. I know I am not finding new theory but the components of grounded theory were helpful to this study (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). It is important to me to remain open to new interpretations, as opposed to staying with the safety zone of the principles of others.

This spider-map visual doesn't provide enough depth to the data. Perhaps this is because I don't have very much data. But what I did find in the data, to date, is one child invented (wrote what she knew about how to write her address, i.e. "303"), one child assimilated (adapted her writing style to fit into the dialogue journal), one child connected (discussed books to think about birds she had seen), and and one child learned about deserts (learned a definition for desert). One child felt empowered (yelled excitedly when he completed a task), and supported (received help from tutors when he had trouble with spelling words). One child brought in outside worlds through personal language (called a chrysanthemum a banana flower), social worlds (wrote about what he liked to play with), and literacy history (talked about a fondness for reading all day long). For my next diagram I'll have to think of a visual that demonstrates the children are the focus of this data..

06/30/09

The data I have seen thus far is represented as a framed picture of a child (See Appendix I). The head represents the literacy history, personal language, and social

worlds of the child. I saw a child draw lines on paper because that is how she likes to write. A child wrote his family likes to be lazy sometimes. Children discussed camping with family. All of these events demonstrated children's thoughts and also reveal who the children are and where they come from.

The arms and torso represented the actions of the child: invent, respond, connect, attend, and assimilate. [I know all parts of the body are "active" in one sense or another, but for some reason I think of the arms as one of the more active parts of the body.] The children were active in the literacy camp. One child used capital letters and backwards letters to invent his own way of writing. Another connected the text to himself when he wrote about his nervous feelings associated with getting shots. I observed some misbehavior this week and wrote that word as one of the actions. "Misbehavior" does not seem to be an appropriate word, so I will likely change it. One of the children needed constant reminders to sit down, to pay attention, and to be kind to others.

In the framed picture of the child, the block under the feet represents the outcome of the literacy camp: empowerment. When I drew this I thought of a child standing on a block to receive some kind of award, like the medal ceremony at the Olympics. [This reminds me of my children's gymnastics and swimming classes. During the last session of each class, the staff direct the children to stand on a block to receive their ribbons for the session.] I used the word "empowered" because I observed one child get the opportunity to tell the tutor what to do when he instructed her to cover her eyes. I saw a child yell, "I'm done" with excitement and enthusiasm after he completed a task; and I heard another child comment the strategy on which the group was working was the easiest one for him.

The frame surrounding the picture of the child represents the tutors' help in framing the camp: support and meaningful learning experiences. One child got the chance to talk about her family and the upcoming arrival of a new baby. Another child supported his friend in Simon Says when he told her not to complete an action because "Simon didn't say." I like the diagram of the framed picture of the child because it is child-like. But it also seems to me the camp had action and the children had a reaction. I wonder if I could come up with a diagram to show that?

07/01/09

Finally, I thought of a picture to represent action and reaction. The older group used a make believe campfire for snack time. They used paper towel rolls and tissue paper to create a "fire." During each session, the group would "roast" marshmallows in the "fire". It was this activity that gave me an idea for a diagram. (See Appendix J). The logs represent personal language, social worlds, and literacy history -- the foundation of a child's literacy. I watched children and observed these foundations when one child discussed how many letters were in a word, another child talked about playing war games with his friend, and a third child became upset because another child stole his idea.

The fire represents meaningful instruction, support, assimilation, knowledge, connection, and misbehavior. I wrote "misbehavior" at first and then was encouraged by one of my professors to change this word. Instead of "misbehavior," I used "interruption." I observed the action-flames when I saw the scavenger hunt, the prediction logs where children predicted what a cat would make in a rainforest, the

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connections a child made while comparing a rainforest to a day at the pool, and the support of a tutor during a child's reading.

The heat radiating from the fire represents the empowerment the children felt when they gave their opinions of the books the tutors read to them in the camp.

No; still not there yet. I like the action/reaction idea, but it seems like being empowered is the end. There is no more. Maybe more of a cyclical diagram would represent the data. In that way a child could come with a literacy history, do something in the camp, feel empowered, and then have a new literacy history, etc. The cycle would just keep going on and on.

07/09/09

Maybe my diagram should be simplified (See Appendix K). Maybe all along the child's life, he or she is acquiring literacy history, constructing knowledge, and feeling empowerment. I witnessed literacy history when a child wrote about her love for her grandparents and when a child laughed really hard about his story about eyeballs falling out. I observed a child constructing knowledge when he wrote so hard his back hurt and when a tutor supported a child when she presented her writing to the group. And finally, I saw empowerment when a child circled all happy faces on the *Garfield Reading and Writing Inventory* (Kear, et.al, 2002) on the last session of the camp.

No, I don't like this either. It still implies there are steps to literacy. I don't think there are ever steps to literacy. It is a free-flowing process. It is not inevitable that a child who has a literacy history will construct knowledge and feel empowered every time. I must keep thinking.

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I reflected on Dyson's (2002) work. She would appreciate the kidwatching approach and not my old linear approach. Dyson is a proponent of watching children to find out how written word evolves from a child's social past and present. I also found this to be true in this literacy camp. Dyson's analogy to ballet and the messiness that goes along with the beauty and straight lines of the dance rings true when applied to the evolution of a child along a literacy journey. Dyson wants to see how children learn to "become full participants in their present childhoods and in their travels far from narrow lines into ever-widening futures." She put it so well. I couldn't appreciate this participatory, immersion approach until this stage in my life. [I used to envision a narrow path along which I thought children traveled in to learn to read and write. But, the narrow path does not make sense. Only a handful of the first graders appreciated my linear instruction; the other students needed me to be more fluid. I will be in the future.]

07/21/09

[I'm trying to be more fluid, to see things as they come, messiness and all. I think my epiphany has come! Two mornings ago I was in a body toning class. The class is at a local gym. The time was 5:45 A.M. I know this is a crazy time to work out, but it fits my schedule. The class is so hard! A friend who tried out the class says the instructor is a sadist! She pushes us to the limit to do our best. I started this class about four weeks ago. When the instructor told us to get "heavy" weights I chose the three pounders. I knew I could not keep up with the rest of the class because I had not taken a weight training class in years and years. But something is happening! I am finding that each class I can add a little more weight to my routine and I am getting stronger.

I feel empowered!] Is this what the children feel at the literacy camp? I started sketching out an arm and a barbell to help me think this through. Later I found some free clipart that was much better than my artwork (See Appendix L). I thought about my codes that represent background knowledge or the *framework* that children have when they come to the camp (history, personal habits, and social worlds). The background is represented by the arm. Everything I have done in the past to exercise and everything that makes up my muscle genetically constitutes my background. The barbell is the instruction and support (or *cooperation* of the two) given by the instructor. In other words, the instructor provides the appropriate tools to exercise. The third component is the action of the arm. Even though the instructor can tell me how to exercise, it is up to me to put my arm into motion. The actions of the arm (and the children in the literacy camp) construct, connect, assimilate, learn, and inquire. All of these represent the *happenings* of both the exercise class and the literacy camp. The outcome of all of this is the sense of empowerment -- the result is that I am stronger, I have learned more about myself, and I feel capable of going to the next step – obtaining stronger muscles and raising the weight on my barbells. This is similar to the *reaction* the children had in the literacy camp-also empowered. The reason why I italicized happenings, cooperation, reaction, and framework (see Table 2) is because they are my themes.

Is this how the children in the literacy camp felt? I think so. They will enter the next grade feeling more capable and more empowered to read and write better. I hope it will last. It was good for me to re-learn how it feels to get better at something. As adults we can easily forget the awesome feeling of learning something new and getting better at it.

Happenings.   Reading over my data again brought me to the realization that I should elaborate on comparing a literacy camp to an exercise class (Appendix L). There are numerous similarities. First of all, happenings. Modeling takes place in both environments. The graduate tutors did a lot of modeling. When they wrote in the children's dialogue journals, the tutors modeled. The children got the hang of the dialogue journals right away and started writing such questions as: "Do you like to read?" and "What do you like to do?" The questions were in response to questions the tutors had asked the children in previous dialogue journal entries.

[In my current body toning class, the instructor does most of the exercises at the front of the room so we can follow. She also counts for us and gives us hints about how we should be doing the particular exercise. She is models constantly.]

Another happening is that the children in the camp constructed knowledge about literacy. When the graduate students taught a writing or reading strategy the children constructed knowledge and comprehension about the text.

[Every time I go to an exercise class, I construct knowledge about my body and its capacity to work and function. My body is also constructing knowledge each time on how to get stronger and fit.]

The children inquired mostly about definitions or meanings of words. For example, Sally asked what a wart was and Tara asked what a bikini was.

[In contrast, very few of us in the exercise class ask questions of the instructor. I don't know if this is because none of us have questions, or because the music is so loud we know she couldn't hear us even if we did have questions. As adults, we ask fewer

questions than children. Perhaps adults are more guarded, or perhaps adults just think they know it all.]

In the literacy camp, I saw miscues and inventions that centered on children's not following directions for instruction or misusing writing conventionalities. I almost didn't use this code, because I think these miscues are inevitable and useful to see how the child is progressing. But, on second thought, I think it was important to include this data because of the premise in kidwatching that miscues are not to be called mistakes.

[My body toning instructor has not corrected me for any miscues, but I am sure I have made them. Last week I went on a cruise with my family. I decided to go to an abdominals exercise class on board the ship. I went to the class because I wanted to stay in shape for my body toning class. I also went to the class because I knew I was eating way too much on the ship. One of the hardest exercises was the plank position from pilates. We had to hold the position for thirty seconds. The instructor told us numerous times to keep our rear ends down and if we didn't, he would come and correct us. He told us this because if we did the exercise the wrong way we could hurt our back. Sure enough, without actually touching my rear-end, he forced my rear-end down because it was sticking up too far. Miscue! When I think of my miscue I think of children's miscues. As a teacher I am bound to point out why miscues in literacy may be harmful to children. For example, if I let a child read an incorrect word over and over I am going to hurt the child's comprehension of the text. Especially if the word is crucial to the child's understanding of the text. This scenario could result in a child misunderstanding a text and skewing his literacy history.]

Cooperation.   I observed so much cooperation in the camp. The tutors supported the children with meaningful instruction. In looking back at the data, the dialogue journals were meaningful to both children and tutors. Everyone in the camp enjoyed conversing with one another and telling about themselves. The story Parts, by Tedd Arnold (1997), and the scavenger hunt were both very meaningful, as well. The children wrote more during these two activities than during any other activity in the camp.

[My body toning class is meaningful to me because, on the days I take the class, I feel more energetic, productive, and strong. No wonder I want to go back class after class.]

The graduate tutors supported the children in so many ways. The most support I saw came in the writing of sentences and the spelling of words. One tutor encouraged a child to tell why he didn't like a particular book. One tutor pantomimed a word from a sentence a child was trying to remember. Another tutor helped a child spell "good." I saw one tutor explain what an ocelot was. I saw a tutor praise a child for writing a complete sentence. Finally, I noticed a tutor helping a child understand that copying words is quicker if you write more than one letter at a time. There were also moments of support from tutor to tutor and from child to child.

[I feel supported from the exercise instructor because she is there, waking up at the crack of dawn with us, telling us how to exercise. But more importantly, I feel supported by my husband with this body toning class. He gets up with the children on these mornings. He has the house under control when I get home. He tells me all the time about how good I look. My nephew said a sweet thing on the cruise last week. He said to my sister, "One thing I know about Uncle Ernie is, he sure loves Aunt Melinda." My

sister asked him why he said so. He said, "Because Uncle Ernie talks about Aunt Melinda all the time." You know, I don't know many husbands who would encourage their wives to pursue their Ph.D. and not make money. My support comes mainly from him. I am a lucky woman.

Just like children experience a "summer slide" when they are off for the summer, I experienced a "summer slide" when I did not attend exercise classes for twelve days. I went on vacation. I told my instructor about my dissertation. She thinks it's a great analogy- a child learning reading and writing, and an adult in an exercise class. I also told her about the concept of "summer slide" and literacy. I confessed I had missed class for over a week and would be feeling the pain in my muscles the next morning. She said that I would get the muscle back and not to worry.]

Reaction. I think the children felt empowered because they were successful. I saw children writing funny stories and laughing out loud. I saw several reluctant writers conveying meanings through drawing, which enabled them to correspond with others. And I saw children reading to find out story elements in the book.

For the most part, the children were initially positive about literacy instruction and related exercises; I saw this trend continue throughout the camp. I think a lot of this was due to the small group setting. The children felt positive about the amount of one-on-one interaction. Additionally, the children got smarter and learned more about reading and writing.

[I feel empowered by exercising because I am getting stronger. I am making gains on my weight training and learning more about my body. I feel successful.]

Framework. I mentioned in chapter four that the children had positive literacy histories. They enjoyed reading and writing, as evidenced from the interest inventory and the Garfield Reading and Writing Inventory (Kear, et.al, 2002) that the graduate tutors administered on the first literacy camp session. This confidence gave the children a leg up in the literacy camp, and hopefully a leg up when they start the next grade.

[I reflected in detail upon my history with exercise classes (Appendix L). Most of the participants in the body toning class are slender. I wonder what it would be like to go into the class being overweight or having a poor self image. Similarly, I wonder what it is like for a child to enter a class having a poor self-perception in the area of literacy. It could be traumatic.]

One of my favorite things to observe was the children's social worlds. My favorites were the children's family pictures and the dialogue journals. I found out so much about what the children valued and appreciated.

[In thinking about my social worlds and exercise, I think of my preference in music. In the body toning class and most group exercise classes, music is played during exercising. I have a fondness for rap music with hard bass in the background. Every time a song comes on that has these features, I find myself working harder and even smiling through the pain. Thankfully my instructor plays a lot of this type of music.]

I feel good about this diagram. I like that it is not linear in any way. The process is on-going. Children can be anywhere in the diagram or all places at once. I am pleased with how the process got me to this diagram.

Some would say, "So what? You have a diagram, but what does it mean to create a metaphor for a literacy camp that takes the shape of a person exercising?" I would say

to them that this picture represents the camp and effectively reaching young children through literacy. Literacy fitness, if you will. All parts work together to create a sense of empowerment. Without one part the other parts won't work as well. A teacher must look at the child's framework and where he comes from. In addition, the happenings in the classroom must be observed so that the teacher gets a full picture of what the child can do with others and by himself. The teacher must have cooperation with the child through support and meaningful instruction and empowerment will hopefully occur throughout the process. The process is not linear, cyclical, or haphazard, but on-going and static. The child's job is to put forth the effort, to build upon the skills he already has and use the support the teacher offers.

Implications of the Study

This study has implications for those who teach literacy to young children. The information in this research might help to change what Graue (2008) considers a missing piece in research discourse -- teaching. She argues research discusses children and research discusses educational ends. Rarely do researchers use the experience of teaching young children meaning, context, and power. I found that meaning, context, and power were all evident in the children's responses and inquisitions.

I see new opportunities for teachers because of this research -- writing strategies and reading strategies that empower children to love literacy learning.

The study also extends the literature by providing more research on the effects of summer literacy camp. But the techniques and strategies from the literacy camp do not have to be included only in literacy camps. Dr. Reynolds teaches the classes to the

graduate tutors because she wants the graduate tutors to go back into the classroom and offer these strategies to children (Appendix F). Any child in any educational setting would benefit from these strategies. [I told Dr. Reynolds, "I wish every child's language arts block each day looked like the two hour sessions in the literacy camp." She told me that in her classroom the language arts block frequently did look very similar. I can imagine the support the children in her class felt.

I envision great potential for teachers using the techniques observed during this literacy camp. I put myself in the position of one of the graduate tutors, especially the teachers newer to the field. I am envious that they are going into the classroom with research-proven techniques in the beginning of their career. I know I cannot change history, but I sure wish I could. When I go back into the classroom setting, I will be reborn as an educator. I will empower my children to construct knowledge through meaningful instruction.

After analyzing the data, I now know how to change the way I think about what children bring to the classroom, whether it is their literacy history, personal language, or social worlds. I was the kind of teacher who told my children not to write about certain things, such as guns, violence, or TV shows. I won't do that anymore. I will let the children be themselves and write about what is meaningful to them.

The problems I encountered as a teacher -- my reliance on standardized testing, and my linear way of teaching the reading curriculum -- have been countered with this research.]

This study can help toward solving the problems of standardized testing and linear teaching by reinforcing kidwatching and literature-based reading and writing strategies.

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The literature was well-chosen, as well, as seen in the children's empowerment. The graduate tutors selected the literature with care, which was crucial because the literature was the basis for all of the reading and writing strategies.

Clay (1993) says that standardized testing may be a problem if used in isolation. She states that in the first two years of schooling, observation records are more useful than standardized tests because they provide the teacher with a closer look at what the child really can do. Observations inform the teaching process. I agree. Kidwatching is just the way to relieve the problems of standardized testing, seeing what the children can do on a class by class basis instead of at the end of the school year, comprehensively and under pressure. By observing session by session, I got a clear picture of each child's literacy capabilities. Standardized tests have become the focus of teaching in some schools. I don't agree that this is good practice.

Standardized tests are a one-size-fits-all solution to classroom assessments. Children are different, in different locales, and need to be treated as unique. There has to be a better assessment which is reflective of the group of children being tested. Teachers should teach students at their instructional level and not in a linear way that conforms to a standardized test.

Dyson (2001) says linear teaching has no place in a classroom. Children expand possibilities by adapting, blending, and differentiating "cultural resources" (p. 36) and "textual exploits" (p. 35). During the non-linear environment of the summer literacy camp, I found children adapting and blending, assimilating and constructing knowledge. The graduate tutors were able to teach without textbooks or "canned" commercial materials.

Furthermore, the study has implications for researchers. If researchers consider the data in this dissertation they may find useful information to further their own studies. For instance, if researchers are trying to find out how a summer literacy camp functions and what children might learn in the process, they might read my research. Those who might want to learn about writing autoethnographies might also read my work. I know I read several dissertations written in an autoethnographic voice.

Finally and most importantly, the study has implications for children. [I did this research because of the children.] We need teachers who model research-driven strategies in the classroom. If all of the graduate tutors go into the classroom and teach as they did in the literacy camp, so many children will be reached and feel success.

I successfully defended my dissertation on November 19, 2009. At the final defense the outside chair recommended that I add a few implications from the study. The first is that the camp provided a fun way for children to learn reading and writing. Teachers should take these instructional practices back into the classroom. Second, I saw social interaction in all of the sessions of the literacy camp. This was interesting because it again proved to me that children need to talk and be social to learn. And last, I think I became self-aware throughout the study and I found out where I was coming from in terms of being a teacher and where I wanted to be.

Directions for Future Research

[I would like to further this research by taking the concept into the classroom and conducting an additional study based on my findings. Again I think about the

conversation with Dr. Reynolds in one of the sessions about teachers using the younger group's schedule as a guideline for a typical day in the classroom. I appreciated the way the younger group modeled writing and reading strategies. I was also grateful for the way the tutors in the group organized the order of the strategies in a chart that was posted on the wall.] Unfortunately, with a group larger than five, all of those strategies and lessons would last so much longer than a school day allotted to a classroom teacher. I would love to be that teacher for the five children. If it was not possible to have just a small group of five, I could pull out a small group to model strategies, while the remainder of the class could participate in meaningful literacy centers.

Just as Triplett (2007) says, I found when teachers and children participate in book discussions, children learn vital comprehension strategies. This kind of rich discussion took place frequently in the summer literacy camp. One example is through the cloze passage strategies. ***In my own classroom I would tap into children's identities by letting children talk about their interpretations of the text.*** Again, the graduate tutors had these talks frequently through prediction logs and dialogue journals.

Conversely, as Copenhaver-Johnson says, I found that tutors did not talk about race in the literacy camp. [I hope to change that by having frequent discussions about race in my classroom. An appropriate way to do this would be to read a good piece of literature first.] However, there were a few activities that were related to diversity in the camp, as Lee, Ramsey, and Sweeney (2008) suggest. The tutors from the younger group read *Hunter and Stripe and the Soccer Showdown* (Elliot, 2005). The children made a Venn diagram to show how the children were alike and different from one of their friends. The same tutors read *Chrysanthemum* (Henkes, 1991). The children then wrote

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about their families and had a discussion about how their families were alike and different from other children's families.

Just as Rodgers (2004) says, I found that the tutors scaffolded when they kept in mind the children's cutting edge of learning. I think the graduate tutors tried to find out the children's cutting edge. I observed this when I looked at the dialogue journals. Most tutors tried to discover what the children could do and teach slightly above that level. [I will do this, as well.]

There were no tests in the literacy camp and no preparation tactics. [Standardized test preparation will not be a part of my curriculum, either. This may be problematic because administration may encourage teachers to prepare children for standardized tests. When I taught first grade the practice books were passed around from teacher to teacher. The principal never came around to check if each teacher had used them. Of course at that time I did use them so administration would have been satisfied. If I teach in another situation where the circumstances are different I would probably explain my motives and then the principal and I could have a lengthy discussion on why I don't agree with preparing towards a test.]

McGill-Franzen and Allington (2006) state that there is little evidence that proves that test preparation improves test performance. In fact, they consider extensive test preparation to be a sign that the school and district have no idea how to improve reading. [I will teach reading and writing strategies and use kidwatching to constantly observe what the children can do and what the children need help with.]

Just as Kim and Lorsbach (2005) say, I discovered that when tutors observed the actions of children it enabled them to identify ways children could increase writing self-

efficacy. The case reports were perfect examples of this. The tutors searched for ways they could empower the children and wrote about those ways in the case reports. [I hope to increase children's self-efficacy. It will be one of my goals as a teacher.] Kidwatching (Owocki and Goodman, 2002) will be a great way to observe the actions of children. [I will record what I see and then identify ways that I can increase children's self-efficacy.] For example, Kim and Lorsbach found that when very high and very low self efficacy children write, they need extra time. The low self efficacy children sometimes get stuck in their writing, and the high self efficacy children take longer to do well.

Similar to Nolen's (2007) findings, I found that when the children were given choice and creative control their motivation for writing increased. In the dialogue journals, the children could write about anything they wanted to write about. They were given creative control. [I will be fervent with dialogue journals in my classroom. The benefits are enormous. Additionally, as I stated before, I will use authentic writing experiences whenever possible.]

Stone, Engel, Nagaoka, and Roderick recognized press and personalism as important educational components. Press and personalism were present in this summer literacy camp and contributed to the children's substantive learning experiences. The tutors pressed when they offered meaningful experiences, like the scavenger hunt. The tutors showed personalism when they supported the children through compliments, pats on the leg, spelling help, writing help, and reading help. The tutors used encouraging words constantly. [I need to work on the personalism part in my classroom. I was business-like as a first grade teacher and needed to loosen up. I was once called

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"militaristic" by one of the parents of one of the children in my class because of my behavior plan.

Most importantly, I hope the children will all feel that they are capable learners. I hope that I can find ways to incorporate practices from their outside lives into the classroom setting (Schneider, 2001).] This may provide new "entry points" (p. 432) for children to learn literacy. This also relates to authentic learning experiences. [I will start to use "Author's Theater" to let children confront their identity and have an entry point for children to learn literacy (Dyson, 1994).] I observed many graduate tutors writing back and forth in the dialogue journals to children about children's outside lives. This certainly gave Calvin an outlet to express himself and talk about his love for Sponge Bob, something he wanted to do in all six sessions.

Wow! The future looks bright but exhausting! Every day I thank God for my children's teachers. They make decisions like these every day and for that I am so thankful. It's hard to be a teacher! But if I take all of these concepts into the classroom and then use the results as research I will know if it is possible to bring the literacy camp strategies into the classroom and effectively teach young children.

Postscript

[With respect to my autoethnography, I have learned so much about myself and others. I learned that I can compare myself now to my former self as a teacher. I can also compare myself to the graduate tutors. I can compare myself to the children and put myself in the place of a learner. I have always needed to do this more, put myself in

another's "shoes." I am glad I finally can experience this in a very broad way. It helps me as a teacher, a student, and a human being.]

I now favor sociocultural perspective. I believe, as Owocki and Goodman (2002) do, that children construct knowledge within their own social worlds. [I was a believer in a sociocultural perspective before the summer literacy camp, but now that the research is near an end, I am even firmer in my belief.] All of the children in the literacy camp were unique and it was the responsibility of the graduate tutors to find rich experiences for each child. One of the graduate tutors found a rich experience for two boys when she made up the scavenger hunt for rainforest creatures.

[The hardest part of the research was the time it took to get the parents to sign the consent forms. All of the parents signed, when I asked them, but it was getting to the community center at the right time that was the difficult part. I had to take my own children up to the center most of the time because pick-up is between 4:30 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. One time I even went to the community center at 6:00 A.M. to try to get consents signed. I made eight different, ninety minute round trips to the community center on my continuing quest for the elusive completed, parental consent form. When the Institutional Review Board made the decision to require parental consents, one of the board members stated that she thought it would be empowering for the parents to sign a consent. With that in mind, I guess I don't mind all of the trips.

The funniest part of the research was the "portable" copier I brought to the literacy camp each week. Before the camp began I hunted for a small copy machine to take with me to copy the children's journals and writing work. I couldn't find a cheap one, so I took my home copier. It is big. I hunted for a durable hand cart and couldn't find

a good price on that, either. So I ended up taking my huge printer, zipped up inside of a jumbo suitcase on wheels. I looked silly!

I could not have gotten such rich and comprehensive data without the help of my friend, Jay. Jay was there for all of the sessions with children. His notes were an invaluable resource. I transcribed them, coded them, and analyzed them. If I had questions about anything, I called him for clarification. Several times I e-mailed him with questions or comments. Additionally, we had time before the children came to discuss the data, because we both got there approximately one hour before the children got to the camp.

Jay effectively doubled my eyes and ears and offered reaffirming feedback regarding the assembled data and reflections. Without his help I could only have observed half of what I observed in the literacy camp. When I asked him to read my chapters, he said that I wrote about the data in an interesting and accurate way that was true to the literacy camp. He thought that I explained what I was doing well and that I supported the observations well. Jay did not refute anything that was included in chapters four or five.]

I sent an entire copy of my dissertation to one of the graduate tutors. I wanted a "member check" to see if I represented the graduate tutors in a fair way. I called her one week after I sent her the chapters. I asked her if there was anything that she would change or anything I did not represent well. She said I did a good job representing the camp. The only thing she would change was that she would list the children and what group they were in at the beginning of chapter five. I thought it was a great idea. I incorporated her feedback into the preceding chapter. It was interesting that instead of looking at things

that happened in the camp, she chose to focus on the way I presented the data and wrote my dissertation.

In chapter five I spoke about teacher lenses being different. I saw Calvin's writing one way, and a tutor saw it a different way. This made me realize, even more so, how people's lenses change the way children are thought of in the classroom. [I think that I was harder on the tutors than I was on the children. I was more critical about what I saw the tutors do. I think this means that I became a good kidwatcher but need more time to become an adultwatcher. I need to remember that everyone has a lens they look through, be it an adult or a child.]

Quality

I look back to Richardson's (2000) criteria for ethnographic quality. I do believe that this piece contributes to an understanding of social life in the literacy camp. I believe the piece succeeds aesthetically. Dr. Reynolds invited me to come and speak with her qualitative class about my dissertation. My dissertation invited some interpretive responses. Some of the students found it hard to believe that I could write about myself so much. Other students found the dissertation riveting and couldn't put it down. Nobody said it was boring.

I think there was plenty of self-awareness and self-exposure so that the graduate students could make judgments about my point of view. My subjectivity was both a product and producer of the text. I was changed because of this study. My work has inspired at least one of the graduate students to use autoethnography in her dissertation. And last, the story seems "true" to others. It was a credible account of a social sense of

the "real." I did add some fictional accounts of conversations that took place between my husband, my sister, and my friend Jay. But the conversations seemed real and credible. I hope that if Richardson were to have graded my work she would think of this dissertation favorably.

I agree with Anfara, Brown, and Mangione (2002) when they contend that how researchers account for their approach to their research is very important when evaluating the research. For that reason, I want to tell you exactly how I achieved triangulation. I want to show you how I triangulated, because once I was encouraged to go through the motions of triangulation, I was excited how it transformed and connected my data.

My research questions were: What types of literacy instruction do nine children receive from their graduate education major tutors in a community of interest summer literacy camp? How do nine children respond to the literacy instruction they receive from graduate education tutors in a summer literacy camp? My data sources were observational notes, documents, and introspection. I used all of the data sources to answer the research questions. To find out what types of literacy instruction nine children received, I watched children and tutors, I collected journals and writing samples, and I thought about what I saw and reflected about myself. To find out how nine children responded to the literacy instruction, I watched children, I examined journals and writing samples, and I reflected about myself and what I saw.

I accomplished triangulation when I developed codes (categories) and themes, described in Table 2. As shown in Table 3, I then went back through my data, code by code, looking to see how often I used observations, documents, and introspection, in relationship to one another. I hand-wrote a rough draft of what my new table would look

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like. I then went code by code, making X's for each time I used each data source for each

code.

Table 3

Triangulation of the Summer Literacy Camp Data

Finding		Source of Data		
		O	D	I
Theme I: Happenings				
Code 1.1	The children changed the ways they thought about literacy.	X	X	
Code 1.2	The children related texts to other texts, themselves, and the world around them.	X	X	X
Code 1.3	The children built their knowledge about literacy.	X	X	X
Code 1.4	The children asked questions to understand.	X		X
Code 1.5	The children made mistakes with intent.	X	X	X
Code 1.6	The children caused pauses in instruction.	X		X
Code 1.7	The children answered questions.	X	X	
Theme II: Cooperation				
Code 2.1	The tutors provided instruction that was relevant and related to the child.	X	X	X
Code 2.2	The tutors and children supported each other.	X	X	X
Theme III: Reaction				
Code 3.1	The children felt good about themselves and had power over the situation.	X	X	X
Theme IV: Framework				
Code 4.1	The children knew about literacy.	X	X	X
Code 4.2	The children communicated in their unique ways.	X	X	
Code 4.3	The children brought in their outside worlds.	X	X	X

Note: O=Observation; D=Document; I=Introspection

[I have a confession to make. Before the pre-defense I had not done this step. One professor pointed this out to me at the pre-defense. I went back after the pre-defense and took the steps to show triangulation. The process was fascinating to me. I have always loved record-keeping. Here was proof that I had done the study well and I hadn't even shown the reader that I had done it well. I approached my husband right after this triangulation experience and said, "I triangulated! I am so excited! This is what real research is all about!"]

Creswell and Miller (2000) indicated eight verification procedures for qualitative research: (1) prolonged engagement and persistent observation, (2) triangulation, (3) peer review or debriefing, (4) negative case analysis, (5) clarifying researcher bias, (6) member checks, (7) thick description, and (8) external audits. Creswell recommends that researchers include at least two in each study. I have included four: triangulation, peer review or debriefing, clarifying researcher bias, and member check.

I actually had two peer debriefings. One was my conversation with Jay about the codes, and how we define them. The other was on the day after my first session with the children. Sarah and I had a peer debriefing (See page 117).

When I chose to do an autoethnography, I didn't think that I would have a more valid study. However, it was very easy to say that I included researcher bias. The whole study included my biases.

I did get a member check when I asked the tutor to read my work. [I almost had a panic attack after I sent it to her. It was one of those times when I wished I could undo an e-mail. I e-mailed Dr. Holland my concerns and she advised me to tell the student to please not share it with anyone else. I had visions of the tutor spreading the dissertation

around to other tutors and I didn't feel like that would go over too well. I didn't put some of the tutors in a very positive light. It turned out OK and the tutor did not share my work. It taught me a lesson, though, about sharing confidentiality requests before you send out your work.]

Summary

I would like to end with a closing prayer, commonly attributed to the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr in 1943; I keep it above my computer and above my bed.

"God, grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference. Amen" (Kaplan, 2002).

[I used to think I was only one teacher; I couldn't possibly change much in education. Now I know how much I can change. When I go back into the classroom I will be a force to be reckoned with. I will teach as I know I should, from research-driven methods only. I will fight to teach children in the ways that I know are effective. I memorized this prayer in a very low point in my life, my years of infertility. I repeat it to myself many times during a week. It has applied so many times in moments when I was dealing with this dissertation. I find that it applies in most, if not all, situations in my life. It applies to this research because this research is how my life has come around. Eight years ago I was a teacher spinning her wheels. I was not effectively teaching children. Now, eight years later, I am about to earn my Ph.D. With the degree I hope to make up for the previous years and touch many children's lives. I have the courage to change!]

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Appendices

Appendix A. Summary of Multicultural Articles (2005 to 2008)

Article's Author	Multicultural Education Findings
Sutherland (2005)	Contended that discussions about literature can help adolescents with identity. Black, adolescent girls were the participants in a literature discussion of *The Bluest Eye*. Researcher found: *Eurocentric view of beauty was a boundary *literacy and identity were connected
Copenhaver-Johnson (2006)	Argued that teachers need to talk about race in the classroom. In many classrooms being White is normative.
Henning, Snow-Gerono, Reeds, & Warner (2006)	Posited that fourth graders can use literature to make comparisons to current world situations using: *nonfiction accounts of Christopher Columbus *strategies such as literature detectives
Triplett (2007)	Identified how first, second, and third graders : *negotiate reading intervention pull-out groups *are labeled as "struggling" readers in some contexts and not in others *use literature circles
Davis (2007)	Provided evidence that seven and eight year-olds: *use pre-conceived ideas about gender in talking about reading enjoyment *in working class schools engage in discourse that is gendered and afforded boys as having low reading status
Gomez, Johnson, & Gisldottir (2007)	Distinguished that the figured world of a school can come from the principal's philosophies and can be shaped by this philosophy by: *identifying struggling readers and writers *celebration of movement through levels of books *empirical evidence showing what students can do

Lazar (2007)	Noted that providing courses for preservice teachers with an emphasis on urban, minority children: *should include discussion *should include direct experiences *did help in making the teachers more sympathetic and understanding
Christ & Wang (2008)	Recommended that first graders: *should have opportunities for student-led groupings for instruction *sometimes are not enculturated into classroom practices *need knowledge of procedural practices
Glimps & Ford (2008)	Argued that the internet can be used for many instructional purposes such as: *family ancestries *simulations *diversity discussion
Lee, Ramsey, & Sweeney (2008)	Posited that kindergarten children: *need conversations about race and social class *need activities related to diversity *become more aware of race and social class when discussion and activities evolve in the classroom
Perry (2008)	Contended that storytelling: *has cultural importance *is a powerful form of sense-making
Taylor, Bernard, Garg & Cummins (2008)	Found that kindergarten children: *could create published works with their dual-language families *discovered the works were personally relevant *formed new relationships with family members

Appendix B. Summary of Literacy Instruction Articles (2004 to 2008)

Author's Article	Instructional Practice
Rodgers (2004)	Argued that a teacher who effectively uses Reading Recovery and running records makes moves, observes child's response, and makes another move to accommodate child's learning process.
Stipek (2004)	Identified two teaching practices and found different schools used these for different purposes: *constructivist teaching *didactic teaching
Brown, Morris, & Fields (2005)	Provided the following evidence for the effectiveness of 1:1 tutoring: *second through fifth grade children who are tutored fare better *paraprofessionals and teachers have about the same rate for success
Kim & Lorsbach (2005)	Maintained that: *motivation can be seen through observations and conversations *teachers should look at reasons why children have high self-efficacy *children with high and low self-efficacy need extra time for writing *children with low self-efficacy have less writing skill knowledge *teachers can accurately determine children's perceived self-efficacy
Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, Morris, Woo, Meisenger, Sevcik, Bradley, & Stahl (2006)	Recommended the use of two reading approaches: *FORI (fluency-oriented reading instruction *Wide-reading Approach
Labbo (2006)	Noted the functional role of computers in the classroom and suggested that teachers: *incorporate children's outside worlds in the classroom *remember the role of leader and follower in the classroom

Nolen (2007)	Contended that first and second graders: *have varied motivations to read and write *have motivations that are socially constructed *have motivations that are determined by the classroom community
Dyson (2008)	Distinguished that first graders use multimodal literacy to: *take part in official writing practices *practice literacy *dynamically learn the basics of writing *produce text
Graue (2008)	Elaborated on DAP (developmentally appropriate practice) and standardized testing to conclude that the teacher is missing in both.
Helf, Cooke, & Flowers (2008)	Posited that 1:3 tutoring was the best possibility for tutoring and should be the preferred method.
Neumann, Hood, & Neumann (2008)	Distinguished that three strategies are beneficial in supporting early literacy skills: *scaffolding *an environmental approach *a multisensory approach
Wohlwend (2008)	Contended that multimodal play is beneficial because it: *provides spaces for children to play with meaning *provides space for children to achieve school goals

Appendix C. Summary of Summer Learning Articles (2004 to 2008)

Author's Article	Summer Learning Findings
Downey, von Hipple, & Broh (2004)	Provided evidence that supported: *schools act as equalizers *learning rates are less variable during the school year *family and neighborhoods are responsible for the learning rates during the summer
Borman, Benson, & Overman (2005)	Contended that voluntary summer school programs can negate the summer slide
Stone, Engel, Nagaoka, & Roderick (2005)	Argued that press and personalism: *are more present in summer programs than in regular school year settings *contribute to substantive learning experiences
Lauer, Akiba, Wilkerson, Apthorp, Snow, & Martin-Glen (2006)	Identified that OST (out-of-school-time) programs: *can have positive effects on the achievement of math and reading *can improve reading for both elementary and secondary children
McGill-Franzen & Allington (2006)	Recommended that we decontaminate the accountability system by: *recognizing summer reading loss *altering the current model of retention *minimize test preparation activity *abandon test accommodations
Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson (2007)	Noted that children's outside lives account for the majority of the achievement gap.
Kim & White (2008)	Posited that scaffolding: *can be effective in an at-home reading initiative *with oral reading and comprehension are more effective than just reading literature by itself

✓

Informal Observation of Book Knowledge

Child's Name: _____

Instructions: Use the blank spaces to fill in the dates on which the following concepts are observed.

Handling

_____ Holds book in an upright position.

_____ Understands that print proceeds from left to right and top to bottom.

_____ Turns pages left to right.

_____ Reads print on left page before right page.

_____ Appropriately uses terms such as *cover, page, story, title,* and *author.* Others:
        _____.

_____ Uses book title and cover illustration to make predictions.

_____ Understands that a book contains an author's message.

_____ Understands that an illustrator creates the visuals for a book.

_____ _____

_____ _____

Print Knowledge

_____ Understands that pictures are viewed and print is read.

_____ Knows what a *letter* is (names or points to a letter when asked; uses the term
        conventionally during conversations).

_____ Knows what a *word* is (names or points to a word when asked; uses the term
        conventionally during conversations).

_____ Participates in reading when the language is predictable.

_____ Attempts to match voice with print.

_____ Reads some words conventionally.

_____ _____

_____ _____

Interpretive Knowledge

_____ Is eager to select a book to read alone or to someone else.

_____ Is aware that books contain stories as well as other kinds of information.

_____ Labels pictures while looking through the pages of a book.

_____ Uses pictures to make up a connected story or sequence of events.

_____ Discusses/retells stories, referring to ___ character, ___ setting, ___ problem,
        ___ plot episodes, ___ resolution, ___ theme.

_____ Discusses/retells key concepts and information learned from nonfiction.

_____ Retelling occurs in a logical sequence.

_____ Makes personal connections with books.

_____ Makes connections between books.

_____ _____

_____ _____

Figure 4–2, p. 45

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Talk Contexts

_____ Whole Class	_____ Individual Child: _____
Self-Talk	
One-to-One with Adult	
One-to-One with Peers (record peer names)	
Self-Chosen Peer Group (list names)	
Teacher-Chosen Peer Group (needs-based; children who seldom talk in groups; children who talk often; etc.)	
Small Instructional Group (observe across changes in subject matter)	
Whole Group	
Play Settings	

Figure 5–1, p. 55

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Oral Language Functions: Classroom Observation

Place a check by the functions that are regularly present in your classroom. Place a star by those that occur in various contexts and settings. Indicate the extent to which languages other than English are used to serve the varying functions.

_____ Sharing stories

_____ Retelling events

_____ Reporting information

_____ Explaining how to do or make something

_____ Expressing language and literacy knowledge

_____ Building productive learning relationships with peers and adults

_____ Creating imaginative worlds (during play; through writing or drawing; while singing)

_____ Taking social action

_____ Planning events

_____ Enjoying language for its aesthetic value (poetry; language play)

_____ Describing sensory experiences (sights, smells, sounds, touches, tastes)

_____ Expressing feelings, empathy, emotional identification

_____ Expressing points of view

_____ Taking leadership

_____ Asking questions; requesting information

_____ Building collaborative relations

_____ Responding to peers' and teachers' questions and requests for information

_____ _____

_____ _____

Figure 5–3, p. 57

110

Interactional Competencies

Child's Name: _____

_____ Participates in group talk activities (discussions, poetry reading, dramatization, play, shared writing).

_____ Elaborates coherently on self-selected topics.

_____ Elaborates coherently on instructional topics.

_____ Asks peers questions (for assistance; about language; about content).

_____ Asks teacher questions (for assistance; about language; about content).

_____ Responds appropriately to peer questions, elaborating when relevant.

_____ Responds appropriately to teacher questions, elaborating when relevant.

_____ Participates and takes turns appropriately in conversations.

_____ Leads conversations.

_____ Builds on what others say.

_____ Uses appropriate nonverbal behavior (gestures; facial expressions; ways of indicating listening).

_____ When talking, holds the attention of others.

_____ Speaks clearly and audibly; uses comprehensible speech.

_____ Feels comfortable speaking before a group.

_____ Shows awareness of listener needs (recycles, repairs, clarifies).

_____ Listens when others speak (in one-to-one settings, small groups, large groups).

_____ Uses effective strategies for interrupting.

_____ Demonstrates understanding of oral directions given in a variety of settings.

_____ Talks about language.

_____ Adapts language to changes in setting.

_____ _____

_____ _____

Figure 5–5, p. 58

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Written Language Functions, Formats, and Genres

√

_____Advertisements	_____Observational notes
_____Alphabet books	_____Nonfiction in varied genres
_____Announcements (birth, death)	_____Pamphlets
_____Autobiographies	_____Phone messages
_____Bills	_____Plans for events
_____Biographies	_____Poems and songs
_____Blueprints	_____Posters
_____Book jackets	_____Price tags
_____Calendars	_____Programs (for theater, events)
_____Cartoons and comics	_____Receipts
_____Charts and graphs	_____Recipes
_____Checks	_____Records of events
_____Computer software/publishing programs	_____Reports (weather, sports, scientific)
_____Coupons	_____Requests for information
_____Diagrams	_____Restaurant orders
_____Expressions of opinion	_____Reviews (of books, movies, TV shows)
_____Forms	_____Rules
_____Health records	_____Schedules
_____Instant messaging	_____Scripts
_____Instructions (for games, crafts)	_____Self-evaluations and reflections
_____Internet search engines	_____Signs
_____Invitations	_____Stories (in varied genres)
_____Journals and logs	_____Tickets
_____Labels	_____Webs
_____Letters, email, notes, and cards	_____Word puzzles and games
_____Lists	_____ _____
_____Maps	_____ _____
_____Menus	_____ _____
	_____ _____

Figure 7–2, p. 80

Appendix D (Continued)

Spelling Knowledge

✓

Child's Name: _____ Date _____

_____ Represents meaning using random strings of letters

_____ Uses prominent sounds to spell words (often, these are consonants in English; vowels in Spanish)

_____ Uses one letter to represent each word or syllable (S for *star*; BT for *better*)

_____ Uses initial and final consonants to represent syllables or words (SR for *star*; BDR for *better*)

_____ Incorporates medial consonant and vowel letters (STAR; BEDR)

_____ Spells short vowels conventionally

_____ Uses vowel markers (more than one vowel) to spell long vowels conventionally

_____ Uses phonics to spell past-tense endings (WAKT for *walked*; ADID for *added*; SNOWD for *snowed*)

_____ Uses visual features (-ed) to spell past-tense endings conventionally

_____ Uses double consonants consistently (*better*; *ladder*)

_____ Demonstrates knowledge of spelling patterns such as -ing, -ate, -ain, -er, and -es

_____ Continues to increase visual memory/repertoire of words usually spelled conventionally

_____ Recognizes when words are misspelled

_____ Continues to invent spellings for low-frequency words (words not frequently used in the child's writing)

Figure 7–7, p. 85

Note-Taking Form for Observing Writing

Child's Name: _____ Date _____	
What to Look For	**Examples and Instances**
Knowledge about the functions of writing (e.g., uses writing for varied purposes; writes on varied topics; explores functions in play; knows when to use a list, web, envelope, note, card, sign)	
Knowledge about written language formats and genres (e.g., writes in varied genres; uses different forms; uses typical generic features; invents new features)	
Knowledge about ideas and content that are expressed in writing (e.g., content is connected to personal life and classroom inquiries; content fits the format and genre; humor and sensitivity develop in appropriate genres)	
Knowledge about orthography and phonology (e.g., forms letters; understands that print means; knows difference between drawing and writing; represents written language syllabically; shows alphabetic knowledge)	
Knowledge about punctuation (e.g., explores use of spacing, line breaks, periods, commas, question marks, capitalization, dialogue markers, font variations)	
Knowledge of grammar (e.g., sentences are complete in narrative; words or phrases are used appropriately in specific genres; dialogue is used)	
Processes of getting ideas on paper (e.g., solves problems collaboratively; asks for help; invents spellings; copies items around the room; uses pictionary or dictionary; uses private speech; uses talk, drawing, movement, and sound)	
Social processes (e.g., works collaboratively with others; talks about writing; sensitively and thoughtfully responds to others' ideas; conferences; participates in author's chair)	
View of self as writer/author	

Figure 7–8, p. 88

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Profile of Writing Knowledge

Child's Name: _____ Grade_____

Knowledge Demonstrated:	Sept	Nov	Jan	Mar	May	Description/Examples/ Reflections
Draws to signify meaning						
Uses invented characters to signify meaning						
Shows a sense of directionality						
Uses random strings of letters to signify meaning						
Writes letters to represent beginning or prominent sounds						
Writes letters to represent vowels and medial consonants						
Is beginning to conventionally spell commonly used words						
Uses spacing between words						
Uses capitalization for names and places						
Writes sentences with appropriate grammatical form						
Uses simple punctuation (.?!); more complex punctuation (",')						
Chooses own topics for drawing and writing						
Writes with sensitivity						
Explores varying voices (serious, informative, humorous)						
Shares pictures and writing with others						
Rereads own writing/revises/ edits						
Explores multiple genres						
Self-evaluates						

Figure 7–9, p. 90

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Summer Literacy Camp Observation Form

| **Name:**

_____
Date:

_____
People present:

_____
Physical Setting:

_____
Observer:

_____ | **Research Questions:**
1. What types of literacy instruction do nine children receive from their graduate education major tutors in community of interest summer literacy camp?
2. How do nine children respond to the literacy instruction they receive from graduate tutors in a summer literacy camp? |
| **Notes:**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ | **Feelings, Personal Meanings, Personal Significance:**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ |

<u>**The Reading/Writing Connection**</u>
Practicum in Reading and Writers and Writing: Trends and Issues
Summer Session, 2009
Janet C. Reynolds, Ph. D.
Course Instructor and Camp Leader
Course Prefix & Number: RED # 6846/ Practicum in Reading
Course Prefix & Number: LAE #6315/Writers and Writing: Trends and Issues
Summer Semester, 2009: Class Meetings: Wednesdays, May 13, 20, 27, and June 3
at USF, 5-9 PM in Room EDU 115 and 9-1 PM. University Area Community Center,
June 10- July 15, 2009 –Instructor: Janet C. Reynolds, Ph. D.
E-mail: JReynolds@coedu.usf.edu and janetusm@aol.com
Office Hours: By Appointment

*The College of Education **CARE**s*

The College of Education is dedicated to the ideals of **C**ollaboration, **A**cademic **E**xcellence, **R**esearch, and **E**thics/Diversity. These are key tenets in the Conceptual Framework of the College of Education. Competence in these ideals will provide candidates in educator preparation programs with skills, knowledge, and dispositions to be successful in the schools of today and tomorrow. For more information on the Conceptual Framework, visit: www.coedu.usf.edu/main/qualityassurance/ncate_visit_info_materials.html

"Teachers are learning helpers. Their main job is not to test, or trick, but to help learners reach their fullest potential through guided differentiated instruction. Exemplary teachers are like Lev Vygotsky, the constructivist scholar. They model and they work along with learners" (Reynolds, 2005)

<u>***CAMP MOTTO***</u>*: We offer research-based instructional strategies and best practices. We know if our tutoring students have experienced difficulties with traditional literacy instruction, we must move forward and offer strategies and best practices designed to help children accept responsibility for their own learning. We always model our thinking and we model strategies before we expect tutees to participate. We LIMIT asking questions. We promote student engagement and success. We always know why we are helping tutees learn something. We stay away from Round-Robin oral reading. We never use ditto sheets or commercial materials. We follow a pattern of instruction for each tutoring session.*
Disability Statement
If you think that you have a disability that qualifies you under the Americans with Disabilities Act and requires accommodations, please visit the USF Office of Student Disabilities Services (974 4309) in order to receive special accommodations and services.

Please give Dr. Reynolds written communication from this office regarding your special accommodations.

USF Policy on Religious Observance
All students have a right to expect that the university will reasonably accommodate their religious observances, practices, and beliefs. Please notify Dr. Reynolds in writing if you will be absent in accordance with this policy.

Special Course Requirements
Attend all classes on time and remain in class for the entire class session. Tardy after 15 minutes = one absence. Leaving class 30 minutes early = one absence. Two unexcused absences = lowering grade point one whole grade (e.g., from an A to a B.) Please turn off cell phones. Please use your computer only to take class notes. Thank you.

Course Description: Practicum in Reading/Writers and Writing: Trends and Issues is an innovative, combined graduate course that focuses on topics and issues relevant to authentic assessment and remediation of reading and writing problems of primary through-high school literacy learners. It is an application course, where graduate students with learners who are experiencing literacy problems.

Required Reading
Gipe, *Differentiated Instruction* (For Reading Practicum students). I will also place required readings on BlackBoard for all graduate students. There are two packets of reading materials at Procopy. Students in the Practicum course must purchase and use the Practicum Reading packet. . Students in the Writers and Writing course must purchase and use the Writing and Writers packet. Students in both courses must purchase and use both packets of materials.

<div align="center">

Important Information

</div>

This summer we will embark on a special journey in which two classes of graduate education students work together to tutor children at-risk in a Community of Interest (COI) Summer Literacy Camp. Members of a COI frame and then resolve a problem. Members come together in the context of a special project and dissolve after the project has ended. Members have the potential to be innovative and transforming. Communities of Interest members have interactions across boundary systems (e.g., the disciplines of reading and writing and concomitant theory, instructional practices, and materials).

Challenges facing Community of Interests are in building a shared understanding of the task at hand, which often does not exist at the beginning of an initiative (e.g., reading and writing graduate students learning to collaborate to offer combined lessons to children at-risk in the summer camp). Shared understanding evolves incrementally and collaboratively. Members MUST learn to communicate and learn with others (Engstrom, 2001).

COIs rely on multiple knowledge systems (in our case knowledge, elements, etc., associated with the semiotic/sign systems of reading and writing). Although similarities exist between these two disciplines and it is beneficial to connect these two disciplines for literacy instruction, there are some basic differences-receptive versus expressive language, books versus writing instruments and paper, vocabulary for elements.

Accordingly, students in the Practicum and students in Writers and Writing will work together in teams to plan and offer tutoring sessions. Tutoring sessions take place on Wednesdays from 10-noon beginning June 10th and ending July 15th. Tutoring sessions take place at the University Area Community Center on 22nd Street.

Our first 4classes will meet on Wed, evenings in EDU 115 from 5-9 PM (May 1, May 20, 27, and June3). From then on we meet at 9AM on Wednesdays at the UCC. After tutoring sessions are over at noon we regroup together for additional seminar discussions, lectures, demo lessons, and group interactions.

There are some graduate students who are taking both classes concurrently. These graduate students will have to work especially hard to fulfill obligations for both courses.

More Important Information

I will distribute teaching supplies during our second evening meeting. These consumable supplies have been procured from a grant from Verizon Reads. I will also ask graduate students what other teaching supplies they might need and I will purchase as many of these supplies as I can.

Some doctoral students will work in the camp. One student, Melinda Adams, will collect data for her dissertation. Two other doctoral students, Barbara Peterson and Sarah will assist all of us. Both of these doctoral students are familiar with this program and with concerns you might face and solve.

You may chose a partner with whom you would like to collaborate.

You may choose a grade level (e.g., K- 6/7 grade)

Your absence will cause difficulties to the program.

Tutoring sessions follow a structure as listed below:

Distribute sturdy, attractive nametags (Complete sentence "My name is Susan.").

Go over printed /posted group rules. (Only three rules)

OUR GROUP RULES.

1) We listen when others speak.

2) We raise our hands when we want to speak.

3) We respect others and ourselves.

Read aloud for the group—Camp Notes. These Notes are written like a letter – not listed 1,2,3.

Distribute dialogue journals in which you have written entries during the week— (individual entries to each tutee depending upon tutee's interests and what tutee needs to learn next about written language).

Conduct a reading lesson that ALWAYS includes a pre-during and post reading strategy.

Connect fiction with content text.

Connect readings with a visual (not a visual aid).

Offer culturally relevant readings.

Connect reading with writing.

Connect reading and writing with other sign systems (literacies) of visual art, music, dramatic arts, technology, puppet-making, informal drama, poetry, dance).

Make dioramas with tutees.

Make murals with tutees.

Offer culturally appropriate lessons at all times.
Complete a cloze passage with tutees at every session.
DO NOT HAVE KIDS READ ALOUD IN A ROUND ROBIN FASHION! (I'll tell you why).
You must use multiple strategies that I demonstrate and that are discussed in your Packets of materials. Use *Yes/No and Why; It Reminds Me Of; What Do I See? Think? Wonder? How Do You Know*? and many more strategies.
I will observe your sessions. The doctoral students will observe your sessions.
Keep children moving every 20 minutes or so. Two hours is too long for children to sit.
End all sessions with "What did we learn?" Write group responses on a chart and read aloud at next session ("Last week we learned…")
Use Prediction Logs, Individual Dictionaries, and Literacy Logs.
Each tutoring group will make a group book. Tutors help with this best practice. Copies for all students?
Reading students offer reading lessons and writing students offer writing lessons. However, collaborate and share your knowledge.
We only tutor six times so make the most of it. You can list this innovative configuration on your resume.
Required packets of materials are available at Pro Copy.
Reading and Writing graduate students will collaborate and turn in a 2 page collaborative case report by Friday of each week. These 6 case reports will document your work during the six sessions and must include objectives, achievements, and problems. Use this structure: Date; Tutors' Names; Tutees' Names; Objective of Each Lesson; Description of How Each Lesson Went; What You Would Do Differently in the Next Lesson; What Outside Resources You Used: Anything You Want to Tell Me
Each collaborative group must e-mail weekly within the group and then send the e-mails to me. I will keep track of the e-mail messages and I will respond to you.

Class Readings and Assignments

*Each week, pairs of students will collaborate and give an overview of a reading and a writing strategy.
 *Because of this intense collaboration, I strongly suggest that pairs of collaborators and group collaborators meet outside of class sessions. You might stay after class. You might meet at other times during the week. If you do not meet as pairs or groups you might find that your grade might suffer because planning is insufficient. * Weekly tutoring sessions must follow the model described above.
All students must have a copy of *Doing Academic Writing: Connecting the Personal with the Professional* by Reynolds and Miller (2003). Follow the guidelines for academic writing that are portrayed in this book when you write your weekly case reports.
Note: Pre-and post-assessments of your study participants on an Informal Reading Inventory are welcome. Various IRIs are appropriate, such as Woods and Moe. For older students *The new Comprehensive Reading Inventory: Measuring Reading Development in Regular and Special Education Classrooms* (Cooter, Flynt, & Cooter, 2007 that includes passages K-12 in Spanish and English, may be of interest to you. It also includes

vocabulary measure, although of high-frequency words only. The authors state the assessment takes 15-20 minutes per student. The USF library has copies of a few IRI's appropriate for older students. However, you do not have to use these time-consuming assessments.

* Assessments that <u>ARE</u> required are: *The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (The Reading Teacher*, May, 1990, beginning on pp 630. You must score this assessment for pre and post testing so you need 2 copies of this assessment for each tutee in the literacy camp.

*In addition to data obtained from *The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey*, obtain a weekly writing sample from each student; ask paraphrased questions on the WISC-R. Ask Interest Inventory questions. These are NOT paper/pencil tasks. *Interact with your tutees. These required assessments must be turned in for each tutee in the program. *<u>Interspace tutors with tutees at all times. Handle all problems with kids within the group. Do not isolate kids. Solve all behavior and learning problems within the community</u>.

Course Objectives and Outcomes for Graduate Students:

1. Students will learn how to collaborate with a partner or partners to plan and offer research-based reading and writing lessons to small groups of students at-risk.
2. Students will develop an understanding of the factors that relate to appropriate and meaningful assessment of reading and writing abilities.
3. Students will learn to work successfully with learners experiencing reading and writing difficulties, including creating a group book.
4. Students will learn how to communicate with parents if appropriate to gain insight into the relationship between the home, school environment, and learners.' literacy achievements.
5. Students will recognize the characteristics of diverse authentic assessments.
6. Students will learn how to interpret, triangulate, and integrate assessments to best make recommendations for effective instruction.
7. Students will learn how to utilize recommendations for improving learners' literacy abilities in reading comprehension and writing strategy.
8. Students will analyze and understand the moral and ethical dimensions of reading and writing assessment and culturally relevant instruction.
9. Students will recognize cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity and develop understandings of diversity issues in the context of reading and writing assessment and instruction - specifically the need to build upon learner's strengths rather than emphasizing weaknesses. Do not use the term Use <u>instructional needs</u>.

10. Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with peers, administrators, and learners.

Grading will be based upon weekly tutoring planning and instruction, weekly e-mails to Dr. Reynolds, weekly 2 page collaborative explanations of strategies listed in the two packets of materials, and weekly case report summaries.

Grading Scheme: <u>A Plus</u> = perfect attendance, perfect group creative book, completing all assignments on time, including report to Dr. Reynolds by Friday of each week; perfect academic writing on weekly case reports. Each team member takes a turn writing up the weekly case report. Sincere, motivated; on-time always; culturally relevant lessons; strategies offered at all times; offer multiple literacies, dress professionally- no skin showing, jeans are ok.
<u>A</u> = same as above with minimal writing help needed
<u>A minus</u> = same as above with minimal writing help needed
<u>B</u> = same as above with writing help needed one absence allowed
C = same as above with 2 absences, much writing help needed
D and below + under prepared, 2 or more absences, late reports and late assignments
I will always speak privately with a graduate student whose grade is in jeopardy (Below an A).

Course Agenda:
Dr Reynolds will lecture on reading and writing topics. Reading for Practicum in Reading students is Gipe J. (2005) *Differentiated Reading Instruction.*
<u>Wks 1, 2 and, 3:</u> Overview of the course, direct measures of assessment, review of basic reading and writing terminology, theories, approaches, and strategies. Fundamental aspects of reading and writing difficulties. Principles of working with students in need of rich literacy experiences. Administration of informal reading inventories and other assessments. Correlates of reading and writing disabilities. Semiotic theory, multiple literacies, and the visual and communicative arts. The analytic process, forming initial diagnostic hypotheses. Interpreting \ informal assessment data. Writing lesson plans (model to be provided). Reading and writing instructional strategies (e.g., comprehension, metacomprehension, developing a perspective for reading, hypothesizing and predicting about text ideas and events, accessing and enhancing background knowledge, word identification strategies, collaborative, teacher-directed and creative writing strategies). *Stanley and his Family*, Integrating Rap, Rhyme, Music, and Rhythm with Story Book Reading (posted on BlackBoard_ Please have for first class.

<u>Wks 4, 5, and 6:</u> Planning an instructional program. Reading and writing instructional strategies continued (e.g., Reciprocal Teaching, I Wonder, Yes/No and Why, It Reminds Me Of. QAR, Readers Theatre, Add a Word/Stretch the Sentence, Teacher Dictation). Instructional techniques and materials continued (Paired Repeated Reading, Request, Dialogue Journaling, Speed Writing). Classroom organization for literacy instruction for

all students. The importance of literacy games, learning word meanings. Alternative and authentic assessment (e.g., oral and written story retelling, macro cloze activities, portfolios, dialogue journals). Discussion of structure of final case reports and communication to parents. Reading records, Getting to Know My Story Character, Language experience stories, KWL plus, vocabulary expansion, What Do I See? Think? Wonder? Inferencing/How Do You Know? Change a Word/Change the Sentence, Paraphrasing)

Wks 7, 8, 9, and 10: The reading/writing connection, Write a Sentence/Make a Story, Spelling Categorization). : Instructional techniques and materials continued (Find the Features and Connect them,   Evaluate students' literacy achievements. Celebrations.

Bibliography for Additional Reading. This list is included to enhance your professional development.

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Norton, D. (2001). *Multicultural children's literature through the eyes of many children,* Upper saddle river, NJ: Prentice Hall.
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Roller, C., (1996). *Variability not disability*. Newark, DE, International Reading Association.

Course Content: Please note that several themes thread throughout the course. These include communication, collaborative efforts, and a philosophy that we have the expertise and knowledge to enhance all K-12 learners' literacy abilities.

Course Format and Expectations:
Due to the structure of this class, students must attend all class sessions, and come prepared to be active participants in collaborative small group and class discussions. Students will apply in tutoring sessions what they learn in this class, as well as what they have learned in previous classes. Each class session will include, in addition to discussion of the assigned topic, time for students to discuss their on-going tutoring activities.

Evaluation of Student Outcomes: This course focuses on the practical application of current literacy knowledge to the classroom. Evaluations will include: weekly electronic journaling with Dr. Reynolds, collaborations, work with K-6/7 learners, typed weekly assignments, presentation (to our class) of a reading and a writing strategy in a combined lesson.

Important Writing Tips. Study this list and write accordingly.
Limit use of weak 'ing' verbs.

Know when you use passive or active voice. Decide in what voice you will write and stick to that voice.
Limit use of adverbs and adjectives.
Start off with a simple on-topic sentence. Don't digress. Don't take forever to get to the point.
Remember that good writing is good thinking.
Know your audience.
Write using simple language.
Avoid jargon.
Avoid wordiness.
Vary vocabulary, but if you begin your report using the term <u>student</u> stick with that term. Don't switch to <u>children</u>, tutees, or <u>pupils</u>.
Be reader hot--critic cold.
Monitor your writing at every word. Know exactly what you say and why.
Remember that time spent revising is time well spent.
Remember that academic writing should be just as exciting to read as a top selling novel.
Read exemplary research articles to become familiar with academic writing.
Consider your audience at all times. Guide your audience through your report with sub headings.
Spend part of your first session determining what your tutees know about literacy and what they need to know. Use the following assessments (listed above). Record information.

Suggestions for Initial Interview Questions (Interest Inventory)
Published by Richards in the Gipe text
1.   Do you like to read/write? Why or why not?
2.   Who's the best reader/writer you know? What makes him/her such a good reader/writer?
3.   Do you know someone who can't read/write? How would you explain reading/writing to that person?
4.   What does your teacher do to help you learn to read/write better?
5.   What do you do when you come to a word that you don't know? How do you figure it out? What do you do if that doesn't work?
6.   What do you do if you don't understand what you read/write? What do you do to try to figure it out? What do you do if that doesn't work?
7.   What's the best way to become a good reader/writer?
8.   Do you think that you're a good reader/writer? Why or why not?
9.   What types of activities do you do on the computer?
10.   Do you use the computer in school or at home? What computer activities do you do?
11.   What do you like to do when you are not in school?
12.   Do you know any reading or writing strategies? Can you name them? What do you use them for?

Twenty Paraphrased Questions from the *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised (WISC-R) for Young Children. If you tutor older children, rephrase these questions accordingly.*

1. What is your first name? last name? middle name?
2. What is your address?
3. What is your telephone number?
4. How many sisters and brothers do you have?
5. What is the first letter of the alphabet? last letter?
6. What alphabet letter comes before 'c'? after 'g'?
7. Name the seasons of the year.
8. What month is it?
9. What month comes after this month?
10. What is the date of your birthday?
11. How old are you?
12. How old will you be next year? in two years?
13. How many pennies in a nickel?
14. How many pennies in a dollar?
15. Why do we put stamps on letters/
16. Why do we put license plates on cars?
17. If you found a wallet on the ground and it had no identification, what would you do with it? I
18. If you and a friend were playing ball and the ball crashed into a neighbor's window, what would you do?
19. What number comes before the number 10?
20. In what city do you live?
21. Why does oil float on water?
22. Why does a boat float on water?

Obtain a writing sample. Do not tell tutees what to write. Give them choices. For very young children the following prompts are appropriate: Write all the words you know. Write all the alphabet letters you know. (Tutors: Write some letters and numerals and point to them. Ask, "Is this a number or an alphabet letter? What is the first/last letter of the alphabet? What sound does t, m, n, s, make?"

Assess each tutee using the Garfield Elementary Reading Attitude Survey.
.
Additional Lesson Reminders
Do not use inappropriate books. All good literacy lessons begin with a good book. Most literature should contain characters, settings, problems, and solutions. Use culturally responsive, sensitive literature, African-American literature, Hispanic literature, and Caldecott and Newberry winners. Connect literature with genre writing. Genre writing includes the following: memoir, how to, poetry, imaginative, persuasive, descriptive, academic, humor. The following books are just a few that you can acquire at libraries are

appropriate for genre writing: Obtain multiple copies for children to follow along. Provide sentence markers and magic windows to help tutees keep their eyes on appropriate words and sentences. Engage children in creating comic books. Help them take snapshots of their favorite place in or outside of the UCC. Help them write about their photographs.

Cannon, J. (1997). *Verdi*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace.
> A young python does not want to grow slow and boring like the older snakes he sees in the tropical jungle where he lives.
> Writing model: good example of having and solving a problem; writing description. (Problem solving writing)_

Barrett, J. (1991). *Animals should definitely not wear clothing*. New York: Scholastic.
> Humorous pictures of animals wearing clothes show why this would be a ridiculous custom for them to adopt. (persuasive writing)

dePaola, T. (1999). *26 Fairmount Avenue*. G.P. Putnam's Sons. (memoir)

Henkes, K. (1996). *Lilly's purple plastic purse*. New York, NY: Greenwillow Books
(imaginative writing)

Johnson, A. (1989). *Tell me a story, Mama*. New York, NY: Orchard Books.(memoir)

Polacco, P. (2002). *When lightning comes in a jar*. New York, NY: Philomel Books.
memoir)

A memoir is a vivid or intense memory about a person's life that was framed by unique events (Zinzer, 1987). Here are some picture b book memoirs

Angelou, M. (2003). *My painted house, my friendly chicken and* me. Random House.

Soto, G. *Snapshots from the w*edding. Putnam.

Rylant, C. (1982). *When I was young in the mountains*. Dutton.

Some Writing Prompts
I Am/ I Am Not
I Remember
I Know/I Do Not Know
When Did You Have a Change of Heart (change your mind?)?
What Have You Always Wanted to Write About
What is Something You Have Never Told Anyone?
What are Your Thoughts about the world? Your family? Where you live?
When is a Time You Lost Your Temper?
What Will You be Like When You Are Old?
What Do You Need to Do to Become a Better Person?
What's Right and Not So Right with your This Summer Camp?

What Do You Love? (Not Who)
What Would Make You Happier?
List Ten Behaviors You Need to Quit Doing
If tutees are too young to write their thoughts on these topics encourage them to share orally and write their thoughts on chart paper. Do a reading/writing connection and have individual children read what they said. (What I can say others or I can write and what others or I write I can read and others can read).

Introducing Genre Writing
Before you expect children to write on various genres, you must model these genres for children. For example, when introducing poetry, you might read some of Shel Silverstein's poems. You might introduce Bio Poems by creating your own Bio Poem and sharing it with children. For example consider the following poem:
Sick
by Shel Silverstein
"I cannot go to school today,"
Said little Peggy Ann McKay.
"I have the measles and the mumps,
A gash, a rash and purple bumps.
My mouth is wet, my throat is dry,
I'm going blind in my right eye.
My tonsils are as big as rocks,
I've counted sixteen chicken pox
And there's one more--that's seventeen,
And don't you think my face looks green?
My leg is cut--my eyes are blue--
It might be instamatic flu.
I cough and sneeze and gasp and choke,
I'm sure that my left leg is broke--
My hip hurts when I move my chin,
My belly button's caving in,
My back is wrenched, my ankle's sprained,
My 'pendix pains each time it rains.
My nose is cold, my toes are numb.
I have a sliver in my thumb.
My neck is stiff, my voice is weak,
I hardly whisper when I speak.
My tongue is filling up my mouth,
I think my hair is falling out.
My elbow's bent, my spine ain't straight,
My temperature is one-o-eight.

My brain is shrunk, I cannot hear,
There is a hole inside my ear.
I have a hangnail, and my heart is--what?
What's that? What's that you say?
You say today is. . .Saturday?
G'bye, I'm going out to play!"

To All Good Kids
By Dr. Janet. Reynolds
Here's a poem to all good kids
Who like to read and write
They help others and never frown
And never, never fight

Here's a poem to all good kids
Who may be girls or boys
They eat their spinach and broccoli'
And share their favorite toys

Here's a poem to all good kids
Who grow up and turn out cool
We know we can depend on them
'Cause they follow the golden rule.

A Reference for Poetry
Technically It's Not My Fault: Concrete Poems by John Grandits. Houghton Mifflin Company (Clarion Books), 2004. 48 p.   Summary Book designer John Grandits uses the voice of eleven-year-old Robert to present inventive poetry. This is a book that will appeal to kids (especially boys) who are looking for a quick, funny read. Grandits uses shapes, typefaces and other design techniques to enhance the various poems. Technically, they are not all by definition "concrete poems," but they are clever and eye-catching and will certainly appeal to even the most die-hard poetry-hater. Be forewarned about the subject matter, which not only includes standard fare, such as homework, pets and basketball, but also "The Autobiography of Murray the Fart" and "Spew Machine."

In the same way, before expecting children to write a memoir, a persuasive piece, a how to piece, an imaginative piece author your own memoir, etc., at home and share with children before you expect them to write.

Writing requirements for writing students. Align these assignments with your tutoring.

Turn in a typed two-page memoir second-class meeting. Because of the large number of students in these two classes, I cannot accept any assignments after due date.
Turn in a persuasive piece the third class meeting.
Turn in a "how to" piece the fourth-class meeting.
Turn is original poetry the fifth class meeting.

Strategies for Spelling Instruction
How can you help students become accurate and independent spellers? Check out "Spelling -- What's All the Fuss?" chapter one from Spelling in Use by Lester L. Laminack and Katie Wood Ray, to learn more about how spelling fits into the broader topic of learning to write. Designed for teachers and families, the book features stories from real classrooms and rich examples of student writing.

Read the English Journal article "What I Wish I'd Known about Teaching Spelling" for eight recommended teaching practices. See "Spelling and the Middle School English Language Learner" for additional techniques to help the language learners you teach.

The article "Teaching Challenged Spellers in High School English Classrooms" from English Journal, also foregrounds writing as the key to spelling instruction. The article suggests that teachers begin by observing samples of students' writing and then weave in skills lessons related to the spelling needs they observe.

To explore alternatives to teaching spelling in isolation, consider the ways that helping students to imagine themselves as writers "is much more complex than nurturing a more stable grasp of sentence clarity or spelling" in the Teaching English in the Two-Year College article "Imagine You're a Writer

"Winning the War of Words: Improving Our Students' Spelling" from English Leadership Quarterly explains an alternative spelling bee activity that promotes camaraderie and offers students strategies for overcoming their spelling foes.

For additional resources on teaching spelling, consult the resources and strategies included in NCTE's Spelling Teaching Resource Collection.

... Using Vocabulary Instruction to Shape Students' Spelling
The Vocabulary Book. As students explore vocabulary words and expand their comprehension skills, they learn about word structure and spelling in context. The Vocabulary Book provides teachers with sound advice and research-based models of exemplary instruction. The book presents a comprehensive plan for vocabulary instruction from kindergarten through high school -- one broad enough to instruct students with small vocabularies, exceptional vocabularies, and every child in between.

Appendix F (Continued)

Dancing with Words: NCTE's <u>Dancing with Words: Helping Students Love Language</u> <u>through Authentic Vocabulary Instruction</u> uses practical and fun activities with words to invite students to a lifelong dance with language. The book includes chapters on how to appreciate the different vocabularies used in a big city newspaper, in sports writing, book and TV reviews, news reporting, editorials, and science writing. Chapter Three, which explores activities for the first days of vocabulary instruction, is available online.

Pilot Study: Finding My Voice as a Qualitative Researcher: An Autoethnography

about Learning to Trust Myself as a KidWatcher

Melinda Adams

University of South Florida

Jay: How *is the concept paper coming*?
Melinda: *Awful. It's starting to feel like my experience with infertility.*

I had this conversation with my uncle John in February of 2008. Two weeks prior to this conversation I met with two of my committee members regarding my concept paper. The meeting had not gone well. I presented the members with an idea about service-learning with young children. I think the idea was fine; it was how I went about organizing the plans that wasn't acceptable. I ended the meeting by crying.

Why was I comparing the concept paper to infertility when speaking with my Uncle John? During my four years of infertility, I felt like I was doing something wrong. I felt that I was putting time and effort into something that ultimately might lead to nowhere. I also had the feeling I needed to know a lot more information about my body and what the process of reproduction was like. This "infertility time" was like a roller coaster. I was on top of the world, thinking we were on the right course and then boom-shot down. Each time the pregnancy test told me I was not pregnant, I felt discouraged and distraught.

I felt similar feelings on that day of the committee meeting. The professors thought I didn't have enough experience with research. I had been taking a different route than most in my Ph.D. program. Eight years ago, I took three classes before I adopted my kids. During my third class, Statistics II, my husband and I got a call out of the blue that there was a beautiful baby girl in Georgia who was ours. I rushed to

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Georgia and subsequently put Stats II on hold. I didn't return to classes until two semesters later.

In 2005, we adopted a baby boy. Now most of our time was spent raising two small kids. I stayed at home with the kids up until my graduate assistantship, which coincided with the challenging committee meeting. Should I have done my graduate assistantship earlier so that I could have gotten the experience with research prior to my concept paper? There is no doubt in my mind. If I had been a graduate assistant earlier, I could have made connections with professors in the program and gotten extra experience with research. The time period before our daughter's birth would have been the best time. However, you can't change history.

Back to the concept paper. Sadly, I had put about fifteen hours into my unsuccessful concept paper. I needed more research experience before starting my dissertation. Again, I felt discouraged and distraught.

A few days after the conversation with my uncle I talked to Dr. Reynolds. She had an idea for a pilot study, which might give me more research experience. Initially, I was wary of the concept of a pilot study.

When I learned that, during my pilot study, I would have the opportunity to observe children and graduate students at a summer literacy camp, some of my wariness dissipated. I realized the pilot study would not be so bad after all.

Dr. Reynolds suggested I use the kidwatching practices of Yetta Goodman. While reading Kidwatching: Documenting Children's Literacy Development (2002), I

highlighted text, and smiled, nodded my head, and smiled some more. This book was the

culmination of all that I had learned in my classes at the Ph.D. level.

Dr. Reynolds suggested four research questions to get me started:

1. What do ten young children who participate in the USF/ACC summer literacy program know about literacy?
2. What types of literacy instruction do they receive from their graduate education major tutors?
3. Is this instruction appropriate and culturally sensitive?
4. Does this instruction promote literacy as functional?

I was so thankful for this suggestion. Before the pilot study, I assembled the

research questions and the kidwatching practices. They were an easy fit. In the back of

the kidwatching book there are multiple checklists for classroom observers. I shrunk

eight of them, copied them back to back and laminated them, so now I had one reference

sheet for eight checklists, which included spelling knowledge, writing knowledge, book

knowledge, interactional competencies, oral language functions, talk contexts, and book-

handling knowledge.

Rationale for My Inquiry

The kidwatching practices outlined in *Kidwatching* (Owocki & Goodman, 2002)

are for teachers to evaluate their own students. I wanted to find out if an "outsider" could

observe the children and reflect upon classroom practices. Kidwatching focuses on

getting to know the children and the families of the children, throughout the school year.

I did not get to do this, but using the practice of kidwatching and using several of the

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checklists gave me an opportunity to share insights and reveal whether or not the practices would be useful in a summer camp or school classroom.

Participants

The summer camp focused on reading and writing. The camp took place in a multi-use facility in a low-income area of Tampa. Graduate students taught the children and received credit in a reading and/or writing class at USF. Most of the children attended a camp within the same facility Monday through Friday, from morning until evening. Some of the children, however, participated in the literacy camp only. The literacy camp went from 10:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M. on six consecutive Wednesdays in the summer of 2008. The ages of the children I observed were between 5 and 9.

Children were initially grouped by grade level. Some of the children were shifted because groups were too large or too small. Because the first grade class had more than twelve students during the first session, one of the graduate assistants shifted two children to the kindergarten class. Attendance varied each week.

I observed three different groups and took field notes. I originally named the groups based upon grade levels, but after some children were shifted I used a different naming convention. The youngest children were called group A, the middle children were called group B, and the oldest children I observed were called group C.

The Kidwatching Practice Model

Yetta Goodman defined kidwatching through her work in the 1970's and '80s (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). Kidwatching is the practice of observing what children know by documenting children's expressive knowledge and the ways children construct knowledge. After observing, teachers plan instruction that is tailored to specific strengths and needs (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). It is a state of mind. Kidwatching affirms the importance of children's experiences. The premise of kidwatching is that children are always moving forward as learners (Flurkey, 1997). It is the teacher's responsibility to build on what children can do and reflect on children's abilities and knowledge (Goodman, 1996). *Kidwatching* can be used as a manual for educators to use while in the classroom (Owocki & Goodman, 2002).

The laminated observation checklists served as my "cheat sheet" for actions I observed in the classrooms. I could have used blank paper to record observations, but I wanted something more organized. I created observation sheets for each child I would observe with six sections. I used one for each child for each session.
The six sections were:

1. Knowledge about literacy
2. Types of instruction received
3. Appropriate instruction
4. Culturally sensitive instruction
5. Functional literacy promotion
6. Other notes.

Each section directly coincided with my research questions.

I went into the first session with my laminated checklist, my observation sheets, a pen, and a determination to work hard. It was difficult to pick out which children to observe. I selected several children from the first session who did not show up for the later sessions. I tried to select those children who were outspoken so that I could record some of their dialogue

Before I wrote this paper, I re-read *Doing Academic Writing in Education: Connecting the Personal and the Professional* (Reynolds & Miller, 2005), which I first read in a writing roundtable class. The text suggests invention strategies to get the writer started in the writing process. I have always been a visual learner, so I decided to draw a picture of what my pilot study would look like. By the time I got to the third draft I couldn't find a piece of paper. Before the thought escaped me, I grabbed the first thing I could get my hands on, which was an envelope. I quickly jotted down my ideas, and the concept still remains on the envelope.

Rationale for Using a Developmental, Sociocultural Perspective

If I utilize the kidwatching practice for my dissertation (which I hope to do), I will use the sociocultural perspective. In the book *Kidwatching*, Owocki and Goodman (2002) describe most kidwatchers as informed by a sociocultural perspective. They further maintain that children construct knowledge within their own special worlds. Children make hypotheses and test them to determine the way in which language works. As teachers we try and provide "rich" experiences for our children. The challenge is that

each child is unique and has many sociocultural experiences. A rich experience for one may not be for another. Kidwatchers should try to find out what makes a rich experience for each child.

Rationale for Using the Tradition of Ethnography

After researching theoretical traditions and orientations and reading *Kidwatching* (Owocki & Goodman, 2002) once more, I decided that for my dissertation I want to utilize the ethnographic method. Goodman (1996) addresses ethnography in the book Notes from a Kidwatcher. She notes that a good ethnographer carefully observes by spending time watching, interacting, making notes, and interpreting information.

To help me further understand what ethnography is, I went back to my Qualitative Measurement I class textbook. Patton (2002) describes fieldwork where the investigator is immersed in the culture. Ethnographers ask the question: "What is the culture of this group of people?" If I am going to use the ethnographic method in my dissertation, I must spend some time getting to know the culture of the children I will observe

The Inquiry

Literatures Informing the Inquiry

At this point I needed to look at some other research to find out about analysis. I decided to go to *The Qualitative Report* based upon my experience in my Qualitative Measurement I class. I focused on an article about the same literacy camp from two

years prior. The article was insightful, and I learned a lot from it. The article is called,

"Making Meaning of Graduate Students' and Preservice Teachers' E-Mail

Communication in a Community of Practice" (Reynolds, Bennett, & Shea, 2007). I read

the analysis section and found out the authors used global constant comparative analysis.

I reviewed the references regarding this technique and decided to look closely at how this

analysis was done. One reference was in a textbook which I didn't have and which was

not available at the USF library. I decided I needed it, so I ordered it. The book is called

An Introduction to Qualitative Research (Flick, 2006).

Limitations of the Inquiry

Since the literacy camp was only six weeks long, I made adaptations in my

practice of kidwatching (Owocki and Goodman, 2002). In a classroom, teacher

observations would lead to changes in the way that teacher led future instruction. In this

summer literacy camp, observations might lead to an understanding of how children learn

in general. Additionally, my observations may lead to ways in which future camp

instructors and teachers in schools could give more meaningful instruction.

Data Analysis

After reviewing *Introduction to Qualitative Research* (Flick, 2006), I decided

grounded theory might work better for me. I went back and read *Basics of Qualitative*

Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory (Strauss &

Corbin, 1998), which guided me through coding the data. I found out that open coding

was going to fit my research. First, I discovered whether the children were showing oral

language, writing, or reading skills. This was Strauss and Corbin's (1998) first step in

coding, to conceptualize, or group according to properties. My next step was to look at

some questions offered by *Kidwatching* (Owocki & Goodman, 2002) for analyzing data. I

chose four questions. These were:

1. What does the child know about language?
2. In which settings does the child use more or less oral language?
3. In what activities does the child need further support?
4. When is the child successful in getting things done?

In this way I used Strauss and Corbin's (1998) second step, which is to define

categories and develop the categories in terms of their properties. The final step in my

analysis was to determine if the instruction that I observed was appropriate, functional,

and multicultural. This was similar to Strauss and Corbin's (1998) step of relating

categories through statements of relationships or patterns. This is what I found:

Examples of Literacy Moments

Examples Showing Knowledge about Language

The children were very knowledgeable about language, which became evident

through their writing, reading, and oral language skills.

Example One*: Child (Timothy):*

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Appendix G (Continued)

(Writes in response to a graduate assistant's entry in a dialogue journal)

 I don't know what I'm going to do this week. I just rebmemeber I going fishing. from.

Mr. Seleres

Example Two: *Child (Timothy)* Writing letter to mom and dad:

(Says) How do you spell thank? T-h-i-n-k?

Graduate Student

(Says) Yes, but change the "i" to an "a".

Child (Timothy):

(Says) I'm going to write it big.

(Writes) Dear mommy and daddy, Thank you for all you have given me. Love, Mr.

Seleres

Example Three: *Graduate Student*:

(Says) Where was his setting? (Regarding the book *Rainbow Fish*) (Pfister, 1992)

Child (Xavier):

You mean where did the story take place?

Graduate Student:

Yes.

Xavier:

In the ocean.

Example Four: *Graduate Student:*

(Says) Why did he say "ole" for the matador camp? (Regarding the story *Toot and Puddle*) (Hobbie, 1997)

Child (Keith):

(Says) From the song (sings) "Ole, Ole" (Title of actual song, "Hot, Hot, Hot") (Cassell, 1983)

Graduate Student:

Good! That's making a connection!

Examples of Settings which Promoted Literacy Use

Settings were important to the graduate students. The graduate students found uses for the community center space which would not ordinarily be used for learning. Graduate students taught activities that are not usually considered "academic." Additionally, graduate students selected literature that promoted literacy talk.

Example One*: (*Teacher brought in a photo album from a trip she took on her honeymoon)

Child (Catherine):

Related building in photo album to her former home of Puerto Rico

Example Two: *Child (Sean):*

(Says) I can make a connection! I saw a movie once where someone got hurt by getting

his head stuck in the elevator! (This was during a reading of the book *Alexander and the*

Horrible, Terrible, No Good, Very Bad Day) (Viorst, 1972)

Example Three: Children and graduate students take individual cameras outside to take a

"Wonder Walk."

Child (Michelle):

I wonder what the ant is looking for?

Example Four:

Group C developed a play using Reader's Theater. They reenacted the play using *The*

Great Kapok Tree (Cherry, 2000) as their story. Children made hats, dictated paraphrased

lines, and acted out the part they were given. Throughout the process, the children were

engaged and excited, talking excitedly about their parts.

Child (Michelle):

(Says) I don't want it to be over!

Examples of Settings where Children Needed Support

       Dr. Reynolds recommended teaching reading and writing strategies to the

children by naming the strategies and introducing a new one for each session. Making

connections and making prediction statements about books were two such strategies. As can be expected, children needed multiple attempts with learning the various strategies.

Example One:

Graduate Student:

What does connection mean?

Child (Keith):

Respect the book!

Example Two:

Graduate Student:

What little thing goes there?

Child (Mary):

Comma! In the middle or there?

Graduate Student:

There.

Example Three:

Children are asked to write an "I wonder" about the rainbow fish

Child (Carolyn):

He can Giv His FRes Sum Gler.

Examples of Settings Showing Success

One of the most valuable parts of the camp was that the children were successful. Some children do not feel this success in their classrooms. The small graduate student to child ratio may have contributed to this success. As mentioned previously, Dr. Reynolds encouraged the graduate students to ask the children specific questions about literacy at the end of each session, such as:

1. What are you learning to read better?
2. What are you learning to write better?
3. How can we help you to help you be a good writer/reader?

Children answered these questions thoughtfully. The answers were helpful to the graduate students because they could plan for future lessons. Graduate students in all three groups were required to produce a class book with the children. I observed group B as the graduate students passed out individual copies of the class book to the children. Without being asked to read the books, children immediately opened the books and started reading one another's excerpts.

Example One:

Child (Timothy):

(Says, after reading Keith's excerpt in the class book) Nice handwriting, Keith!

Example Two:

Graduate Student:

What can we do to help you be a good writer?

Child (Sean):

You can't. I'm already good.

Graduate Student:

What can we do to make you great?

Child (Sean):

Keep doing books and prediction logs.

Example Three:

(Writing in dialogue journals)

Child (Xavier):

(Writes) My TuTors are Nise. My Friends TUToRs aRe Nise! I Like to read Books!

CaptR Books! (My tutors are nice. My friend's tutors are nice! I like to read books!

Chapter books!)

Example Four:

One of the graduate students read *P is for Passport* (Scillian, 2003). As the story went

along, children were encouraged to wonder about what the different letters in the

story would represent. Children excitedly responded and could hardly wait for their

turn to speak.

Indications and Implications

My research showed that this summer literacy camp was a fertile place for

learning. The children came to the camp with prior knowledge about literacy, which was

the beginning of my kidwatching practice. Owocki and Goodman (2002) describe a teacher's responsibility to build a community that encourages children to fully demonstrate their knowledge. This community must be caring, and the children must feel safe to take risks. The literacy camp was just such an environment. Michelle's comment, "I don't want it to be over" (during Reader's Theater) is one indication that the children, working with challenging material, were relaxed and having fun. Using Reader's Theater helped children take on multiple points of view. This greatly expanded children's communication skills (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997).

The literacy instruction was appropriate, and the children learned much about reading and writing. The questions the children were asked at the end of each session were valuable. Sean was asked the question, "What can we do to make you great?" Sean commented, "Keep doing books and prediction logs." This was indicative of the desire to continue the instruction given to the children in the camp. Sean's willingness to write in prediction logs follows Bredekamp and Copple's (1997) description of how six- through eight-year-olds develop. The authors contend that in this age group, children's metacognition improves because children can think about their own thinking processes. Additionally, when children engage in conversation about their learning, it can strengthen children's abilities to communicate, express themselves, understand, reason, and solve problems (Wells, 1983; Wilkinson, 1984; Nelson, 1985; Chang-Wells & Wells, 1993; Cobb, Wood & Yackel, 1993; Palincsar, Brown & Campione, 1993).

There were many opportunities for me to observe instruction that promoted functional literacy. Smagorinsky, Sanford, and Konopak (2006) describe functional literacy in terms of instruction that provides children with a way to make meaning and order in their lives. Gee (1999) believes that students do not master any school practice without believing they will use it now or later in life. The Wonder Walk that the graduate assistants in group C planned was an event that promoted literacy as functional. I saw children reporting information, expressing language knowledge, building productive learning relationships, describing sensory experiences, requesting information, and responding to teachers' requests for information (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). All of these "oral language functions" are real-life processes that the children were practicing (p. 111).

After reading *Toot and Puddle* (Hobbie, 1997) to the children, graduate students in group B asked their children to write a letter to whomever they chose. Timothy wrote a letter to his mom and dad. Timothy expressed language knowledge, formed productive relationships with his mom and dad, and expressed emotional identification by thanking his parents for all that they have given him (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). Again, the graduate assistants chose an assignment that is related to real world functions.

Toot and Puddle (Hobbie, 1997), *P is for Passport* (Scillian, 2003), and *The Great Kapok Tree* (Cherry, 2000) are three of the books that were used in the literacy camp. All three of these books showed that the camp provided culturally sensitive

materials, even though the graduate students from groups A and B confessed they could have done

Appendix G (Continued)

more. Goodman (1996) explains that "within a multicultural framework, we respect each other, recognize our similarities, debate our multiple perspectives, accept and celebrate our differences, and are constantly involved in exploring the strengths and influences that all the members of our world community contribute to our own growth and well-being" (p. 32). Gee (1999) claims that culture and identity must be present for success in school activities related to literate language.

Graduate students in group C planned for a camp theme of culture and identity using travel, passports, and cultures around the world. *P is for Passport* (Scillian, 2003) is an ABC book. The author encourages respect for one another through getting to know the world better. Scillian urges everyone who reads the book to remember that people make the world go around. Looking back to Goodman's definition of a multicultural perspective (1996), the book makes the reader recognize similarities, strengths, and influences in our world community

Group C used *The Great Kapok Tree* for their Reader's Theater production. It is a book about a young man who wants to cut down a kapok tree but is talked out of it by some animals and a child from the rain forest. By introducing a book about the Amazon Rain Forest, graduate students emphasized another continent. The young man in the story has "new eyes" at the end of the story. He respects others (albeit animals, not people) and

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has taken on multiple perspectives. Additionally, the young man finds out that each animal has strengths and contributes to our world.

Appendix G (Continued)

Toot and Puddle (Hobbie, 1997) is a book about two pig friends. One pig, Toot, decides to travel around the world while the other pig, Puddle, decides to stay at home. The trip is told through postcards from Toot to Puddle. Group B told this story and described differences in each new country and the influences that each country contributes. When Toot travels, Puddle imagines multiple perspectives by reading Toot's postcards. Keith's aforementioned connection to "ole" was an interesting one. The picture represented Toot at "matador camp" in Spain. Keith related "ole" to a song he had heard. This was an example of the strategy this class was working on: making connections.

The implications for this research may affect teachers of young children. The research indicates that a summer literacy camp is an opportune experience for rich, meaningful instruction for children. The introduction of literature, the talk-rich environments, and the communication between the children and the graduate students all contributed to this experience.

Kidwatching provided an excellent pathway for me to observe children and the "objects, events, and people in their worlds (that) make knowledge construction a different experience for every child" (Owocki & Goodman, 2002, p. 4). Each child was unique, each child had potential, and each child had a "personal language" (Mickelson, 1990).

Post Script

I learned a lot from this pilot study, including how research illuminates children's

remarkable abilities and teachers' care and concern for children. I am no longer

Appendix G (Continued)

discouraged and distraught. I was struggling with infertility, but then adopted two

amazing kids! I was struggling with research, but then I had this amazing research

experience and I found my voice as a researcher!

Appendix G (Continued)

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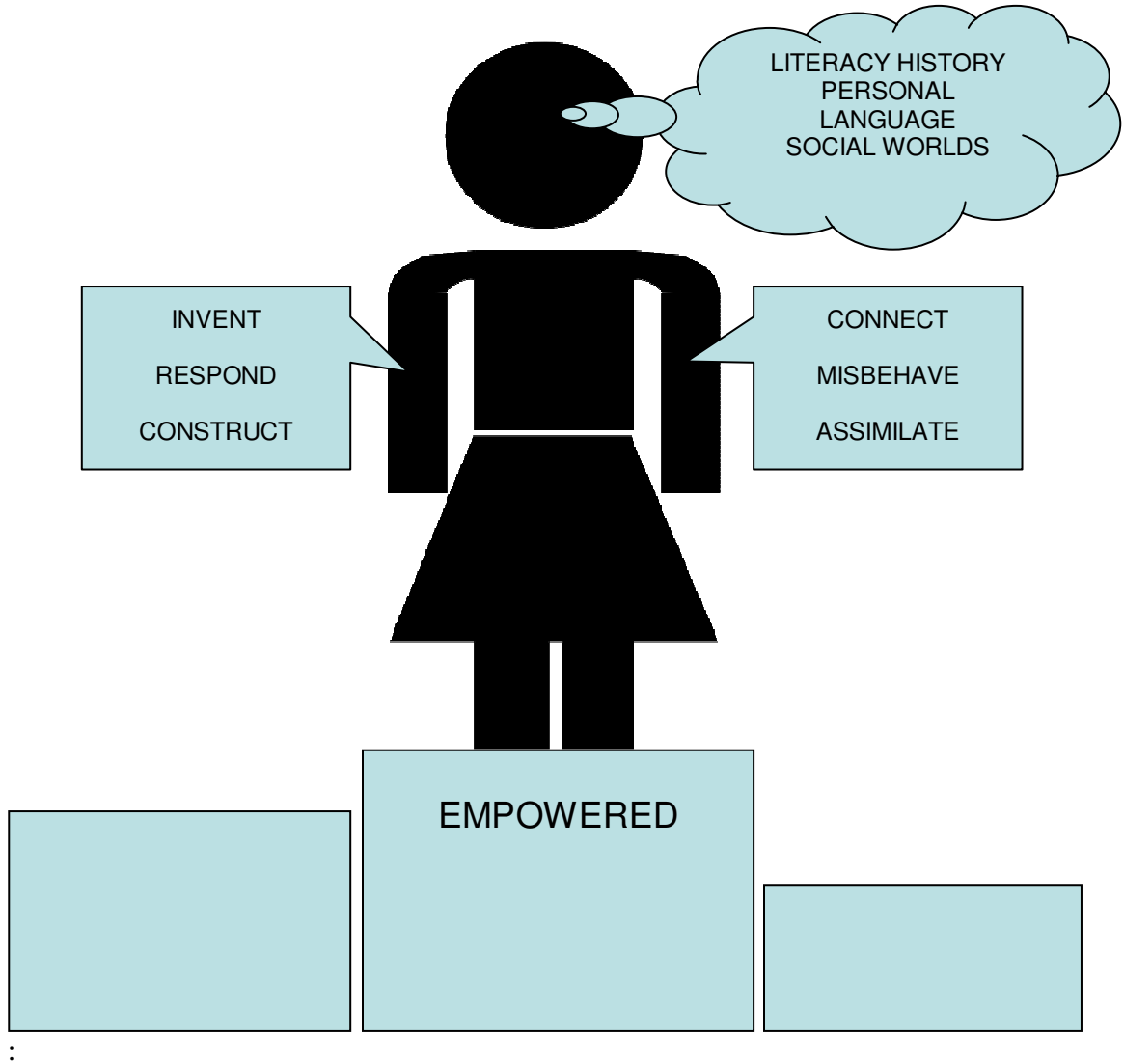Scillian, D. (2003). *P is for Passport*. Chelsea, MI: Sleeping Bear Press.

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Appendix H. Early Diagram on the Literacy Camp Experience
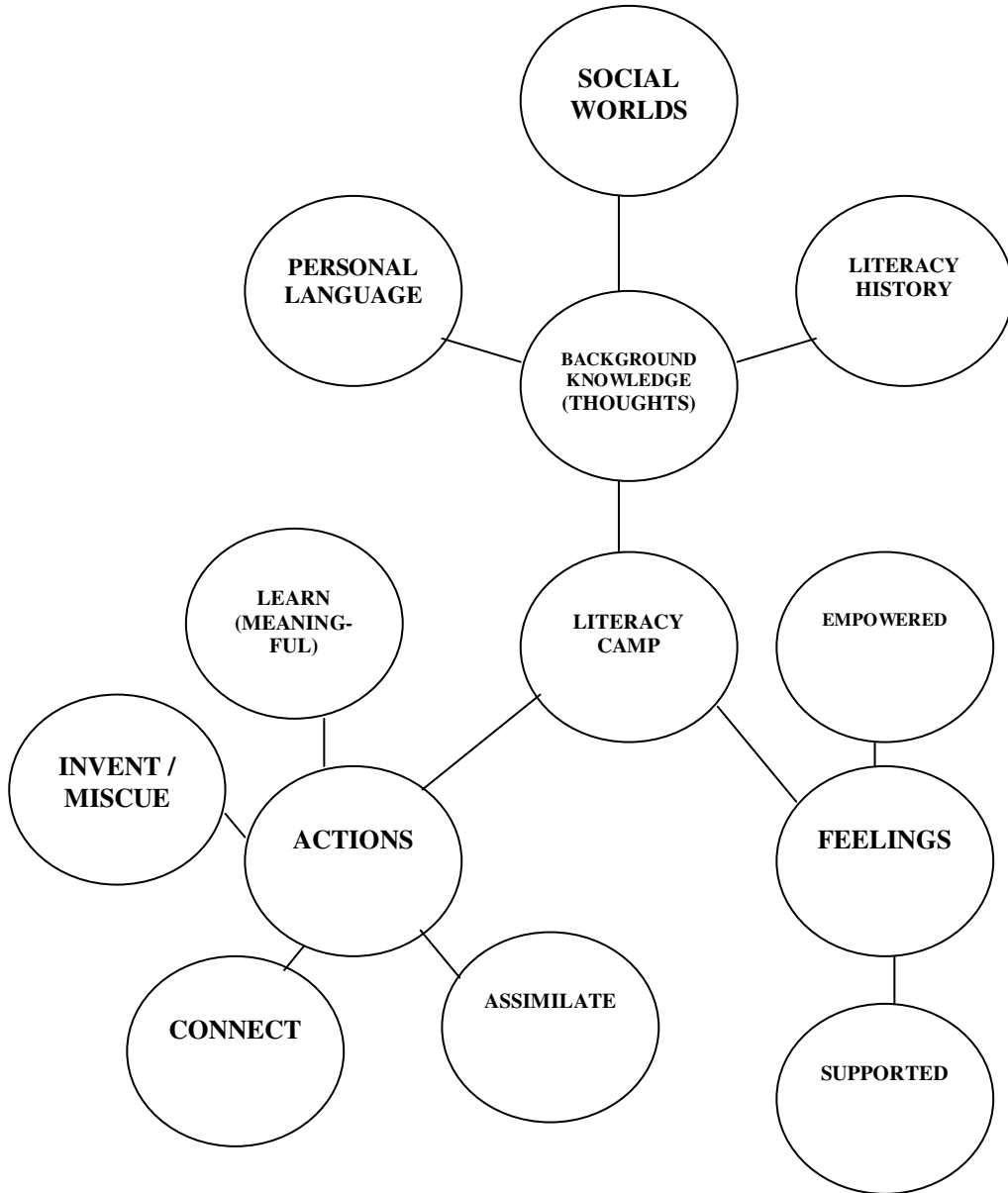
Appendix I. Child-Like Diagram on the Literacy Camp Experience

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GET MEANINGFUL INSTRUCTION,
SUPPORT, ASSIMILATE,
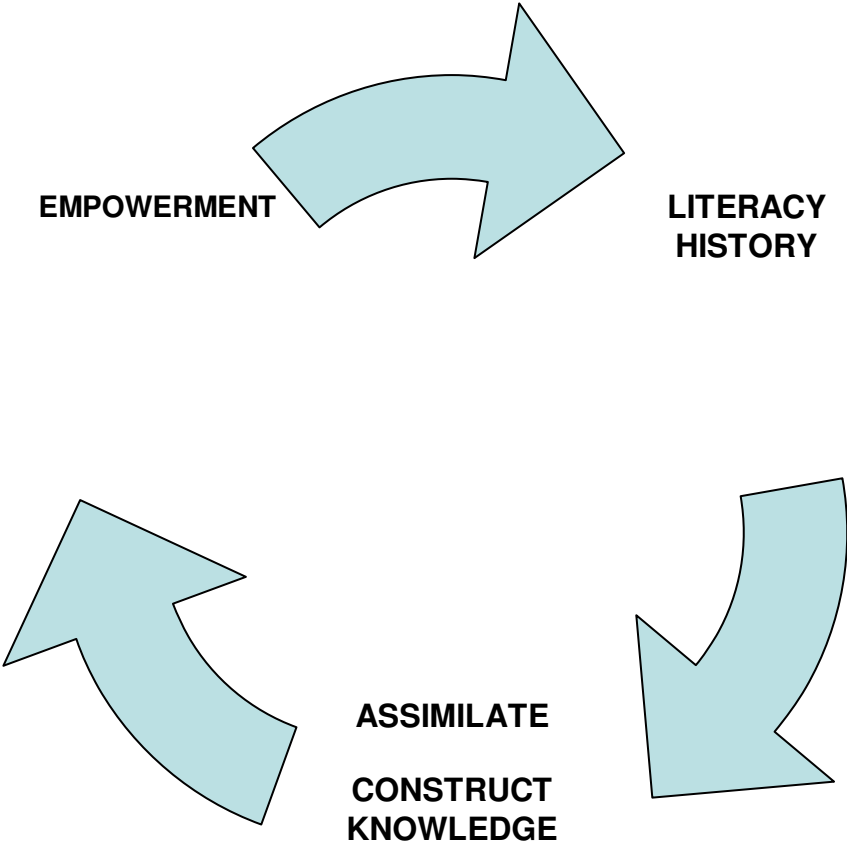CONSTRUCT KNOWLEDGE,
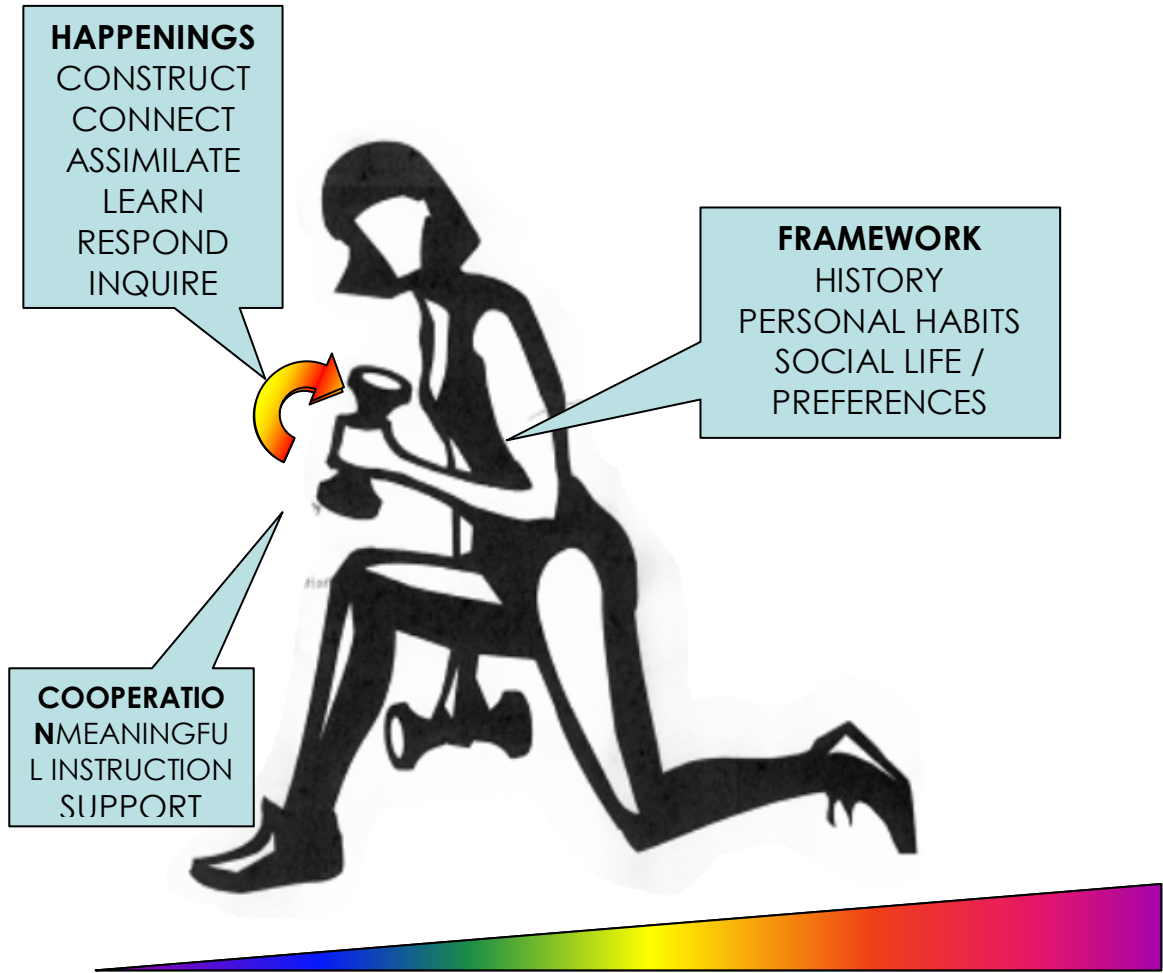CONNECT, INTERRUPT,
RESPOND, INVENT

EMPOWERED

PERSONAL
LANGUAGE,
SOCIAL WORLDS,
LITERACY
HISTORY

Appendix K. Cycle Diagram on the Literacy Camp Experience

EMPOWERMENT

LITERACY HISTORY

ASSIMILATE

CONSTRUCT KNOWLEDGE

Appendix L. Diagram Metaphor: Empowerment

HAPPENINGS
CONSTRUCT
CONNECT
ASSIMILATE
LEARN
RESPOND
INQUIRE

FRAMEWORK
HISTORY
PERSONAL HABITS
SOCIAL LIFE /
PREFERENCES

COOPERATION MEANINGFUL INSTRUCTION
SUPPORT

REACTION: MUSCLES GETTING BIGGER REPRESENTS EMPOWERMENT

About the Author

Melinda Adams earned a B.S. Degree in Elementary/Early Childhood Education at Florida Southern College and a M.S. Degree in Educational Leadership at Florida State University. She worked as a kindergarten teacher for one year and a first grade teacher for eight years. While in the Ph.D. program at USF she was a stay-at-home mom for seven of the eight years. The eighth year she was a graduate assistant, teaching Children's Literature, observing to research "Tune into Reading," and teaching level I interns. She published an article in *Journal of Reading Education* and presented a paper at National Reading Council.