

INCORPORATING LITERATURE CIRCLES IN A THIRD-GRADE CLASSROOM

by

Margaret Marlene Morrow

B.S., Clarion University of Pennsylvania, 1970

M.Ed., University of Pittsburgh, 1989

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

The School of Education in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

University of Pittsburgh

2005

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
GRADUATE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

This dissertation was presented

by

Margaret Marlene Morrow

It was defended on

January 13, 2005

and approved by

Rita M. Bean, Ph.D.

Shirley A. Biggs, Ed.D.

JoAnn R. Dugan, Ph.D.

Douglas K. Hartman, Ph.D.
Dissertation Director

Copyright by Margaret Marlene Morrow

2005

INCORPORATING LITERATURE CIRCLES IN A THIRD-GRADE CLASSROOM

Margaret Marlene Morrow, Ed.D.

University of Pittsburgh, 2005

This study describes how one third-grade classroom became literature discussants utilizing role-playing in a literature circle format. Over a span of nine months, I documented students' initiation, training, and practice utilizing role-playing to conduct peer-led discussions about books. Types of responses, role-playing, and interactions resulting from role-playing activities while engaged in literature circles were examined. Audio and video taping, student self-evaluations and reactions, student role-playing *schedules*, and student artifacts based on culminating activities, provided a data set to analyze interactions and responses.

Findings of the study indicated roles used to promote individual participation in discussions about books were easily adapted, particularly for the low and average-ability students who require more support in their learning. Over time and texts, students appeared to shift naturally in and out of roles while making contributions to discussions. Interactions known as *Informative* ranked highest in frequency for all students followed by *Facilitative* and *Solicitation*. *Acknowledging* interactions ranked third in frequency for the low-ability student. Responses known as *Personal* were most frequent and progressive across time and texts for all students. *Interpretive* responses showed the greatest percentage increase compared to other categories, but the lowest in cumulative frequency. *Evaluative* responses were most frequent and consistent across time and texts for the high-ability student compared to low and average-ability students. *Descriptive* responses were lowest cumulative tally for high and low students only. The role of the teacher was viewed as shifting from voice of authority to facilitator assisting youngsters in finding their own voices.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	xii
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background of Problem	1
1.2. What Are Literature Circles?	2
1.3. Using Literature Circles with my Third-Graders	3
1.4. Values of Literature Circles	4
1.5. Contribution of the Study	8
1.6. Guiding Questions	9
1.7. Limitations of the Study	9
1.8. Definitions of Terms	10
1.8.1. Literature Circle–	10
1.8.2. Roles	10
1.8.3. Interactions –	11
1.8.4. Responses –	11
1.8.5. Literature Circle Schedule	11
1.8.6. Discussion King –	12
1.8.7. Word Wizard –	12
1.8.8. Passage Master –	12
1.8.9. Royal Connector –	12
1.8.10. Masterpiece Maker –	13
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	14
2.1. Introduction	14
2.2. Historical Reference	14
2.3. Research on Literature Circles	20
2.3.1. Breaking Tradition.	20
2.3.2. Growing Pains	21
2.3.3. Promising Results.	21
2.3.4. Book Club Boom.	25
2.4. Literature Circles with Role-Playing.	27
2.5. Literature Circles Without Role-Playing.	36
2.6. Literature Discussion Groups Without Role-Playing.	39
2.7. Conclusion	56
2.8. The Social Construction of Literacy	56
2.9. Analysis of Peer Group Interaction	59
2.10. Identity and Social Interaction in the Classroom.	62
2.10.1. Role-Theory.	64
2.10.2. Role-Concept.	65

2.10.3.	Role-Taking.	66
2.10.4.	Role-Playing.	66
2.10.5.	Why Use Role-Play?.....	68
2.11.	The Power of Collaboration.....	69
2.12.	Collaborative Learning and Cooperative Learning.....	69
2.13.	Learning Circles.....	73
2.13.1	Building Community.	73
2.13.2	Constructing Knowledge.	74
2.13.3	Supporting Learners.....	74
2.13.4.	Documenting Reflection.	74
2.13.5.	Assessing Expectations.....	74
2.13.6	Changing Cultures.	75
2.14.	Summary	75
3.	METHODOLOGY	76
3.1.	Setting	76
3.2.	Participants.....	77
3.2.1.	Students.....	77
3.2.2.	The Teacher/Researcher.....	77
3.3.	Procedures.....	79
3.3.1.	Phase 1: Planning.....	79
3.3.2.	Phase 2: Training	80
	Simulation	80
3.3.3.	First Chapter Book.....	82
	Rationale.	82
3.3.4.	Procedure.	83
	Day 1.....	83
	Day 2.....	84
	Day 3.....	85
	Day 4.....	85
	Day 5.....	85
	Day 6 to Day 10.	86
3.3.5.	Phase 3: Immersing.....	87
3.3.6.	Second Chapter Book	87
	Rationale.	87
3.3.7.	Procedure.	88
	Days 1 to 4.	89
	Days 5 to 20.	90
3.3.8.	Third Chapter Book	94
	Rationale.	94
3.3.9.	Procedure.	95
	Day 1-5.....	95
	Day 6 to10.....	97
3.3.10.	Fourth Chapter Book.....	98
	Rationale	98
3.3.11.	Procedure	98
	Day 1.....	98

Day 2 to Day 12.....	100
3.4. Data Collection	102
3.5. Data Analysis	104
4. RESULTS	107
4.1. The Students.....	107
4.1.1. Billy.....	108
4.1.2. Bob.....	108
4.1.3. Thorton.....	109
4.2. Guiding Question One	109
4.2.1. Roles	110
4.2.2. The Environment	110
4.2.3. Analysis of Role-Taking	111
4.2.4. Summary of Students' Role-Taking	114
Billy's Roles.....	114
Discussion King.....	114
Word Wizard.....	117
Passage Master.....	126
Royal Connector	133
Masterpiece Maker.....	135
Bob's Roles.....	136
Discussion King.....	136
Word Wizard.....	142
Passage Master.....	145
Royal Connector	150
Masterpiece Maker.....	152
Thorton's Roles.....	154
Discussion King.....	154
Word Wizard.....	157
Passage Master.....	161
Royal Connector	163
Masterpiece Maker.....	164
4.3. Guiding Question Two.....	166
4.4. Summary of Individual Student Interactions	167
4.4.1. Billy's Interactions.....	167
Discussion King.....	167
Word Wizard.....	168
Passage Master.....	169
Royal Connector	170
Masterpiece Maker.....	171
4.4.2. Bob's Interactions	172
Discussion King.....	173
Word Wizard.....	174
Passage Master.....	174
Royal Connector	175
Masterpiece Maker.....	176
4.4.3. Thorton's Interactions	176

Discussion King	177
Word Wizard.....	178
Passage Master.....	178
Royal Connector.	179
Masterpiece Maker.....	180
4.5. Guiding Question Three.....	180
4.5.1. Personal Responses.....	182
Billy’s Personal Responses	182
Bob’s Personal Responses	182
Thorton’s Personal Responses	183
4.5.2. Descriptive Responses	183
Billy’s Descriptive Responses	183
Bob’s Descriptive Responses.....	183
Thorton’s Descriptive Responses	184
4.5.3. Interpretive Responses	184
Billy’s Interpretive Responses	184
Bob’s Interpretive Responses	184
Thorton’s Interpretive Responses	184
4.5.4. Evaluative Responses.....	184
Billy’s Evaluative Responses.....	185
Bob’s Evaluative Responses	185
Thorton’s Evaluative Responses.....	185
4.6. Guiding Question Four	185
4.6.1. Roles	186
Released Authority.....	186
Adapted a Protocol for Assuming Roles.....	186
Searched and Sampled Meaningful Vocabulary.....	188
Chose Passages.	189
Made Connections.	190
Encouraged Self-Expression through Illustrations.	192
Introduced a Literature Circle Schedule.	192
Allocated Time, Method, and Books.	193
Addressed Changing Needs and Developing Expertise of Participants.	193
4.6.2. Interactions.....	193
Promoted interaction.	193
Acknowledged Behavior of Appropriate Interactions.	194
Informed.....	194
Facilitated.....	195
Connected.	195
Other.	196
4.6.3. Responses.....	197
Personal.....	198
Descriptive.	198
Interpretive.....	201
Evaluative.	201
5. CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS	204

5.1. Summary of Findings.....	204
5.2. Conclusions.....	209
5.3. Discussion.....	213
5.4. Instructional Implications.....	219
5.5. Research Implications.....	220
APPENDIX A.....	222
LITERATURE CIRCLE SCHEDULE.....	222
APPENDIX B.....	229
LETTERS OF CONSENT.....	229
APPENDIX C.....	233
STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.....	233
APPENDIX D.....	235
STUDENT LITERATURE CIRCLE REFLECTIONS.....	235
APPENDIX E.....	240
STUDENT LITERATURE CIRCLE EVALUATION SAMPLE.....	240
APPENDIX F.....	242
BILLY'S UTTERANCE CHART FOR THREE AREAS OF ANALYSIS -SAMPLE.....	242
APPENDIX G.....	244
BOB'S UTTERANCE CHART FOR THREE AREAS OF ANALYSIS -SAMPLE.....	244
APPENDIX H.....	246
THORTON'S UTTERANCE CHART FOR THREE AREAS OF ANALYSIS-SAMPLE..	246
APPENDIX I.....	248
SAMPLE COMMENTS FOR CODING INTERACTIONS.....	248
APPENDIX J.....	251
SAMPLE COMMENTS FOR CODING RESPONSES.....	251
APPENDIX K.....	253
PORTION OF TRANSCRIPT FROM RAMONA QUIMBY AGE 8.....	253
APPENDIX L.....	255
PORTION OF TRANSCRIPT FROM THE LION THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE	255
APPENDIX M.....	257
PORTION OF TRANSCRIPT FROM STONE FOX.....	257
APPENDIX N.....	259
PORTION OF TRANSCRIPT FROM WIND IN THE WILLOWS.....	259
APPENDIX O.....	261
PORTION OF TRANSCRIPT FROM MY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN.....	261
APPENDIX P.....	263
BILLY'S INTERACTIONS BY CATEGORY ACROSS 4 TEXTS.....	263
APPENDIX Q.....	265
BOB'S INTERACTIONS BY CATEGORY ACROSS 4 TEXTS.....	265
APPENDIX R.....	268
THORTON'S INTERACTIONS BY CATEGORY ACROSS 4 TEXTS.....	268
APPENDIX S.....	271
SUMMARY OF STUDENT INTERACTIONS.....	271
APPENDIX T.....	273
FREQUENCY OF UTTERANCES IN FLOOR-TAKING ROLES.....	273
APPENDIX U.....	275

BILLY'S TURN-TAKING FREQUENCY IN ROLES ACROSS TEXTS BASED ON TRANSCRIPTS	275
APPENDIX V	277
BOB'S TURN-TAKING FREQUENCY IN ROLES ACROSS TEXTS BASED ON TRANSCRIPTS	277
APPENDIX W	279
THORTON'S TURN-TAKING FREQUENCY IN ROLES ACROSS TEXTS BASED ON TRANSCRIPTS	279
BIBLIOGRAPHY	281

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Literature Circle Studies with Role Playing	28
Table 2 Alternative procedures to literature discussion participation without role-play	55
Table 3 Timeline of Four Periods of Literature Circles.....	101
Table 4 Time Table for Data Collection	103
Table 5 Data Sources	104
Table 6 Sample Utterance Analysis.....	112
Table 7 Responses to Four Texts: Purves and Beach Categories	181

PREFACE

In Memory of Dr. Jean E. Winsand
whose contagious enthusiasm for literacy education provided
impetus for this study.

Dr. Douglas K. Hartman...without your insight and guidance throughout this long and winding journey, there may never have been an end. I am honored to have you as my advisor.

To committee member Dr. Rita M. Bean, ultimate teacher and role model, thank you for providing guidance when I needed it most.

To committee members Dr. Shirley A. Biggs and Dr. JoAnn R. Dugan, I am grateful for your support and valuable input to this study.

To my third-grade class and colleagues...this study would never have happened without you. I have learned so much from each of you and am truly grateful.

To my esteemed sister-in-law, Dr. Sandra L. DiPento, *Teacher of Excellence* many times over, I am grateful for your on-going words of encouragement. You have my praise and admiration!

Matthew, you have been so patient and helpful ...*thanks!*

George, Tracy, and Lisa, for your love and devotion...I am truly blessed.

1. INTRODUCTION

This study is about third-graders reading and sharing books in literature circles. It tells about the implementation and exploration of the literature circle format in a third grade classroom: how it evolved, how students performed, and what was learned. The purpose of this study is to provide insight into the world of children at work in literature circles as their literate-developing selves unfold throughout the school year. Specifically, I examined three aspects of activity in the literature circle setting: student roles, peer interactions, and individual responses. As children took on roles the adoption path for each role was tracked. The interactions between members of each discussion group were analyzed as the conversations about books ensued. Finally, patterns were identified in the responses children made about the texts they read.

1.1. Background of Problem

The problem with literature circles is that they have become widely accepted, but little understood. With children's literature as the material of choice in American reading programs, and literature circles as the discussion method du jour, we have little empirical evidence about how it develops aesthetic reading and responding to literature...if at all. Advocates of literature circles claim that the approach honors children's choices and that children spend a great deal of time reading, and less time learning about reading and their reading is authentic because it is done for their own purposes, not the teacher's (Spiegel, 1998). But evidence for such claims is

thin, and even less is known about children's roles, interactions, and responses during literature circle events. Acceptance of literature circles, apparently, has been mistaken for understanding.

1.2. What Are Literature Circles?

The formation of "literature circles", otherwise known as literature study groups, book clubs, or discussion groups, center on small groups of students gathered to discuss a self-selected piece of literature in depth (Schlick Noe & Johnson, 1999). The text can be:

a story, poem, article or book. While reading, each group assigns portions of the text (either in or outside of class), members make notes to help them contribute to the upcoming discussion, and everyone comes to the group with ideas to share. Each group follows a reading and meeting schedule, holding periodic discussions on the way through the books. When they finish a book, the circle members may share highlights of their reading with the wider community; then they trade members with other finishing groups, select more reading, and move into a new cycle (Daniels, 2002, p. 2).

Some versions of literature circles use discussion roles that rotate each session (Daniels, 1994). Members come to the discussion table with notes needed to help perform a specific role, e.g., Word Wizard. Roles are designed to support collaborative learning by giving students clearly defined, interlocking, and open-ended tasks (Daniels, 2002, p. 13). Role sheets, which function like work sheet schedules, are designed to help each student approach a text with clear-cut, conscious purposes (Keene & Zimmermann, 1997 as cited in Daniels, 2002, p. 13). The overarching goal is to "grow the club", so that chunks of class time are comfortably reallocated to genuine student-led, small-group discussions. Once readers can successfully conduct their own discussions, formal roles during discussion may be dropped.

1.3. Using Literature Circles with my Third-Graders

In order to “grow the club” in my own classroom with five groups of students reading different texts simultaneously, I chose Daniels’ model featuring the role-playing format and student schedules. The role-playing aspect seemed like a promising way to systematically start growing a club for both students and the teacher. Daniels suggests that one of the key insights of collaborative learning is the need for clear tasks and roles in a group (1994, p. 24). Structures such as literature circles require social skills of collaboration first. One way I designed cooperative work was by assigning specific structured roles to the different group members. Each student had a special responsibility, a piece of the puzzle, to contribute for the group to succeed, according to Daniels. My classroom of students reading different books simultaneously in different literature circles were supported before, during, and after reading by the use of roles as guides for thinking. Basic roles are designed to invite different cognitive perspectives on a text such as drawing a response, reading a passage aloud, debating interpretations, connecting to one’s own life, creating a summary, tracking the scene, focusing on words, tuning in to one character (1994, p. 25). Rotating the roles provides everyone with a new perspective each day. Eventually, roles can become so internalized, students unconsciously think in terms of all the roles they have played over time.

This study provides an empirical work that examines third-graders reading and responding in literature circles. Eight and nine-year old students are enticed by the opportunity to discuss books on their own and prove that they are capable of sprouting wings early on towards becoming full-fledged discussants. Role-playing became a manageable system for my third-graders to follow, which seemed to allow for enough structure to stay on task while allowing for enough space to explore others’ perspectives in the process. As students experienced the revisiting of literature pieces through discussion format, they grew as informed

literate selves, more able to discern the thoughts of others compared to their own, more able to create new thinking about books, and more able to communicate effectively. For the teacher-researcher, the management system of literature circles, once initiated with direct instruction, was released to the students and guided through observation and debriefing.

1.4. Values of Literature Circles

The rationale for research on literature circle use with young children can be found in two areas of study. The first is the opportunity for personalized growth, or intra- psychological stretching due to inter-psychological awareness that is its essence. The zone of proximal development (ZPD) and internalization phenomena espoused by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky provide credence to the rationale for providing youngsters with the opportunity to train and exercise for authentic reading experiences with friends in small groups such as literature circles. Because the teacher provides initial instruction and opportunity for guided practice followed by gradual release of authority to the student, a zone of opportunity for continuous learning is created. The bar is raised in terms of expectations as students are allowed space to nurture interests and time to learn how to communicate with peers in the classroom. The distance between the child's "actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving" and the higher level of "potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" is what Vygotsky describes as the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978, p 86 as cited in Wertsch, p. 67-68). The zone projects the optimistic viewpoint of student potential being met. Analysis of ZPD offers a solution to the problem of how a child can become "what he not yet is". Vygotsky refers to skills not yet matured but in the process of maturation as the 'buds' or 'flowers' of development

rather than ‘fruits’ of development (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86 as cited in Wertsch, p. 67-68). The premise of ZPD suggests that in order to understand higher mental functioning on the intra-psychological (personal) plane, one must also examine its inter-psychological (social) precursors.

Much like adults in academic situations, young learners adopt an academic discourse or interplay of “teacher talk” modeled in the classroom (McCormack, 1997, p. 36). The authoritative discourse originates from instruction, rules, directions, and models, which Bakhtin refers to as “reciting by heart” (1986, cited in McCormack, 1997, p. 36). The language of the text influences students’ language use in discussions. Precise language from stories is used to embellish discussions. Intertextual connections describe events from story to story. Students use the words of their peers to inform, reword, and rework their own ideas (McCormack, 1997, p. 37). As students grapple with text, they make use of their personal experiences and understanding about events first to construct individual meaning, then to contribute to the group construction of meaning. Bakhtin refers to such discourse, or discussion, as “telling in one’s own words” or using “internally persuasive discourse”.

Second, literature circles emphasize the importance of small group cooperative learning led by peers. When children are talking in a group without an adult present, responsibility for the management of the talk falls on themselves: they must negotiate who talks, when and how; cope with occasional conflict and with silences; encourage others to make contributions while controlling attempts to dominate; judge the relevance of contributions; monitor whether the discussion is germane to the task; and maintain some judgment of quality of the discussion to know when they have reached a stopping point (Barnes & Todd, 1977). Research on interaction in the classroom indicates that in class discussion it is the teacher who manages and controls the discourse. Not only do teachers do most of the talking, but they also take responsibility for the

content, pacing and style of pupil contributions. Teachers decide the topic for discussion, nominate some students to speak, hush other students, and judge the relevance of student contributions.

Barnes and Todd (1977) conducted an empirical study of thirteen-year-olds of average IQ working in small groups on tasks, which their teachers had set. When recordings were played back to the teachers, their reactions were both of surprise and delight. They were surprised by the quality of the children's discussions far exceeding the caliber of students' responses in class; they were pleased to hear unexpected skills and competencies. It seems to be often assumed that if children are to reach a deeper knowledge, or to increase their understanding, this will only be possible under the direct guidance and control of the teacher. Notions of schooling present students as passive receivers of learning. Teachers know, but pupils do not; if they do, they know imperfectly according to Barnes and Todd (1977). They concluded that under certain circumstances at least, children are able to talk to good purpose, and to increase their understanding, without calling on adult resources. They do not deny the importance and necessity of the teacher nor argue that small group methods are necessarily a good thing in themselves. They do conclude that children are often underestimated, and that they possess skills and competencies, which are rarely called upon in a conventional classroom. This is where the importance of small group discussion lies; here is where many of these skills are manifested and if they are not drawn on in class, it follows that the teacher may never know that these skills exist according to Barnes and Todd (1977). Their poignant findings suggest that to place responsibility in the learners' hands changes the nature of that learning by requiring them to negotiate their own criteria of relevance and truth, to relate new knowledge to old. Furthermore, if schooling is to prepare young people for responsible adult life, such learning has an important

place in the repertoire of social relationships, which teachers have at their disposal (Barnes & Todd, 1977).

Courtney Cazden (2001) describes classrooms among the most crowded environments of human existence. Few adults spend as many hours per day in such crowded conditions with one person, the teacher, responsible for controlling all the talk that occurs both negatively, as a traffic cop does to avoid collisions, but also positively, to enhance the purposes of education (p.2). Since her first edition of Classroom Discourse The Language of Teaching and Learning, (1988), Cazden addresses evidence of significant changes in the nature of the workplace and of civil society. Studies conducted by two educational economists, Murnane and Levy (1996) suggest the abilities required of current high school graduates to get decent, high-wage jobs calls for a list of “new basic skills” that include: ability to read at the ninth-grade level or higher; the ability to solve semi-structured problems where hypotheses must be formed and tested; the ability to work in groups with persons of various backgrounds; and the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Activities are needed that exemplify the social good by ordinary people. Schools are charged with the duty to create not only individual human capital for a healthy economy, but collective social capital for healthy communities as well says Cazden (2001). Curriculum standards now place less emphasis on products, facts or procedures to be learned in favor of processes and strategies for learning and doing. Teachers are being asked to deliberately give up relying so heavily on the traditional three-part pattern of classroom lessons- Initiation/Response/Evaluation (IRE)- that best fits the transmissions of facts and routinized procedures. They are being asked to add nontraditional discussions that serve better to stimulate and support “higher-order-thinking” across the curriculum, according to Cazden (2001, p. 5).

For the past decade, teachers have implemented reader response approaches to literature as part, if not all, of their literacy development programs, according to Spiegel (1998). Children, teachers, and parents often embrace the reader response approach with enthusiasm. Results of reader response studies indicate children enjoy reading more (Samway et al., 1991; Swift, 1993; Yocom, 1993), do read more (Anzul, 1993; Borders & Naylor, 1993; McMahon, 1994), and are more engaged in their reading (Encisco, 1992; Knipping & Andre, 1988; Many & Wiseman, 1992; Noll, 1994; Nystrand & Gamoran, 1991 as cited in Spiegel, p. 41). Spiegel (1998) contends that children involved in reader response approaches such as literature circles do become better responders and better readers.

1.5. Contribution of the Study

In general, this study contributes to the body of research promoting best classroom reading practices for producing independent readers and thinkers in literature discussion groups. Specifically, the contribution is in three areas: students' roles, interactions, and responses to literature.

First, this study will contribute an understanding of how student roles and identities emerge across time. To date, no study on literature circles was found by this researcher that examines the evolutionary paths by which students adopt and enact the rotating roles of: discussion king, word wizard, passage master, masterpiece maker, or royal connector.

Second, this study will contribute a fuller understanding of how student interaction evolves across an extended period of time—an entire school year. To date, studies of literature circles have only looked at interactions during shorter periods of time (one day, week or month).

Analysis of student interactions will focus how students use each other as resources to clarify, confirm, and expand ideas (Bayer, 1990, p. 99) about the texts they are reading.

Third, this study will contribute a more refined understanding of how student response and personal evocation to text in the peer-mediated literature circle discussions develop over an entire school year. To date, few studies have been found that use Rosenblatt's (1978) conception of aesthetic response as a lens for examining literature circle patterns of response. This study will contribute to our long-term understanding of how peer-mediated discussion shapes individual student response.

1.6. Guiding Questions

1. How does the taking on of roles affect students' ability to initiate and carry on their own discussions in literature circles?
2. What are the results over time in terms of interactions created by third-graders conducting their own conversations about books in literature circles?
3. What are the results over time in terms of responses created by third-graders conducting their own conversations about books in literature circles?
4. What role does the teacher play in shaping how students take on roles, interact, and respond?

1.7. Limitations of the Study

A reasonable interpretation of the findings of this study depends upon the characteristics of descriptive, qualitative research. Specific descriptions of actions within the setting of the present study are difficult to generalize due to the small study sample. The study involved my

classroom of 21 third-grade students with a focus on the cases of three males representing a cross section of ability levels: low, middle and high. The intent was to explore students' role taking, interactions and responses that ensued in the classroom environment during peer-led literature circle events.

As a participant observer, all perspectives are personal ones. It is conceivable that other researchers would have quite different ideas about some of the events reported here. Although many of the children's responses and the literature circle context were discussed with teachers and other adults involved, the final analysis reflects primarily the perception of a single investigator.

It is also a matter of some importance that a participant observer in any setting becomes a part of that setting, and changes it in ways that may be difficult to assess. In this case, as the classroom teacher responsible for the introduction and implementation of the literature circle format, it is conceivable that there have been indirect influences, which have gone unrecognized.

1.8. Definitions of Terms

1.8.1. Literature Circle

Small group of students gathered together to discuss a piece of literature in depth (Schlick Noe & Johnson, 1999). For instance, four to five students are seated close to one another, talking about a book they are reading, using text to inform, confirm, laugh, argue, and share for purposes that are largely of the students own choosing.

1.8.2. Roles

Positions and identities taken by individuals of a group to make sure that all members are involved and make a contribution of the group's efforts (Lyman and Foyle, 1990). Role descriptions according to the literature circle discussion format of this study have been adapted from Daniels (1994, 2002) to match the "castle and lore" theme for the year and include: discussion king, passage master, word wizard, royal connector, and masterpiece maker.

1.8.3. Interactions

The exchange and stimulation of cognitive processes in a learning environment (Bayer, 1990). Johnson and Johnson (1994, p. 48-49) suggest patterns of interaction may be promotive (students use each other as resources to clarify, confirm, and expand ideas), oppositional (students may obstruct each other's efforts to achieve), or no interaction (students work without interaction focusing only on their own achievements and ignoring the efforts of others).

1.8.4. Responses

Students' personal evocation of text (Rosenblatt, 1978). For instance, when a child expresses delight or disdain from his interpretation of a piece of text, or recognizes the rhythms of the language of nursery rhymes, asks questions, looks for important elements or themes, or makes personal connections with the text, he creates active, on-going thinking about text regarded as making responses (Keene and Zimmerman, 1997).

1.8.5. Literature Circle Schedule

A teacher-created organizer provided for students to track their daily reading during literature circles in terms dates, chapters, and roles. Included in the schedule are various job descriptions and memory aids to assist in the performance

1.8.6. Discussion King –

A teacher-created role derived from Daniels' (1994) Discussion Director. The term “king” vs. “director” was chosen to coincide with the classroom theme and stationery of castles and lore. A discussion king writes down questions that his/her group might want to discuss about a part of the book.

1.8.7. Word Wizard –

A teacher-created role derived from Daniels' (1994) Vocabulary Enricher. The term ‘wizard’ was chosen to coincide with the classroom theme and stationery of castles and lore. A word wizard finds words from the reading selection and writes them down to talk about with his/her group. Words may be new, different, strange, funny, interesting, important, or hard.

1.8.8. Passage Master –

A teacher-created role derived from Daniels' (1994) Literary Luminary. The term was chosen to coincide with the classroom theme and stationery of castles and lore. A passage master chooses parts of the story to read aloud to his/her group. The idea is to help people remember story parts that are interesting, powerful, funny, puzzling, or important, says Daniels (1994, p. A2).

1.8.9. Royal Connector –

A teacher-created role derived from Daniels' (1994) Connector. The term was chosen to coincide with the classroom theme and stationery of castles and lore. A connector's job is to find connections between the book and the world outside. Connections can be to one's own life, happenings at school or in the neighborhood, similar events at other times and places, to other

people or problems, to other books or stories, to other writings on the same topics, or to other writings by the same author.

1.8.10. Masterpiece Maker –

A teacher-created role derived from Daniels' (1994) Artful Artist. The term was chosen to coincide with the classroom theme and stationery of castles and lore. A masterpiece maker draws something about the story to share with his/her group such as a character, the setting, a problem, an exciting part, a surprise, a prediction of what will happen next, or anything else preferred. When the group meets, they guess what the drawing is about and talk about it first. The artist can then tell about his/her construction and interpretation of the drawing.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is three-fold. First, a historical tracing of the concept of book groups in America provides a sense of the legacy inherent in children reading and discussing books in small groups of friends. Second, the most recent research regarding children's literature circle discussion groups is presented. Of particular relevance to this investigation is the concept of role/identity formation during literature circle discussions and the responses and interactions that are shaped by role-playing activity. Finally, the theories of social construction of literacy and cooperative learning are presented as they relate to literature circles.

2.2. Historical Reference

Book groups have been around since the dawn of American history (Laskin & Hughes, 1995). Anne Hutchinson, a Puritan religious leader, is credited with forming America's first literary discussion group. While sailing from England to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1634 she supposedly gathered her fellow female passengers each week to talk about that Sunday's sermon. Once in Boston, she invited interested women to her parlor twice each week for sermon discussions. As the group progressed from literary analysis to theological disputation, it quickly faced the wrath of the male Puritan establishment. Hutchinson was banished for "troubling the peace of the commonwealth" and "maintaining a meeting and an assembly condemned as a thing not tolerable nor comely in the sight of God nor fitting for your sex" (Laskin & Hughes, 1995, p,

2). The markedly female venture continued into the 1800s once Puritanism relaxed. A group formed in Chelsea, Connecticut was determined to “enlighten the understanding and expand the ideas of its members.” (p. 3) Reading parties in Boston invited male lecturers in the late 1840s into homes to speak and linger to exchange ideas with a mostly female audience. Elizabeth Peabody, owner of a bookshop at West Street, Boston, held in-store book groups for conversations, the forerunners to Barnes & Noble and Borders Books’ discussion groups, perhaps. Freed African-American women living in eastern cities in the early 1830s were determined to acquire an education and discovered they would have to do it themselves. Book groups served as their classrooms. The out-cropping of book clubs spread all on its own, without being fueled by any mass media for the sole purpose of “intellectual inquiry and aspiration”(Laskin & Hughes, 1995, p. 4).

Sociologists, such as Elizabeth Long, studied the phenomenal outgrowth of book clubs across America. Her impression was that group members valued belonging to such groups because of the special kind of socializing. Members enjoyed talk about ideas; their thoughts about books were enriched by having other people’s lives to draw on (Laskin & Hughes, 1995, p. 15).

By the end of 1946, 20,000 people were participating in the Great Books Movement. The idea behind the movement was initiated by Professor John Erskine at Columbia University, New York around the time of World War I. Erskine assigned his students readings in the great books of western literature and then led discussions of the texts. In 1929, University of Chicago president, Robert M. Hutchins, and his colleague, Mortimer J. Adler, assembled a reading list and discussion seminar similar to Erskine’s. The discussions became so popular, that Hutchins and Adler took the idea beyond the university walls to high schools and other adult groups.

Cheaper paperback editions were printed to assure public accessibility. The Great Books Foundation was established in 1947 as an independent, nonprofit educational corporation that continues today by promoting the reading and discussion of literature from kindergarten through grade twelve as well as adults of all ages. Leaders are trained to promote small group discussions of preselected sets of paperbacks described as great works of literature. A shared inquiry method of reading and discussion focuses on interpretive questions about the meaning of a work that have no single correct answer. The goal is “to develop in all students the skills, habits, and attitudes that characterize successful readers who think for themselves and have the persistence of mind to reach for meaning (An Introduction to Shared Inquiry, 1991, p. 59).”

The popular term “literature circle” grew out of Kathy G. Short’s work with Jerry Harste and Carolyn Burke on the authoring cycle (Short, 1986). The authoring cycle was developed as a curricular framework for the writing process which focused on the importance of building from children’s life experiences, writing for a wide variety of purposes, taking new perspectives on some pieces of writing by sharing them with peers, revising, and editing those pieces, publishing them, reflecting on strategies of writing, and continuing the cycle through new invitations and actions (Short, p. ix as cited in Hill, Johnson, & Schlick Noe, 1995). The author circles where students brought rough draft pieces of writing to a small group for their response were impressive with talk that occurred as students worked collaboratively thinking and exploring together as authors. To Short and her colleagues, the authoring cycle was a metaphor for learning, not just writing. Children author meaning in any learning context. They build from their own life experiences and are involved in many authentic engagements with meaning. As they consider these engagements, they collaborate with others, revise their understandings, present their new understandings publicly, reflect on their learning, and take new actions and

invitations (Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988, Short & Burke, 1991 as cited in Hill, Johnson, & Schlick Noe, 1995). Literature circles became the missing piece realized by Short and colleagues to become the counter part to author circles. Children were becoming fluent readers who loved books and read extensively, without thinking deeply and critically about what they read (p. x).

Literature circles provide a curricular structure to support children in exploring their rough draft understandings of literature with other readers. Literature circles encourage children to expand and critique their understandings about their reading through dialogue with other readers. These circles are based on the belief that reading is a transactional process where students actively construct understandings by bringing meaning to as well as taking meaning from a text (Rosenblatt, 1978). Students' primary focus is not on extracting information from a text, figuring out the interpretation the teacher wants to hear, or learning about literary elements. They enter the world of literature to learn about life and to make sense of the world (Hill, Johnson, & Schlick Noe, 1995, p. x).

Literature circles are not a variation on reading groups. They are not a better way to teach reading. They are a place to think and inquire. This is not to say that students do not learn about language and explore reading strategies during these groups. They do, but the primary focus of a literature circle is not the reading process but on life and inquiry. In older classrooms students often partner read with each other. The issue is not whether they can read the books, but whether they can productively think together about the books (Hill, Johnson, & Schlick Noe, 1995, p. x).

The August 2000 issue of Primary Voices K-6 is entirely dedicated to literature circles: “Literature Circles: Growing our Reading Lives”. Teaching reading through literature study grows from a central belief that readers construct meaning from their transaction with texts- all through their personal lenses of life experiences. Five essential strands of thinking guide teaching of reading through literature study (circles) according to Holt and Halliwell Bell (2000): building community, the literature itself, choice, talk, and assessment. Peterson & Eeds (p. 10, 1990 as cited in Holt & Halliwell Bell, 2000 p. 3) contend that “literature knits a group together and contribute to building a community. When readers gather around powerful literature, communities develop as students live together through the experience of the story. “We begin to know each other as readers, writers, learners, as human beings,” (Eeds & Peterson, 1997, p. 55). Literature is both the “how we get there” and the “where we want to be.” Literature helps form the community and then it becomes the community itself that helps students have even more powerful encounters with literature. A community is built on trust and caring. A community enables students to take risks and make themselves vulnerable by voicing their own ideas for others to talk about, critique, and either accept or reject.

Books of value that extend a reader’s experiences, foster an understanding of people, provide relief and escape, build information and taste for language, or move a reader to action, to feel, to question, to examine traditions and cultures, to provoke them to think about how they view the world are made available. When children are invited to reflect on what they have read, something must be there for them to reflect on (Watson & Davis, 1988, p. 64-65).

Having choices in reading most likely yields commitment over requirement. Groups of students join circles based on interest, not ability or test scores. “Cognitively choice acts as a propeller in learning” (Short, Harste, & Burke, 1996, p. 320 as cited in Holt & Halliwell Bell,

2000, p. 5). Students come to consensus about how many pages to read, what kind of response to focus on for their next meeting, for example.

Through talk, students build a shared understanding that broadens the ideas and connections of each member. Participation within a literature circle gives each reader access to multiple points of view, new ways to think about and organize information (Barnes, 1993). As students retell or re-experience text they sort out or confirm what they understand. Barnes (1993) refers to this kind of talk as “thinking out loud” or a precursor to deeper level insight and dialogue suggested by Peterson & Eeds (1990, p. 10). Following the re-experiencing phase conversation moves to what Barnes calls exploratory talk. This is when students hesitate, rephrase, and add qualifiers to their think alouds. Now they struggle to make sense of a new idea. Small groups offer the support needed for this risk-taking mode.

Assessment is a realistic part of a reading circle model. However, reading is not considered a means to an end where correct answers are predetermined. Rather, the most compelling assessment takes place while students are engaged in literature circle talk. Evaluations are learner referenced, focused on efforts as well as achievements and fostering risk-taking rather than fear of low test scores. Anecdotal records of student interactions, listening to dialogue, captures what students are doing and what is valued as acceptance, respect, timely responses, rethinking, participation. Self-evaluation assesses things like being prepared and actively participating (Holt & Halliwell Bell, 2000).

For the purposes of this study, Harvey Daniels’ model of literature circles using roles is of primary interest. According to Daniels, his model (see Chapter I) was born of work by Becky Abraham Searle in 1981. Teaching a multi-age classroom 4-5-6, Searle devised four simple role sheets that gave each group member a task: discussion director, literary luminary, vocabulary

enricher and process checker. Using and rotating the roles, she found that students had deeper, more independent, more self-sustaining discussions. After several cycles of role-structured discussions, she withdrew the role sheets and had students record their ideas and questions in response logs, which turned out to support the reading process and the group meetings as much as role sheets had. Daniels (1994) credits Searle's work with roles and literature circles as influencing teachers all across North America. Beach and Hynds (1991) contend that few longitudinal or long-range studies of readers' orientations exist. The roles, goals, strategies, or stances readers learn to adopt for certain texts or social contexts need to be explored. This study will examine children's role-playing activities and interactions as they conduct discussions of books during literature circles.

2.3. Research on Literature Circles

2.3.1. Breaking Tradition.

The idea of formulating book groups for discussion by children has become a popular literature event in today's classrooms, although not always so. Today concern for developing students' ability to have conversations about literature seems to follow the spreading grassroots movement of adult book group discussions. The traditional model of schooling that teaches students to regurgitate correct responses to post-reading questions, is making way for the growing body of research that supports the value replacing the IRE (initiating, responding, evaluating) question-reading cycle with a discussion format. The new model suggests students are capable of carrying on conversations much like adults when they share their impressions about a book. Nation-wide endorsement of "Standards for the English Language Arts" in 1996

promotes literature-based, collaborative classrooms where students take increasing responsibility for choosing, reading, and discussing books and other texts. Students are encouraged to explore a wide range of books representing different cultures, periods, and regions and to read for enjoyment as well as information as one of the “best classroom practices” in the teaching of reading and writing.

2.3.2. Growing Pains.

What is remarkable, according to Richard Allington, in Moving Forward with Literature Circles (2002) is that the importance of developing students’ ability to have conversations around literature has been ignored by some educators. Allington contends perhaps standardized testing or the powerful “grammar of schooling” logic described by Tyack and Cuban in Tinkering Toward Utopia (1995) are to blame. “Little has changed in the way schools divide time and space, classify students, allocate them to classrooms, splinter knowledge into “subjects,” and award grades and “credits” as evidence of learning (p. 85)”. As early as 1902, John Dewey warned against “the manner in which the machinery of instruction bears upon the child... and really controls the whole system (Dewey, 1902, as cited in Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 85). Traditionally, responding to post-reading questions has been the typical school-aged child’s reason to read in school. Teacher training courses and curriculum materials pay more attention to questioning than fostering classroom discussions, according to Allington (2002). Yet a body of research contends that reading achievement can be boosted by engaging students in discussions about what they read. Some examples follow.

2.3.3. Promising Results.

Knapp (1995) found that high-poverty students’ reading achievement improved when they had opportunity to discuss what they had read. Fall, Webb, and Chudowsky (2000)

reported that performance on reading comprehension of short passages dramatically improved once students had even brief opportunities to discuss passages with peers (cited by Allington in Day, Spiegel, McLellan, & Brown, 2002, p.8). Effective classrooms described by Guthrie and Alvermann (1999, in Fall, Webb, & Chudowsky) find children engaged in conversations about what they read as more motivated to read. However, Spiegel (1998) argues being engaged and motivated to read does not necessarily mean that children grow in their ability to respond to literature or in their ability to read. She contends that children involved in reader response approaches do become better responders and better readers. Her review of the past decade of research indicates growth in students' responding to literature occurs in at least six areas: (1) they develop ownership of what they read and of their response (Jacque, 1993; Crawford & Hoopingarner, 1993; Garan, 1994; Anzul, 1993; Freedman, 1993; Stewart, Paradis, Ross, & Lewis, 1996; Fuhler, 1994; Turner & Paris, 1995; Daniels, 1994; and Barnes & Todd, 1977), (2) they make personal connections with literature, their own lives, and the world (Anzul, 1993; Cox & Many, 1992; Crawford & Hoopingarner, 1993; Davala, 1987; Dix, 1993; Enciso, 1992; Galda, 1992; Gilles, 1990, 1993; McMahon, 1994; Many & Wiseman, 1992; Samway et al., 1991; and Swift, 1993), (3) they gain an appreciation for multiple interpretations along with a tolerance for and even expectation of ambiguity (Dias, 1992; Yocum, 1993; Almasi, 1995; Samway et al., 1991; and Chase & Hynd (1987), and (4) they become more reflective and critical readers (Protherough, 1987; Borders & Naylor, 1993; Samway et al., 1991; Sebesta, Monson & Senn, 1995), (5) they move to higher levels of thinking and understanding of literature, (Almasi, 1995; Anzul, 1995; Berger, 1996; Crawford & Hoopingarner, 1993; Kletzien & Hushion, 1992; Many & Wiseman, 1992; and Raphael & McMahon, 1994), and (6) they increase their repertoire

of responses to literature (Enciso, 1992; Gilles, 1993; Raphael & McMahon, 1994; and Samway et al., 1991).

As children experience responding to literature and making meaning of texts, they not only become more adept at doing so and more sophisticated in their responses, they become more strategic readers in the process (Spiegel, 1998, p. 45). Participation in reader response activities leads to a change in children's view of themselves as successful readers (Gilles, 1990; Knipping & Andre, 1988; Kristol, 1993; Samway et al (1991); Stewart et al., 1996). Spiegel suggests for those with most to gain, such as less able readers (Annul, 1993) also Dugan (1996), and diverse learners such as learning disabled or ESL students (Goatley, Brock, & Raphael, 1995), change seems most evident. Students grow in confidence and sense of control as they begin to trust their own judgments and gain their own voices of opinion (Smith, 1992; Daniels, 1994; Kneeler, 1994; Samway et al, 1991).

Several studies indicate students participating in reader response activities perform better on standardized tests compared to teacher, text-dominated programs (Misbrand & Gomorra, 1991; Swift, 1993) or as well as students in programs with specifically taught tested skills (Raphael & McMahon, 1994; Stewart et al, 1996 as cited in Spiegel, 1998, p. 46). Atwell (1987) describes a cohort of her eighth graders moved from the 54th percentile to the 72nd percentile after a year of reading workshop. Research funded by a grant from The Chicago Annenberg Challenge led by Harvey Daniels and colleagues between 1995 and 1998 at the Center for City Schools proposed support for the development of instruction in a group of struggling Chicago schools. The intervention focused on helping teachers implement literature circles as part of a reading-writing workshop approach. Training involved summer institutes and school-year support, delivered by peer consultants who had used these strategies in their own classrooms.

According to Daniels (2002, p.8) schoolwide results outstripped citywide test score gains by 14 percent in third grade, 9 percent in sixth grade and 10 percent in eighth grade. Writing gains topped citywide efforts by 25 percent in third grade, 8 percent in sixth grade, and 27 percent in eighth grade. Although treatment results could not be specifically matched with test results, teachers were convinced their literature circles worked to help students become readers and to prove they are readers on the mandated measures of proficiency.

Other research suggests similar promising outcomes. “A 1998 study of fourth graders by Klinger, Vaughn, and Schumm found that students in peer-led groups made greater gains than control groups in reading comprehension and equal gains in content knowledge after reading and discussing social studies material (Daniels, 2002 p. 8)”. The results were confirmed through a standardized reading test, a social studies unit test and audio- tapes of group work. Researchers found that 65 percent of students’ small group talk was academic and content-related, 25 percent was procedural, 8 percent feedback, and only 2 percent off-task.

Martinez-Roldan and Lopez-Robertson (2000) studied the effects of literature circles in a first grade bilingual classroom. They found that “young bilingual children are able to have rich discussions if they have regular opportunities to engage with books” (Daniels, 2002, p.8). Many of the Spanish-dominant children were more eager and ready to make personal connections with stories than the English speakers, who tended to stick closer to the text on the page. The Hispanic children demonstrated their connections through the telling of extended stories, a style of response that English-speaking students did not (Daniels, 2002, p. 8).

In 1999 Dana Grisham of San Diego State University, organized the first panel at the American Educational Research Association to focus on literature circles, according to Daniels (2002). Her bibliography can be found on the literature circles website at

www.literaturecircles.com. Among the research studies on literature circles catalogued by Grisham, cited by Daniels (2002, p. 9), are Pardo (1992) benefiting inner-city students; incarcerated adolescents (Hill & Van Horn, 1995); “resistant learners” (Hauschildt & McMahon, 1996); second-language learners (Macgillivray, 1995); and English-as-a-foreign-language learners (Dupuy, 1997). Other study results indicate increased student enjoyment of and engagement in reading (Fox and Wilkinson, 1997); increased multicultural awareness (Hansen-Krening, 1997); increased social outlets for students (Alvermann, 1997); expanded children’s discussion opportunities (Kaufmann et al., 1997); increased multicultural awareness (Hansen-Krening, 1997); promotion of other perspectives on social issues (Noll, 1994) and gender equity (Evans, Alvermann, & Anders, 1998).

2.3.4. Book Club Boom.

Today, Daniels claims that millions of students are involved in some kind of small, peer-led reading discussion group. Throughout the country teachers are inventing and reinventing literature circles. Adults are enjoying a renewed passion for book clubs estimated at 50,000 in 1990, which doubled at the turn of the millennium according to Daniels (2002). The book club boom is being supported by The Random House website which lists more than 100 book club study guides available for downloading. The discussion guides promote multiple-copy sales in a low cost way. The regenerated Oprah Book Club of 2003 continues to soar book sales and has instituted study guides for East of Eden (Steinbeck, 1982) to assist reading and journeys to story settings. Such nationwide interest will continue to spur and stir reading among adults that aptly influences the children. Such positive conditions both in schools and in the wider culture have coalesced to support the rapid growth of book clubs for students (Daniels, 2002, p. 4).

The body of research on literature groups is growing rapidly. Contemporary literature groups used by classroom teachers appear under many different names (literature studies, book clubs, literature discussion groups, literature circles, cooperative book discussion groups, conversational discussion groups, transactional discussion groups), and often combine divergent ingredients such as teacher control versus student autonomy, assigned versus chosen books, assigned roles versus no assigned roles. Choosing one type of group format over another requires some consideration. Which discussion format is most developmentally appropriate for a particular classroom or grade level or the teacher for that matter is a matter of choice. What is already being done in terms of sharing and talking about books in the classroom must be determined. Will students conduct peer-led groups or be led by the teacher? Among the peer-led groups, will students take on roles to conduct their discussions or will discussions spring naturally without roles? Perhaps the title of a group format is of little significance compared to the contributions group discussions about books can bring to children's literate lives. Are students learning independent thinking, sharing ideas with peers, supporting each other, respecting opinions of others and learning new perspectives beyond themselves? My personal choice in response to a format that encourages independent thinking and sharing of books is one that allows students to lead their own small group discussions with the revolving responsibility of rotating roles in preparation for those discussions. The title for such groups suggested by Harvey Daniels (1994, 2002) is literature circles. As I reviewed studies in preparation for this work, it became apparent that educators have adopted the title "literature circles" in formats with and without role-playing. Some say they use roles, but don't after all. Others allude to role-playing without really describing tasks. Most studies described renditions of small groups of children being led by teachers through guided interpretations of books. An explanation might be

that there is no best way to initiate a format for developing literature discussion groups (circles) in the individual classroom. What works for one may not work for another. Key parts of the formula seem to appear across the board. What differs is the role-playing aspect. A review of the research on literature circles with or without role-playing and other generic discussion groups which may or may not utilize roles follows.

2.4. Literature Circles with Role-Playing.

Recent studies of using literature circles in the classroom as a format for literature discussion with role-playing activity is limited. Of the studies examined in preparation for this work, only five referred to literature group discussions as “literature circles” and utilized role-playing in some way as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Literature Circle Studies with Role Playing

Researcher	Grade	#Roles	Assigned	Sustained	Evolved
Bowran	7	5	Yes	Yes	No
	5	5	Yes	Yes	No
	4	5	Yes	Yes	No
Wellman	3	4	Yes	Yes	No
	5	5	Yes	Yes	No
	8	6	Yes	Yes	No
Mizerka	6	5	Yes	Yes	No
Olmstead	6	5	Yes	Yes	No
Bandermann	4	3	Yes	Yes	No

Bowran (2001) studied how teachers and students in grades 4, 5, and 7 participated in literature circle conversations with role- playing. Her study addresses a transactional view of reading which features three critical aspects of transactional theory (Beach, 1993; Langer, 1990, Ransom, 1941, Rosenblatt, 1994):

- a) The reader actively draws from personal experience and prior knowledge to create initial meanings as he reads and discusses.
- b) The reader is dynamically involved with the text as he draws on his initial understandings to build further meaning from text, and then uses these constructed meanings to explore and refine his earlier understanding.
- c) The reader creates meaning in non-linear ways as he revisits previous interpretations throughout his reading and explores related issues (Bowran, 2002, p. 52).

The role structure common to Daniels (1994, 2002) encourages students to take different perspectives and to respect and value the thoughts of others, according to Bowran. Roles give students a framework for their continuing conversations even when the teacher is not present (Bowran, 2001, p. 52). Care must be taken, however, to avoid roles becoming just a routine part

of literature circles. Rather, students' preparation for role taking in literature circle assignments should affect a shift in responsibility from the teacher to the students to create meaningful, personalized conversations with peers. Literature circles are used by Bowran as a structure to engage students in conversations beyond surface level interactions with books and into thoughtful transactions and lively discussions. Grounded in a transactional view of reading, Bowran expands the work of Langer (1990) by examining ways teachers facilitate students' transactions with text and addresses practical and theoretical questions about literature circles to promote a transactional view of reading. She uses Langer's (1995) "envisionment building" terminology to identify four categories of transactions coded during literature circle events: envisioning, interpreting, personalizing, and evaluating. (1) Langer defines an envisionment as a text-world in the mind that differs from person to person- the world of understanding a person has at any one point in time. It is always open to change which she refers to as "envisionment building". "Understanding is interpretation," says Langer, "and people have options available to develop their interpretations" (Langer, p.15). These options she refers to as stances, or vantage points. The First Stance, or Being Out and Stepping into an Envisionment occurs when we begin to read and are trying to gather enough ideas to get a sense of what the work will be about. Envisionment can also occur throughout reading if comprehension becomes derailed, or when an event causes us to become puzzled and lose focus (p. 16). The Second Stance: Being In and Moving Through and Envisionment (interpreting, Bowran, 2001) refers to the vantage point where "we take new information and immediately use it to go beyond what we already understand. We use personal knowledge, the text, and the context to furnish ideas and spark our thinking. We ask questions about motives, feelings, causes, interrelationships; we call upon our knowledge of the text, ourselves, others, life and the world to elaborate upon and make

connections among our thoughts” (Langer, p. 17). The Third Stance: Stepping Out and Rethinking What One Knows (personalizing, Bowran, 2001) Langer describes as a vantage point from which we are helped in sorting out our own lives. It does not occur as often as the other stances partly because all works don’t necessarily make an impact or give cause for reflection (p. 18). Stance Four: Stepping Out and Objectifying the Experience (evaluating, Bowran, 2001) is the vantage point where we distance ourselves from the environment we have developed and reflect back on it. We can get a more analytical, look at literary elements, focus on the author’s craft or the text’s structure and judge them and relate them to other works and experiences (p. 18-19).

Study findings demonstrate the importance of developing teacher expertise in facilitating grand conversations. The teachers in this study initiated most of the transacting even though students had roles to prepare for discussion. One teacher maintained the same literature circle groups throughout the entire year; another had students repeat the same roles throughout. Gentle inquisitions described by Eeds and Wells, (1989) were used by one teacher to help extend student responses. The teacher began the literature circles and maintained primary responsibility for development by asking students to elaborate on their responses based on their roles. Another used the roles as a routine. She called on each student to share their preparations for role assignment and did not make use of roles to shift responsibility to students, according to Bowran. Students usually shared with her instead of others. Sometimes natural conversations were observed; however, they were intermingled and typically stimulated by teacher directives or prompts.

As a participant-observer, fifteen-year veteran teacher, Debra Baker Wellman (2000), also investigated three teachers as they began to implement literature circles with their students.

She contended that literature circles have the potential to link Dewey's (1939) theory of learning and Rosenblatt's (1994) theory of transactional reading: genuine learning takes place through connected experiences that take place in a relaxed atmosphere where students engage in authentic experiences; reading is an interactive process between the reader and the text.

Wellman's purpose was to examine how teachers interpreted, developed, and incorporated the fundamentals of literature circles. The setting for her study rested in three classrooms of third, fifth, and eighth graders. Each of the teachers varied in number of years of experience, type of school, socioeconomic status, and teachers' depth of knowledge about literature circles.

Findings suggest they struggled with a variety of issues that should be of concern to anyone wanting to implement literature circles: (1) monitoring students' understanding of the text, (2) integrating skills with authentic literature experiences, and (3) wrestling with issues of control, especially teachers' roles (Wellman, p.iv).

Using a continuum scale to rate the teaching techniques of each of the teacher participants from a high, moderate, to somewhat Traditional/Behaviorist view to a somewhat, moderate, high Collaborative/Constructive view, the following eleven categories were ranked to show visually how each teacher fared in her implementation of literature circles: 1) number of students in each group, 2) discussions, 3) participation, 4) book choice, 5) amount read, 6) how a book is read, 7) response, 8) roles, 9) vocabulary, 10) mini-lessons, and 11) assessment.

Wellman concludes that the third grade teacher's experiences with literature circles did not fit the definition of true literature circles. The teacher never strayed far from traditional methods of teaching though she divided the students into small groups. The text chosen was an abridged version of *Treasure Island* (Stevenson, 1990 as cited in Wellman, p.181), written for third graders. Roles of discussion director, word finder, passage picker, and artful artist were

introduced, but never used to support discussion. Rather role sheets adapted from Daniels (1994) sadly became skill sheets students needed to complete to receive a grade (p. 181). Literature circle meetings never turned into discussions; they were described as turn-taking sessions of reading their answers from role sheets.

The fifth grade teacher also adapted roles from Daniels (1994) including: discussion leader, passage master, connector, vocabulary enricher, and illustrator to implement literature circles. Though she firmly believed in the power of authentic literature and natural discussions of text; she felt the need to monitor her students' understanding of the text and supplemented literature circles with traditional methods such as comprehension checks in the form of quizzes, according to Wellman. The conflicts she felt were ignored as she continued to mix collaborative learning with traditional methods where she was able to control the discourse. In comparison, the eighth grade teacher seemed to rank as most constructive on the continuum scale according to Wellman. Her natural ability to take risks with her students became a benefit to the implementation phase. Already familiar with collaborative classroom structures, she quickly aligned literature circle techniques with already established teaching techniques she found comfortable. Students were required to come to their literature circles with completed role sheets. Each was required to journal about the reading, locate two "think about it" questions, and write down any new words they came across in their readings. Literature circles were formed based on student choice from a variety of seven books. Wellman's cross-analysis of the three case studies yielded three major areas of teacher concern regarding implementing literature circles: (1) how could they monitor students' understanding of the text and continue to teach reading skills, (2) how could they turn control of the learning over to the learner and (3) how could they identify their new teaching roles in literature circle instruction.

Nuances of significance emerged as each of the case studies was developed: each of the teachers (1) found literature circles “too difficult” for some of their students, (2) insisted on equal number of students per group, (3) segmented their curriculum, (4) refused to allow students to work with friends, and 5) dominated discourse and encouraged their students to adopt the same patterns of discourse (Wellman, p 183). It is Wellman’s hope that the discomforts felt by the three teachers at various levels of experience may serve to alleviate the discomfort felt by other teachers as they face implementing new teaching techniques.

Olmstead (2001) initiated a six week study, as part of her master’s thesis, by utilizing literature circles with roles described by Daniels (1994), including discussion director, word wizard, travel tracer, artful artist, connector, and e-mailer (her own creation). The e-mailer’s role was created to connect her sixth-graders’ discussions with a class of university teacher candidates. University students read the same book as the sixth-graders and asked thought-provoking questions about the book. Sixth graders responded to the questions during literature circles, wrote summaries of what they had discussed, and e-mailed results back. Her objective was to examine the benefits of using literature circles to promote student motivation to read and improve comprehension. Although roles were utilized, only the newly formed e-mailer role was emphasized in the study. Study results suggest students enjoyed the experience and were motivated to read due to the added responsibility of e-mailing their university buddies. The author observed her students reading more and at times above their reading level because they liked what someone else said about a book. Students claimed to pay more attention to their reading because they knew they would have to be able to discuss it with their group. Because students learned what they needed to do to become better readers, it was inferred that their level of reading improved.

Mizerka (1999) initiated literature circles with her sixth grade class. She looked for any advantages or disadvantages between peer-led vs. teacher led literature circles in terms of attitude toward reading and reading improvement over a twenty-one week period. Comprehension was assessed using a pre and post California Achievement test, portfolios and audio tapes judged with rubrics, criterion reference tests given for each book, and students' records of their daily reading and the ways they verified books. Roles were assigned to the peer-led group and reported to be crucial to the success of the students conducting their own literature circles. Student participation was more spontaneous in peer-led circles. Responses were categorized as being sometimes personal, descriptive, or interpretive. Students in the peer-led circles tended to be more centered and involved in their discussions, according to the author, because the spontaneity and format allowed for greater participation, which was a clear advantage. In contrast, students in the teacher-led circle seemed to be less involved considering the common practice of moving quickly along to the next question once a correct response is given, according to Mizerka. Students needed to wait to be called on to respond, and were not called on that often. Changes in attitude toward reading based on a survey given to both circles indicated no significant change over time between the groups, except that each group showed growth. There were no differences in the reading comprehension of either group as measured on the CAT. Mizerka concluded that while it is necessary for guided, directed learning for those students who need more skills and structure, there is also a time when students must be given the opportunity to stand and think on their own. To always be guided and directed to the right answers, children will never gain the confidence to think on their own. Most interesting in terms of my own study, was one final reflection. Mizerka claimed she would eliminate the summarizer, the character captain, the connector, and the word wizard roles but offered little

insight into the change except to say she would focus on directed written responses and questions and sharing those responses, instead. Among her suggestions for further study is the area of depth and strength of discussion dependent on the type of question asked.

Elaine Bander mann (1997), an ESL instructor and 25-year teaching veteran of Ontario, Canada, studied fourth graders' engagement with text through literature circles and classroom drama. Groups of students met to share books they had read by using roles described by Harvey Daniels (1994) such as "discussion director", "literary luminary", and "vocabulary enricher" to carry out their conversations. Bander mann's initial hesitation to use roles stemmed from concern that the students would rely too heavily on their particular role and not listen and interact easily. She gives the example of a student counting ahead to predict when he would have to read in a traditional reading group. However, in practice, the opposite occurred. With the inclusion of roles students began to identify with the roles they assumed. Students realized the contribution each group member could make as they talked about stories. She concluded generally that this led to greater commitment to prepare for the literature circles and a shared respect for all participants (p.101). Through literature circles and drama students of varied cultural, linguistic, and education experiences worked together and nurtured each other's differing viewpoints to construct meaning personally and collectively (p.105). She discovered a sense of personal and group responsibility which resulted in group cohesiveness (p. 128). They made connections during discussion that stimulated further reading. Opportunities to question the meaning of text, to make predictions for further reading and to negotiate group responses were provided. According to Bander mann, concepts are developed as students express their ideas verbally, as they listen to others, as they respond through writing, as they continue reading (p. 42).

2.5. Literature Circles Without Role-Playing.

Malcolm (1998) describes literature circles at the kindergarten level as “designated groups of children discussing picture books together”, but with no use of role-playing activity other than roles that spring naturally during book discussions as children negotiate talk time and meaning construction. Malcolm examined the actions of kindergarten lab-school students at Pennsylvania State University over an eight-week period as they discussed picture books in peer-led groups following large group read alouds. The intent was to initially introduce the process of small group discussion by reading one book to the whole class during story time, then allowing small groups of students to discuss the same book, without being curious about the books of other groups. The large group reporting at the end would be about a common book heard by all. Time was allotted for children to meet and discuss the same story. Each group had one copy of the book to use in their discussions, which were audio and videotaped to observe and analyze group dynamics, collaboration tactics, and extent of book talk. Students were directed to their unsupervised, prearranged groups, referred to as literature circles, to discuss whatever they wanted to about the story. If they chose to gather art supplies, the decision was spontaneous. A modification made to increase child-centered choice in books shared was to direct the children to select a book from six previously read in order to revisit and discuss. A second experience introduced a more complex approach. This time, students chose books to share in groups after listening to the teacher’s book talks. Periodically, children were interviewed to assess their understanding of the story, or were spoken to informally about their group’s involvement choices. Midway through the study an interview was conducted to assess any changes in attitudes and beliefs or to determine changes made in the strategy implementation. Meet and discuss sessions among the researcher, the teacher and student teacher were held periodically to share experiences with the intervention and assist the interpretation of data. Data were generated

that clearly illustrated the benefits of using literature circles. Children were supported in their learning experiences while being free to interact socially, culturally, and cognitively with peers. Educators can bend and shape literature circles to meet the needs of individual classrooms, according to Malcom. Children take ownership of the process in an atmosphere of support and nurturing. Everyone's voice is considered unique and adds to the dynamics of interaction. Unfortunately, natural, emerging forms of role-playing are not defined.

Rickey (1992) examined literature circles in process in two elementary classrooms, a first grade and fourth grade, to gain insight into the how teachers and students practice them. She began by establishing a definition of literature circles on two levels: first, as a concept or set of beliefs and assumptions about readers and texts; and second, as an observable practice of literacy instruction based on work by Watson and Davis (1988):

Literature circles as instructional practice follow a general pattern. They usually consist of heterogeneous groups of four to eight children who meet regularly both with and without the teacher to discuss a piece of shared literature. The students keep response logs or journals and these written entries often form the basis for discussion. The oral and written response sequence may be extended to visual or performing arts events as the groups share their reading with one another (p 11).

Next she defined response process in reference to the sequence of events and activities that make up literature circles and to the students' oral and written responses and their artistic extensions of response to the texts they read or listen to. Components of literature circles defined in her study include teachers' reasons for using literature circles, teachers' roles in structuring and facilitating response, and the ways the classrooms are organized and used for literature

circles. Also included are the types of responses that emerge in the children's oral and written discourse and artistic extensions to literature in literature circles (p. 12). However, nowhere in the study did students employ role-playing while engaged in literature circles. Rather, the teacher's role seemed to be paramount to Rickey. Her findings suggest that the less-experienced first grade teacher, Max, conducted a more exploratory approach to the use of literature circles and seemingly modeled other levels of response than IRE such as Say Something (the strategy for response developed by Short (1986)). In small groups, readers agree on the amount they will read; when finished, each person takes a turn to "say something" about the passage. Thus, he opened the way for more interpretive responses from his students. In contrast, the fourth grade teacher, Janet, and her students, had a more challenging time changing patterns of communication, according to Rickey. Arbitrary rules were set by the teacher: everyone needed to contribute and everyone needed to say something about the text. Based on Rickey's observations, students interpreted this literally and typically passed a turn around the table making sure all had said something, even if it was a variation of the previous responses. Rickey's rather eye-opening observation for me was that the content of the responses did not seem to matter as much as did making one (1992 p. 277)! These students had spent most of their academic lives in basal readers. Interviews conducted with the fourth graders supported Rickey's observation. Students reported that literature circles were more of a set of separate routines than a process in which reading, talking, and writing about books interrelated (p. 282). Their descriptions of group formations, book distribution, and their teacher's role during literature circles indicated that they shared little of the autonomy associated with the strategy. They did report that they enjoy literature circles over basal reading lessons.

Verna von Unruh (2000) designed a master's level case study to examine fifth-graders' discussions of novels during literature circles. Her purpose was to determine whether certain factors such as quality of the chosen literature (award-winning or not) or how time is spent in a particular group affect quantitative and/or qualitative changes in discourse. The format used in this study only required students to share their individual responses to literature. Students were not required to ask or answer questions which seemed to limit the students' discourse, according to von Unruh (2000, p. iv.) Rather, students read one or two chapters and copied a piece of text from the books that was at least one sentence long, but no longer than a paragraph. Then the students each wrote a half page single-spaced response to that piece of literature. In round-robin fashion, individuals each read a text portion, but not a response. Following group members' commentaries about a passage, the contributing student read his/her response, known as having the "last word". Action proceeded around the table as everyone participated at least in reading chosen bits of text and reading their half-page response. Action could also include improvised dramatic retellings of the text, which seemed to generate a higher percentage of utterances from those groups compared to the no drama retells. Over a three month period, groups met three times per week. Discussions averaged fifteen minutes even though forty minutes were allotted. For the purposes of the study, von Unruh (2000) created limiting parameters to measure differences between groups' reading.

2.6. Literature Discussion Groups Without Role-Playing.

Teacher-researcher, Rachael McCormack, (1995) explored the relationship between effective teaching practices and second-graders peer-led ways of responding in literature

discussions. Her work challenged prevailing practices in classroom settings where teachers take sole responsibility for students' learning. Twenty-seven second graders were observed as they participated in nine peer-led literature discussions about African folk tales that had been read together previously in class. To prepare for the discussion groups, McCormack set clear rules for participation in this peer-led format suggested by Alvermann, Dillon, and O'Brien (1987 as cited in McCormack, p. 39, 1995):

- (1) Discussants should put forth multiple points of view and stand ready to change their minds about the matter under discussion.
- (2) Students should interact with one another as well as with the teacher.
- (3) The interaction should exceed the typical two or three word phrase units common to recitation lessons (p.7).

Through these activities students practiced the prepositional, social, and expressive functions of language (Cazden, 1988, pg. 3). By questioning one another, affirming each others' ideas, elaborating their own and the ideas of others, and supporting ideas through specific examples, students practiced discourse conventions usually reserved for the teacher. Students were asked to create their own groups which could be adjusted by her if needed. Socialization factors were as critical as gender, reading ability and verbal performance. Students were also encouraged to participate in forms of peer talk throughout the day. Much of it was done in whole class discussions where alternative participation structures were encouraged. Students were encouraged to open the discussions by initiating questions, monitoring turn taking, and closing discussions. Student-led sharing times modeled after Michaels and Foster (1986) were conducted on their own without teacher intervention, collaboration, or evaluation. Student leaders led the discussion for each session by calling on other students to share and by

monitoring the behavior of individuals. Community discussion, the second student-led activity, gave students an opportunity to ask questions. The discussions evolved when a student voiced a strong opinion or complaint during class to which the teacher opened the discussion to the floor.

McCormack's students met in their peer response groups approximately every two days to discuss African folktales they had read together in class. McCormack transcribed the third, the sixth, and ninth story discussions in two ways. First she explored the general patterns of interactions in each group, focusing on the speaker's purpose. Next she examined the transcripts to investigate how the students used intertextuality to co-construct meaning. Three themes emerged from the data. First, there was a form of social interdependence that was unique to each group. Factors such as the developmental levels in reading, thinking, and speaking; home background; personal life experiences and their connections to the selection; self-concept; and general knowledge base were considered. The social interdependence in each group fell into two categories: positive or cooperative and negative or competitive (Johnson and Johnson, 1991 as cited in McCormack, p. 47). Second, there was a unique format in which narratives were constructed, topics were introduced, and the discussions were sustained. Last, all groups moved from competitive or individualistic categories at the beginning of the study to positive and cooperative structures by the last discussion.

Findings consistent with Applebee (1978) suggest that beginning discussions were often a series of summaries or retellings of the stories and characteristic of 7 –and 8-year olds' typical responses to literature. With repeated opportunities for practice, the students in this study improved the quality of their responses. Continued opportunities for practice supported the students' efforts to connect and build on the ideas of others. Gradually discussions became conversations. Abandoned summaries and retellings were replaced with related comments,

queries, and analyses. Gee (1988, cited in McCormack, p. 82) stated, “One always and only learns to interpret texts of a certain type in certain ways through having access to and ample experiences in, social settings where texts are read in those ways” (p.209). Students engaged in the social process of learning to respond and co-construct meaning by monitoring their own discourse, according to McCormack. Work by O’Flahavan, Wiencek, and Martin (1993) suggests that improvement in cooperative structure occurs when students have to negotiate all the turn-taking in the discussions. They learn to deal with the problems of peer interaction over time, such as participation, lack of respect of others’ ideas, and digression from the topic at hand. Without a teacher leading the discussions, the students neither adopted an adult stance nor dismissed their peers’ topics for discussion as trivial or irrelevant.

McCormack’s study illustrates the positive correlation between effective instruction and student performance. Students adopted a more sophisticated discourse style for their discussions. They practiced the academic discourse modeled in the classroom- the special way they talk about books- with peers as audience. Bakhtin (1981) describes the assimilation of discourse as first “reciting by heart” or authoritative discourse. Such discourse originates from the instruction, rules, directions, and models. McCormack also offers Bakhtin’s theory to explain the assimilation of discourse in the peer groups. When her students used the words of others to inform their own ideas before they articulated them, they made their discourse half theirs, half someone else’s. She refers to “telling in one’s own words” or internally persuasive discourse, students using the words of others to inform their own ideas before they articulate them, making their discourse half theirs, half someone else’s (McCormack, p. 87, 1995) .

Bakhtin suggests:

The unique speech experience of each individual is shaped and developed in continuous and constant interaction with others' individual utterances...Our speech, that is, our utterances (including creative works) is filled with others' words, varying degrees of otherness, or varying degrees of our-own-ness, varying degrees of awareness and detachment. These words and others carry with them their own expression, their own evaluative tone, which we assimilate, rework, and accentuate (p. 186, as cited in McCormack, p. 88).

All the groups made progress in sustaining a topic they introduced. Students demonstrated ability to work collaboratively as a community of learners. Opportunities for practice helped the students improve the cooperative structure of their discussions.

Susan Scott (1992), teacher-researcher of her fifth-grade class, also sought personal clarification regarding what happens when students encounter text within the context of small discussion groups. Scott implemented daily activities surrounding a school-wide theme featuring the concept of aging and the roles and contributions of older citizens in the community. Students read from multiple copies of Tuck Everlasting (Babbitt, 1975) throughout the first five chapters and held large group discussions facilitated by the teacher. At the end of the fourth session, Scott changed the discussion format to small response groups to read at their own pace and initiate their own discussions. Using the fish-bowl technique and students' SSR books for training purposes, Scott chose two girls to role-play along with her how interactions might take place during discussion groups. After initiating a discussion of her own book, Scott's students asked her clarifying questions then proceeded to model the same technique. Within the triad, each student now spoke about her book and said "thank you", then paused for questions from the other two. Finally, all class members formed groups to discuss their SSR books in a similar

fashion. After one practice session, students formed discussion groups of five each to discuss Tuck Everlasting (Babbitt, 1975). Unique to each group was a teacher-designated discussion leader and a list of suggested teacher created questions to help guide discussion. A student-teacher often joined the group discussions. Large group debriefings were held following each session to assess students' discussions in depth and to communicate teacher expectations, and the importance, and the value of what they were doing. Concerns that grew out of the first novel discussions addressed the need for structuring the membership of each group since the social functioning of the group was as important as the understanding of the conventions of discussion or the reading itself, according to Scott.

Scott's second unit involved everyone reading the same text, From the Mixed-Up File of Mrs. Basil E. Frankenwiler (Konigsburg, 1969). A new piece, the packet, was added to help guide discussion. Although a copy of the packet was absent from the Appendix B section as indicated in her study, responses from students' questionnaires regarding the value of the packets alluded to students' apparent dislike of them at a 64% rate compared to 36% of students reporting their value. Dislike apparently arose from use of the packet being like writing and rewriting what had already been discussed, according to one; or in the words of another, he didn't like the things they make you do and would rather work in a journal. Another suggested the packets slowed him down, or discussion was so involved he never got time for the packet in his group. Of the 36% finding the packets helpful, students reported the packets helped guide them along the book, helped build understanding about what was going on, and made you think about the characters. Seventy-seven percent of students found writing notes and quotes in journals was helpful compared to 23% who did not. Students enjoyed expressing themselves and

reflecting on their reading; some thought it was easier to write down what they thought, others felt they took away too much precious time or they just wanted to discuss aloud.

Scott's final unit involved students forming discussion groups based on self-selected novel choices. Students had to formulate a plan for their group's meetings. The plan included what they chose to read and why, who the members are, plans for how much and how often to read, and thoughts about group work to negotiate leadership roles. The teacher was invited to a group as an occasional member.

Student surveys completed after the final literature study indicated nine of the classmates reported that working in groups increased their understanding of text; eight indicated that working in groups helped them increase their understanding of others; five indicated that working in groups helped them to feel more involved. The function or sense of "role" of the group provided an opportunity to practice "literate behaviors" (Heath, 1985, as cited in Scott, pg. 103). The teacher was also given the opportunity to change roles and better observe her students. Student participation was enhanced through literature discussion group strategy. Effort and engagement of low status students improved. Students developed their own voice as readers and learners as they engaged in meaning-centered learning with others. Finally, as they shared responsibility and control for the group's function, they in turn developed a sense of their own needs and preferences as learners, according to Scott (pg. 104). Scott implies that establishing a classroom of students exploring literature for themselves and with others is a "journey", a word echoed by many educators indicating the way can be as long and arduous as it is exhilarating and enlightening.

Goier (1996), both a principal and a language arts director, studied the responses of fourth graders engaged in literature discussion groups (or circles- a word she uses

interchangeably) for an entire school year within her own district. The teacher and 22 students chosen for the study were inexperienced with literature discussion groups and were therefore learning how to interact, to respond, and to cope with sociocultural factors including (a) agenda, (b) group size, (c) roles and stances, (d) types of talk and (e) group and relationship building. Goier makes a distinction between working collaboratively versus cooperatively. Her distinction lies in the teacher's desire to not have students take on roles or tasks to negotiate the literature study together. Rather, she describes the discussion group as a collaborative framework directed toward literature response most often aesthetic response (p. 20). I found it ironic to read the implementation process engulfed in structure at any rate such as contracts for reading, literature logs to be turned in, posted questions to be answered, five post-it notes to mark book sections for discussion, or write notes on. Key findings of the study suggest collaboration is most likely to occur between groups of three or four, with other members observing the collaboration. Active and equal levels of participation were not as essential as the type of talk and thinking used to sustain a meaningful conversation and negotiation of shared meaning (p. 217). "Exploratory talk" was more evenly distributed among group members as they reacted to one another's points of view. "Presentational talk" was used to share information as a scaffold or think aloud that moved the group forward in their thinking. "Talk around the edges" took place when students talked with one or two other students while the rest of the group supported a topic, established power or refuted the power of others, or clarified or sought information. Considering how students use "talk around the edges" not only in literature discussion groups but in classrooms in general, Goier considers discussion as a key to understanding the nature of talking and assisting the learning process. Also, students did not respond unless they felt that it was safe to do so, and that "safe space" was created by the talk

and dynamics of the group (p.223). Thus, an important factor to consider in terms of the general classroom is understanding what is considered to be a “safe place” and how it is socially constructed.

Karen Smith (1993) conducted a study examining reader responses of her fifth/sixth grade students, as well as her own, in depth, breadth and nature. Her desire was to go beyond traditional ways of looking at responses in predetermined categories and consider their potential for learning about and exploring story (p. 56). Out of forty-seven codes first realized to examine responses during and across sessions, Smith collapsed them all into eleven categories under three major headings: attending to meaning making, attending to students’ interactions, and engaging students in interactions (pg. 73). As she attended to making meaning, she engaged in making sense of rudimentary responses, helping students deal with confusions, making the story world accessible, making learning visible, and giving students status. While attending to students’ interpretations, Smith answered students’ questions, and validated and extended students’ understandings. As for engaging students in interactions, she put students in the lead, took the lead, or supported students’ leads (p. 74). Her analysis of student responses were organized around 11 categories sorted into three overlying themes: 1) organizing literature study (both procedures and flow); 2) focusing on reading (affirming self and others as readers and revealing reading strategies); 3) and constructing meaning about the story world (collaborating and making connections to create the story world). The final category, making connections to create the story world, was further subdivided into making connections between responses in different sessions about characters, events, objects, tensions, and settings. Smith met with 7 of her students over ten different sessions to talk about the book, M. C. Higgins, the Great (Hamilton, 1974). Based on student interviews, students viewed Smith as “just a kid” who shared her ideas

and insights with them. They also agreed that sometimes she just sat back and watched them think and watched how they cooperated in their thinking. Smith's own analysis of her responses revealed three major themes: (a) attending to students as meaning makers; (b) attending to students' meanings; and (c) engaging students in interactions. Attending to students as meaning makers bore 5 codes including (a) making sense of rudimentary responses; (b) dealing with definitions; (c) making the story world accessible; (d) making her learning processes visible; and (e) recognizing students' competencies. Engaging students in interaction included positioning students to take the lead; taking the lead; and supporting the lead. Smith assured opportunities for students to entertain and develop their ideas by drawing them into the talk with open-ended questions such as, "What was going through your mind?" Although role-playing did not take place in this study, students worked collaboratively showing willingness to share the responsibilities that go with organizing the study over time and within sessions, according to Smith. "Literature study was not perceived as something imposed or directed by the teacher, but was perceived as a joint effort in which each person assumed some of the logistical responsibilities (p. 181)".

Maloch (2000) investigated the relationship between the teacher's role and the students' participation within third graders' literature discussion groups. Her concern was that the teacher leadership role in the process of guiding students towards conducting their own literature discussion groups might encourage procedural interaction (i.e., raising hands, waiting to be called on, answering questions) and therefore only procedural understanding of the literature suggested by researchers such as Barnes (1975) and Edwards and Mercer (1987 as cited in Maloch, p. 1). Thoughts of the IRE interaction pattern of response referred to as initiation-response-evaluation by Cazden (1988) and Mehan (1979 as cited in Maloch, p.1) common to

teacher-led discussions can place students in passive, responsive roles. Teachers' interpretations are often privileged over the students' interpretations and can often limit students' interpretive strategies to those that help identify the teacher's "correct" interpretation (Maloch, p. 1). Maloch contends that a discussion format that is less teacher-centered, in fact, student-led, where the teacher acts as facilitator, might encourage students to engage in more problem-solving talk which might in turn lead to more complete understanding of literature. Literature discussion groups are defined as groups of four to six students who come together to read and discuss a shared piece of literature and are based on interest, rather than ability. Proponents of literature discussion groups (Eeds & Wells, 1989; Gambrell & Almasi, 1997; Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988; Jewell & Pratt; Routman, 1991; Short, Kaufman, Kaser, Kahn, & Crawford, 1999, as cited in Maloch, p. 2, 2000), argue that these groups provide opportunity for students to engage in discussions of topics that are relevant and important to them, thereby promoting a deeper, more meaningful understanding of text. In contrast to the IRE pattern of discussion, students become more vested in leadership opportunities and have more time to talk. When students have more time to talk, research suggests their responses are more complex than when they simply reply to teachers' questions (Almasi, 1995; Au, 1980; as cited in Maloch, p. 2, 2000). Data collected over a six month period by Maloch, investigating the role of the teacher, and students' interactions included students' interpersonal, interactional, and response-related competency in skills necessary for literature discussion groups. Findings suggest much needed teacher scaffolding must exist to transition students from IRE respondents to literary discussants. Rather than prescribing roles, Maloch examined participation structures to inform ways to discuss literature. Structures refer to rules governing speaking, listening, and turn taking. Social organization patterns vary across events throughout the school day and across events unrelated to

school such as the nine Au (1980) identified within a twenty minute lesson referenced by Maloch. Maloch observed that teachers facilitated students' transition to student-led discussions by explicitly defining both the task and the teacher and student roles. Teachers repeated explanations in the ongoing literature discussion groups. Teachers helped students define their role by continually reminding them that they were "in charge" of their discussion, that they were responsible for contributing to the discussion and by arriving to the group prepared with their literature response logs (p.157). Students were asked to support their comments with evidence, to ask follow-up questions that help others explain their reasoning, and to challenge others' comments.

Maloch's findings suggest much teacher preparation (months) prior to and during the initial stages of literature discussions is needed to enable students to more completely grapple with the complexity of combining skills and strategies during literature discussion groups. The classroom community and expectations must create an atmosphere conducive to respectful interactions with others. Planned literature response activities shared by the entire class provide opportunities for teacher and peer modeling of literature response, of negotiating with text, and of self-evaluation of group processes. The teacher explicitly offering guidelines for discussion pushes students to reflect on their own discussion process. During the ongoing literature discussion group process, Maloch contends the teacher's role must be active and dynamic (critical) during literature discussion groups as students adjust to new discussion format. Seated just outside discussion circles, the teacher should be there to act as facilitator, mediator, able to jump in and out of the discussion. Teacher interventions in this study were guided by key factors such as the teacher's own discussion protocol or her expectations and goals for the discussion. The degree to which students discussed corresponded to the protocol (expectations) and the

timing of teacher interventions during discussions. Maloch considered this type of protocol similar to Mercer's (1995) "exploratory talk" -drawing from research of Barnes (1975, 1993)- which suggests a way of talk to effectively collaborate and reason with others in a problem-solving way. In small groups students experience a tentative style of speech where they appear to be thinking out loud as they rearrange their thoughts and work through their understandings and misunderstandings. Barnes(1975) concludes that exploratory talk reflects the degree of control students have over knowledge they feel they themselves have. In contrast, is the presentational (final draft) talk prepared for teacher approval and thus teacher control (p. 108 as cited in Maloch, 2000, p. 25). Across all stages of the implementation process, Maloch found that the teacher who consistently highlighted process also raised students' awareness of the discussion process. Techniques included elicitations (ranging from direct and explicit to inexplicit), directives, signaled modeling, reinforcements, elaborative explanations, and reconstructive recaps, which were varied in explicitness and in frequency across groups, individuals, and time (p.197).

Patterns and themes suggested by Maloch's study support a better understanding of the range of roles teachers engage in literature discussion groups. In this study, students' interactions were influenced by the teacher's interventions; however, by the end of the year, Maloch contends that the teacher was still very involved in the group's discussion. She suggests the possibility of exploring if over time, teacher's involvement lessened as students became more strategic in their use of exploratory talk. Clearly, my own study suggests students can become more capable discussants over time, given the opportunity and encouragement to read and talk about books without constant teacher intervention.

Wollman-Bonilla (1991) studied eight literature discussion groups of socioculturally diverse sixth graders, both high ability and low ability, over the course of a year. The talk and the social construction of meaning among the students and their teacher provided data for identifying general patterns and differences in each group's discussion activity. Her study of meaning construction involved describing: 1) what the motive or purpose of the group's activity was for the participants, 2) how participants interacted to construct a discourse context, 3) how this discourse context shaped individuals' participation, 4) how meanings were constructed in this context, and 5) what kinds of shared meanings or knowledge, were displayed in the groups' talk (p.8-9). In her final analysis, Wollman-Bonilla suggests that despite the school's goals to give nonmainstream students a better chance of achieving their aspirations and valuing their backgrounds, subtle yet powerful sociocultural factors such as discourse practices can create out-of-awareness expectations and judgments which serve to reinforce social stratification. When teachers do understand how students talk, they can appreciate their ideas and facilitate their learning. Bringing teachers' mainstream norms for interaction to light enables looking beyond the expectations imposed by their own backgrounds and learning to understand and value diverse discourse practices. Care must be taken to nurture and promote sociocultural equality through schooling, however daunting the task.

Another study by O'Flahavan (1989) explored participation structures of second graders' social, intellectual, and affective development in varied group discussions about narrative texts. The 14 week study incorporated six second-grade volunteer public school teachers whose reading group discussions exhibited an initiate-reply-evaluate structure (IRE) and a select group of their students to be assigned to one of three participation structure conditions: a control condition (teacher-led, IRE interaction) and two experimental conditions (two variations of an

approach designed to facilitate movement from teacher-led participation structures toward more open structures in which students become the sole managers of the group discourse). Theories and intervention studies he reviewed supported the contention that higher degrees of student participation should and can promote students' intellectual, social, and affective development. The common denominator between each is social interaction; and in the context of this study, group discussion is the social and instructional event.

Paterson (2000) conducted a study with five groups of 22 ethnically diverse twelfth-grade AP English students to examine how they used text and other sources in peer-led discussion groups to negotiate the meaning of a text over time and how they perceived the process. One of her unexpected findings was that the groups developed distinctive identities based on preferred strategies, thematic concerns, beliefs about text, methods of operations, and interaction patterns, despite similar academic ability, experience in school and classroom context. Applebee (1996 as cited in Paterson, p. 9)) calls this "knowledge in action" in which students master the traditions of a discourse and learn how to operate within them as well as how to change them. Differences in strategic preferences and text theories were related to cognitive decisions. Some group members followed exact text to account for their interpretations. In contrast, others developed an approach based on their discussion about issues outside the text and open to multiple interpretations. Others resisted and did not move beyond superficial plot descriptions. Another's strategies were influenced by the efferent stance. Students indicated they felt little involvement in the story world due to lack of feeling congruence between the language and culture portrayed in the book and themselves. The reading was perceived as an academic exercise to which literary elements and novel structures were identified rather than characters. The fifth group saw meaning in the text and other sources such as personal and world

knowledge, historical context, and intertext references as valuable for interpretations. Gender stereotypes at times were voiced and cultural variables seemed to influence discussions. Culture affected students' attitudes toward various novels. Some could relate to feelings and be led to deep engagement and understanding; others failed to identify with characters making the novel seem unrealistic and out of sync with their own culture.

Marks (1995) conducted a third grade study examining gender differences of students' oral discourse during peer-led literature discussion groups. Following O'Flahavan's (1989) Conversational Discussion Group approach, Marks divided each discussion into three phases: 1) an Introduction/Review during which she introduced the discussion and worked with students in the group to set goals for the discussion to follow, 2) the Discussion itself lasting about 20 minutes, and 3) the Debriefing phase during which students were assisted in reflecting on the experience by reviewing what was discussed and talking about how group members interacted. Marks assumed the role of boundary coach (O'Flahavan et al., 1992 as cited in Marks (1995, p. 59) meaning she sought to increase the interactive and interpretive diversity of the students by sharing her own literary perspectives, responding to students' interpretations, and adding students' suggestions and ideas to a chart. She also coached students during the Introduction/Review and Debriefing phases, but not during the discussions. It seems that girls appear to be better able than boys to lead and participate in discussions because at some ages, their verbal abilities are somewhat higher than those of boys (Brownell & Smith, 1973; Haslet, 1983; Hoffman, 1972, Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Olson, 1949 as cited in Marks, 1995, p. 4). Yet many girls allow more assertive boys to take the lead in spite of competence in this area (Aries, 1976; Lockheed & Harris, 1984, as cited in Marks, 1995). Marks' findings relating to

gender influences during peer group discussions will be examined more closely as they compare with findings of my own study to be discussed in Chapter 4.

See Table 2 for a summarized list of alternative procedures for literature discussion participation without role-play.

Table 2 Alternative procedures to literature discussion participation without role-play

Researcher	Grade	Procedure
Malcolm	K	Open-discussion
Rickey	1,4	Say Something
von Unruh	5	Have the last word
McCormack	2	Tell in your own words
Scott	5	Discussion leaders/guiding questions
Goier	4	Exploratory talk
Smith	5/6	Open-ended questions
Maloch	3	Response logs
Wollman-Bonilla	6	Studyguides
O'Flahavan	2	Conversational discussion groups
Paterson	12	Problem solving
Marks	3	Conversational discussion groups

2.7. Conclusion

Children conducting small group discussions about books has become a popular event in today's classrooms. Advocates of literature circles contend that children spend more time reading and less time learning about reading. That more aesthetic reading and responding actually occurs within the literature circle format remains to be seen. How role-taking and interactions evolve into greater literacy events remains to be studied.

2.8. The Social Construction of Literacy

According to Cook-Gumperz (1986) literacy rates are seen as indicators of the health of the society and as a barometer of the social climate. Illiteracy takes on the significance of disappointment in our educational system and society itself. The assumption is that if our schools can't produce functionally independent students who can read and write, then society as a whole can not expect any future generation capable of dealing with more complex questions of technological change. Now more than ever what our society needs is citizens with an exploratory attitude and a versatile ability to recognize problems and to collaborate in the forming and testing of possible solutions, according to Wells (1986). Ethnographic studies of schooling (Holt, 1967; Kohl, 1967; Kozal, 1967 as cited in Gumperz, 1986) illustrate classrooms as social systems where the learning process is influenced by the social characteristics of the students themselves, by peer group relations, teacher-student relationships, and the organizational requirements of the social system.

Recent ethnographic studies examine the notion of communicative competence. To be effective in everyday social settings speakers and listeners depend on knowledge which goes beyond phonology. Philips (1972) compared patterns of class participation among reservation-

reared American Indian children and among non-Indian children. She found that the Indian children participated more enthusiastically and performed more effectively in teaching situations which minimized both the obligation of individual students to perform in public and the need for teachers to control performance styles and correct errors. Student preferences reflected the kinds of relationships they were accustomed to on the reservation, where peer groups were more important in learning than hierarchical roles of adults and children. The poor school performance of Indian children she attributed to the unfamiliar and threatening frameworks of participation and proposed the notion of 'participant structure' to characterize the norms and notions that shape social relationships, affect participants' perception of what has transpired, and influence the acquisition of formal skills (p. 56).

Bandura (1977) provides a theoretical framework for analyzing human thought and behavior he calls "social learning theory" (p. vii) which has added to the standard methods of research. His theory emphasizes the roles played by three processes in psychological functioning: vicarious, symbolic, and self-regulatory.

The study of power of socially mediated experience, such as children engaging in literature circle discussions, acknowledges human thought, affect, and behavior can be influenced vicariously by observation as well as by direct experience. Human capacity to use symbols enables us to represent events, to analyze our conscious experience, to communicate with others at any distance in time and space, to plan, to create, to imagine, and to engage in foresightful action (Bandura, p.vii). The third feature of social learning theory is the role it assigns to self-regulatory processes. People do not simply react to external influences; rather, they select organize, and transform the stimuli that affects them. Therefore, recognizing people's self-directing capacities suggests the impetus for research in which individuals themselves serve

as the agents of their own change. Human behavior is explained in terms of a continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental determinants. Therefore, humans are neither cast into the role of powerless objects controlled by the environment nor free agents who can become whatever they choose.

In the social learning view, results of one's own actions are not the sole source of knowledge, according to Gee, (1988). Information about the nature of things is often learned from vicarious experience. In this mode, observing the effects produced by somebody else's actions provides the check on one's own thoughts (p. 181). Gee (1992) writes about the social mind. "In our heads are rich networks of association of which are our biological "gifts" ("innate"), and many others of which are built up by our experiences in the physical and social world from birth on. These associations are cognitive tools with which we get into and "play" social "games" or, put another way, "act out" social roles. These "games" are always serious matters in which power, status, and solidarity ("social goods") are at stake" (p.vii). The rich networking he refers to is referred to as "connectionism" in cognitive science. "What is in the head, in a connectionist point of view of the mind/brain is the prerequisite for getting into and playing out social practices in much the same way that a body skilled in a certain way is the prerequisite for getting into and staying in a game of baseball (p.viii).

Research focusing on the social interactions of the classroom is focused mostly on whole-class interactions between the teacher and students known as the Initiation-Response-Feedback/Evaluation (IRF/E) sequence (Camden, 1986, 1988; Meehan, 1979; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975 as cited in Kumpulainen & Wray, 2002). The teacher often controls the structure and content of classroom interaction sequence by giving feedback on the student's response. The gradual shift from a transmission model of teaching to learner-sensitive

instruction, emphasizing collective negotiation, supports the theoretical shift in perspectives on learning and teaching that emphasize the active role of individuals in meaning-making and knowledge construction (Wells, 1999 as cited in Kumpulainen & Wray, 2002 p. 10). Recent studies of classroom interaction provide evidence of the existence of new patterns and forms of interaction resembling everyday conversation. The point to be made is that in-school learning implies there must be educational value attached to the social interaction. Therefore, the prime concern for interaction studies is the mechanisms and patterns that lead to intended learning goals (p.10). This study presumes literature circles to be a conduit for pattern development.

2.9. Analysis of Peer Group Interaction.

Kumpulainen and Wray (2002) provide a descriptive system of analysis for investigating the dynamics of peer interactive groups. The analysis framework emerged as a result of studies conducted with primary-aged students' interactions while working in peer groups on various educational tasks. The initial development of the method focused on functions of students' verbal interaction as a basis for investigation of students' roles as communicators and learners in teacher-centered and peer group-centered classrooms (Furlas & Wray, 1990 as cited in Kumpulainen & Wray, 2002, p. 32). Kumpulainen and Wray (2002) found that despite the potential of the analysis method, the functional analysis of verbal interaction was inadequate as a means of unraveling the complexities of socially shared learning processes. There seemed to be a need to develop a descriptive system of analysis that took a more holistic and multi-dimensional perspective on interaction. Also, it seemed important that more attention be paid to the moment-by-moment nature of interaction in order to highlight the situated processes of meaning making and knowledge construction within peer groups. Finally, it seemed important

to take the individual and the group as units of analysis in order to investigate the types and forms of participation within peer groups.

In the analysis method of peer group interaction developed by Kumpulainen and Wray (2002) three dimensions are approached. The first dimension, functional analysis, investigates the character and purpose of student utterances in peer group interaction, the communicative strategies used by participants in social interactions. The second dimension, cognitive processing, examines the ways in which students approach and process learning tasks in their social interaction, students' working strategies and situated positions towards learning, knowledge and themselves as problem-solvers. The third dimension, social processing, focuses on the nature of the social relationships that are developed during students' social activity. This includes examining the types and forms of student participation in social interaction.

Earlier research on peer interaction included process-product studies (Joiner et al., 1995; King, 1989; Light et al., 1994; Teasley, 1995; Tudge, 1992; Webb, Troper & Fall, 1995 as cited in Kumpulainen, p. 33). Peer interaction is analyzed with coding schemes that categorize interaction into pre-defined categories. Variables like student achievement and performance are linked to the frequency of categories identified in the data (p.33). Therefore, the process of interaction over time is not highlighted. The situated nature of interaction represented by the context also often receives only cursory inspection (p. 33). The advantage of these studies, according to Kumpulainen & Wray, 2002) is that they accommodate large amounts of data analysis and use publicly verifiable criteria to make their categorizations.

Barnes and Todd (1977, 1995, as cited in Kumpulainen & Wray, 2002) developed an analytic system for studying peer group talk. Their system of analysis derived from the data, compared to being derived from a pre-existing network of categories. They were interested in

the actual processes of interaction; in the ways in which students developed and constructed knowledge without direct teacher presence. They make the distinction between the interactive and the social aspects of speech events (p.33). Using a two level parallel analysis, they concentrated on the coherence of the discourse at the first level, and at the second level, concentrated on the social skills and cognitive strategies used by the students in their discourse. The task was difficult since logical relationships had to be identified from peer interactions. And peer interactions are often implied rather than given verbal form. Despite limitations with the analytical system and the tools used for data collection (audio tapes), Barnes and Todd's work was important. Since they integrated ideas from discourse and conversational analysis with research on learning and instruction, and they defined content frames and interaction frames, they made it possible to investigate how students brought their frames of reference to the interaction situation and how these frames were negotiated and developed (p.34).

One recent analytic approach to understanding children's talk during small-group learning was developed by Fisher (1993), Mercer (1994, 1996) and Phillips (1990), as cited in Kumpulainen & Wray, 2002) called the SLANT (Spoken Language and New Technologies) project (p. 34). This approach tries to investigate how children use talk to think together. It tries to show that particular ways of talking permit certain social modes of thinking. Their analytic framework was derived from analyses of children's talk during collaborative peer group learning with computers and it includes three modes of talk that characterize different ways of thinking together: disputational mode- characterized by disagreement and individualized decision making; cumulative mode consisting of positive but uncritical decision making; and exploratory mode seen as the most effective mode of speaking in fostering critical thinking and cognitive

development (Mercer, 1996, as cited in Kumpulainen & Wray, 2002) Argumentation and hypothesis testing characterize constructive and critical engagements.

2.10. Identity and Social Interaction in the Classroom.

“Identity is like an iceberg; most of it is invisible” (Elbers & Streefland, 2000, p. 38).

The traditional classroom interaction between teacher and students follows familiar routines and rituals, with little dispute about participants’ social roles. Difficulties arise when the invisible portion of the iceberg emerges. New circumstances force participants to reexamine their social roles and negotiate and redefine responsibilities.

A study conducted in a Dutch primary school by Elbers and Streefland (2000) involved eighth grade students’ introduction to an experimental mathematics curriculum. During the lessons, the children were addressed as researchers. Teachers became the senior researchers. Students were given a task or problem usually related to everyday life and were required to work in small groups alternated by class discussions of small groups’ results. Children were to make explicit which research questions were relevant and to work at answering the questions themselves. They were expected to listen to one another, to take others’ arguments seriously and to use arguments for convincing others. It illustrates the teachers and the children at work in a community of inquiry having to redefine their roles and invent new patterns of interaction and cooperation. Four lessons were video and audio recorded then transcribed. The authors focused on three aspects of the recordings for analysis: Responsibilities, Forms of Collaboration, and Expressions.

Results suggest the children were more responsible for their learning than in the traditional lessons. They had to rely more on their own creativity and powers and less on support

by the teacher. As participants in a research community, students had to work out forms of cooperation tied to learning as a group rather than individual performance.

As *collaborators*, children became aware of themselves and reminded each other that they should work as a group. Some offered to explain to others the way to the solution. Some expressed rivalry and claims to authorship of a solution. When asked to write down the solution to a problem, children found that it was not necessary to all repeat the same calculations.

In terms of *expression*, children had to formulate their own questions and make attempts to solve them. They had to develop terms and expressions for argumentation and discussion as collaborating researchers such as, “What do you think?” “Wait a moment, I’m thinking.” “I think that ...I don’t understand.” “Wait, I’ll explain it to you.” “Look at it this way.” (p. 44).

Teachers also had to find their place in the new context of a “research community” (p.45). Difficulty arose when they were no longer teacher authority but senior researchers interacting with juniors. As with literature circles, the students got more responsibility for their learning, but in the end, it is the classroom teacher who is ultimately responsible for the learning process and the procedures in the classroom.

Antaki and Widdicombe (1998, as cited in Cowie & van der Aalsvoort, 2000, p. 47) point to the dual aspect of identity as a tool and an achievement. Without a sense of identity as a tool for learning, children would neither know their responsibilities in the classroom nor what is expected of them by the teacher. They suggest that identities are never stable. Children work at their identities in their dialogues and statements and how they view their position in relation to others. They challenge, renegotiate, maintain or change their own and the interlocutors’ identities (Maybin, 1993; Muller & Perret-Clermont, in press as cited in Elbers & Streefland, 2000, p. 47).

The achievement aspect of identity was observable when discourse conventions changed, social relationships and identities were questioned and had to be redefined. In this study, children talked about their new responsibilities as members of a community of inquiry. To answer questions “who am I?” “what are my responsibilities?”, students worked out new forms of cooperation, relativized competition and claims of authorship. They searched for new expressions that would fit their collaboration and their interaction with their teachers, the senior researchers (p. 47).

Rogoff (1994) writes that “individuals can become ‘fluent’ in more than one philosophy of learning and its practices” (p. 50). She views learning as a process of learners’ transforming participation in social activities. Different models of learning prepare children for participation in the life of the community. However, flexibility can only exist if children become aware of the social identities and responsibilities which the various philosophies of learning demand of them (Elbers & Streefland, 2000, p. 50).

2.10.1. Role-Theory.

Elbers and Streefland (2000) make the distinction between their use of the term “social role” and role theory. “Role theory defines roles as sets of activities or behaviors that belong to social positions. People conform to roles because of socialization processes” (Potter & Wetherell, 1987 as cited in Elbers & Streefland, 2000). The authors suggest that this way of thinking is a disadvantage since it defines roles positionally, belonging to the situation. They exist before the people involved have learned how to adopt them. They are more or less determinate categories which the students only have to take on and on which they have little influence (p. 50). When students work as a community of researchers, it does not imply that they play a new role that they can just as easily lay aside again. “New identities have to be

constructed by the participants in their talk. For understanding pupils' roles, it is not sufficient to look at the structural properties of these roles. We have to study the microprocesses of conversation and interaction in which the new identities take shape" (Elbers, 1996 as cited in Elbers & Streefland (2000, p. 50). Anthropologists distinguish between "etic" and "emic" approaches in their study of cultures. Etic description of a culture is based on concepts and categories from the outside. Since they are derived from a general model, they are considered applicable to any culture. In contrast, "emic" description attempts to see a culture from the inside as culture specific, as in the Dutch study. The difference between role theory and a study of the discursive construction of identities corresponds with the difference between an etic and an emic perspective.

2.10.2. Role-Concept.

For the benefit of my own study, role-play is a deceptively simple concept, one that is a significant part of student interaction during literature circles modeled after Daniels (1994, 2002). In its simplest form, role-play is the idea of asking someone to imagine that they are either themselves or another person in a particular situation (van Ments, 1999, p. 4). Each player acts as part of the social environment of the others and provides a framework in which they can test out their repertoire of behaviors or study the interacting behavior of the group. The term 'role' is derived from the word used to describe the roll of parchment on which an actor's part was written. From a theatrical perspective, when watching a play the audience needs to discern quickly the characters and their positions. The extension of the concept of role to the way people behave in everyday life comes from a similar need in real life for people to summarize or condense what may be complex perceptions of another person's appearance or behavior (p.6).

The concept of role acts as a shorthand way of identifying and labeling a set of appearances and behaviors on the assumption that these appearances and behaviors are characteristic of a particular person and predictable within a given situation. Role can be ascribed to people by social position, or imply reciprocal relationships, or be defined by context or in terms of function or purpose.

2.10.3. Role-Taking.

van Ments (1999) suggests that when people take a particular role, they are using a repertoire of behaviors which are expected of that role, such as a doctor performing physical exams or giving advice. This behavior is often the result of internalizing the expectations developed by others- or doing what other people expect of the person in that role. It is a major strategy for understanding and predicting the behavior of others (p.7):

The process of role-taking is a natural and continuous one for anyone who is socialized within his or her own community. It is a serious matter; most of our social life consists of such activity and failure to adapt to the right role at the right time can lead to a breakdown in communication. A conversation, for example depends on each person anticipating the other's feelings, expectancies, thoughts and probable reaction to their own behavior. This enables each to guide and monitor the conversation, otherwise the participants would only be talking at each other.

2.10.4. Role-Playing.

The idea of role-playing, according to van Ments (1999, p. 8-9) derives from this everyday activity. In role-playing one is practicing a set of behaviors, which is considered appropriate to a particular role. It is a natural part of children's behavior and everyone will have

experienced it as part of their childhood games. Ladousse (1987, as cited in van Ments, 1999, p. 9) describes the idea of 'role' as that of taking part in a specific situation, the idea of 'play' is associated with a safe environment and encouraging creativity.

van Ments suggests there is an unfortunate confusion between role-playing and acting. The essential difference is that acting consists of bringing to life a dramatist's ideas (or one's own) in order to influence and entertain an audience, whereas role-play is the experiencing of a problem under an unfamiliar set of constraints in order that one's own ideas may emerge and one's understanding increase. An actor studies and rehearses to move and influence the audience, to entertain and divert them (p. 9).

"The purpose of the role-player is quite different. Role-players are not concerned with audience, only with themselves and other role-players. Their aim is to feel, react and behave as closely as possible to the way someone placed in that particular situation would do. They are only concerned with the effects of their behavior on the other players, not an audience, and will do whatever is necessary within their role to persuade and convince them that their ideas and decisions are important. As long as they give their fellow role-players sufficient information and an indication of their attitudes and wishes, they do not have to convince them that they have been transformed into another person. Thus the 'acting out' in role-playing is, for all practical purposes, no greater than that which is done by the majority of people from time to time in the course of their everyday lives" (p. 9).

"The idea of role-playing is very simple: to give students the opportunity to practice interacting with others in certain roles. The situation is defined by producing a scenario (the literature circle format) and a set of role-descriptions. The role-descriptions give profiles of the people involved" (p. 9-10). As a technique, role-play can be very powerful. It is highly

motivating and enables students to put themselves in situations they have never experienced before; in particular it opens the way for them to put themselves in others' shoes. Much of our behavior in interpersonal interactions is governed by our assumptions about our own role, other people's roles, and the way we perceive these roles" (p. 10).

2.10.5. Why Use Role-Play?

Role-play is ideally suited to provide practical experience developing interpersonal skills during literature circles. The use of role-play brings home to the student that some aspects of behavior, such as the development of good human relations, requires skill. Moreover, it demonstrates that these skills can be taught- they are not something that people are born with. The emphasis in role-play is on requiring students to do and to act, rather than just talk about something" (van Ments, p.14-15). The major advantage of role-play, according to van Ments (1999, p. 15) is the one it shares with all simulation and gaming activities in that it is highly motivating and gives students simple, direct and rapid feedback on the effects of their actions. Wohlking and Gill (1980) suggest that one of the well-known facts about education is that it does not necessarily guarantee effective job performance. One of the most common causes of failure in work performance has to do with ineffectiveness in dealing with people face-to face. The breakdown comes when one-to-one communication, essential to work success, is ineffective. Role-playing can help people close the gap between what they know and how they apply it as well as serve as a training method to deal with almost any type of situation where face-to-face transactions are involved.

2.11. The Power of Collaboration.

Collaboration provides the framework that allows students to show what they can do. In a seventh grade resource room of learning-disabled students, Gilles and Van Dover (1988) observed what they concluded might be a class of academically talented and gifted students considering current events. Students worked collaboratively to draft a letter to President Reagan regarding a news report of the United States' attack on Libya. They revised the writing after questioning themselves for clarity, and followed up with asking for the letter to be typed and sent. Such collaboration invites students to be decision makers. As they discuss and make plans, students practice not only linguistic and cognitive skills, but their social skills as well. Students soon see the necessity and power of literacy and are more willing to invest the time and effort needed to become proficient readers and writers.

Adele Fiderer (1988) reports on her fifth grade class' reactions to collaborating about a book with peers. Through talk readers discover what it is they really think about a book. Talking about books provides the main mode of response and helps them become active, critical readers. In the words of one of her students, who finds that collaborative talk does more than help her know what she thinks, the ideas offered by other readers expand her own vision. She writes, "When you talk about a book with someone who has read it, you and the person give your opinions about it....When you disagree, you look at the book in a whole new way" (Fiderer, 1988, p.59).

2.12. Collaborative Learning and Cooperative Learning

Collaboration in education is not new. Its most recent past begins with British educator Edwin Mason in the late 1960s. Mason called for a moratorium on the development and

application of learning theories while exploring collaboration as a better way of knowing. Mason wrote:

I cannot think of any part or moment of life in which we are not reacting to the presence of other people, or carrying over into relationship with everything else, what we have learned (by no means consciously) from collaborating with other people while exploring the world with them. It is not only to move mountains that [we] collaborate; we collaborate to pass the time pleasantly and, if we make love well, to make love, and does not exclude conflict” (Mason, 1970 as cited in Bruffee, 1999 p. 80).

In America, according to Bruffee (1999), the principles of educational collaboration are traceable to the eighteenth century. Tocqueville noticed that the tendency toward independent association is a distinctively American trait. And interdependence with an educational goal appears in the autonomous learning groups that Benjamin Franklin organized to promote his own informal education while living as a youth in colonial Boston under conditions of poverty. Autonomous peer groups remained the only educational resource available to women and most working men during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth century (p. 80-81).

By the 1940s and 1950s collaborative influence nearly died out, according to Bruffee (p. 81). By the 1960s interest revived, encouraged in part by the growth of self-help mutual aid groups, by the systematic study of social group work, and especially by the impetus gained in support groups developed by the women’s movement. Yet in the 1970s and early 1980s collaborative learning languished again, this time in part, according to Bruffee (1999), because sociologists tended to associate it unfairly and inaccurately with managerial manipulation of workers known as Taylorism (p. 81).

James S. Coleman (1986) in Youth: Transition to Adulthood suggests that it is through collaborative activities that adolescents are most effectively drawn into active participation in academic and other constructive activities. Colman was advancing the position of Theodore Newcomb of 1962. Newcomb reported research demonstrating that the single most powerful force in undergraduate education is peer-group influence. With impatience, however, he considered it “deplorable that some of the kinds of changes that should be occurring in contemporary American colleges are not, apparently, occurring.” Work by Alexander Astin (1979) concluded that colleges might be able to reach a high level of student satisfaction by finding ways to encourage greater personal contact between faculty and students. By 1993, Astin changed his mind to regard “the peer group” as producing “some of the strongest and certainly the most widely spread effects on student development” (as cited in Bruffee, 1999, p. 82). He contends that teaching that allows students to work in small groups creates students more motivated to become actively involved participants in the learning process. Students will more likely expend more effort because they know that their work is going to be scrutinized by peers. Also, they “tend to learn course material in greater depth [because] they are involved in helping teach it to fellow students” (p. 82).

Other research, according to Bruffee (1999, p. 82) on the effects of peer group influence in education confirms Astin’s views. Work has concentrated mostly on primary and secondary school education. Robert Slavin (1983), Shlomo Sharan (1990, and David and Roger Johnson (1984), demonstrate how “teamwork” among school children can help overcome racial and ethnic bias. It has also shown that children learn better through collaborative group work than in classrooms that are highly competitive and hierarchical and individualized.

Bruffee (1999, p. 83) suggests collaborative learning and cooperative learning are two versions of the same thing. Both are educational activities in which human relationships are the key to welfare, achievement, and mastery. Both developed independently age-old educational ideas: helping students learn by working together on substantive issues. Although they may disagree about terms and methods or principles and assumptions, their long-range goals are similar. Both can say that constructive conversation is the particular social experience that educates. What distinguishes them are their disadvantages, according to Bruffee (1999, p. 92). Collaborative learning (self-governed student peer relations) suffers from loss of guaranteed accountability. Of cooperative learning, in guaranteeing accountability, it risks maintaining authority relations of traditional education both within each small working group and in the class as a whole (Bruffee, p. 92). What unites them are their strengths: the educational advantage of marshalling peer group influence to focus on intellectual and substantive concerns. Both renegotiate classroom control. Both assume that most people can become critically engaged in schoolwork when teachers find ways to displace direct supervision into tasks that students undertake working together. “Both tend to validate the assumption that knowledge is not some absolute entity inside or outside us but is instead a social construct” (p. 92).

Stating the post-Deweyan case about what teaching is not, teaching is not dishing out information for students to swallow. Learning is not swallowing what teachers say. Most profoundly, both collaborative and cooperative learning agree on the post-Deweyan case positively. The new positive statement includes Dewey’s doctrines that “school is primarily a social institution and that experience is education, according to Bruffee (p. 84). Collaborative and cooperative learning proponents claim this experience is constructive conversation in which people construct knowledge as they talk together and reach consensus (Bruffee, p. 84).

2.13. Learning Circles.

Collay, Dunlap, Enloe, and Gagnon (1998) describe learning circles as “small communities of learners among teachers and others who come together for the purpose of supporting each other in the process of learning” (p. ix). The circles capture the essence of interdependence found in nature, especially those principles of flexibility, diversity of thought, energy flow, sustainability, and co-evolution or learning together. Most learning experiences take place within an individual but occurs through a process of social interaction that creates conditions for personal transformation. Such change usually happens when a learner is **building community** with other learners who are **constructing knowledge** through their own experience and **supporting learners** involved with them in **documenting reflection** on their experiences and **assessing expectations** agreed on as they are **changing cultures** in their classrooms, institutions, workplaces, or organizations (p.xiii). A brief description of the six essential conditions for learning follows.

2.13.1 Building Community.

Building community means making sure members get to know one another, their work, their life stories, and their areas of interest. Groups may form opening and closing rituals, share snacks, treat all members with respect, and agree to core values. Learning circles have no assigned leader. Alfie Kohn (1996 as cited in Collay, Dunlap, Enloe, & Gagnon, 1998, p. 24) contends that both children and adults need authentic opportunities to participate as citizens who govern and make meaningful decisions about our community, learning, and work.

2.13.2 Constructing Knowledge.

The second condition essential for healthy communities of learners is to understand how individuals construct knowledge by making their own meaning and sharing their understanding with others (p. 10). “Teaching cannot be based on telling learners what we think they should know but must be done by engaging them through active learning experiences so they form their own conclusions about situations presented to them” (p. 10). Physical learning is interconnected with sensory learning and communicative learning.

2.13.3 Supporting Learners.

Supporting learners is the third condition essential for healthy communities of learners through conversations, encouragement, site visits, support groups, and feedback on ideas and changes (p. 10). Learning circles build and sustain conditions of trust and safety, build conditions of collegiality that support all learners, and sustain an atmosphere of learning that encourages risk taking.

2.13.4. Documenting Reflection.

Documenting reflection is the fourth condition essential for healthy communities of learners. Individuals describe, record and share their reflections with others (p.10).

2.13.5. Assessing Expectations.

Assessing expectations is the fifth condition essential for healthy communities. Determining progress toward shared goals is critical to effective professional development (p. 11).

2.13.6 Changing Cultures.

Changing cultures implies members engaging in thinking about how the culture of their classrooms and students are always evolving as members come and go or as individuals learn and change. “Learning circles emphasize the importance of personal transformation and the value the impact that a learner can have on another person” (Collay et al., 1998, p. 11).

2.14. Summary

This review of related research supports the widely accepted use of literature circles as a discussion method for children reading books. The major conclusion drawn from the research on literature circles and their impact contends that this approach honors children’s choices, develops aesthetic reading and responding to literature, and assures great amounts of time are spent reading for authentic purposes rather than learning about reading. However, little empirical evidence exists to support such claims and even less is known about children’s roles, interactions, and responses during literature circle events.

As a result of the information obtained from this review, a closer examination of the implementation of literature circles in action throughout three phases: planning, training, and immersing in my third grade classroom was proposed. The research methodology for this approach to discussions about books is described in Chapter 3.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study examined the types of responses and interactions third graders enacted while assuming various roles in literature circle discussions. To examine the interactions and responses a case study approach was taken using audio and videotape transcriptions, artifacts, observations, and interviews as data sources. These sources were used to identify patterns in the types of responses and interaction enacted by the students. In this chapter I outline the components of the study, which include setting, participants, procedures, materials, and data collection and analysis

3.1. Setting

The classroom that provides the setting for the present study is located in a semi-rural/suburban community approximately fifteen miles outside a large northeastern U.S. city. The school was built in the early fifties and was renovated and expanded in 1998. The one-story structure of yellow brick and glass sits in front of a wooded area that includes a nature trail. Before renovation, wild turkeys were regular distracting visitors to surrounding fields. Deer and turkey crossings along the winding, forested side road to the school are common and require diligence to avoid accidents. The serenity of the area rivals the patchwork green countryside of the community's sister city in Ireland.

The community is located in a township that is 97.2 percent White, .8 percent African American, 1.1 percent Asian, .2 percent some other race; and .7 percent two or more races based on the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000. Median family income for the township is \$46,

810 based on 1999 results. Management, professional and related occupations comprise 52.4 percent of the work force. Sales and office occupations comprise the next highest percentage at 26.5 percent. Educational, health, and social services equal 20.5 percent. The school district has approximately 3,780 students and is projected to continue to grow in enrollment over the next ten years (Pittsburgh Post Gazette, 2002). The school does not meet criteria for Title One. Student population is primarily White with several international and African American students.

3.2. Participants

3.2.1. Students

This study focuses on the third graders from my own classroom of twenty-one students, nine girls and twelve boys. One of the nine girls is African American. All the boys are Caucasian. The class is fairly well balanced with regard to academic ability based upon daily teacher observation and supported by quarterly report card grades. Of the twenty-one members of the class, five rank in the top third, with one of these students enrolled in the district's program for gifted children, eleven rank in the middle third, and five rank in the bottom third.

3.2.2. The Teacher/Researcher

As a classroom teacher conducting research within my own setting, I am at once the observer and a key actor. Because my role is so central to the process, the perspective and life experiences I bring to the study are central to understanding the work.

My early years were spent growing up in a working class home in rural western Pennsylvania, about fifty miles north of Pittsburgh. My father was first generation American of Italian heritage. He never completed high school, which was not so unusual for the late thirties in America. Neither paternal grandparent, both Italian immigrants, learned to read or write English nor was fluent in reading and writing Italian (a story that astounds my third grade

students- yet ironically offers hope to those who feel they struggle with reading, I think). The booming steel industry of Pittsburgh drew its natural resources of coal, limestone and oil from the surrounding countryside where we lived and my father and uncles worked as limestone miners.

My first grade year is indelibly marked with the fondest of memories of my antique school even though it had no indoor plumbing. An outdoor hand pump for water, a communal tin cup for drinking (perhaps a stretch), a pot-bellied stove for heat, and rows of desks bolted to the floor complete the scene. At recess we played like the children portrayed in Roxaboxen (McLerran, 1991) building stone-marked houses in the shade of the wooded grounds. In 1953 a new elementary school built just a few miles away, across Route 68 from my grandmother's house, replaced the aging two-story relic. The starkness of the plain brick building, blacktopped parking lot/playground, and an open-spaced grassy lawn devoid of trees to play under, created few good memories. The combination middle and high school was all White, mostly working class. John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, my freshman year. I recall sadly writing a poem about his funeral since we were a nation in mourning and out of school for three days. That same year a native French teacher arrived on the high school scene and impressed us with her beautiful accent. French would be part of my college days and early-married life in Switzerland.

The naiveté of the local folks kept us blinded from Civil Rights issues. As children, we rarely discussed political or social issues at home, or at school for that matter, except for families impacted by World War II and disdain for Hitler's genocide and the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. The aging history teacher, also my beloved piano teacher and band director, taught from his same aging yellowed notebook until the day he retired. I entered the local state college

largely due to economic constraints, with the help of a National Defense Educational Act loan, Economic Opportunity Grants, and a local scholarship. I became the first college graduate of the entire extended family. America was jettisoned into the race for space. John's brother, Robert, was also assassinated along with Dr. Martin Luther King, whom I knew very little about. The war in Viet Nam did not affect me at the time since I was female and had no relatives drafted. Larger state schools felt the brunt of Civil Rights issues and draft dodging; however, I remained blatantly unfettered.

Awakening to the reality of a multi-diverse world along with the responsibilities inherent in my role as a classroom teacher establishes credence for this study. Allowing student voices and identities to emerge through literature circle discussions of books engages and empowers students to be world citizens in training. One of my goals as a teacher and researcher is to allow the time, space, and practice witnessed by this study.

3.3. Procedures

3.3.1. Phase 1: Planning

This study was motivated by a desire to widen the methodological lens towards literacy that my students and I would share through the implementation of literature circles. Collaboration with two other members of the third grade team prior to summer vacation set the stage for work to proceed in the fall. Patty, the newest member of the team, had just completed an invigorating course on utilizing literature circles in the classroom taught by Kathleen Strickland at Slippery Rock University. Together we attended a summer academy on literature circles taught by one of our fifth grade teachers. Afterwards, we laid out plans for composing a literature circle management schedule (to be known as Literature Circle Schedule, see

APPENDIX A for an example) for students to track their work; we planned a theme of castles and lore to accompany room décor and stationery.

A district-wide grant known as an Opportunities Fund was available to help finance teacher-initiated projects such as this one utilizing literature circles in the classroom that enhance student learning. Once the grant was applied for, it underwent the scrutiny of a review board consisting of staff and community members to determine the legitimacy of such a project. Awarding of the grant did not occur until after January, at which time the literature circles were already underway. The amount of the grant totaled \$500 to support the purchase of trade books for the entire third grade, rather than five individual third grades. Initially, as a team of third grade teachers, we wanted to be able to read the same books at a given time to be able to expand on and integrate with mandated curriculum. We believed the logistics of sharing the same sets of books at the same time was next to impossible since students needed time to read, to write, and to discuss in separate classrooms. Sets of available books were gathered by combining our own collections and utilizing book points earned from various book clubs such as Trumpet, Scholastic Arrow, and Troll. Plans were also in place to begin the year with a simulation of nursery rhymes and games called “Rhyme Square” (Frey, 1992), to help set the stage for students working cooperatively in groups and for allowing time for students to become acclimated to third grade.

3.3.2. Phase 2: Training

Simulation

Before launching the first set of literature circles, it was logical to provide students with simulation training in role-playing during the first week of school since role-playing is part cooperative group learning. To initiate the process and capture the interest of the players-to-be, a poster-size bold-faced black and white outline map of the town of “Rhyme Square” was

displayed on the front board. During free time students were allowed to color the poster and examine the pictures representing scenes from nursery rhymes of Mother Goose. Most students were familiar with the rhymes and could recite them from memory. Others had a vague memory of them, or did not know them at all, which was somewhat surprising, yet nevertheless an important pre-assessment to consider.

Students were divided into five groups based on a mix of abilities from high, middle and low performance on the CAT 5 achievement test in reading comprehension and report card grades from second grade. Each group of students was seated in five clusters of four desks each. Desks were pushed together side by side with each pair facing the other. The effect created one table of students representing one cooperative group. By positioning students in the table-like format, the ease of conferencing as a group was established and the opportunity for each member to contribute to the group was enhanced. Each group (or team) was instructed to choose a name to promote ownership, identity, and bonds of cooperative spirit and support. They became known as the Fire-Breathing Dragons, the Froggies, the Penguins, the Bald Eagles, and the Gladiators. It seems no single rationale explains why students chose the group names that they did since some relate to the castle theme and others do not.

Students were presented with the following cooperative-learning based roles, or jobs, in order to complete the group tasks that lie ahead involving working with nursery rhymes: taskmaster, encourager, quiet captain, and recorder. The taskmaster's role entailed leading the group effort in discussion and activities. The encourager would support group work and ideas and draw everyone into the discussion or decision- making process. The quiet captain was in charge of enforcing the six-inch voice rule during discussion and work. In this initial effort with cooperative learning, the teacher modeled each role with students then gave each team

opportunity to act. Whole class debriefings held after a round of play (usually questions presented to each team and / or tasks prompted by the simulation script) were conducted by the teacher as a way to assess students' involvement, meaningful responses and quality of execution of each role. Because the rhymes involved very little reading, were easily recalled by most or were brought to mind with group support, the activity was failsafe and promoted self-confidence and positive attitudes about working as a team. As student teams proceeded to respond to questions and tasks involving rhymes, roles were enacted to portray what it meant to lead, to scribe, to manage volume control, and to encourage others. As the week progressed, students swapped jobs each day by rotating around the table clockwise. Rhyme Square simulation entailed having fun and learning to work cooperatively. Having roles assigned to each member meant everyone was responsible for his/her share of the daily work. Rehearsing the roles using familiar rhymes from early childhood became an excellent springboard to the next cooperative work using literature circles with mandated curriculum materials. Additionally, the simulation provided valuable time to observe students and to assess performance. Following the simulation, decisions about choice of books to read and how to proceed with literature circles were made. A description follows.

3.3.3. First Chapter Book

Rationale.

The rationale for choosing books fell within three broad categories: interest or topic to provide motivation to read; level and range of reading appropriate for a multi-ability classroom; and availability of books, or the pragmatics of servicing an entire classroom at once and in multiple groupings. The choice of Ramona Quimby, Age 8 by Beverly Cleary (1981) fit all three categories: (a) interest-wise the story of eight-year old Ramona closely resembled the lives of our students in a White suburban community similar to the one on Klick-a-Tat Street; (b) since

one of the book's chapters was an excerpt chosen by notable editors of the district-mandated anthology, *Treasury of Literature* from Harcourt Brace (1995) it served as both an appropriate, leveled text for literature circles and an introduction to reading chapter books based on the third grade text itself; and (c) at the time Scholastic Book Club offered Ramona Quimby, Age 8 (Cleary, 1991) for ninety-five cents, which was an additional boon for students to purchase their own copy rather than borrow the teachers'; also, layout of the chapters could be managed easily over a two-week period without usurping classroom time spent typically with the classroom anthology excerpt and a unit assessment week.

3.3.4. Procedure.

The first week would entail reading one chapter per day together (the first five chapters), to provide modeling and training time utilizing roles and building story comprehension; the second week would be training put into practice and application reading the remaining four chapters. In keeping with the castle and lore theme, literature circle roles were given titles befitting royalty: "Discussion King", "Word Wizard", "Passage Master", "Royal Connector", and "Masterpiece Maker".

Students were presented with the idea of literature circles and the plan for learning roles while reading about Ramona. I began by reading the first chapter aloud while the students followed along in their own books. The first role to learn was Discussion King (director).

Day 1.

Modeling Discussion King meant thinking aloud with students about ideas for possible questions they might discuss. A Discussion King, comparable to Daniels' (2002) Questioner, is responsible for writing down a few questions that comes to mind during or after the student reads the story. "What were you wondering about? What a character did? What was going to happen next? Why the author used a certain style? Or what the whole thing meant? (Daniels, pg. 108)".

The prompt written on our Literature Circle Schedules states, “You are Discussion Director (King). Your job is to write down good questions that you think your group would want to talk about. Remember some words that are used to begin questions are: What, Where, When, Who, How, and If.” Students were given time to record their own questions about Chapter 1, “The First Day of School” for discussion the next day.

Day 2.

As students met in their already assigned cooperative groups, seated in the far corners of the room to maintain a reasonable noise level, they were told to bring their schedules, books, clipboards (instant desks), pencils, a tape recorder, and cassette. The person having the most recent birthday was chosen to initiate the questions and responses within each group. While students discussed, I rotated from group to group observing and note taking, commenting, and sometimes questioning students for clarity. The tape recorder served as a management tool by not only recording data, but also assisting in keeping students on task and accountable for their participation. Afterwards, students returned equipment to its station and met back in their seats to debrief as an entire class and to prepare for the next day’s assignment. Chapter 2, “Howie’s House”, was also read aloud while students followed along or volunteered to read to the group. The next role, Word Wizard, was modeled using the format from Daniels (2002): “You are a Word Finder. Your job is to look for special words in the story. Words that are: new, different, strange, funny, interesting, important, hard” (suggested word types). “When you find a word that you want to talk about, write it down here: Word, Page, Why I picked it.” Daniels (2002) describes the Word Wizard’s role as being on the lookout for a few words that have special meaning to the reading selection, words that stand out, are repeated a lot, are used in an unusual way, or key to the meaning of the text. A Word Wizard helps members find and discuss the

words (pg. 113). Students were given time to search for words to be ready to practice role-playing as Word Wizards the next day.

Day 3.

Students met in their groups to discuss chosen vocabulary, then debriefed as a class and were read aloud Chapter 3, “The Hard-boiled Egg Fad”. This time the role of Passage Master (Picker) was modeled. Students were directed to choose parts of the story that they wanted to share on their schedules: Page, Paragraph, and Why I like it (pg. 122).

Day 4.

“The Quimby’s Quarrel”, Chapter 4, was read aloud after students shared passages in their literature circles and debriefed as a class. The last two roles, Royal Connector and Masterpiece Maker were assigned to one student if the groups had four members, or assigned as individual roles if there were five. The Royal Connector role (known as Connector from Daniels (pg. 120) was to find connections between the book and the world outside. According to Daniels connections might be to your own life, to happenings at school or in the neighborhood, to similar events at other times and places, to other people or problems, to other books or stories, to other writing on the same topics, or other writings by the same author. Masterpiece Maker (Artful Artist or Illustrator (pg. 119-123) should draw anything about the story that he likes: a character, the setting, a problem, an exciting part, a surprise, a prediction of what will happen next, or anything else.

Day 5.

After meeting and sharing the last two roles as illustrator and connector, the students listened and shared the reading aloud of Chapter 5, “The Extra-Good Sunday”, and prepared an individual role for literature circle discussion. Discussion King was chosen by me based on

personal observation of student performance throughout the week, as someone who could lead the group easily into a discussion format. The remaining roles fell into place clockwise in each group, according to the Literature Circle Schedule: Word Wizard, Passage Master, and Masterpiece Maker / Royal Connector and rotated after each session thereafter. Students wore color-coded group tags marked with a role title and picture representing the role.

Day 6 to Day 10.

Students met for the first time as full-fledged literature circle participants and managed the five roles for discussion throughout the remaining four chapters of the book. If students chose to switch seating positions in the groups, the coded name tags and schedules kept matters straight. Throughout the five days, we met to debrief after small group discussions and chose volunteer groups to demonstrate their expertise using the fish bowl technique- volunteers sat in a circle surrounded by an outside circle of student observers. Following the demonstration, the audience provided supportive feedback about what they saw, what they liked, and so forth. Third grade team teachers visited each other's classrooms during this week to observe the activities and provide support and feedback. Students evaluated their performance in written format, wrote to one another in their reader's journals at least once during the ten day period to discuss the activity, what they enjoyed most and least, what they might change, and whether the activity should be repeated. The first phase of literature circles was completed by having students prepare a book commercial, like Ramona did, to present to the class.

I reviewed 21 students' Literature Circles Schedules, audio tapes, journals, my notes of the sessions, and feedback from peers, and drew several conclusions: (a) students for the most part were eager to do literature circles every day, (b) students were able to carry on some discussion with the aid of the tape recorder rather than an adult managing the group, (c) for now,

the roles and written schedules were manageable, and (d) teaching peers also implementing literature circles were positive about the initial sessions. At this time there were no plans to make any changes other than observe closely and monitor students' participation carefully in order to make changes when deemed necessary. I did wonder about inviting parents to assist with the discussion groups; however, I really wanted to see what the children could do on their own, with some intervention from me when I felt it was needed, and with the silent witness, the tape recorder. To invite parents would mean taking additional time for training and adding another piece to be monitored in terms of the study. Students struggling for their identities might be influenced by the quasi-control of their moms' or dads'. The tape recorder became a hit in fact as students wanted to hear themselves talk and sometimes listened in. The time factor was always an issue, however, throughout busy school days. My thinking was to have the students listen to the tapes periodically and do personal evaluations of how they did and what they learned. Book selections at this time were somewhat of a concern. Rather than choose books to read haphazardly based on availability, team members agreed to try and purchase theme-centered sets, such as survival, or around genres such as biographies or mysteries, or authors once the grant was issued.

3.3.5. Phase 3: Immersing

3.3.6. Second Chapter Book

Rationale.

The third phase of the study to be known as Immersing incorporated more student choice and subsequently less teacher control over group membership. Books were presented based primarily on the pragmatics of availability of multiple copies; however, age appropriateness,

student interest, leveling to meet all students' needs, and quality worthy of lively discussions were criteria for choice.

3.3.7. Procedure.

Students were excited to make first, second, or third place choices including Dahl's The BFG (1982), Mr. Popper's Penguins (Atwater, 1966), two groups of The Mouse and the Motorcycle (Cleary, 1965), and The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (Lewis, 1950). Other books were offered, however, these were the ones most often picked. Students who preferred the exciting Dahl books seem to enjoy a taste for vivid language, humor, sarcasm, nonsense, and big words. Mr. Popper's Penguins, recognized as a book from second grade, familiar as a read aloud by one of the second grade teachers from the previous year, was an immediate choice of some. Chapters are short and highlighted with illustrations. A reading level of four (4L) suggested by Scholastic, Inc, would indicate a fairly easy book for mid-year third grade readers, particularly with the added advantage of familiarity and nonsensical topic of raising penguins in a bathtub. The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (Lewis, 1950), recognized as part of The Chronicles of Narnia appealed to able readers who enjoyed reading about extraordinary adventures and enchanted lands slightly reminiscent of the Harry Potter books. Thorton, a very able reader, whose older brother had read the book, was first to choose, quickly followed by three more boys excited to join the action. The Mouse and the Motorcycle, written by Cleary (1965), leveled by Scholastic as RL 5.8, was a good choice for third graders who seem to naturally love animal stories, especially fanciful tales of mice like Ralph who become expert motorcyclists, who are befriended by a young boy of their own age and status like Keith. The book appealed to enough readers to create two literature circles.

Based on their preferences and some negotiating, students were issued their books of choice. Because students were familiar with the Literature Circle Schedule and the roles, this time they decided how much to read each night and how to start the role assignments as a release from teacher control. They were still required to keep a record of chapters, roles, dates, and their input for each session in their schedules, as usual.

Days 1 to 4.

Because it was assessment week, students were not assigned a reading from the classroom anthology. This meant more time could be allotted to reading literature circle books. Consequently, students met everyday that week and generally chose to read one or two chapters per day, depending on the length of each. (Typical of the remaining weeks stretching over a two month period, we tried to meet two or three days a week. Flexibility with time was a bonus of conducting the study with my own class. Literature circles could be managed around regular specials, assemblies, other time impingements, or run during opportunity breaks based on happenings of the day. Once again, the tape recorder served as data keeper and group manager to some extent.)

The first day students met in their five newly configured circles, each circle was named after the book it represented except for The Mouse and the Motorcycle groups which were given a 1 or 2 following the title to differentiate membership in one circle or the other. Each circle established its roles based on a group-decided method. Some chose abc order of names, birthday order, or simple volunteering and movement around the circle in a set order. Again, the roles to be played out included Discussion King, Word Wizard, Passage Master, Royal Connector, and Masterpiece Maker. Once again, depending on a four or five members group, the Royal Connector and Masterpiece Maker roles (deemed easiest to prepare by the teacher) were

assigned to one person, except for a the five member group. Each group met in separate spaces in far corners of the classroom to minimize noise level and assure good taping results. Once roles were established, students read together in their circles and decided upon number of pages to read according to number and length of chapters. For example, The Mouse and the Motorcycle groups 1 and 2 were committed to reading a total of 158 pages divided into 13 chapters; therefore they read one chapter a setting. The remaining groups: Mr. Popper's Penguins decided on two or three chapters (20 chapters totaling 138 pages) a setting; The BFGs read two or three chapters (25 chapters totaling 208 pages of fine print) a setting; and The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe group read usually two chapters a time based on 27 chapters 186 pages of fine print. I remained on the outside of each circle, rotating, listening in, occasionally commenting on a procedure, keeping order, and refereeing when necessary.

Days 5 to 20.

Students continued to meet in their circles and perform role enactments as they discussed their books. Following the last chapter reading per group, students were asked to decide on a way to present their book to the rest of the class. After usually a class period of brainstorming ideas for presentation, they had the sometimes difficult task of negotiating a single way or combination of ways to present. Once choices were finally made, students were given time to meet, plan, and prepare their activities. As groups finished, they followed the same procedure.

Conclusions drawn from the tapes and observations suggest (a) quiet students often appeared marginalized by the more aggressive, boisterous students, (b) quiet students appeared to try and take a stand, even in the face of over-talkative peers, [evidence based on transcript](c) impulsive students or those with stronger, more confident personalities, had the most trouble

interrupting others and staying with a discussion, or taking over the discussion. In depth analysis of audio taped discussions follows in Chapter Four.

Physically managing the five circles in action at the same time required an intensity of concentration and energy. Students were quite amazing to watch as they sat in their circles and shared their reading like pros. Occasionally, however, personalities clashed. The Mr. Popper's Penguins group of all girls at one point became loudly argumentative because they couldn't agree on who was to be doing which job because someone had been absent and did not get an assignment. Their inability to solve the dilemma led me to collect their role necklaces, shuffle them, and reassign positions on the spot. Occasionally the noise level of the working groups had to be toned down. Sometimes students came unprepared or had forgotten their schedule or book. Their group would have to be put on hold doing something else while a member did his job. The obviousness of letting down their own group by not getting an assignment done usually led to very few recurrences. When students were absent or went home due to illness, the remaining group members had to help those in need catch up or take their notes and fill in for them when possible. The majority of the time, however, students were on task and playing out their roles.

At one point during the Day 5-Day 20 period, I decided, based on observation and feeling some disappointment in students' depth of discussion, to extend students' circle time and increase discussion turns by having all students compose five discussion questions similar to the modeling phase of the first pilot and reiterate the importance of everyone being heard and how that might best happen. The following session, I intervened again, asking all students to compose three discussion questions and choose four words to discuss. Time on task was certainly extended, but the flow of literature circles and the practiced role taking and management appeared no longer "light" and conversational. Students appeared bogged down

with the change in format as I struggled to find a balance between cursory kid's play in terms of discussing books and the elongated question-answer sessions. Or was kid's play what it was all about? After some discussion with peers, we all agreed students needed to be heard, they needed to be independent readers with opinions, and they needed to hone their ability to take a stand for what they believed. Most of all they needed to love reading books. So far, my students were excited about literature circles. I wanted to keep their spirit of fun and play alive. I should have faith that third grade is a proper training ground for developing more in-depth, sophisticated conversations about books and rejoice because all students have a role to fulfill each session. The lowest reader in the class, based on latest CAT 5 achievement test results (2002), I observed as being able to participate in his own way. I observed both his laughter and total enjoyment of belonging as well as his sometimes off task, annoying behavior such as flicking a piece of paper at someone. The beauty of belonging to a literature circle, at least the one he belonged to, was to see his group supporting him, correcting his inconsistencies with text, and ignoring his inappropriate behavior. I would like to believe he comprehends more than what he is able to express in writing or conversation. Or perhaps this observation is true of many of the third graders who when pressed to explain seemingly pertinent information from a story appeared clueless. I struggled with my decision to try to let the stories unfold through independent reading and sharing of ideas with the least amount of policing from me. It became important to keep a check on students' schedules if I noticed after spot-checking that work was not being recorded or assignments were incomplete. Since students were usually given time to work on the following session's task, they needed to hold on to the schedules, so time for collecting them and handing them back before the day ended, was a balancing act. The set up of chapters was different from book to book. Students had to be careful to record page numbers carefully to stay together as a

group. They were asked not to read ahead to maintain the discussions and avoid giving away new information.

This section of literature circle implementation wove in and around major time crunching activities, both in-class and school-wide initiatives. Hindsight would suggest shorter chapter books or perhaps picture books relating to social studies themes might have been better served at this time. A flurry of activities usurped time beginning with a Mayflower simulation, holidays around the world research, Black History research, a school-wide cultures around the world event, as well as a messy paper mache project making animal Valentine's Day boxes spun from animal research work. At the same time, the personal tragedy of one of our mother's suffering a recurring illness and her subsequent passing added to time needed for managing the emotional climate of the classroom and providing best ways to stay focused and move along as a community of learners. The paper mache project was time consuming yet necessarily therapeutic. We were grateful to be able to share the expertise of Aunt Penny who was both sister to our mom and an art teacher, to come in and assist with our boxes and emotional stability two entire afternoons in February. My sense is we lost momentum with literature circles, yet were able to refocus and complete the reading and discussions by March. Extension activities were not teacher directed this period. After brainstorming possibilities students were free to decide on a project and given time to plan. Four of the groups decided to perform skits of their favorite chapters. Despite some violence with The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe group, the skits were light-hearted, spontaneously enacted, and typically third grade style. As students prepared, I was reminded of the children in Roxaboxen (McLerran, 1991), a story connected to social studies the first week of school, as they laid out areas to perform and improvised props. What I was able to capture on tape was the audience scrambling to arrange their chairs along the

carpet's edge to have front row seats to the action. The spirit of play that ensued, and the total escape into a child's world of imagination was heart-warming. The rapt attention of the audience gave confirmation to how supportive students had grown of each other. The BFG (Big Friendly Giant) group chose to work in pairs to create poster-size drawings of their favorite giants and to present them in vivid detail and character description.

3.3.8. Third Chapter Book

Rationale.

The third literature circle period evolved from a teacher-induced class interest in the Iditarod, which evolved from a story in our anthology, *Secret of the Seal* (Davis, 1994). Carnegie Museum of Natural History educators are invited to our third grade classrooms annually to present their program, "Survival in the Arctic". Along with their voluminous background of information about the culture of the Inuits, they bring authentic artifacts for students to either play with or touch. Expanding from this was my daughter's visit to the classroom with her two Siberian Huskies and newly adopted Forrest, an Alaskan Husky now retired from racing in the Iditarod due to an accident with a snow mobile. Before heading back to Alaska for the second opportunity to volunteer as a dog handler in the 2002 Iditarod, Tracy provided first hand information and set up an email site for us. Students followed the race on the Internet by choosing a favorite musher based on personal information and statistics which were intriguing for most. They made paper sleds, wrote short bios of the racers on the sleds, and then moved the sleds along the chalk tray after checking the Internet each morning for current standings. Tracy sent mailings such as the Anchorage News that gave front page coverage of the race and a full page layout of the contestants, their pictures, and race information. The additional primary sources of information added richness to the project. Such motivational hype set the stage for everyone reading the same book, Stone Fox, in reconfigured groups chosen by

the teacher. The book was appropriately leveled for young readers with ten short easy to read chapters with illustrations to aid comprehension. In this story, ten year-old Little Willy enters a dog sled race against the legendary Indian, Stone Fox, in an attempt to win money and save his ailing grandfather's potato farm from foreclosure. As a third grade team, we thought the story would arouse strong feelings about fear of losing one's home, about having to care for a sick grandparent all alone, and about teaming with a wonder dog such as Searchlight. Pragmatically, Stone Fox was another economical purchase of ninety-five cents each from Scholastic Book Club.

3.3.9. Procedure.

Day 1-5.

The first two chapters of Stone Fox were read aloud by me while students followed along in their own copies. Because four of the five third grade classrooms shared the two classroom sets of the book, time was an issue in order to pass the books along to the waiting students and in order to read the book during the high-interest period of the Iditarod, itself.

With the setting and characters established from the read-aloud and group discussion, students met in five reconfigured groups decided upon by me based on ability-mix to assure high, middle and low readers were represented, on congeniality of group members, and on opportunity to oblige students from the last set of literature circles who did not read in a preferred group (for example, one girl reluctantly read with a group of four boys in The Mouse and the Motorcycle.) The following eight chapters were read over a one- week period reading two chapters per session. Again, students enacted literature circle discussions in their roles, which were rotated after each session to prepare for the next reading assignment.

Two issues that became clear as I considered the purpose of implementing literature circles. If the answer was to provide students with both voice and choice about what they read, I

was missing the point by manipulating group configurations and dictating which text would be read! Nevertheless, the discussions were detailed and connected to the wealth of background information surrounding dog sledding, artifacts from Carnegie, Tracy's dog visit, and personalized Iditarod experience. A flood of books might be considered next time that would relate to Stone Fox or dog sledding in some way such as books about dog breeds, controversial issues about raising dogs for racing, humane treatment of animals, the potato, potato dishes, potato cultivation. These were students eight and nine years of age who still believed in Santa Claus, so there would still be time ahead to consider taking sides in emotionally charged issues. The benefits, depending on the maturity of the group, however, would be vast. Students could write letters voicing opinions in true authentic style involvement. For now, we were still feeling our way with literature circles by working cooperatively and performing our roles.

The idea for the story, Stone Fox is based on a Rocky Mountain legend that was retold to John Gardiner over a cup of coffee at Hudson's Café in Idaho Falls, Idaho. In an afterword of his book, Gardiner explains that although the characters Stone Fox and others are fictitious, the tragic ending to the story belongs to the legend and is reported to have actually happened- a point of interest to explore and extend learning. One student considered Little Willy's race as the Iditarod. When pressed to understand her error, she exclaimed, "Whatever!" Such a huge error in detail did not appear to matter and indicated less than close reading. The word "Wyoming" was misread by some of the brightest. My concern was that we were reading and talking about books, yet often missing major pieces of information, or sloughing over unknown vocabulary. Without seeming like the teacher police, voice of authority, I had to remind myself to stand back and let the students experience the reading in their own way, without fear of failure, with a spirit of adventure. The point being, the anthology stories, what students call "reading" are stories

experienced, scrutinized, taught skills from, and tested for comprehension and vocabulary knowledge. Literature Circles were being implemented to go beyond that. Would continued engagement with group discussion of books grow better readers mechanically as well as socially? Most students would agree based on year-end evaluations. This was a powerful book to grow with. Ironically, there were no tears shed when they learned Searchlight had to be carried across the finish line to win the race. Even though the text read, “She was a hundred feet from the finish line. Her heart burst. She died instantly. There was no suffering.” (Gardiner, pg. 77) students actually debated whether she really did die! Perhaps the recent passing of one of our mothers was too close to bear witness to the dog’s death. Afterwards students would attest to Stone Fox being one of the least favorite books read this year because it was sad.

Day 6 to10.

After reading the final chapter reading of Stone Fox, students met in their circles to decide on a way to present their ideas of the book. After brainstorming and decision making, choices for the five groups’ extension activities consisting of four skits and one poster were established. Students were given time, materials, and space to create and practice. They pretended to be dogs racing or the Indian, Stone Fox, giving orders about no man crossing the finish line except Little Willy with his dog Searchlight. Others enacted scenes from Grandpa’s illness, such as Grandpa signaling one-word answers to Little Willy with palm up or palm down. The youthful audience appreciated all products and performances. An analysis of choices students made, of negotiations among group members to reach consensus or agree to disagree, and of solutions provide evidence of growth in reading as a social rather than singular act.

3.3.10. Fourth Chapter Book

Rationale

For the last period of literature circles, students chose from a selection of books available including those purchased with the newly awarded \$500 grant from the Opportunities Fund. Teachers' book choices were based on the desire to assure quality of content, student interest and motivation, ease of reading for entertainment and conversation, and the best selection economically.

3.3.11. Procedure

Day 1.

While students were at a special, I placed several stacks of brand-new books on empty desks at the front of the room. Upon returning to the classroom, and without hesitation, students began eyeing and touching the new books with decision making already in mind. Search for Delicious (Babbitt, 1969) tantalized the taste buds of a group of little girls. Perhaps they were captivated by the innocent-looking mermaid gazing at a handsome boy or perhaps the idea of searching for the meaning of delicious, itself. Ribsy, another Cleary book (1964), about a floppy-eared black and white dog grabbed the interest of more than eight readers. Four adventuresome boys were smitten by My Side of the Mountain (Craighead-George, 1959) as a first pick. Not only did the book cover seem enticing -displaying an older boy with a beautiful falcon- the story line depicting life in the wild was captivating. Again, Thorton, a very able reader, said his brother had read the book and now he would have the opportunity. Two more high ability readers joined the group followed by a less able reader. A Scholastic Junior Classic, The Wind in the Willows (retold from Kenneth Grahame by Ellen Miles, 1908, 2002) was a quick sell. One boy was jumping out of his seat to please let this book be his first choice. It seems he and a few others who attended the same CCD class after school recognized the animal

characters on the cover. One of their instructors was using Wind in the Willows characters in her lessons, which these students found intriguing and clearly sparked their desire to read the book.

Some negotiating for spaces in the five literature circles took place. Not everyone could have his/her first choice. Consequently, the Ribsy groups were mixed to include both boys and girls whom I determined should be separated to maintain order and help keep everyone on task. One group was evenly divided with two girls and two boys, and the other group consisted of one boy and three girls. Neil, the single boy, accepted the placement without flinching, as I trusted he would based on excellent performance in lit circles so far, and his incredibly mature demeanor without gender issues. He remained an excellent discussant with the girls. Such intervention rejects the purist literature circle mantra of allowing students to have their say. Group formation may have been left to students' discretion; however, I sensed the need to delegate some control knowing one student would have to compromise on a position. Some do so with grace, others do not. I looked for the best chance for a successful literature circle period. I experienced in the second period of literature circles one of my little girls unhappily situated with three boys reading The Mouse and the Motorcycle (Cleary, 1965). She was such a strong discussant, I felt she would be able to manage the gender issue better than others. Though she managed, she did so without having a "good group" in her own words. The next literature circle period I promised her first choice of book and subsequent group, but her demeanor was definitely less spirited. Literature Circles are supposed to be fun, after all. We are supposed to be learning how to manage ourselves in groups and have fun reading at the same time. Daniels (2002) suggests even two students sharing a book would have been reasonable, if need be.

Once circles were established, students chose a site for reading. Locations did not seem to have to be negotiated. Students seemed to just enjoy the freedom sitting casually on the floor

in their circles rather than at desks. Day one began with the reading of chapter one in each of the new circles. Once again, roles were chosen without much ado; students read together and prepared for the following day's discussion.

Day 2 to Day 12.

Students followed the same role-playing tasks as before to complete their discussions about books. The number and length of chapters per book were criteria for choosing the amount of reading per session. Ribsy, consisting of seven lengthy chapters equalling 192 pages was read over six more sessions. The Search for Delicious, of thirty-three segments totaling 167 pages were read two to three segments per session. My Side of the Mountain was divided into 23 chapters totaling 177 pages. The boys generally chose to read two to three chapters per session and prepare for discussion for following day or session. Once books were completed, students worked in their circles to create an extension activity to accompany their books and share them with the rest of the class. Ribsy groups created puppets and dialogue. The Search for Delicious group created a map of Gaelen's travels while searching for Delicious. The Wind in the Willows group made up a "Wheel of Fortune" game about their book to play like the one the Spanish teacher made for her classes. Last, My Side of the Mountain group read throughout the longest period of sessions by dividing up the 23 chapters and 177 pages of small print into segments of usually two chapters each. A careful examination and reporting of results is included in the following chapter. What changes in discussion length or frequency of turns to speak occurred as a result of teacher placement versus students' own placement of self, particularly in one of the two groups each of Ribsy or The Mouse and the Motorcycle? How different might discussions have been if students had true choice? Adam, a very bright, but very quiet boy was sulking because he had not landed his first choice book for discussion. He was thrilled to know that he

could read the book independently since there were extra copies, and complete his role work with the BFGs.

Clearly the literature circle experience evolved into a workable system of eight and nine year olds organizing themselves, managing the tape recorder, and voicing their opinions about books. The success of the experience was apparent one particularly dark, stormy May afternoon. Students settled in on the carpet sharing beanbags, resting comfortably to discuss our progress and our books. We purposely sat in the darkened room as we talked and listened to each other on tape. It was as if the words emanating from the tape recordings were enough to illuminate our thinking about the year's work. This time of reflection about the entire literature circle experience I knew would be not only helpful to analyzing the results of the study but reassuring to me that students were positive in their reflections about the literature circle experience in several ways: (a) students appeared eager to share their book adventures thus far, (b) they readily agreed that their discussions were longer and better compared to the beginning of the year because they asked less one word response questions and had to explain their reasoning (c) they wanted to hear each other's tapes and sat patiently, for the most part, as their stories were told, offering asides of information and questions, and (d) students voiced appeals to read each other's books.

The following table (Table 3) lists the books read during two phases of the study known as Training and Immersion:

Table 3 Timeline of Four Periods of Literature Circles

Timeline of Four Periods of Literature Circles				
Timeline	Book Title	Chapters	Pages	# of Lit Circles
October 22-29, 2001	Ramona Quimby, Age 8	9	182	5
January 28 - March 15, 2002	The Mouse and the Motorcycle	13	158	2
January 28 - March 15, 2002	Mr. Popper's Penguins	20	138	1
January 28 - March 15, 2002	The BFG	25	208	1
January 28 - March 15, 2002	The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe	27	186	1
March 18-23, 2002	Stone Fox 101	10	81	5
April 30-May 17, 22, 23, 2002	Ribsy	7	192	2
April 30-May 17, 22, 23, 2002	The Search for Delicious	33	167	1
April 30-May 17, 22, 23, 2002	My Side of the Mountain	23	177	1
April 30-May 17, 22, 23, 2002	The Wind in the Willows	11	147	1

3.4. Data Collection

By applying case study methodology, we come to know the actors, the twenty-one students, experiencing literature circles. The classroom represents the bounded context described by Miles and Huberman (1994, cited in Merriam, 1998, pg. 37) of the case or phenomenon to be studied. “The relation between meaning-perspective of actors and the ecological circumstances of action in which they find themselves,” writes Erickson (1986, p. 127), “is a central concern of interpretive, participant observational fieldwork research.” This choice of methodology is guided by the need for specific understanding through documentation of concrete details of practice (p. 121). By exploring the details of practice, we make explicit the points of view of these actors, as well as the meanings of their actions within a specific setting (Scott, 1992, p. 34).

Table 4 Time Table for Data Collection

Time Table for Data Collection									
Methodology	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Lesson Plans	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Student Reflections / Questionnaires		x							x
Response Journals	x						x	x	
Audiotapes	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Videotaped Snippets		x			x	x	x	x	x
Lit Circle Evaluations / Students		x					x		
Lit Circle Schedules	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Artifacts		x			x		x		x

Data collection (see Table 4) was a yearlong process beginning with the initial modeling and application phase through each of the three following literature circle periods. The data sources included audio taping of each literature circle discussion. A total of 209 sessions averaging approximately 20 minutes each amounted to 68 hours of dialogue/interaction. Two hours of videotaping captured a cross section of snippets of students conducting literature circles throughout the year. One hundred and eighty-three Literature Circle Schedules of student work were collected for analysis by categories including student questions for discussion (literal, open-ended) important words (nouns, actions, descriptors); significant passages (descriptive of setting, character, or event), evoking emotion, or pure enjoyment; connections (to self, text, world), and illustrations to be analyzed (color, detail, captions, significance to story theme or symbolic of an idea noted). Data sources listed according to each of the four research questions are included in Table 5:

Table 5 Data Sources

Audio/Video Discussions	Student Schedules	Dialogue Journal	Story Extensions	Student Reflections	Student Evaluations	Student Interviews	Teacher Notes	Lesson Plans
1. X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
3. X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
4. X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X

Numbers identify research question. 1. Roles (student) 2. Interactions 3. Responses 4. Teacher role

Explanations for column heading labels:

Students' Group Discussions – Group discussions were audio taped along with periodic videotaping.

Students' Schedules - Following independent reading, students completed their role assignments in Student Schedules to prepare for each discussion session. Discussion questions, vocabulary words, passage selections, connections, or drawings were posed based on personal response to the reading.

Initial Dialogue Journal Entries - Students wrote in dialogue journals to one another or the teacher in response to their

reading of *Ramona Quimby, Age 8*.

Students' Story Extensions - Artifacts were collected and dramatizations were videotaped of each group's book extension activities.

Student Reflections - Students responded in writing to open-ended questions pertaining to their experiences conducting

their own literature circles.

Student Evaluations - Students self-evaluated and group-evaluated participation in literature circles.

Student Interviews - Two year follow-up interviews with student participants in literature circles were conducted.

Teacher Notes - Reflective journaling followed literature discussion sessions.

Teacher Lesson Plans - Lesson plans included literature circle steps for small or large group introduction, times, and dates.

3.5. Data Analysis

Three students were chosen—one each below, at and above grade level—to provide a cross-sectional view of the discussions, and rotating role assignments throughout the school year. Evidence of change in roles, interactions, and responses were examined from various data sources (see table in previous section). Of particular interest were changes in individual identity, valuing points of others, concern for the rights of all to participate, willingness to share ideas and feelings, acceptance of praise and criticism and ability to offer both, and ability to recognize value and aesthetic rewards when sharing literature with others.

By focusing on a sampling from different reading levels this case study approach examined data sources for patterns or change or stability across time in terms of students' roles, interactions, and responses. Categories that characterize patterns in data were created and refined to understand the literature circle discussions. The process for creating and refining categories will involved: reading and rereading artifacts, sorting similarities in content of artifacts together, generating labels for similarities in sorted content, and resorting and redefining similarly labeled content. Inter-judge reliability of information generated by the sorting process will occur with a colleague.

A coding system model after Eeds and Wells' (1989) investigation of literature study groups and Scott (1992), suggest the following categories for consideration:

Construction of Meaning- to be defined as the act of producing meaning as one reads or transacts (Rosenblatt, 1978) with text. The assumption is that meaning will vary based on readers' life experiences, attitudes, and personal literary history. Examples include clarifying ideas, formulating opinions, using prior knowledge and relating life experiences to the context of the story.

Issues of Social Concern- are defined as ways students work as a social unit during literature circle discussions. Examples include evidence of supporting, arguing, role-playing or competing with one another during discussions.

Empowerment Issues- are defined as students' revelations about their feelings of ownership and control related to literature circle participation. Students may express increased competence as readers and discussants or talk of having greater choice for planning group events, choosing texts, or assigning group work.

These categories were considered as a reference point for analyzing student responses and interactions. Transcripts were coded by utterance described by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, p. 21) as “everything said by one speaker before another began to speak.” Their meaning will be deciphered and coded into categories. A fourth category suggested by Eeds and Wells (1989, p. 8)) and used by Scott (1992) labeled “Conversation Maintenance,” was used to reflect the fluid nature of conversation: initiations, nominations, back channeling, agreements, disagreements, encouraging remarks, and paraphrased statements.

Student reflections and evaluations were transcribed and analyzed for what individuals reveal about their conceptions, thoughts and feelings related to their participation in the literature circle discussion groups. Student artwork and extended activity projects were examined as part of the classroom context of literature circles.

Finally, the role of the teacher was examined through descriptive analysis of how she shapes students taking roles, interacting, and responding to literature during the school year. Information gleaned from teacher notes and observations of the study will include her accounts of classroom experiences, interpretation of experiences and understandings of events as they occur across time.

Key linkages among various items of data were sought. According to Erickson (1986): “A key linkage is key in that it is of central significance for the major assertions the researcher wants to make” (p.147). Research methods for this study were chosen for their potential to reveal key linkages between various sources and types of response as well as to reveal the key events that occurred among the congested scenes of classroom life.

4. RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate how third graders grow as literature discussants by assuming roles in peer-led literature circles. Through the role-taking process, students' interactions and responses to the literature were examined to look for change over time as they grew their literate selves. The assumption was that the discussion generated through the role-taking process would reveal telling information regarding third graders' ability to carry on their own conversations about books and delve below surface understanding by building meaning together. This chapter portrays the results of the study based upon four guiding questions:

1. How does the taking on of roles affect students' ability to initiate and carry on their own book discussions in literature circles?
2. What are the results over time in terms of interactions of third graders conducting conversations about books in literature circles?
3. What are the results over time in terms of responses created by third graders conducting conversations about books in literature circles?
4. What role does the teacher play in shaping how students take on roles, interact and respond?

4.1. The Students

The narratives that follow describe the three students from the study representing a cross section sample of one low, one average, and one high ability reader. Students are listed anonymously from low to high. The selection was based on established standardized testing data of cognitive ability and reading performance, as well as evidence from classroom performance.

4.1.1. Billy

Billy, identified as a low ability reader, is easy-going and pleasant-natured, with a laid-back demeanor. His mother described him and his twin sister as, “a little husband and wife team looking out for one other” (Parent-Teacher Conference, November, 2001). Billy displayed courageous behavior for a young boy; his composure in the face of his mother’s terminal illness during the year of this study was remarkable. Activity-wise, Billy is an avid skate-boarder and outdoorsman. He enjoys art and gym. Reading in school is fun for him, he says. Billy’s end of grade two reading comprehension performance on the CAT5 was at the 38%ile. He also is a former special reader from both grades one and two. By year’s end, Billy’s reading comprehension score on the CAT5 had nearly doubled at the 63%ile. His personal account two years later was an acknowledgement of his growing interest in reading: “When I read the [literature circle books] they would encourage me to read another and keep going. When you had six to pick from, I would want to read all of them,” (Interview, 5/21/04).

4.1.2. Bob

Bob, identified as an average-ability reader, is a rather serious-natured boy. He complies with school rules, completes assignments, and works to the best of his ability. Football is his number one interest both in and out of school. Reading is his least favorite subject or thing to do in his spare time, he reports from his Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (1990) of 10/01/01.

Bob completed grade two at the 53%ile on the CAT5 reading comprehension subtest. Oral reading for him can be choppy and uneasy as he stops and starts, back channels and sometimes thinks aloud to make sense of text. His audio taped dialogue in literature circle discussions is frequently peppered with an “I don’t care”, or “Whatever!” But the standardized evidence from this yearlong study indicates that he does care. For instance, Bob demonstrated the highest reading gains of the class on spring CAT5 testing in both vocabulary (98%ile) and comprehension (97%ile). His total composite test performance increased from the 68%ile to the 91%ile. Bob’s reflections of his third grade reading experience in literature circles indicate he enjoyed time to listen to himself read on the tape recorder and hearing everyone’s opinions. It made it a lot easier for him to discuss he said, by listening to what they talked about (5/21/04).

4.1.3. Thorton

Thorton is a high-ability reader. He appears quiet and somewhat shy around adults and blushes easily. Thorton actually is quite personable, friendly natured, and knowledgeable. He loves to laugh, to read, play sports and chatter with friends. Thorton can always be found reading a book in his spare time or practicing the viola. His desire is to be a genius someday and start a small business that makes lots of money he says (his fifth-grade bare-bones book). Thorton completed his second grade year at the 91%ile in reading comprehension on the CAT 5 subtest. His year-end reading comprehension subtest performance in third grade remained high at the 95%ile, and total composite at the 99%ile.

4.2. Guiding Question One

How does the taking on of roles affect students’ ability to initiate and carry on their own book discussions in literature circles?

4.2.1. Roles

The taking on of roles in peer-led literature circle discussions, captured through study of transcribed audio taped dialogue, student reflections, evaluations, interviews, and teacher's notes are explained in this section.

4.2.2. The Environment

During literature circle discussions students were seated around a tape recorder in circle-like fashion, either on the floor or in chairs, in far corners of the room to minimize noise level for discussion and allow for accurate tape-recording. Students routinely stayed in the same positions throughout a book cycle, but changed spots with each new book.

Sessions began with students organizing themselves with books, clipboards and their Literature Circle Schedules, their tape recorders and cassettes. They began each taped session by announcing the date, the name of their group, their roles, and what they were reading often in unison or said by the Discussion King himself. This was a management issue that worked to identify the data chronologically and was something the students enjoyed as a routine. They often added a seasonal greeting and would end with dramatic farewells like, "That's a wrap!" or "Ciao!" "Sayonara!". The Discussion King initiated discussion with his questions followed by Word Wizard presenting vocabulary, Passage Master reading book parts, and Royal Connector and Masterpiece Maker sharing his connections and artwork. If a student was absent, another student would take over that role, or if the schedule was available, the role was completed by proxy. Sessions were intense and noise-level and times varied depending on the discussion

interest and length. As one girl recorded in her journal, she could have talked for two hours (10/01).

4.2.3. Analysis of Role-Taking

Students' role-taking turns during the literature circle discussions were audio taped, transcribed, coded, and categorized by roles across 4 texts: two sets each of Ramona Quimby, Age 8 and Stone Fox; one of The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe; one of My Side of the Mountain; and one of Wind in the Willows [read by Bob, only, counted as his fourth text].

Separate charts of utterances for each student in role-taking turns were extracted from the main transcripts and listed chronologically and according to five roles across texts for analysis.

Utterances were units of speech I adapted from Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) to divide the speaker's words within a turn (marked by parentheses) with slash marks to divide the words into small, meaningful parts for analysis. My purpose was to acknowledge all efforts made by the students in carrying on book discussions. Note an example taken from Billy's Utterance Chart of Three Areas of Analysis (see Appendix F). Billy is in role as Royal Connector discussing Ramona Quimby, Age 8 with his fellow Froggies group:

Table 6 Sample Utterance Analysis

Billy's Utterances	Roles	Interactions	Utterances	Responses	Utterances
<u>Ramona Quimby</u>					
(Okay,/	Royal Connector	Facilitate	1	Personal	1
the first connection I did/		Facilitate	1	Personal	1
was my mom sometimes		Connect	1	Personal	1
calls me a nuisance					
for some reason/.) p.6					
Coding Procedure					
1) <i>p. 6</i> indicates the page of the original transcript. Parentheses enclose Billy's turn at speaking; he is in role as Royal Connector.					
2) <u>Okay</u> was counted as the <i>first</i> utterance of this turn because the word was used to end a previous conversation and begin another.					
<u>Okay</u> was coded as a <u>Facilitative Interaction</u> since the word helped move discussion along.					
<u>Okay</u> was also coded as a <u>Personal Response</u> since the word was his own reaction.					
3) <u>the first connection I did</u> was counted as the second utterance. Billy gave importance to the "first connection" he did and chose to relate that fact to his discussion group. <i>the first connection I did</i> was coded as a Facilitative Interaction since his phrase assisted conversation by enumerating his connection for others to consider.					
the first connection I did was also coded as a Personal Response since the phrase indicated his own connection.					
4) my mom sometimes calls me a nuisance for some reason was counted as the third utterance of this turn because Billy explains his connection. <i>my mom sometimes calls me a nuisance for some reason</i> , was coded as a <u>Connective Interaction</u> since he connects the story to his own life.					

Interrater reliability was determined by two raters rating utterances across texts coding types of interactions and responses during role-taking events. Agreement between the two raters was found to be 92%. See Appendices F, G, and H for Utterance Chart samples and Coding Samples in Appendices I and J.

Students took on each role sometimes several times as discussions ensued. The aura of being the Discussion King (or temporary group leader) was generally understood as being in charge. Placed in a leadership role meant opening the circle time, assisting the discussion by moving role-taking along, assuring that everyone had a chance to speak, delivering questions for discussion, following others in their roles and signaling an end of discussion. Usually, the leader took charge reporting the job rotations for the next meeting and confirming how much to read, but not always.

Eventually, no role was considered sacred as often students crossed from one role to another. One student may look over the shoulder of the Word Wizard and hurry to find the next word before the Wizard himself and gleefully exclaim, “I found it!” A more introverted student might begin in the role of Discussion King, but may not be strong enough socially to carry it through every session. More capable peers carry-on, at times seeming to overtake a role in a natural sense to keep conversation rolling. With practice and within a safe learning environment such as reading self-chosen books with able peers and rotating into all roles, each student experienced the multiple tasks required for each role and broadened their thinking. It was interesting to watch the role-taking play out over time as often the most quiet, perhaps least expected to perform status youngster often took charge ‘out’ of role by casually directing the next role player to begin, for example, or could be heard finishing the sentences of others, and spouting their own opinions. Billy, ‘out’ of Discussion King role, for instance could be heard repeating, “Let’s move on. Let him figure it out.” (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, pg. 20).

Passage Masters appeared to enjoy taking the stage as they chose longer and longer portions of text to read aloud with their groups as the year progressed. But in terms of creating discussion they either inspired several transcribed pages of dialogue or merely created a listening opportunity for the joy of sharing the language of the story with little outward form of discussion. Thorton once read aloud a list of passages and page numbers like reading an address book and considered his job done with minimal protest from his group. One student was distinctly heard whispering to the Passage Master to “Just read it!”(no time to discuss) (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 28). Performances naturally varied. Rules had to be reviewed constantly as to what made a conversation. This was a learning process in progress, taking valuable class time, requiring constant teacher vigilance.

Even in the Masterpiece Maker role, some students drew elaborate pictures in color while other obviously less talented students drew stick figures or made little more than a scratch on paper. Or if illustrations were optional, as in Stone Fox sessions, they may have chosen to not draw at all. Students were always instructed to say what is good about something. Generally their comments were emphatically expressive when a student obviously prepared a well-drawn picture. Sometimes they would give their advice by thinking aloud what they might add. The illustrations were presented for circle members to guess before the artist confirmed what he drew. No student attempted in any way to create a symbolic representation of an idea from the books, though the stage was open to do so, and might be considered an area for further development and research.

4.2.4. Summary of Students' Role-Taking

Billy's Roles

Discussion King

Turn-taking frequency. Conversing is something Billy felt at ease doing in his typical slow-paced, deliberate manner. Billy's turn taking frequency averaged 28.5% (n=91) of all turns completed (319) in his literature circles while he led as Discussion King seven times across four texts: one session of Ramona Quimby, Age 8; only one of The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe due to tape malfunction, three of Stone Fox, and two of My Side of the Mountain because of taping problems. Note that a turn in dialogue was tallied for every change in speaker. See Appendix F for turn taking samples.

An increase in number of turns initiated during Billy's time as Discussion King is shown as follows both chronologically and in ascending order:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8..... 8.8

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe.....14.3

Stone Fox..... 38.5

My Side of the Mountain..... 38.5

The increase may in part be a result of Billy's ability to facilitate conversation and "hold court" among peers who perform at often higher ranges of reading ability than he, as a result of his practice throughout the school year conducting literature circles.

He increasingly demonstrated patience waiting to catch a turn to talk, listened politely, offered acknowledgments of other's opinions, and attempted to form his own generalizations. Students discussed one of Billy's questions from Stone Fox (Gardiner, 1980), the third book. As the Discussion King he chose to discuss why Searchlight, the dog, had a particular spot on his forehead. The casual pace of conversation can be felt as the talk bounced back and forth with a characteristic pattern emerging—that of one student finishing the sentence of another. Out of his simple question, simply posed, and simply addressed came a truism simply shared:

Billy : Why do you think Searchlight has a spot on his forehead?

Lily: He's just born like that! Cause everybody's born with special
somethings.

Leon: But it's kinda like an explanation at that one story about a horse
that had a white diamond on his forehead.

Billy: Yeah.

Lily: Cause families have certain things in them.

Billy: Yeah, like...

Leon: ...certain dogs have certain things.

Billy: It's like a star on his forehead. (Stone Fox Transcript, p.8)

In another literature circle discussion, students were responding to the question as to why Grandfather in Stone Fox (Gardiner, 1980) wouldn't wake up. Billy not only provided a closing argument but signaled a close without leader status at the time. Sometimes roles blended naturally:

Billy: Because he's worried...

Leon: He was too worried he couldn't. (wake up.)

Jo: And he couldn't pay the bill.

Lily: And he got so worried he got sick and he got cancer probably.

Leon: Brain cancer.

Billy: Yeah, brain cancer

Lily: He probably didn't want to eat cause of that so he could sell food to somebody. But he shouldn't have.

Billy: He got so worried.

Lily: He got so sick he'll probably die. But he's probably not going to die.

Leon: No.

Lily: He might.

Billy: He'll probably just get better (by) paying the tax bills.

Billy: Okay. [impromptu expression often used to move the discussion along. Even though Billy was not the leader, he took control.]

(Stone Fox Transcript, p. 8).

In another instance, he relinquished his Discussion King status to another group member who insisted that all of Billy's questions had been presented. One question inadvertently

remained. However, Billy appeared to agree with the group without protest. How he felt personally, as he gave up his time without argument (or perhaps inadvertently), might be judged somewhat in his own words as he made a personal connection to Stone Fox in one of his later discussion sessions: “*Sometimes I’m happy that I don’t hear people. I just don’t listen to that. I ignore them* (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 28).”

Frequency of utterances. In the Discussion King role, Billy’s frequency of utterances was 197 total, which is an average of 24.4% of his total utterances in all roles (n=806). Chronologically, Billy’s Discussion King utterances are listed as follows:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	5.6
<u>The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe</u> ...	10.2
<u>Stone Fox</u>	51.3
<u>My Side of the Mountain</u>	33.0

The decrease in utterances from Stone Fox to My Side of the Mountain is represented by a drop in his percentage of turns taken during My Side of the Mountain in relation to his group. Stone Fox was not only a lower-leveled, shorter text compared to My Side of the Mountain, but was read partially aloud by the teacher, and accompanied by a vast array of contributing artifacts about the Iditarod, which may have consequently attributed to more conversation. However, my observation of Billy’s participation level across all texts is that he appeared comfortable with each of his groups.

Word Wizard

Billy’s role as Word Wizard required him to find special words in the story that he wanted to write down and discuss. Students were prompted to look for words that were new,

different, strange, funny, interesting, important or hard, for example, as noted on their Literature Circle Schedules. Arbitrarily, four spaces were indicated on the second portion of students' Literature Schedules, as a minimum number of words to select for discussion, however, more words were always acknowledged as a positive for extra effort and demonstrating a need to know. Page numbers and reasons for choosing the words were marked on the schedule for ease of reference during discussion time.

Turn-taking frequency. Billy's turn-taking events (n= 93) encompassed 36.9% of his four group members' total turn-taking frequency (n=252) while he performed as Word Wizard. Listed below chronologically is his personal frequency of turn averages as Word Wizard across four texts (93 total):

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	7.5
<u>Lion, Witch and Wardrobe</u>	29.0
<u>Stone Fox</u>	16.1
<u>My Side of the Mountain</u>	40.9

His average of turns reported for Stone Fox sessions is nearly halved possibly due to a teacher-directed shift in having students complete multiple roles per meeting. For instance, Billy was Word Wizard three times, but the number of words chosen varied from five, to three, to two, along with serving as a Discussion King asking questions, or a Passage Master sharing one or more passages, a Royal Connector making connections and a Masterpiece Maker sharing a drawing, all in one literature circle discussion. The first Word Wizard role-taking in Stone Fox by Billy resulted in a group total of 24 turns; ten were his. The second session totaled eleven turns by the group; four were his. In the final session, Billy read and talked about two words important to him because they were strange: TETON MOUNTAINS and ABREAST (read first

as “A BEAST... no, ALERT, then as ABREEST or something like that, page 65,” according to Billy. “Here it is:”

They stood nine abreest- Stone Fox in the middle. Little Willy right next to him. Little Willy had read all about the other contestants in the newspaper. They were all well-known mountain men with good racing records and excellent dog teams. But, even so, all bets were on Stone Fox. The odds were as high as a hundred to one that he’d win (Gardiner, 1980, p. 65).

He shared the page number (p.36) for TETON MOUNTAINS with his group and read the sentence: “The jagged peaks of the Teton Mountains shot up in the background toward the clear blue sky overhead. And I picked it because it was a strange word.” Without a breath or a definition, he slid into Passage Master role by reporting his first passage location with page number and paragraph. The directed activity of having students shift roles and multi-task may have reduced vocabulary discussion as Word Wizards. However, what might have resulted as a gap in vocabulary discussion was quickly replaced by Billy’s careful reading of a moving passage about Stone Fox’s change of heart, which Billy recognized and described unwittingly in a simile:

“Willy asked. [Billy started reading in the middle of a sentence because it was the first word of a line, a habit repeated by low to average readers] ...looking up at Stone Fox with his one good eye. Stone Fox knelt and put one massive hand on Searchlight’s chest. He felt no heartbeat. He looked at Willy, and the boy understood, (Gardiner, 1980, p. 78).”

Billy: And I picked it because it was a good part. They actually get along that time.

They don't get along in the beginning and they get along at the end. Searchlight's heart burst. It's like friendship.

Betty: [It] breaks up.

Billy: They were long friends. Now they're not.

Lily: Okay. [impromptu expression to move on]

In terms of group averages of turns per texts chronologically [total Word Wizard turns during Billy's turn taking was 252], percentages appeared similar to his individual performance:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	7.5
<u>Lion, Witch and Wardrobe</u>	28.6
<u>Stone Fox</u>	14.3
<u>My Side of the Mountain</u>	49.6

The drop in Stone Fox percentage of turns may be the result of the switch in format to multi-tasking already discussed. Otherwise, the progression in discussion length from first to last text was significant. Both the second text, Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, (186 pages) and fourth text, My Side of the Mountain, (177 pages) were twice as long as Stone Fox (81 pages), that helps explain the less time on task emitting less discussion.

Comparing Billy's personal average of turns within his discussion groups across texts and time, his percentages appear flat except for My Side of the Mountain when his average appears to drop:

<u>Ramona Quimby Age 8</u>	36.8
<u>Lion, Witch, and the Wardrobe</u>	37.5
<u>Stone Fox</u>	41.7
<u>My Side of the Mountain</u>	30.4

Billy struggled with pronouncing vocabulary words he chose here:

Billy: My first word is TUMBERS on page 150 [Billy wrote TUMBERS instead of TUBERS in his literature circle schedule.] I picked it... was such a strange word to pronounce it. Like TUMBER 'er TUMMER.

Thorton: TUBER

Billy: It is such a strange word like TUMORS [he may be connecting tumors to his mother's illness] TUMMERS. What are they called?

[Inaudible whispering ensues: "Don't___your ____." Unfortunately, the word was neither read in context nor discussed. Billy struggled on here through his second to fourth words.]

Billy: And my second word is POUNDKEEPERS / POUGHKEEPSIE and the page is 151...POGKEEPEEZ or something...POGSHKEEPIES

Bob: POGKEEPIES? I think it's POUGHKEEPIES.

Billy: That's a hard word to pronounce. I could hardly pronounce it just a minute ago when I read it. And my third word is IN-SA-LU-TION / INSULATION on page 154 and I picked it because it was a hard word to pronounce. And my last word is WARBLERS on page 172. I picked it because it's a weird word. I'm not sure what it means cause I couldn't find it in a dictionary."

Will: What is it?

Billy: WAR, WARBLER.... (tape shuts off).

Audio taping difficulties along with difficulty pronouncing self-chosen vocabulary as Word Wizard may explain the drop in number of possible turns by Billy discussing My Side of the Mountain, the last book.

Frequency of utterances. Billy became Word Wizard nine recorded times across four texts. Utterances were counted as a word or words spoken one after the other to form a group—not necessarily well formed and given a tally mark. Billy’s frequency of utterances in role as Word Wizard averaged 33.37% (n= 269) of his total recorded utterances (n= 806). Note that (long) verbatim readings of text were counted as a tally of one in its entirety. Though they were not deemed “conversational”, the verbatim readings indicated the student was uttering meaningful words and given recognition for time and effort retrieving them and presenting them to the group. His averages are reported chronologically and in ascending order as follows:

<u>Ramona Quimby Age 8.....</u>	9.3
<u>Lion Witch and Wardrobe...</u>	21.9
<u>Stone Fox.....</u>	30.9
<u>My Side of the Mountain...</u>	37.9

Billy’s choice of words included words he had trouble pronouncing such as: AFFECTIONATE [aFEKette]; PAVILION [parvesion]; AMAETEURS [ama tee yerz] or RECOMMENDED [REecommended]. In his own words, Billy shared how he faced a difficult word:

“I picked RECOMMENDED because it was a difficult word to read when I was first going to it. RECOMMENDED sounded like ‘ree- commended’ something like that, (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 17).”

The word, PAVILION, a word chosen by Billy as part of “a good writing”, was “new” to him. Before the word was read from the text, Thorton asked politely if he meant, PAVILION, to which Billy replied,

“Yeah. Hm. No. Parvesion. I’m looking. Yeah, in the middle there....

“Pavilion”—that’s what I said,” (Lion ,Witch, and Wardrobe Transcript, p. 32.) and then read aloud:

“When the other children woke up next morning (they had been sleeping on piles of kushens/cushions in the pavilion.” [read simultaneously by Thorton, the questioning student] “The first thing they heard from Mrs. Beaver was that their brother had been rescued and brought into camp late last night; and was at that moment with Alsan/Aslan,” (Lewis, 1950, p. 138).

Billy acknowledged word research was hard. (personal interview, 5/21/04). Nevertheless, he chose words that challenged him and his group. He was straight-forward in acknowledging what he was unsure of rather demonstrating lack of interest, or slow-going use of the dictionary locating words and choosing correct meanings. However, based on his ERAS (McKenna, 1990) from October (2001), he claimed to enjoy using the dictionary. The idea, based on Billy’s emerging performance in this study was to build meaning together.

Billy demonstrated his ability to define words reading My Side of the Mountain, the fourth and final book, (George, 1950) in his second session as Word Wizard (Billy’s Transcript p. 36-37):

“ PROVOKE, it means to annoy someone and make a person angry. It’s a new word.

ASTONISHMENT, and the definition is to make someone feel very surprised. I picked it because it was a hard word.

IMMEDIATELY, now, or at once.”

Billy’s word HICKORY evoked a two-page dialogue, first in how the word sounded:

Billy: My first word is HICKORY on page 55 and I picked it because it was a strange word to me, like hickory...[interrupted by a peer].

Thorton: Well, there's ...

Jon: Like a street name.

Thorton: There's like hickoreeeeeeeeeee limbs.

Then in building meaning:

Thorton: Like slim, isn't there something like hickory beef or something?

Jon: Probably...hickory beef

Thorton: It's something you can use to make salt of, salty flavor

And the book definition:

Billy: and the meaning of it (HICKORY) is a tall tree of North America with
hardwood and edible [assisted by peer] nut.

Then evaluation:

Billy: It was a strange word to me.

Billy then moved immediately to his next words to share. Dialogue about Billy's words and students' brief comments fill another page of the transcript and wind back to the word: HICKORY, again. Jon is correct in saying they need to discuss...[interrupted by Thorton]:

Thorton: (Discussion King) Now that is the end of Billy's words.

Jon: Well, first we need to discuss...

Thorton: I thought those were very good words. (chuckles)

Ron: Actually, I didn't know the hickory one.

Thorton: I thought that was just like really thin type wood because how is he supposed
to chop off the branches with a knife?

Jon: Yeah. How did he get the nuts?

Billy: Once I [interrupted....]

Thorton: It said he got the hickory limbs not the nuts.

Jon: Ah, Billy, ...(inaudible)

Talk continued about how far someone read with some laughter from Ron. Billy's comment was left incomplete. He did not pursue the floor yet can be credited for instigating long dialogue. He became a quiet listener, or perhaps quiet, period. Billy's thinking can only be appreciated by his words and actions. One can be reminded of his personal comment about being happy not to always hear what people are saying.

Billy's personal recommendation for dealing with unknown vocabulary in reading literature circle books was to provide a packet of words and their meanings for each book (Personal Interview, 5/21/04). His idea made sense, considering words and their meanings are often posted as footnotes or in glossaries for quick reference. His comment is significant in thinking about the aesthetic purpose for reading in literature circles. The idea was not to struggle with the reading itself, but to experience life in and from the book. Obviously, when his discussion partners took the time to build meaning together, Billy was a huge benefactor. The all-boy group was also a considering factor that may have contributed a more supportive atmosphere for Billy to share his uncertainties than with girls present.

It was troubling to find errors in pronunciation that were unrecognized by any group member or misguided sense-wise. Words such as "abreast" may have been understood in the context of the sentence or in the illustration on page 66 of the text that all contestants, including little Willy and Stone Fox, were standing alert. Neither Billy nor his discussion partners were alert. Billy read, "abeast".

Another point to be considered in relation to Billy's abeast/alert/abreast scenario is his vision. Billy wears thick glasses and announced that he couldn't see out of one eye- a personal

connection to the character, Willy, being hit in the face by Stone Fox (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 28), which appeared on the page as: “The injury to Willy’s eye brought concern for him being able to see during a dog sled race.”

Words were sometimes chosen because they were amusing and would set off a titter of laughter and capture the essence of merely enjoying the sound of the word as students joined spontaneously and in unison repeating one of Billy’s words, PLOPPED: Plopped! Plopped! Plopped! (Stone Fox Transcript, p.17).

Passage Master

Passage Masters were responsible for choosing story parts to read aloud, recording page numbers for easy retrieval, and marking why they liked them. Billy led his literature circle sessions eight times throughout the year as Passage Master (once by proxy).

Turn-taking frequency. With Billy leading as Passage Master during his eight recorded sessions, 173 turns were tallied in all for his groups’ total, or an average of 46.2 turns per session. In comparison, Billy’s own turn taking accounted for 75 of the 173 turns or 43.4% of the group total. Listed below is the distribution of his percentages of turns per text across time using his own total of 75 turns to compare:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	18.7
<u>Lion Witch and the Wardrobe</u>	22.7
<u>Stone Fox</u>	14.7
<u>My Side of the Mountain</u>	36.0

The drop in turns within Billy’s two Stone Fox sessions as Passage Master remained consistent across roles most likely due to the change in protocol, preparing for more than one role per

session. Billy read an entire page as a passage during the first session, yet the discussion that proceeded included all members of the group working together to draw conclusions:

Billy: It was a good part.

Erica: No more pausing! [tape recording control issue]

Billy: [inaudible due to tape recording manipulation]...Little Willy's dog dies.

So close and his heart just gives out.

Lily: It bursts! She was running too fast.

Jon: Yeah, she wasn't a real running dog.

Billy: Yeah, it was too hard on her.

Erica: She was just a regular kind of dog. She just runs and plays.

Billy: Yeah, like a regular dog...Not like Samoyeds or anything like that. She was just a regular old dog that wanted to race. So she gave it her best shot.

Erica: She didn't make it.

Billy: (inaudible)

Erica: A hundred feet away. Next passage! [spoken without a pause, amazingly, after the death scene talk.]

Comparing Billy's turns with his groups' turns per text there was a consistency of performance across the first three texts, with an apparent drop in the last text, My Side of the Mountain:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8..... 45.2

Lion Witch and the Wardrobe.....43.6

Stone Fox.....45.8

My Side of the Mountain.....34.2

My Side of the Mountain passage readings by Billy may have not have provoked elongated discussions, yet they were rich in vivid description and evoked opinions, perhaps visual thinking, as students worked aloud uncovering meaning and sharing opinions:

Billy: I am Passage Master and my first passage is on page 29, paragraph 1.

Thorton: I'm there! [giggling because he read from Billy's schedule and found the passage immediately]

Billy: "Therefore I wanted a house that could be...not seen. People would want to take me back where I belonged if they found me (George, 1988)." I picked it because it was a good part...like how he wants people to take him back; he doesn't want to go back...he wants people to taking [sic] him back.

Jon: Yeah.

Billy: Kinda like a good part and happy.

Thorton: Yeah, it's true. They would take him back...feels bad for him...living in the wilderness.

Billy: He wants to stay there.

Thorton: Yeah, he wasn't getting attention from his parents, I'm guessing. They had, what, like 11 kids?

Jon: Yeah, 11 or 12.

Thorton: Eleven, I think.

Billy chose rich, descriptive passages to share:

Billy: ...page 31, paragraph 2: *"It was a hot and dirty [self-corrected] I was*

hot and dirty. I scrambled down the rocks and slipped into the pool. It was so cold I yelled. But when I came out on the bank and put on my two pairs of trousers and three sweatshirts/sweaters which I thought was a better way to carry clothes than in a pack, I tingled and burned and felt coltish. I leapt up the bank, slipped, and my face went down in a patch of dogtooth violets.” I picked it because it was some good writing. Like how he did it, where he was...good description.

Jon: I agree with you.

Ron: And what he was doing.

Billy: *...page 32, paragraph 2: “I stepped into the woods, looked around, could not see the crow, but noticed a big stick nest in a scrabbly pine. I started to climb the tree. Off flew the crow. What made me keep on climbing in face of such discouragement, I don’t know but I did and that noon I had crow eggs and wild salad for lunch.”* [read haltingly, but correctly] I picked it because it had good description. Like what he did, how he did it, what he ate....

Thorton: ...game.

Billy: How he got it.

Jon: Yeah, I liked that.

Thorton: It’s very interesting.

Billy: It’s like interesting.

Thorton: There are a lot of bird eggs. They’re like candy Easter eggs.

Jon: Yes, in salad.

Billy: (read from page 22) *“That’s just what I want. I am going to trap animals and eat nuts and bulbs and berries and make myself a house. You see, I am Sam Gibley, and I thought I would like to live on my great-grandfather’s farm. Miss Turner was the only person who believed in me. She smiled.... We have some very good books on plants and trees and animals in case you get stuck.”* And I picked it because it was a good part. Like I picked it because it was a good part how nice she was being there (in the town library), not “YEAH, RIGHT!” and stuff. She wasn’t being mean. She’s the only one who believed him, which is kinda ...that is cause...people yell a lot.

Ron: Like the cab driver! (story reference)

Billy: Yeah.

Thorton: He did the very same thing. Moving from the city made it easier than from the country.... [story reference].

Frequency of utterances. Billy’s utterances as Passage Master totaled 243 out of his total utterances in all roles (806) or 30.1%. A breakdown of utterances per text follows chronologically:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	12.3
<u>Lion, Witch and Wardrobe</u>	28.8
<u>Stone Fox</u>	19.3
<u>My Side of the Mountain</u>	39.5

The dip in utterances between book two, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, and book four, My Side of the Mountain, might be due to the literature circle protocol change previously

mentioned concerning other roles. During Stone Fox sessions, each student was instructed to find passages on three out of five days [0, 0, 3, 3, 1 passages per day] for discussion, rather than one person taking on the role per session. Billy continued sharing rich descriptive parts:

Billy: *“Baron Weasel, I said. “It’s nearing Halloween. Are you playing tricks or treats?” I handed him the remains of my turtle soup dinner and*

(fastened)”. And I picked it because it was a good part. It was kinda like funny how he says it’s close to Halloween, is it TRICKS OR TREATS? [His passage sparked a shared chorus in refrain.]

Thorton: It is Halloween and that’s kinda like a good part, cause that’s how he’s thinking. Cause he needs to know when he’s out in the woods he needs to think about that stuff and other stuff.

Billy continued reading without further discussion from his next passage on page 96, paragraph 2:

“Swiftly I made piles of cracked nut, smoked rabbit, and crayfish. I even Added two of my apples. This food was an invitation to the squirrels, foxes, and raccoons, opossums, even the birds that lived around me to come have a party.”

Billy: And I picked it because it was a nice part for him to invite the animals to eat his food.

Jon: And to like have a good time.

Billy: And for wild animals, too. Usually people don’t do that. They just shoo them away. But, that was pretty nice of him.

From page 97, he continued reading:

“The moon is coming up behind the aspens. It is as big as a pumpkin and as [adds “a”] orange. The winds are cool, the stars are like electric light bulbs. I am just inside the doorway, with my turtle-shell lamp burning so that I can see to write this. Something is moving beyond the second hemlock. Frightful is very alert, as if there are things all around us. Halloween was over at midnight last night, but for us it is just beginning. That’s how I feel, anyhow, but it just may be my imagination. I wish Frightful would stop pulling at her feathers and drawing herself up like a spring. I keep thinking that she feels things.” And I picked it because it was nice how he’s learning something new. Maybe it’s just his imagination but a different night or something. Maybe just imagine moving around, but like kinda good that he learns. It might just be his imagination.

Jon: Um hmmm.

Followed by his last passage, from page 101, which began: *“In early November I was awakened by a shot from a rifle. The hunting season had begun....”* Billy added that he picked it because it was a scary part. How he could have been shot by the bullet [dressed in deerskin pants and a dirty brown sweater, looking like a deer]. Talk ensued about high-powered rifle capabilities to getting shot by a paint gun [My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 47]. Jon, Discussion King, drew the team back to the story with the familiar ring of “Okay! We’re going back to Thornton and he is the [new] Word Wizard. The vivid, descriptive passages from My Side of the Mountain seemed to yield more enjoyment, or effort, towards listening to the Passage Master read while following along, and visually imaging the scenes, perhaps than need to converse at all.

Royal Connector

A Royal Connector's role is to find connections between the book and the world outside. Billy made mostly personal connections across the four texts. One mechanical glitch erased part of book two, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe tapes and wordage, accounting for the drop in connections when comparing percentages [listed below]. His connections made as Royal Connector were less provocative than the those naturally evolving from listening and joining in others' discussions, more often agreeing, rather than leading. Billy ignored a taunt from a female literature circle member while connecting with Ramona Quimby, Age 8, the first text. He miscued who called Ramona nuisance; she was correct. However, she challenged Billy's reference to the nuisance scene as not really a connection, yet it was, indeed, as he referred to throwing-up in school like Ramona did. He easily connected to life with his own dog, discussed life in dog years, playing in the snow, and being pulled on a sled. He was challenged once more by a female, discussing Stone Fox, the third book:

Billy: Sometimes me and my dog fall in the snow. When we're running in this field cause she'll pull you on the sled and make a sharp turn and fall down.

(similar to Searchlight in Stone Fox).

Betty: Ha Ha!

Billy: She goes like this...[demonstrating a sharp turn on a sled]

Betty: Like whoa!

Erika: How come you said Bingo [her dog] couldn't do it, but your dog can?

Bingo can!

Billy: Your dog is a puppy.

Remaining conversation referred to life in dog years, about which neither boy nor girl was sure.

Turn-taking frequency. With Billy as Royal Connector, turn-taking frequency across 4 texts amounted to 37 turns or 32.2% of total group turns while he was Royal Connector (n=115). Across texts and time the following list shows Billy's percentage of personal turns as a Connector:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	18.9
<u>Lion, Witch and Wardrobe</u>	5.4 [tape trouble]
<u>Stone Fox</u>	24.3
<u>My Side of the Mountain</u>	51.4

Frequency of utterances. Billy's frequency of utterances as Royal Connector was 83. Out of the total number of utterances while taking on roles (803), Billy's talk connecting to the literature in that role alone averaged 1.3%. Percentages of utterances across 4 texts are listed below chronologically:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	15.7
<u>Lion Witch and Wardrobe</u>	6.0
<u>Stone Fox</u>	25.3
<u>My Side of the Mountain</u>	53.0

Billy made personal references of self to text with all four texts beginning with Ramona Quimby, Age 8, the first text, when he referred to being called a nuisance by his mom, by throwing up in the neighborhood, and by having his mom in such a hurry that she forgets her lunch (Ramona transcript, p. 1) Personal connections sometimes exploded as in My Side of the Mountain. Billy referred to wandering in the woods, fishing, diving, and playing games in cornfields. Text ideas accumulated from the varied length of the books themselves, that appeared to spawn extra thinking about personal issues. The fanciful tale of book three, The

Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, may have been more unlikely to produce connections to self because it was a tale. Billy made no direct references to other books, except for acknowledging the genre of fairy tales, or the world, based on available transcripts. A deeper, symbolic meaning to be derived from the book was not in eight or nine-year old vernacular other than good prevailing over evil.

Masterpiece Maker

As Masterpiece Maker, Billy's role was to draw anything about the story he liked. First he would ask his group to tell what they think his drawing is about, and then he would tell them about it.

Turn-taking frequency. Billy led only three sessions of talk about his drawings for a total of 28 turns by all participants. His nine alone represented 3.0% of his personal turns in all roles (305). Following is a list of Masterpiece Maker turns averaged over time across texts based on his 28-turn total:

<u>Ramona Quimby Age 8</u>	null [not recorded]
<u>Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe</u>	22.2
<u>Stone Fox</u>	33.3
<u>My Side of the Mountain</u>	44.4.

Frequency of utterances. Frequency of utterances (n=14) by Billy in the role of Masterpiece Maker compared to his other roles represented 1.7% of his total utterances. The following list reports Billy's utterances as Masterpiece Maker across time and texts:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	null
<u>Lion Witch and Wardrobe</u>	21.7
<u>Stone Fox</u>	28.6

My Side of the Mountain..... 64.3

Billy's illustrations appeared more original and detailed compared to others who tried to reproduce pictures directly from the book. Billy shared his picture of Searchlight, for instance, by asking his group to tell about what they saw. Betty guessed correctly by saying that it was the sled and Searchlight. Erica added that no one was driving it. Billy asked if she knew where the sled was parked. Her response, "Outside Stone Fox's barn," was correct according to Billy. A much more elaborate drawing was completed by Billy for the first book, Ramona Quimby, Age 8, showing the kitchen disaster, but it apparently was never shared according to the transcribed tape.

Bob's Roles

Discussion King

Turn-taking frequency. Bob (average ability reader) presented questions for discussion eleven times as Discussion King, across 4 texts, for a total of 153 turns. His turns as Discussion King were 42.9% of his total turns (357) in all roles. The following list illustrates his frequency of turn-taking dialogue across the four texts in chronological and ascending order:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	2.6
<u>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</u>	15.0
<u>Stone Fox</u>	24.2
<u>Wind in the Willows</u>	44.4

The increase in part may be a result of Bob's ability to facilitate conversation and participate at a higher rate with practice conducting literature circle discussions over time with higher-interest texts. He enjoyed his self-chosen, fourth book, Wind in the Willows, more than his first self-selected book, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, which may account for the nearly triple amount of discussion turns between the two. (Bob's Year-end Evaluation). Bob was

conscientious about following the rules in preparing for discussion and following through in action. His efforts at creating dialogue about a story were genuine but he struggled with hesitations, back channeling of thoughts as a Discussion King:

Bob: Today is.... I'm Bob, ... and my question is, "Do you think the kids, like whenever she [the witch] like tries to turn them to toast, that means like stone, will like it back fire and like will take her like take her power at the end of the story, and that's how they destroy her at the end of the story?"

(Lion, Witch and Wardrobe Transcript, p. 18)

Thorton: I really kinda doubt it cause um the witch could get a shield that could reflect like mirrors [chuckles]...

Bob: Who's your favorite dog? I mean like a dog...?

Kayla: Searchlight

Bob: I mean, do you like, do you like some of the other ones? (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 21),

Or at times he made reference to ideas or objects as "whatchamacallits" or "thingies" and continued thinking aloud about what to say. Reading was not something he felt totally comfortable doing let alone trying to discuss. His audio taped dialogue is peppered with expressions of "I don't care" and "Whatever!" As the evidence indicates, he did care tremendously and was merely trying to gather his thoughts and do his best, as usual.

Frequency of utterances. Bob's total number of utterances (297) in role as Discussion King averaged 30.2% of all his utterances (983) during role-taking sessions. The following list shows his utterances as percentages counted over time and across texts:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	2.7
<u>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</u> ...	22.6
<u>Stone Fox</u>	42.4
<u>Wind in the Willows</u>	32.3

Bob was the first to lead as Discussion King of his Ramona group (book one) based on seating arrangement. He prepared three questions for discussion typically about story details and a summary question (Applebee, 1978). He also remembered to ask others to “explain” their answers, which garnered one extra response in a dearth of the short question/answer (hardly conversational) period. Students had read the first five chapters of Ramona Quimby Age 8 and practiced taking on the literature circle roles and fish bowling the previous week. Bob took charge, informed Betty about the rules [referenced above] for discussion, and seemed satisfied with the short answers (albeit no dialogue) about Ramona throwing up:

Bob: Why were they holding their noses? Explain.

Betty: Because Ramona threw up and the teacher said hold your nose if you want
to because usually barf smells.

Bob: What happened in the chapter? Explain.

[inaudible whispering followed by Bob’s loud, bossy directive-]

Bob: ANYBODY CAN DO IT, OK, BETTY? [spoken as voice of authority]

Hazel: She threw up and...

Billy: She threw up and...

Bob: How did Ramona’s mom get to school?

Hazel: She took a taxi.

Bob: Explain.

Hazel: The car broke down.

Billy: And then she had to take a taxi to school to pick her up.

Betty: Okay. My word is forefingers. Forefingers... (Ramona

Transcript, p. 1).

Betty needed no introduction from Bob, the Discussion King, to move to her own role next, Word Wizard. She produced her part of the circle action by promptly and as quickly as possible reading off her list of new words including a statement as to why she picked them, all in one turn, with no discussion. For Bob, manning the tape recorder was something he enjoyed because he liked to not only take charge, but also listen and hear back everybody's opinions- "It made it a lot easier to discuss," he said, (Personal Interview, 5/21/04)." He pushed PAUSE and seemed to cut her off at the last tweak of "because it was different," to possibly conserve tape rather than disregard her words. Apparently Billy and Hazel had contributed enough of a response to satisfy the group even though they hadn't really finished their statements. The "throwing up issue" had already been explained by Betty.

Bob continued in Discussion King mode, while 'out' of role by announcing the role following Betty. Here he demonstrated his back channeling, thinking aloud:

Bob: Okay, who has Passage Master? NO! Wait!, it's Royal Connector. Wait,

yah, yah, Passage Master, you. (indicating Hazel).

Hazel: She felt com-fert-a-fert-able.

Bob: [as he continues to stop and start the tape] Are you Passage Master?

Hazel: Yeah.

Bob: It's supposed to be a paragraph! [attending to rules]

The decrease in utterances noted in Wind in the Willows , Bob's favorite and final book, may be in part due to the nature of discussion as it evolved. For instance, in his second session as Discussion King (Wind in the Willows), Bob's role was casually overtaken by Passage Master, Nick, an amiable, high-ability reader, as the discussion was initiated:

Bob: We are the Moles. Today is May 13, 2002. 13th, not 14th.

Zeb: I said 13th.

Bob: I am Discussion King.

Nick: I'm Nick, and I'm Passage Master. Gil is absent and we are going to look up his words for him, Word Wizard.

Nick: And Zeb?

Zeb: [high ability] I'm Masterpiece Maker and Royal Connector

Nick: And here is Bob with his questions...

Bob pursued his questions but was in turn questioned by Nick:

Bob: Did you like this chapter, why or why not?

Nick: I liked it because it told about Toad, explained about him. At the end of the chapter it told about him being sentenced to 20 years behind bars.

Bob: Oh, yeah!

Zeb: [high ability reader] He'll be there for 20 years behind bars. I forgot.

Nick: Cause he was Toad the Terrible.

Bob: Oh, yeah.

Zeb: They gave Toad a name...

Nick: And Zeb...

Zeb: What?

Nick: Why do you think it was a good chapter? [a seamless take-over by

Nick, apparently accepted by all]

Zeb: Ah, I don't really know, I just like it.

Nick: Why did you think it's a good chapter?

Bob: (Discussion King) Same reason as you.

Zeb: Yup!

Nick: Well, Bob, what's the difference from this chapter to the last chapter?

Bob: Well, okay...

Nick: That's my question [posed as a thoughtful consideration, seemingly not imposed]

Well, I don't get it because they were just...went from his house to

"Today's the Hour!" I don't get it. Cause it was just like um like it was just quick, quickly changing and that stuff.

Unfortunately, no one had a comment in response, but Nick aptly modeled his thinking aloud for Bob and Zeb then continued as if he were the Discussion King:

Nick: Bob, What's your next question?

Bob appeared unfettered by the takeover. The drop in number of utterances may have appeared as a result of Bob's shortened dialogue, in spite of increased turn-taking frequency. The move toward role shifting was automatic and possibly attributed to a year of talking about books in small, peer-led discussion groups. Daniels (1994, 2002) suggests the roles should fade away as youngsters participate over time.

Word Wizard

Bob's role as Word Wizard required him to find special words in the story that he wanted to write down and discuss. Bob was consistent in recording his words for discussion and prompting why he chose them. He never arbitrarily exceeded the minimum of four words.

Turn-taking frequency. As a Word Wizard, Bob led nine sessions of literature circles- 119 personal turns amid his total group tally of 287. As a Word Wizard, 33.3% of all his turns counted in this study (357) are represented below across texts first to last and ascending over time. A division appears between the first two and last two texts- with pairs showing increase to actually matching:

Ramona Quimby Age 8..... 10.1

Lion Witch and the Wardrobe. 17.6

Stone Fox..... 36.1

Wind in the Willows..... 36.1

A rationale for growth in turn taking between the first two books suggests Ramona Quimby Age 8 word wizardry was students' first foray soloing in peer-led groups reading the last six chapters of the book compared to the second, complete book reading of The Lion Witch and the Wardrobe. The hike in turn taking between Ramona Quimby, Age 8 and third book, Stone Fox, which was not only a shorter book, but teacher-chosen, may relate a natural progression of experience over time plus personal interest in the reading itself. The final, lengthier text, Wind in the Willows, would have suggested a subsequent increase in turn taking about words compared to the shorter text, Stone Fox, but that rationale did not play out. Comparing utterances, as listed below, a similar pattern emerged.

Frequency of utterances. Bob's total utterances during Word Wizard role-taking was 357 or 36.3% of his total utterances (983). Across time and texts his percentage of total utterances evolved as follows:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8..... 8.7

Lion Witch and Wardrobe ... 23.3

Stone Fox..... 35.7

Wind in the Willows..... 37.9

Bob did appear to follow a pattern of making word choices, announcing where to find the words, often defining them, and reading them in sentences (except for his initial session in Ramona Quimby, Age 8, book one, when no words were read in context. Bob appeared unsure of the rules and asked for teacher assistance. As time went on Bob's word wizardry performance incurred short responses from others, who supported his definitions with one or two word responses, or expanded building meaning and making connections:

Bob: ENGINEER. The engineer kept watching. I picked it because it was hard.

I had to ask my dad because he's one. My dad's an engineer; he makes glass.

Joe: My mom's an engineer. She reads directions for people to like build. She helps these real engineers and reading directions. One of my dad's best friends is a chemical engineer. He designs window washers and stuff.

(Joe seemed to connect with the word window washer after Bob presented his previous word WASHERWOMAN, book four (Wind in the Willows, retold by Miles, 2002). Days of the week held importance for Bob, as did main characters:

Bob: "MOLE, my first word is MOLE.... "Couldn't you ask him

for dinner?” said Mole.” And I picked it because it was important. It’s the main character.

Joe: Yeah

Bob: There’s lots of meaning. That’s what it is.

Joe: What’s the meaning?

Bob: Well, it’s a main character, and it’s an animal that digs and stuff.

Bob: RATTY, on page 29. And I picked it because it was funny...

“Meanwhile, Rat dozed in the parlor until the fire cracked and woke him up.”

Jon: RATTY

Bob: I know. “What’s up?” Ratty, asked Mole.” It’s the second main character. And it means the Rat; but it’s a funny way of saying it. RATTY!

Tom: RATTY, RATTY, RATTY (singing the words).

Typically, Bob and his friends shared the sound of words, such as RATTY. Bob sometimes repeated words while he was searching for them in a passage: humming, “Dusty, Dusty, Dusty,” (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 22), perhaps to keep the word in mind in the process. In one instance, while searching, he repeated: “My word is- find it find it find it...oh I know where it is...no, I don’t... Actually I did two (words) of them, so I’m going to do two.” Sometimes he substituted a word he couldn’t recall immediately or perhaps out of habit, with a pseudo word such as “thingamabopper” for DWARF, “DWARF means like a little guy, a fairy tale thingamabopper (Lion Witch and the Wardrobe Transcript, p. 27).”

Bob: Dusty took a powerful swig from a whisker/sc.whiskey bottle. I

picked it because it was important.

Thorton: That's like wine..like alcohol...like wine

Hazel: It's like beer.

Bob: And FRIDAY is a day of the week and it's the best day for me.

Bob related words that had different meanings: "HOLE, there's two different kinds of holes..."; "COURSE- Of course, he thought she was in love with him." But erroneously gave the definition, "It means an obstacle or part of a meal (Wind in the Willows, Transcript, p. 34)." Teacher input, here, questioned the meaning of COURSE, which was subsequently clarified by high-ability reader, Jim, as meaning "definitely".

Passage Master

Passage Masters were responsible for choosing story parts to read aloud, recording page numbers for easy retrieval, and marking why they liked them. Bob led his literature circle sessions seven times throughout the year as Passage Master.

Frequency Turn-Taking. With Bob leading as Passage Master during his seven recorded sessions, 171 turns were tallied for his group's total, or an average of 21.6 turns per session. In comparison, Bob's own turn taking accounted for 56 of the 171 group turns or 32.7%. Turn taking frequency across texts and time with Bob as Passage Master is summarized as follows:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8...</u>	39.3
<u>Lion Witch and Wardrobe.</u>	26.8
<u>Stone Fox</u>	10.7
<u>Wind in the Willows</u>	23.2

Bob remained true to his nature of following the rules and wanting to be correct. He began his first Passage Master role in book one, Ramona Quimby, Age 8, by situating himself and his work and seeking assurance:

Bob: Okay, my job is, my first paragraph is on page 150, paragraph one...I have to read it, don't I? [He chose to read a passage about TV commercials.]

Hazel: What was the word?

Bob: It was a paragraph

Betty: Paragraph 2. It's hard to read.

Bob: I know! I messed up. Mrs. Morrow, should we read the paragraph?

Betty: Yeah!

Teacher: What are you doing? Passage Master?

Bob: Yeah.

Teacher: I think that helps. What do you think? Should you just tell us which paragraph? What fun is it?

Hazel: It doesn't make sense.

Bob continued by reading his passage and stumbling on the word "indigestion." (The man who ate the whole pizza had indigestion.). A short discussion about "indigestion" ensued with the teacher present and guiding on the side, which seemed to account for the highest turn taking across texts. Bob seemed to disregard his need to know "indigestion" since he was in role as Passage Master, presumably, and was all about reading passages. He blatantly read on, over others (including the teacher), still talking about indigestion; "Six horses pulled the Wells Fargo Bank's stagecoach across deserts and over mountains," (Ramona Quimby, Age 8 Transcript, p. 13).

Bob: And I thought it was a good writing.

Teacher: What appealed to you about the writing?

Bob: It was kinda a good description. Because like it tells you what commercials do. Ramona thought about commercials.

Billy: They really had a good description.

Bob had a good sense of what he was reading and why he chose the passage, even though he stumbled over indigestion. Reading aloud, even with prior practice, and particularly with a feisty teammate like Betty (Betty had a grumpy, sullen disposition), was uncomfortable for Bob who seemed to prefer not sharing his less than stellar fluency. Working in peer-led literature circles was still new. Bob and his teammates understood the context and later the key phrase, “I can’t believe I ate the whole thing!”

The drop in turn taking during Stone Fox sessions as Passage Master can be partly explained by the change in protocol: the responsibility of one passage choice. The second text (Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe) and last text (Wind in the Willows) were his self-chosen books of similar length and resulted in a close match in subsequent turn taking sessions (15 versus 13) during recorded conversation. Once again, Bob struggled with oral expression: “My first word, I mean my first paragraph (passage) is paragraph 1, page 77”...Bob read his first passage with only one error (taking/taken), which did not hinder meaning, and was acknowledged by Billy as indeed a “good part, actually”, but with no explanation as to why. Jon, perhaps sensing a time constraint due to classroom schedule, or perhaps his own sense of needing to move on, urged Bob to hurry up, that they were wasting valuable time. Bob promptly replied, “We’re wasting valuable

tape!” [a touché-sounding response, but telling of Bob’s control of the taping process.]

Bob read the passage and finished with his reason for choosing because it was an interesting part, but left the group in limbo as to why Mr. Beaver told the search party to stop looking for Edmund (an important point for discussion). No discussion ensued, however. Thorton asked for the page number, apparently still searching or asleep while Bob was reading, but was ignored. Bob continued by announcing his new paragraph (passage) typically mistaking wordage:

Bob: And my second third paragraph is 85, paragraph 3.

Jon: PAGE 85, paragraph 3 [indignantly]

Bob: Yeah, whatever. Let’s see...[proceeded to read his passage, the

“whatever” word emerged once again]

The second slew of passages amounted to Bob reading detailed passages but without discussion or reason for choosing. In the final set, Thorton acknowledged a passage followed by Billy reiterating Thorton’s words; however, Bob appears to have had an urgent need to move on and does:

Bob: “No, said the Dwarf, it is not/no use now, O’ Queen. They must have reached the Stone Table by now. Perhaps the Wolf will smell us out and bring us news, said the Witch.” And I picked it because it was a good part.

Thorton: That’s true. It like says that the Dwarf’s saying if it’s like the Wolf’s coming, it’s not going to be good news. [chuckling] Well, it could be actually.

Bob: Yeah.

Billy: Probably cause the Wolf could have some news.

Thorton: Like what they're going to do.

Billy: Like where ...[overpowered by Thorton]

Thorton: It could be good. It could be bad. It really depends

Billy: If it's bad, it probably won't be good...if it's like (deceit?-
inaudible)

Thorton: That really depends

Billy: It's not going to be a good sight...[talking in tandem while Bob
listens then moves on to his next passage with no comment at all].

Frequency of utterances. Bob's utterances tallied 248 total remarks or 25.2% of his total utterances while role-playing all roles. The breakdown of utterances over time and texts follows:

Ramona Quimby Age 8..... 22.6

Lion Witch and Wardrobe... 22.6

Stone Fox..... 35.7

Wind in the Willows..... 36.4

Bob contributed an almost even share of turn-taking and utterances within the Passage Master role across texts and time except for book three, Stone Fox. The drop in turn-taking echoed the one Passage Master session due to a change in protocol. Ironically, his utterance count nearly matched that of his final text, Wind in the Willows. An example from the transcribed dialogue suggests the fun Bob and his friends were experiencing as they shared a passage Bob describes as a "good part":

Bob: "Sit down, sit down," said Rat pleasantly, "and finish your oatmeal.

Where did you come from? Did you lose your way in the snow?"...(Grahame, retold by Miles, 2002)

Joe: [revised Bob's passage using a playful English accent] "Sit down, sit down please. Finish your oatmeal!" (Wind in the Willows Transcript, p. 20).

Royal Connector

Turn-taking frequency. Bob's turn-taking frequency as Royal Connector indicates 19 turns or 46.3% of his groups' turns during Royal Connector role-play sessions. The breakdown in turn taking by Bob appears as follows across time and texts:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8.....6.7

Lion Witch and Wardrobe....6.7

Stone Fox.....33.3

Wind in the Willows.....53.3

While in Royal Connector role, Bob made connections to self with book one, Ramona Quimby, Age 8, as he compared getting sick at school, having to stay home and being cared for by his mother to Ramona's ordeal, or asking his sister if she was mad or not, as Lucy did in Narnia, book two, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. Unfortunately, "mad" was misconstrued as "angry" rather than "crazy", even though Thorton had just read a passage about Lucy and "madness": "One only has to look at her to see that she is not mad, (Lewis, 1950, p. 51)." He relates to liking dogs such as Searchlight and reading a book about sled dogs. He also read about a mole, his connection to book four, Wind in the Willows, and being afraid of the dark when he was younger. His fear of the dark issued a short flurry of scary references to vampires and ghosts lurking in dark places like the woods (reference to Wild Wood from the story), hence the jump in turn taking in his fourth book. Connections were typically shared

across texts over time as much if not more out of role, than in role. Nevertheless, nineteen turns in Royal Connector role across four books amounted to 41% of group turns.

Frequency of utterances. Bob's percentage of utterances compared to all of his utterances in role-playing sessions is 6.7% or 68 out of 983. The breakdown of utterances across time and texts in for Bob is as follows:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8....</u>	5.8
<u>Lion Witch and Wardrobe...</u>	19.1
<u>Stone Fox.....</u>	20.6
<u>Wind in the Willows.....</u>	34.4

As a Royal Connector, Bob's utterance count with Ramona Quimby, Age 8, his first book, clearly is out ranked by his remaining utterance counts across texts. Utterance counts increased along with turn taking. As the year progressed he appeared more relaxed and able to participate freely. For instance, he did not take offense to Thorton's response to his connection to Little Willy in Stone Fox (Transcript, p. 31):

Bob: I... I go to school just like he does. Ha, Ya know what I mean?

Thorton: Everybody goes to school.

Bob: I know, but I've read a book like this.

Kristen: Not like after this.

Thorton: Pretty much everybody does.

Bob: Then I've read a book like this before.

Alice: Umm, it's...

Bob: It's about sled dogs...

Often, it was not the personal connections made by the Royal Connector, but the connections spread throughout the discussions from each of the role players that affected individual participation as well or that added to making conversations about books.

Masterpiece Maker

Turn-taking frequency. Bob's turn-taking frequency as Masterpiece Maker was counted as 18 out of the 56 turns of his groups' total or 32.1%. The percentage breakdown of turns across time and texts for Bob is as follows:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8..... 11.1

Lion Witch and Wardrobe...33.3

Stone Fox.....22.2

Wind in the Willows..... 61.1

Pictures drawn by Bob were consistently of main characters in action. Turn taking remained brief for Bob as he presented his illustrations and let others guess or, in the case of his Stone Fox drawing, he actually told what he drew:

Bob: And ummmm I did a picture.

Kristen: Is it Searchlight lying down or he's running?

Thorton: Um...

Bob: No, he's laying down. So. He's lying down, so.

Kristen: Yeah

Bob: Yeah...in the snow. I didn't draw Willy.

Thorton: And now we move on to um...inaudible...Okay....Kristen?

During The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe session, someone turned the tape recorder off before Bob could respond to anyone's ideas. His highest turn taking occurred with his favorite

(fourth) book, Wind in the Willows. Students bantered back and forth discussing whether his illustration contained one character or another and whether or where the picture was copied from the book.

Frequency of utterances.

Bob's utterances as a Masterpiece Maker totaled 43 out of his 1013 utterances combined or 4.2%. Percentages of utterances across time and texts are noted as follows:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8.....</u>	7.0
<u>Lion Witch and Wardrobe...</u>	32.6
<u>Stone Fox.....</u>	23.3
<u>Wind in the Willows.....</u>	37.2

Compared to his frequency of utterances as Royal Connector, Bob's utterances as Masterpiece Maker were similarly low and appreciably lower than all other roles. Illustrations were made once each for the first three books, and twice for the last, Wind in the Willows. Drawings were realistic enough for classmates to guess what he had drawn. He actually won unexpected kudos for his illustration of Ramona receiving a letter from her class, "It's the letter from the class. Nice drawing!" from feisty teammate, Betty. Billy commented that Ramona's arms looked like Popeye's, and her belly and hands looked kind funny, to which Betty promptly ended further discussion, "Are we done?"(Bob's Transcript, Ramona Quimby, p.11). One might wonder if the rather unusually negative comment by Billy was as demeaning, as Betty's approval was supportive; however Bob, in his next breath proclaimed, "Yeah. That's a wrap!", without an additional comment. True to form, Bob reminded his group they needed to set a date (for the next meeting), before Betty, Discussion King, could say a word.

Thorton's Roles

Discussion King

Turn-taking frequency. Thorton, a high ability reader, completed eleven sessions in the Discussion King role, 184 out of 511 of his groups' total turns or 36.0%. The percentage breakdown of turn-taking across time and texts in ascending order follows:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8</u>	6.5
<u>Lion Witch and Wardrobe</u>	12.6
<u>Stone Fox</u>	36.8
<u>Wind in the Willows</u>	41.2

Thorton portrayed himself as a knowledgeable, jovial discussion leader who seemed to enjoy fielding questions and listening to teammates hash over ideas. His turn-taking data indicate more shared turns evolved progressively during his turns as leader. His "Okay" signal usually meant he wanted to end a discussion going nowhere in his opinion, which was usually logical:

Thorton: Why do you think Ramona's mom would lose her job?

Erica: Well because she's not at work. I thought that was the only job they had except for her dad at the frozen food warehouse.

Thorton: AND (interrupted by Erica)

Erica: Well, he doesn't really work there most of the time; he doesn't get that much money and so...

Thorton: Mom is um at work she needs to get money so...

Erica: For the family so they can buy food, clothes, shoes...

Thorton: And they can take ah ah art lessons and stuff so he can (overlapped by

Erica: /and like furniture and.../) so he can be a teacher (overlapped by Erica again: and toys and everything...)

Ari: And school stuff for Ramona.

Thorton: Okay.

Erica: Like books, crayons.

Thorton: Okay, Bruce? (Thorton signaled a switch to the next role player,
Word Wizard, Bruce.)

However, in a scenario, with book two, Lion the Witch, and the Wardrobe, Thorton is prompted by Bob, (conscientious, average ability reader) to stay the course:

Thorton: Um my um first question, what happened so far in the story, Bob?

Bob: Um...well well the kids they were talking to the professor and um

Thorton: And he stayed up. Lucy's mad, something like that?

Bob: Yeah and um

Thorton: (whispers) Your turn (appearing to relinquish time to the next role
player or soliciting for another speaker to give his opinion)

Bob: Na ah, you have to do the whole entire story. You have to do the
whole entire story.

In another scenario, Thorton appears to answer his own question as others repeat what he says or agree, sometimes stopping mid sentence to which Thorton finishes:

Thorton: Do you think Edmund will be king?

Billy: Um

Bob: Um

Thorton: The witch will make him king?

Bob: Not really because um

Thorton: She may be trying to trick him.

Bob: Yeah, tricking him saying, “I’m gonna make you king, and go...

Thorton: Then once she knows where his brother and sisters are and stuff she’ll destroy them or something...turn them into stone like she does everything else (chuckling).

Above all, Thorton relies on the text to confirm or disprove ideas from their discussions, like the simple question he posed concerning what time Willy got home from school:

Thorton: (clarifying) You know at the end of the chapter, whenever he’s like racing back ta’...and then he finds Clifford Snyder, he’s going home from the church? And he starts right at six. Um (under the clock tower)

Bob: OH!

Thorton: What time do you think he gets home then? He probably gets home by around...

Bob: Five?

Thorton: No, because he started at six. I don’t think he would have gotten...

Bob: One o’clock. One o’clock.

Thorton: I think he got home at like about 7 o’clock.

Bob: In the morning, right? Oh, seven at night! (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 37).

Frequency of utterances. Thorton’s highest utterance count fell within the Discussion King sessions: 377 out his total role utterance count of 1007 or 37.4%. The percentage breakdown of utterances across time and text in ascending order nearly matches turn taking data:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8.....4.5

Lion Witch and Wardrobe.....15.1

Stone Fox..... 31.6

My Side of the Mountain..... 48.8

Questions posed by Thorton as Discussion King yielded a growing stream of utterances as conversations expanded over time. An average of 2 utterances per turn (184/377) would indicate longer sustained talk. For instance, students bounced ideas back and forth based on ideas about living in the wild from My Side of the Mountain:

Thorton: Do you think you could live in the wild?

Tom: Yes, cause it sounds like...inaudible

Thorton: It sounds kinda quiet, but could be sorta easy....

Tom: See, it depends. It depends on what kind of...

Thorton: If you had the falcon, that'd be pretty easy. [voice excited and high pitched]

Word Wizard

Turn-taking frequency. As a Word Wizard, Thorton completed 50 out of his groups' total of turns (n=119) during eight Word Wizard sessions or 42.5%. The breakdown of Thorton's turn-taking across time and texts follows:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8.....2.0

Lion Witch and Wardrobe.....56.0

Stone Fox.....22.0

My Side of the Mountain..... 20.0

Thorton led 8 sessions of literature circles as Word Wizard, but not without the support of his teammates. Although he was an avid reader and word savvy, discussing the words he chose

seemed like a moot point to him, perhaps. Others would often prompt him for more information. His first demonstration of Word Wizardry consisted of merely reading through his list of words (throb, dawdle, nuisance, and plodded), their page numbers, and reasons for choosing, all in one turn (Thorton's Ramona Quimby, Age 8 Transcript, p. 1) with no discussion or use of context. The same scenario would have been played out again if not for conscientious Bob who led Thorton back to task and text (Lion, Witch, and Wardrobe Transcript, p. 19-21):

Thorton: My first word was ARCHWAY and it's on page 113.

Billy: What was it, ARCHWAY? It's weird.

Thorton: I picked it because it was strange.

Billy: How do you spell it?

Bob: Ah, okay!

Thorton: Bottom of the page. Everybody find it? Other than Bob?

Thorton: Um, my next...

Bob: Read the sentence!

Thorton: My next word is...

Bob: No! Read the sentence.

Thorton obliged, but no discussion ensued until all his words were read in sentences to which Billy and Bob replied, "Do you know all of them?" Thorton politely responded with meanings for his words that resulted in one lengthy discussion about the meaning of SHAFT , a strange word (of sunlight) [evaluation]:

Thorton: It means like a circle of light.

Billy: Yeah, like overlapping trees.

Thorton: It could be like a little circle of water maybe.

Bob: Beams of something, yeah

Thorton: Okay.

More speculation continued considering airshafts running through buildings or streets [building meaning together]. Thorton summarized by saying he thought they were different from SHAFTS “of delicious sunlight”. But the scenario continued:

Bob: So that’s probably...

Tom: Beams, beams.

Bob: Yeah, beams of sunlight.

Frequency of utterances. Thorton’s utterances as a Word Wizard, 282, were 26% of his total utterances, 1007. Across time and texts, his percentage of utterances follows:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8..... 6.5

Lion Witch and Wardrobe..... 43.9

Stone Fox..... 21.4

My Side of the Mountain..... 28.2

Change in utterances were noted as with turn taking beginning at book one (Ramona Quimby, Age 8) merely announcing words without discussion:

Thorton: I’m Word Wizard and I picked NUISANCE, on page 110 because it

was new. My next word was DAWDLE, on page 110 and I picked it because it

was new, too...

to reading colorful passages containing high vocabulary in book two, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe:

“And then, as if that had been a signal, there was chattering and chirruping in every direction...he saw birds ALIGHTING on branches, or sailing overhead... (Lewis, 1950, p.122).” I picked it because it was a strange word.

to defining by guessing at meaning, discussing multiple meaning possibilities, and referring back to text with the cajoling of peers in book two, The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe (Transcript, p. 20):

Tom: I know what SHAFT means

Billy: Do you (Thorton) know all of them?

Bob: Do you know what those two mean?

Thorton: ALIGHTING and SHAFT?

Billy: Yeah. What do they mean?

Thorton: This one/ means like “wake-up” or something and ARCHWAY’s like
a little bridge that you’d go over.

Bob: Yeah.

Thorton: And um here it is/.../[read aloud from text with ensuing discussion]

Books three and four (Stone Fox and My Side of the Mountain) yielded nearly equal turns and subsequent utterance counts. Thorton chose high-interest words and read (or misread) them in context without any discussion, (UN USE N/ UNISON, GRAN ITE/ GRANITE). Without protest from his groups, Thorton’s Word Wizardry spun no charm.

Opportunities for considering a face like granite, perhaps, a reference to “Stone” Fox were left for another day or time. A teacher intervention here may have otherwise sparked conversation concerning the significance of the Indian’s name in terms of descriptive characteristics typical of Indian naming tradition.

Passage Master

Turn-taking frequency. As a Passage Master Thorton's turn taking frequency across texts was 45 turns or 40.2% of his groups' turn-taking count, 112. The breakdown of turn-taking over time and texts follows:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8..... 31.0

Lion Witch and Wardrobe.... 24.4

Stone Fox..... 13.3

My Side of the Mountain.... 31.0

Thorton's portrayal of Passage Master was typically light-hearted and showcased his oral fluency. However, discussion of the passages seemed to rely on group members' interest, as well, and why not. Promoting discussion about topics was new, not natural. Both he and his teammates benefited from each other's input once discussion got started. Beginning with his Ramona Quimby passages, it was Thorton's teammate, Erica, who countered that she didn't think Ramona's embarrassment was as funny, as he did, till he chuckled and she revised, "Well sort of funny when the tips of her ears turn red (Ramona Quimby Transcript, p. 14)."

Frequency of utterances. As a Passage Master, Thorton's complete utterance count across texts and time was 265 or 26.3% of utterances total, 1007. The breakdown of utterances across time and texts follows:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8.....14.0%

Lion Witch and Wardrobe...20.0%

Stone Fox.....10.9%

My Side of the Mountain....55.1%

Thorton and his group enjoyed the musical sound of the restaurant's juke box playing "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree" mimicking the sound of Ramona and her sister swinging to the beat while pushing buttons on the restaurant's cigarette machine:

Erica: You chose it (the passage) because it was funny?

Thorton: Um hm.

Erica: Well, it's sorta funny.

Thorton: She has to stand up (there aren't enough chairs for the grown ups and she has the youngest legs)...[Another classmate suddenly interrupts the flow of conversation having a recurrent seizure and all talking ceases- the heart of the classroom beats for the child in distress - then talking begins again with everyone safe.]

Erica: Okay, now, read the rest!

Thorton: She amused herself by punching the buttons on the cigarette machine in time with the music.../She's going: Shoo shoo shoo shoo (chuckling) ching chang chang chang!

Erica: Making the sound of the machine and um it's also funny Cause she's dancing to "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree".

Tom: Put a quarter in, for some reason jiggle it; and they (cigarettes) come right out.

Erica: But I don't think her mom would let her smoke.

Conversation about the tribulations of smoking ensued; students related Officer Friendly's talk to the class about smoking. Thorton shared that he would put medicine in cigarettes that would make people stop smoking them.

However, not all of his or others' passages received status or time for conversation. There was no policing of conversational utterances; they were allowed to evolve in as natural a setting for book discussions as possible with the roles as aides to parsing responsibility and focusing on a particular aspect of the reading. If students emerged from set role playing, Daniels would agree that roles should eventually fall away (1994, 2002).

Royal Connector

Turn-taking frequency. As a Royal Connector, Thorton's turn-taking frequency across six sessions totaled 39 turns or 38.6% of total turn count for his group. The breakdown of turns across texts and time follows:

<u>Ramona Quimby, Age 8....</u>	4.0
<u>Lion Witch and Wardrobe.</u>	9.9
<u>Stone Fox.....</u>	5.9
<u>My Side of the Mountain.</u>	21.8

By the fourth book, My Side of the Mountain, Thorton and his all-boy group enliven with talk about living in the wild, experiencing life similar to Sam Gribble's, discussing Sam's exploits with his falcon, Frightful, how fast the falcon would have to fly to catch fish by comparing it the speed of a thrown baseball, relating baseball and speed to the movie, "Ferris Bueller's Day Off". The all-boy group, the self-chosen text, high-interest, and months of talking about books in literature circle format, seemed to help spawn the flurry of discussion in or out of roles (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 6). For instance:

Thorton: I like to go into caves and dune type things...like pound stakes into them...

Billy: Yeah...I like going underground...I made this big hole at the beach....

Frequency of utterances. As a Royal Connector, Thorton's frequency of utterances totaled 6.2% of his total utterances, 1007. Across time and texts the breakdown of his utterance (in role) totals follows:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8.....9.7

Lion Witch and Wardrobe.....22.6

Stone Fox.....19.4

My Side of the Mountain.....48.4

Thorton easily shared simple connections of text to self when he described walking on a frozen lake at his Nana's house, for instance, or doing book reports like Ramona, getting books from his teacher, to enjoying his dad home from a long trip, or hoping to see a falcon from a close place (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 53). Others connect to the feelings evoked by the reader as passages are read and shared. Thorton shared that he would do what little Willy did if his dog died, "I'd probably take it and carry it over the finish line." He would also let Willy win if he were Stone Fox, because Willy needed the money so much. Bob replied, "So would I, so would I, so would I, I'm just saying, so would I (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 38)."

Masterpiece Maker

Turn taking frequency. As a Masterpiece Maker, Thorton's turn taking frequency across five sessions totaled 32 turns out a group total of 109. The breakdown across time and texts follows:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8....12.5

Lion Witch and Wardrobe..25.0

Stone Fox..... null

My Side of the Mountain...62.5

Artwork and penmanship are not Thorton's strengths, yet he seemed to enjoy sharing a guess what I drew game with his friends. Erica thought he should have added more details to know for sure if his first masterpiece was actually what the group guessed it to be, the CAT (Ramona Transcript, p. 9). Thorton appeared to accept the criticism (from a girl, nonetheless, and then a boy) as helpful. His jovial, soft-spoken, intelligent-mannered nature was reflected during such moments:

Erica: Think of some more details.

Thorton: I didn't know.

Erica: Okay, then draw another cat mask

Tom: Do it right now, then.

Frequency of utterances. As a Masterpiece Maker, Thorton's utterance count was 41 out his total utterances across texts, 1007, or 4.1%. The breakdown of utterances follows across time and texts:

Ramona Quimby, Age 8... 7.3

Lion Witch and Wardrobe. .26.8

Stone Fox.....null

My Side of the Mountain...65.9

Thorton's final masterpiece, (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p.54) a bird on a tree branch, conjured the guessing game again which evolved into the longest set of turn-taking and utterance counts of all other masterpieces (the latter turns ended with students finalizing reading of remaining chapters for the next meeting). No one pronounced "Barometer", the nuthatch's, name correctly, saying BARE O METER, nor recognized (or chose to explore, perhaps) the significance of the name Sam Gribble chose for the bird. Billy chose to say he thought the hole

in the tree should be bigger, “Yeah, that’s way too small.” Thorton good-naturedly replied with a light, “Okay!”

4.3. Guiding Question Two

What are the results over time in terms of interactions of third-graders conducting conversations about books in literature circles?

Interactions, or the verbal exchanges among third-graders as they discussed books, were coded according to a set of categories refined and established by completing multiple passes of the transcripts and analyzing utterances. Categories emerged after experimenting with adding and collapsing headings that best represented what students were saying. For the complete coding system with samples see Appendix I. Interactions were coded as follows:

Acknowledging-confirmation, challenge, or disregarding the preceding utterance of another.

Facilitating- initiating a new topic, continuing a topic, or showing discussion maintenance (comments that keep the discussion on track).

Informing- sharing facts, opinions, definitions, clarifications.

Soliciting- asking questions

Connecting- connecting experiences, attitudes, and knowledge to text

Other-sound effects, inaudibles, back channels (ah, um), laughing.

The following summary describes each student’s interactions as they culminated over time and across 4 texts. See Appendix S for a summary of the types of student interactions to each text that occurred while taking on roles.

4.4. Summary of Individual Student Interactions

4.4.1. Billy's Interactions

Most of Billy's interactions occurred as a Word Wizard (269 tallies or 33.4% of his total utterances: 806). Providing definitions for words and then facilitating where to find the words in texts; reading the words in context and providing a rationale; contributed the most tallies as interactions described as Informative (51.0%) and Facilitative (33.5%). Except for a low 2.2% of informing remarks in the first book, Ramona Quimby, Age 8, Billy's Informing interactions across the final three texts increased gradually from 40.7% to 53.0% to 55.9%. An illustration of his informing interactions in each role follows:

Discussion King.

Discussion King (the third ranked role) fostered 197 (24.4%) of Billy's interactions. The Informing category once again was most often cited (70 out of 197 tallies). His interactions were aimed at providing information, giving opinions, or making clarifications on the topic of discussion.

Informing example. As a Discussion King, Billy was naturally more aligned with asking questions than informing; however the following example illustrates an Informing interaction as Discussion King:

Billy: (They) City slickers look like they're going to a wedding...

Alex: And I think he meant like by mayors, and ..., and tax collectors.

Billy: Like Clifford Snyder (the tax collector) (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 31).

Acknowledging example.

Thorton: Maybe eventually they'll find their way out of the wardrobe
or something.

Billy: Uh ha, Yeah, maybe...(Lion Witch and the Wardrobe
Transcript, p.)

Facilitating example. Billy: Today is April 30, 2002, and I am Discussion King.
And my first question is...

Soliciting example. Billy: Why was he (Sam Gribley) trying to keep the fire
low? (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 1)

Connecting example. Billy: You think if you kill a deer it's not going to come
after you! [amused] (My Side of the Mountain Transcript,
p. 30).

Other example. Billy: That would be...[trying to get into the conversation
unsuccessfully at the moment] (My Side of the Mountain
Transcript, p. 3)

Word Wizard

Informing example. As a Word Wizard, Billy was most informing compared to all
roles by providing definitions and reasons for choosing words:

Billy: My next word is SPECTRES on page 136 (his second book, The Lion, the Witch,
and the Wardrobe.) "Call the Ghouls, and the Boggles, the Ogres and the
Minotaurs. Call the Cruels, the Hags, the SPECTRES, and the people of the
Toadstools." And I picked it because it was an interesting word.

Acknowledging example. Billy: Yeah. Make believe fairy tale. (Lion, Witch, and
the Wardrobe Transcript, p. 13).

Facilitating example. Billy: And my next passage word is MEMORIZED, p 13.
(My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p.8)

Soliciting example. Billy: Why would you really need to memorize? (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 8)

Connecting example. Billy: Something like PLAWWWPT...Plops of ice-cream or something like that. (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 17)

Other example. Billy: Once I...[incomplete thought, never acknowledged]

Passage Master

Informing example. As a Passage Master, his next highest interaction counts were tallied at 243 or 30.2% of his total utterances-806. The informative category was again the highest count with nearly similar totals across texts and time: 46.7%, 41.4%, 51.1%, and 52%.

Billy: *“Ramona’s eyes blurry/blurred. Her family had all gone off and left her when she was sick. She blinked away the tears and discovered on the bedside table a cartoon her father had drawn for her,”* (Cleary, p. 128). I picked it because it sounded like a good description...That’s like a really good description telling of it, tells you if they are there, or not there, her mom’s there, not there, she doesn’t really know...tells you a lot about the story, what she was doing (Ramona Quimby Age 8 Transcript, p. 11).

Facilitating example. Billy: I am Passage Master, my name is Billy. My first passage is p. 89, paragraph 2. (Lion, Witch and Wardrobe Transcript, p. 15).

Acknowledging example.

Thorton: Like the witch will make him a king?

Billy: Maybe. (Lion, Witch, and Wardrobe Transcript, p. 15.)

Soliciting example. Billy: A one year old in dog years...how old is he? (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 29).

Connecting example. Billy: The high-powered paint ball gun wouldn't hurt that much (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 47).

Other example. Billy: Um, [I picked this paragraph (passage) this one because it was a good description. How it told us where she was and what she was doing like walking through the wardrobe.] And that and...

Royal Connector

Royal Connections were logically categorized as Connecting interactions, a total of 66.3% of the 83 tallies. Billy's interactions varied from book to book. The most connections were evoked by My Side of the Mountain, a story rich in detail and first-person narrative about a boy living alone on a mountain, and Stone Fox, another story about a courageous boy and his dog. The family life and school dilemmas of Ramona Quimby, Age 8 provided 13 connectives followed last by The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe most likely due to faulty tape sections. Although Billy was the least abled reader, he was uncanny in his ability to recognize overriding themes.

When Billy announced his passages, his interactions were coded as Facilitative, the next highest category as Passage Master (36.9% or 101 tallies) by announcing where to find them in context, reading them aloud, and providing a rationale for choosing.

The Acknowledging category was counted as next highest. Billy recognized speakers and confirmed or challenged a preceding utterance. Solicitation interactions occurred next in frequency. Billy asked questions or gave commands about the topic of discussion.

Informing example. Billy was discussing his dog's age and implied he wasn't

sure how many “dog” years that would be:

Billy: A one year-old in dog years... how old is he? I’m not sure about that. (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 29).

Facilitating example. Billy introduces himself in role:

Billy: My name’s Billy and I am Royal Connector, Masterpiece Maker.(Lion, Witch and Wardrobe Transcript, p. 4)

Acknowledging example.

Billy: Yeah, it’s kinda similar, but not not just like...[being called a nuisance] (Ramona Quimby, Age 8 Transcript, p. 6).

Soliciting example.

Billy: A one year-old in dog years...how old is he? (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 29).

Connecting example. Billy: Once I saw this guy kinda weird with these four kids like talked weird, this guy he’s walking down the street doing something really weird talking like a French man. (Lion, Witch, and Wardrobe Transcript, p. 4).

Other example. Billy: Once my dad, he grabbed me....once my dad...once my dad....[attempting to get into the conversation, ignored, and never acknowledged] (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 29).

Masterpiece Maker

The Masterpiece Maker role overlapped with Royal Connector since they were presented by the same person in sessions conducted by four students. Interactions focused around Billy’s illustrations of the stories, compared to the first three logo-centric role interactions, and might be considered as more evocative of aesthetic response. Billy’s interactions were coded as most

often Facilitative (42.9%), followed by both Soliciting and Acknowledging (24.4%) and then Informing (14.4%). None were coded as Connecting or Other category interactions. Interactions also overlapped as acknowledging and Informing since utterance counts were utilized.

Informing example. (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 29):

Tom: It's his home.

Billy: No. [it isn't]

Acknowledging example.

Thorton: Isn't that where all those bushes and everything and his house [sic]?

That was like his great grandpa's old house thing.

Billy: Yeah.

Facilitating example. Billy: My masterpiece is...[displays his drawing].

Soliciting example. Billy: Do you know where it [the sled he drew] is?

Connecting. No utterances were counted as Billy making connections. He acknowledged others' connections about his drawings. For instance, Thorton moved quickly after Billy's brief experience as Masterpiece Maker to deciding when and where to read next:

Thorton: That's the trees and the apples. Okay. [rushing] And , um, how many chapters? Three?

Billy: Three

Thorton: Okay.

Other. No Other utterances were counted here under Masterpiece Maker interactions..

4.4.2. Bob's Interactions

Bob's interactions were most often in the Informing category, 370 out of 983 times. The Word Wizard role contributed the most Informing hits during the reading of Wind in the Willows, Bob's final book (self-chosen). Facilitating interactions numbering 330 out of 983 were listed as second in frequency, in the Word Wizard role reading Wind in the Willows. Solicitative interactions were Bob's third most frequently coded hits (103 out of 983), but this time were found in the reading of Stone Fox in a Discussion King role. As a Passage Master, Bob scored the third highest tally of interactions with the Facilitating category leading followed by the Informing category tallies from Wind in the Willows. Examples per role and category follow.

Discussion King

Informing example. Bob: I like Badger. He's my favorite character because he...(My Side the Mountain Transcript, p. 8).

Acknowledging example.

Jon: He's nice. He's nice. I like Badger cause he's nice. Cause he brought the ah ah picnic stuff. (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 8).

Bob: Yeah.

Facilitating example. Bob: Okay, now move on to Word Wizard. (p.9)

Soliciting example. Bob: [My second one] is who is your favorite character in the story and why? (p. 8)

Connecting example. None tallied.

Other example. Bob: [inaudible] [related to talking about how Willy will pay the tax bill] (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 2).

Word Wizard

Informing example. Bob: My first word is Grandfather, p. 37. I don't even know where it is.

Acknowledging example.

Thorton: And you picked it because it was important.

Bob: Yes! (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 22)

Facilitating example. Bob: And my second word is Dusty, paragraph pg.68 (p. 22)

Soliciting example. Bob: Did you find it? [the word GRANDFATHER, Stone Fox, p. 37]

Connecting example. Bob: My dad's an engineer. He makes glass. (Wind in the Willows Transcript, p. 34).

Other example. Bob: Grandfather always said," Where...there's...a..."[completed by Alice] (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 10).

Passage Master

Informing example. Bob: "Sit down, sit down," said Rat pleasantly, "did you lose your way in the snow?" (Wind in the Willows, p. 41).

Acknowledging example.

Bob: I think it was a funny, I mean a good part um, because um like like um...

Jon: Cause he wrapped his hands around Rat.

Bob: Yeah.

Facilitating example.

Tom: They famished [sic]. They like ran to the kitchen. They were really really hungry, like Ron said in his word what the meaning was.

Bob: Okay. [a word often used to move dialogue along]

Tom: I thought it was different. Because of the word famished, that made it a little different.

Jon: Yeah, I never heard that word. I heard of it, but I haven't heard of it in a long time.

Soliciting example.

Bob: [struggling to read the word] Indigestion? (Ramona Quimby Age 8 Transcript, p. 13).

Connecting example. None tallied.

Other example.

Betty: Yesterday when my dad came home from Canada, he stopped at McDonalds and he ate bad food. And he had to take that medicine.

Bob: [mumbles, inaudible] (Ramona Quimby, Age 8 Transcript, p. 13)

Royal Connector

Informing example. Bob: I saw a lamp post in the woods, or whatever that was (Lion, Witch and Wardrobe Transcript, p. 7).

Acknowledging example. Bob: I know, but I've read a book like this (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 31).

Facilitating example. Bob: I made three connections...(Stone Fox Transcript, p. 31).

Soliciting example.

Bob: And my second one [connection], my last one is I'm scared when it's dark. When I was little I was scared of the dark.

Jon: And because when lightning flashes like really quick and you have

woods in your backyard. And they looked like vampires and ghosts.

Bob: Whenever you were little?

Connecting example. Bob: I would like Searchlight, because I like dogs. (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 31).

Other example. Bob: Um, the first connection- I wouldn't let him steer the barge. (Wind in the Willows Transcript, p. 26.)

Masterpiece Maker

Informing example. Bob: That would be fun, I've never done that before [steered a barge] (Wind in the Willows Transcript, p. 26).

Acknowledging example. Bob: Yeah, (toad is washing clothes). (Wind in the Willows Transcript, p. 26).

Facilitating example. Bob: My masterpiece is...(Wind in the Willows Transcript, p. 7).

Soliciting example. Bob: Mole lying down, see? (Wind in the Willows Transcript, p. 7).

Connecting example. None tallied.

Other example. None tallied.

4.4.3. Thorton's Interactions

The Informing category of interactions ranked highest in Thorton's utterances, 440 out of 1007. In the Discussion King role, Thorton captured 113 of the Informing interactions during the reading of his fourth text, My Side of the Mountain, and also as Passage Master, reading the same text for a total of 74 Informing interactions. The discussion of Stone Fox yielded 58 Informing interactions, as a Discussion King. As a Word Wizard, Thorton's interactions were deemed Facilitating 64 times while discussing The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.

Seventy-six Connecting interactions were tallied across texts over time for Thorton. The most (23) Connecting interactions were counted during his My Side of the Mountain discussion as a Royal Connector followed by 11 more connectives reading Stone Fox, same role. As a Masterpiece Maker in My Side of the Mountain, 12 connecting hits were indicated. As a Passage Master, My Side of the Mountain yielded 11 Connecting interactions. Acknowledging interactions accounted for 64 of Thorton's total interactions.

The majority of Acknowledging interactions (46.9%) were in the Discussion King role, followed by 28.1% as Passage Master. The remaining interactions were spread evenly over Royal Connector, Masterpiece Maker and Word Wizard roles. Examples of Thorton's coded interactions in roles follow:

Discussion King

Informing example. Thorton: Now she can't have it [butter on her toast] (Ramona Quimby Age 8 Transcript, p. 2).

Acknowledging example.

Erica: Because she got up early in the morning.

Thorton: Very early. (Ramona Quimby, Age 8 Transcript, p. 2)

Facilitating example. Thorton: My third question is...(Ramona Quimby Age 8 Transcript, p. 2)

Soliciting example. Thorton: Why do you think Ramona was grouchy? (Ramona Quimby, Age 8 Transcript, p. 2).

Connecting example. Thorton: It (the falcon) would be a fright if it dived in on you. (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 7)

Other example: Thorton: She (Lucy) like has the biggest imagination.

Bob: Yeah.

Ron: Yeah.

Billy: Yeah, like a kid.

Thorton: Um...

Word Wizard

Informing example. Thorton: I picked NUISANCE. (Ramona Quimby Age 8 Transcript, p. 1).

Acknowledging example. Thorton: ALIGHTING. Yes, I picked it because it's kind of strange, (Lion, Witch and Wardrobe, Transcript, p. 20).

Facilitating example. Thorton: And my third one (word) is on page 122. (Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe Transcript, p. 20).

Soliciting example. Thorton: Introduce me! (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 26).

Connecting example. None exist except out of role: Thorton: [referring to Bob's DWARF, therefore out of role connection] You could just say it's a little creature as big as Lisa [classmate], maybe. (Lion, Witch and Wardrobe Transcript, p. 20)

Other example. Thorton: And my next word is UN USEN (unison), or whatever (Stone Fox Transcript, p. 17).

Passage Master

Informing example. "On warm evenings I would lie on my stomach and look out the door, listen to the frogs and nighthawks, and hope it could storm....(My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 20).

Acknowledging example. "Yeah, he wants it to rain cause he wants to test his new house," (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 21).

Facilitating example. “My first passage is on p. 35, paragraph 1,” (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 20).

Solicitation example. “Wait, he hit your cousin?” (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 22).

Connecting example. “See, it depends on what kind of trout you’re talking about...There’s those big river trout. Those are like POOSH!” (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 20).

Other example. /giggle, giggle, giggle/

Royal Connector.

Informing example. “That’s pretty lucky!” (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 22.).

Acknowledging example. S1: I saw one (a falcon) flutter; it’s like...flying up....

Thorton: “Yeah, really.” (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 53).

Facilitating example. “And now we’re moving on to me, and I am Royal Connector...(My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 53).

Soliciting example. S1: I like going underground. I made this very big hole at the beach.

Thorton: And you climbed in, right? (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 6.)

Connecting example. “And my connection is, I like to go in caves and dune type things...ha ha, pound stakes into them.” (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 6).

Other example. n/a

Masterpiece Maker.

Informing example. “It’s not the owl.” (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p.54)

Acknowledging example. S1: Oh, it’s that owl, maybe?

Thorton: We just mentioned the bird’s name! (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 54.

Facilitating example. “And my masterpiece is....” (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 54.)

Soliciting example. “So what do you think the picture’s of?” (Ramona Quimby Transcript, p. 5.)

Connecting example. “This is it.” [indicates the picture from the book he copied, presumably] (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 7).

Other example. S1: “Oh, it’s the owl maybe?”

Thorton: “UMMMM”

4.5. Guiding Question Three

What are the results over time in terms of responses created by third-graders conducting conversations about books in literature circles?

Students’ responses to four texts were tallied according to moves, or change of speaker using brackets []. If sentences within a particular move indicated definite changes in types of responses, exceptions were made to code the responses appropriately. These bracketed sections of scribed speech taken from the student sample transcripts were categorized as Personal

autobiographical digression or personal engagement within the work; Descriptive- narrational, retelling descriptives about text; Interpretive statements of parts of the work of the whole work; and Evaluative statements about the evocativeness of the work, about the construction of the work, or the meaningfulness of the work. The outline is suggested by Purves and Beach (1973) as cited in Odell and Cooper, 1976, p. 205-296). See Appendix J for a coding sample. The following table lists the four categories sorted by students and texts across time:

Table 7 Responses to Four Texts: Purves and Beach Categories

Texts:	Ramona Q	Lion, Witch, W.	Stone Fox	MSM/WWL	Total
Personal					
Billy (L)	11.4 (30)	20.9 (55)	32.3 (87)	35.7 (94)	263
Bob (A)	7.7 (20)	22.7 (59)	28.8 (73)	41.5 (109)	261
Thorton (H)	11.7 (28)	23.3 (56)	20.8 (50)	44.2 (106)	240
Descriptive					
Billy (L)	13.3 (4)	10.0 (3)	40.0 (12)	30.0 (9)	30
Bob (A)	15.9 (19)	33.6 (40)	21.8 (26)	28.6 (35)	120
Thorton (H)	7.1 (6)	22.4 (19)	21.2 (18)	49.4 (42)	85
Interpretive					
Billy (L)	2.1 (1)	8.5 (4)	53.2 (25)	36.1 (17)	47
Bob (A)	0	15.8 (9)	33.3 (19)	50.9 (29)	57
Thorton (H)	6.4 (6)	21.3 (20)	21.3 (20)	51.1 (48)	94
Evaluative					
Billy (L)	10.5 (6)	1.1 (3)	22.8 (13)	61.4 (35)	57
Bob (A)	14.9 (13)	29.9 (26)	24.1 (21)	27.6 (27)	87
Thorton (H)	19.8 (26)	19.8 (26)	18.3 (24)	42.0 (55)	131

Note: Ramona Quimby; LWW-Lion Witch and Wardrobe; MSM-My Side of Mountain; WWL Wind in Willows

4.5.1. Personal Responses

Personal responses were identified most frequently and consistently across time and texts in chronological order for each of the boys.

Billy's Personal Responses

The majority of Billy's responses were coded as personal and ranked highest of all recorded responses (n=263). Because the Royal Connector role naturally enticed students to make statements of personal engagement with the work, many of Billy's personal responses were generated while taking on this discussion role. For instance, while discussing My Side of the Mountain, Billy connected to his own enjoyment of wandering around the woods and then referred to playing in a cornfield, an idea sparked by discussion, "Once my cousins they tied a bandana around my face and I couldn't get it off, they tied it so tight. And a thing around my hands. I had to walk around the cornfield trying to step on their hands." (Billy's Transcript, p.22). Passages chosen to be read aloud and shared with the group, in the Passage Master role, were coded as personal responses or choices. Words chosen to be defined and shared with the group were also coded as Personal Response because they indicated personal choices or engagements with the texts.

Bob's Personal Responses

The majority of Bob's responses were also coded as personal (n= 261) and closely matched Billy's in frequency. Bob's passages, words and personal connections chosen from the texts were coded as personal choices or engagement with the texts. Identifying himself in role, as having a question, word, or passage to share were also coded as personal. For instance, the disguise worked perfectly, and Toad was out of jail. (Wind in the Willows Transcript, p. 35).

Thorton's Personal Responses

Thorton's (high ability) personal responses were slightly lower in frequency compared to the other boys' (n= 240), but still represented the majority of his responses. Words, passages, questions for discussion, role identifications, and connections were common to Thorton's personal responses. An example: My next word is MUSSELS on page 97. (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 47).

4.5.2. Descriptive Responses

Descriptive responses included talk about story parts, retellings, or descriptive aspects of the works.

Billy's Descriptive Responses

The Descriptive category represents the minority or 7.5% of all of Billy's coded responses (397). Example: [referring to Searchlight] "She was just a regular old dog that wanted to race." Billy's Descriptive Responses nearly tripled between the first two books (23%) and last two books (76.7%). Stone Fox represented the highest frequency.

Bob's Descriptive Responses

The majority of Descriptive Responses in the study, (50.6%), were made by Bob. Across texts, his frequency doubled from the first text, Ramona Quimby Age 8 to the next, Lion Witch and the Wardrobe, 15.9%-33.6%. The remaining texts, Stone Fox and My Side of the Mountain, ranked 21.8% to 28.6% consecutively. Examples: Descriptive Responses identified story characters or retold events: "Ramona thought about commercials." (Bob's Transcript, p. 2) or "It was after they finally found Rat's home." (Wind in the Willows) Transcript, p. 29).

Thorton's Descriptive Responses

Descriptive Responses represented the minority or 15.5% of Thorton's responses in all categories. Across texts, the first text held only 7.1% of descriptive responses compared to the last at (My Side of the Mountain) at 49.4%. The middle two texts were similarly ranked, 22.4% and 21.2%. Example: Then all your grass is gonna die, flowers gonna die, leaves gonna die, (My Side of the Mountain Transcript, p. 21).

4.5.3. Interpretive Responses

Billy's Interpretive Responses

Billy's Interpretive Responses represented 23.7% of interpretive category frequency, but only 11.8% of his responses across all categories. Example: "That's like a really good description telling of it tells you if they are there or not there, her mom's there, not there—she doesn't really know...tells you a lot about the story—what she is doing." (Billy's Transcript, p. 2).

Bob's Interpretive Responses

Interpretive Responses represented the minority of Bob's total responses or 9.8%, but 28.8% of all Interpretive Responses. Zero responses represent the first text outcomes compared to 50.9% of his last book, Wind in the Willows. Example: You know like those opera things? Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah! (sung as a aria (Bob's Transcript, p. 26).

Thorton's Interpretive Responses

Interpretive Responses represented 15.5% of Thorton's total responses in all categories and 47% of all Interpretive Responses. From the first to the last story, Thorton's interpretive responses increased seven fold. Example: Or, maybe Stone Fox would come to town early like. (Thorton's Transcript, p. 13).

4.5.4. Evaluative Responses

Billy's Evaluative Responses

Evaluative Responses represented 14.4% of Billy's total responses in all categories and 20.7% of all Evaluative Responses. From the first to the last story a 121% increase in interpretive responses was measured. Example: I picked it because it sounded like a good description. (Billy's Transcript, p. 1)

Bob's Evaluative Responses

Bob's Evaluative Responses represented 9.7 % or the minority of his total responses in all categories and 32.3% of Evaluative Category Responses. Example: And I thought it was a good writing. (Bob's Transcript, p. 2).

Thorton's Evaluative Responses

Thorton's Evaluative Responses represents 23.8% of Thorton's total responses in all categories and 48.7% of Evaluative Category Responses. Example: "So the good guy can sometimes lose?" (Stone Fox Transcript, p.20)

Students of the study displayed success responding to their books with insight and supported evidence from text regardless of ability level. Choosing great books with real characters working their way through real lives, talking about books with others, adding insights, with the support of teammates, produced discussion that was often lively and motivational.

4.6. Guiding Question Four

What role does the teacher play in shaping how students take on roles, interact, and respond?

I examined my role in promoting student discussions about books across three perspectives: roles, interactions and responses. The enactment of discussion from these

perspectives did not happen by chance but with expert guidance. Information from teacher notes, video and audiotapes of discussions, and discussion transcripts was gathered and analyzed over the year of the study to reveal the teacher's role in the literature circle process.

4.6.1. Roles

Released Authority.

I sought to promote students' ability to discuss books as independent readers and thinkers. To encourage my third graders to read and talk about what they read required a way to put them in charge of their own independent reading, planning what to read, thinking about what was important to discuss, and discussing it. The process that evolved, namely the implementation of literature circles, required my gradual release of authority over students as they were placed in role-taking positions to plan for and initiate talk about shared texts. This approach let go of dominating teacher authority and let peer-led discussions about books happen from training to end of book presentations.

Adapted a Protocol for Assuming Roles.

Roles required rules. The rules guiding each role were introduced by the teacher, one role at a time, one day at a time based on the literature circle work of Daniels (1994, 2002) throughout a week of training and follow-up debriefings. As chapters of the training phase text, Ramona Quimby, Age 8, were read aloud, individual roles were modeled by the teacher, then practiced by each student in small group format. The primary goal was to nurture third graders as independent readers and thinkers with time and opportunity to listen and learn from one another as they shared a focused interest in books.

Each role was modeled by me, first, then practiced by everyone taking on the same role and preparing for and carrying out discussions. Role types common to popular literature circle groups such as a Discussion Director (referred to as "Discussion King"), Word Wizard, Passage Master,

Connector (referred to as “Royal Connector”), and “Artist” (referred to as Masterpiece Maker) were adapted to fit the classroom theme and stationery for the year, castles and lore. With the decision made to use roles to promote book discussions, the first few weeks of school were utilized as training time for learning to work as cooperative groups through sharing jobs, respecting group decisions, learning to listen to one another, and growing confidence owning authority. Using the district mandated anthology-based chapter book choice, Ramona Quimby, Age 8, each role and its requirements were presented by the teacher-researcher, one per day, while reading one chapter per day and thinking aloud during the role as a model of performance, in whole group format. Afterwards, students tried on the role of choice in small group format by following the teacher-initiated model. Finally, students evaluated one another’s role modeling performance by using a fish-bowl technique reenacting their discussions of the day for debriefing. The students and teacher became duel sounding boards- the teacher providing guidance outside the circle- the students responding with new ways of thinking about text inside.

4.6.2. Promoted Questions for Discussion,.

I tried to present interpretive questions to model such as Langer’s (1990) Stepping Out questions- those that would reflect on one’s own life or another’s as discussion-promoting and contrasted them to the type of factual question that might result in merely a one-word response that would need no further explanation or discussion. For instance, questions such as “What would you have done if you were Ramona having to play with Willa Jean everyday after school? After all, didn’t Ramona have to be responsible and do her part to help the family?” “Were her parents expecting too much?” “Would you have done anything differently? How did you feel when you read about Ramona and her quick thinking with the USSR book? were juxtaposed in stark contrast to questions that would contribute little to discussion and subsequent story comprehension, for example, asking the color of Willa Jean’s hair. Considering Willa Jean’s age

would be an appropriate factual question to ask for discussion, however, since Willa Jean's age was a significant piece of background information to build on towards understanding Ramona's dilemma at having to reluctantly appease a five year-old at the babysitters while not letting down her parents. Practice questions were fielded from the class and eventually assigned as written work in small literature circle groups to prepare for the next day's discussion. The teacher became a coach supporting her students as they made decisions about questions to write that would promote discussion.

It was a balancing act to provide just enough support without impeding students' personal, developing ideas about story events or mandating what was important for them to talk about. Ramona Quimby Age 8 was required reading (at least one chapter from the classroom anthology, and now the entire book), and appealed to students individually at varying degrees based on student evaluations. In addition, the reading itself was challenging and support with word attack, vocabulary and story comprehension had to be monitored to support the protocol. The teacher reading aloud with individual students, students reading in pairs, or at home with a parent became ways to assist in preparing meaningful questions for discussion.

Searched and Sampled Meaningful Vocabulary.

Words were searched and sampled together as a class that promoted story comprehension and were personally interesting enough for the reader to want to share with his group. For instance, nuisance (p.68) was an important word to be able to read and know concerning Ramona Quimby. Not only was it a challenging word to read for most third graders, and part of a chapter title, "Supernuisance", it was a word likely to initiate a flurry of discussion. What's a nuisance? Can you give an example? How do you deal with a nuisance? Why did Mrs. Whaley call Ramona a nuisance? Or "responsibility" (p. 19) (a word often sermonized in regard

to eight and nine year olds' behavior, so the concept easily understood) became the theme of much of Ramona's self-talk throughout the book, and much of the basis of students' evolving discussions of events. "Yard ape", the special vocabulary word Ramona coined for recess bullies, or Cleary's reference to "Bigfoot" supposedly seen stalking the mountains of Oregon were considered words to discuss and add to building meaning. Words that would not support discussion, such as "of, and, the , is" were presented in contrast as words that needed no discussion. High-interest vocabulary words were fielded from the class and then individually chosen by each student for the next day's small group discussion. The teacher became a coach supporting her students as they made decisions about words to write down for discussion. A balancing act was required to allow students to experiment with word choices and discussion building, and to interject support and inquiry that might spur additional thinking, without mandating:

Teacher: What kind of COURSE was there? Did you read the sentence?

Bob: It was like...

Jon: Of course.

Teacher: Ah, it's not the same kind of COURSE.

Jon: It means definitely (Wind in the Willows Transcript, p.)

Care to follow the rules of protocol included recording the words for discussion along with page numbers and a reason for choosing prior to discussion was part of word wizardry preparation.

Chose Passages.

Passages rich in description of the setting, of characters, characters' actions, or important events that would help make the story come alive were initially chosen by the teacher as dynamic

discussion starters. For instance, sharing the rich detail of Cleary's writing as she describes Ramona displacing her personal anger toward her wish for Mt. Hood to erupt outside her classroom window, would help to draw students' attention to the lived experience through text and deepen comprehension:

“Still fuming, Ramona entered her new school and climbed the stairs to find her assigned classroom, which she discovered looked out over roofs and treetops to Mount Hood in the distance. I wish it would erupt, she thought, because she felt like exploding with anger (Cleary, 1981, p.31).”

Or the unfairness of life as it comes, particularly at the age of eight, according to Ramona:

“Why did Ramona have to play with Willa Jean when Beezus did not? Because she was younger. That was why. Ramona was overwhelmed by the unfairness of it all. Because she was younger, she always had to do things she did not want to do, to go to bed earlier, (p. 53).”

Students were given opportunity to choose personal interest passages for discussion, after the modeling session. Passages were recorded by page number, paragraph, and purpose in preparation for discussion. As a roving advisor, progress making choices was supported and recognized by the teacher with approval that supported students' efforts and follow-through.

Made Connections.

Another way to talk about books, that would help make reading come alive, was explained (in large group) as making connections from text to self, other texts, or the world as a way to build meaning. The class whiteboard was used to record ideas as they emerged from the three categories to assist the learning. For instance, in “The Quimby's Quarrel”, fourth chapter (fourth modeling session), connecting at a personal (self) level, was demonstrated following

teacher's lead by talking about Ramona and her sister's revulsion and indignation over being almost tricked into eating "tongue" and imagining how one might feel sitting at the Quimby's dinner table. After all, the meat was lovingly prepared (with gravy) by their tired, hard-working mother's hands. Wasn't she only trying to provide a nutritious, economical meal for her family? Mr. Quimby was going to school and working; Mrs. Quimby was working part time and taking care of the family. The girls had to do their part by obeying their parents. What about Mrs. Quimby's feelings evoked by watching her daughters sniff the food before they eat it, as though it might be poison, and then refuse to eat. Did such a thing ever happen in their own lives? Investing time and energy sharing high-interest passages that readily incurred personal reactions encouraged students to transact in intimate ways and to create personally significant meanings (Bowran, 2001).

At a personal level cow tongue is an unusual food to consider for most third graders, although it's likely that tongue might be consumed unaware, in a favorite third grade lunch choice, hot dogs. Tongue is a lean meat served pickled and thinly sliced for sandwiches-fact. Knowledge of tongues as useful body organs was a spin off of discussion. Cows' tongues, specific to the text, are one-foot long body organs; they resemble a large filet of beef in shape; they have taste bud bumps like our own that can be seen and felt. Then, beyond "self" to the "world" outside, a side step in discussion led to people around the world eating all kinds of delicacies which opened the door to discussing food varieties based on availability (feast and famine). If you were hungry enough, would you eat anything? The Chinese jokingly say they will eat anything that has four legs and moves (Teacher's Notes, 1993 China trip).

Practice making multiple connections from the text was completed as class work in preparation for the next day's discussion. The teacher served as a model discussant, materials

manager, and scribe, in large group and then discussion moderator as ideas emerged.

Connections were prepared by children individually for their next day's small group discussions with the teacher facilitating: checking for names, dates, ideas put into writing, and pocket portfolios in place while students worked. Beyond training sessions, students were observed informally by rotating from group to group, sometimes asking questions for clarity, making suggestions, or clarifying expectations of the rules of protocol (including behavior) while they met in discussion groups.

Encouraged Self-Expression through Illustrations.

Students were encouraged to illustrate an idea or portion of text they found particularly interesting. Book illustrations, rather than teacher's artwork, were used as examples to promote discussion. Students often copied illustrations from the reading rather than creating their own pictures, however, they were encouraged to illustrate however they chose.

Introduced a Literature Circle Schedule.

The teacher introduced a Literature Circle Schedule adapted from Daniels (1994) Voice and Choice in a Student-Centered Classroom model, as a way for students to organize information and prepare for discussion. Each day of training, a new page of the schedule was introduced and filled in together as a group, with information regarding dates, appropriate pages, and eventually information chosen by the individual student for the next day's discussion, whether questions, words, passages, connections, or illustrations. Maintenance of the schedules was a critical issue to provide clear, concise instruction of protocol. Pocket portfolios were provided to hold the individual schedules and trade books safely in the desk or in transport to home and back. Students were directed to attach their schedules to clipboards while working in

their literature circles to provide an instant desk for writing and to keep from losing them outside of the portfolio.

Allocated Time, Method, and Books.

Time to practice asking provocative questions, using eye contact, engaging everyone to interact, and insisting on explanations were foci of preparation. The teacher's role became guide on the side as students were learning to listen politely to one another, and to support and encourage one another as cooperative learners responsible for having a part in each book discussion. Books were allocated based on current availability, beginning with reading the entire book, Ramona Quimby Age 8, rather than the one chapter in the student anthology, and through a selection process using current book clubs to purchase high-interest, age and grade appropriate, economical books through a district wide grant.

Addressed Changing Needs and Developing Expertise of Participants.

Students of varying abilities were supported by reading with a partner, the teacher, an aide, or with a parent at home. Since student choice was part of the motivation behind encouraging student interest and book sharing, it was therefore important to provide initial reading support. A special needs student would be supported throughout the discussion building by repeating roles or presenting questions with the consistent help of an aide.

4.6.3. Interactions

Promoted interaction.

The teacher's role in promoting student interactions reading and sharing trade books in this study required a mindset different from the typical transmission-evaluation variety of classroom talk that would instead allow small group discussions to evolve. Assigning simple group jobs (roles) that were initiated and rotated allowed each child to have a say and assert an opinion about what he/she read utilizing the five roles in the process: as discussion initiators,

word promoters, passage provokers, connectors, and illustrators promoted constructing knowledge together rather. How students interacted with one another both behaviorally and with purpose were key to I observing progress. Promoting interaction entailed sometimes stepping out of an observer's role and slipping into a conversation briefly with a question or remark to assist a discussion in the making.

Acknowledged Behavior of Appropriate Interactions.

The teacher promoted students acknowledging behavior that supported opinions with explanation or allowed space to disagree with reason by quoting text or offered personal experience:

Tom: How do you think Little Willy felt after he heard the news about the bill and his grandfather?

Billy: Well, not so good.

Sue: Nah. [conversation continues below]

Informed.

The teacher promoted student behavior that encouraged informing others about the story through discussion question starters, word meaning, passage exploration, making connections, or illustrating based on the text or personal experience. An example follows:

Billy: He kept on yelling at that Clifford Snyder. [informing]

Tom: Yeah. [acknowledging]

Billy: And he'd yell at Doc Smith. [informing]

Tom: Yeah. [acknowledging]

Billy: He just got really upset. [informing]

Erica: Grandfather was going to die, then he sees the bill.

Tom: He's going to have to go to an orphanage.[surmised from Doc Smith's advice
for little Willy to leave the farm and live in town with a family.]

Billy: Yeah, an orphanage.

Erica: Yeah, but then they'll probably be chasing after him cause he didn't pay
the bill.

Facilitated.

Students were encouraged to play out facilitating behaviors that helped move the discussion along by asking questions or offering page numbers or paragraphs to locate information that promoted story comprehension:

Erica: So what's next? [facilitating]

Connected.

Connecting was encouraged across texts and personal engagement with feelings evoked because of the reading:

Tom: My fourth question is: Do you think you could take care of someone like
Willy does his grandfather?

Alice: Maybe.

Erica: Probably.

Billy: Like how?

Erica: If I knew how to communicate with him.

Tom: Like Willy does.

Billy: Yeah. Like how my mom was. [connecting]

Tom: How could you feed him?

Billy: Like a BAY---BY. [connecting]

Tom: Maybe you're allowed to use the oven and you don't know how.

Billy: I know how to use the oven. [connecting].....

Erica: If I was about to die, if the heat was not very bad, I'd use the microwave oven.

Billy: Like my mom was dying, then it happened. Really death. [connecting]

Billy was able to make connections evoked by the text to the poignant details of his personal life at the time.

Whether students chose to pursue a line of discussion depended on the group's lead and not the teacher's direction. Billy's opportunities to share feelings or talk about the personal tragedy of losing his mother gradually over the course of the study, was hopefully cathartic. What might have been impossible in the course of routine classroom reading-evaluating- and assessing practice, became a probable opportunity for making connections to life itself, voiced and shared, in literature circle discussion.

Other.

The teacher provided time and opportunity for students to work in small groups to build conversation. The naturalness of conversation was promoted by the teacher sitting on the side of (rotating, at times videotaping, helping with tapes) the conversation as it developed over time and across texts, and allowing students to grow as discussants. With nonstop teacher intervention, students could not have experienced the freedom to express themselves as interacting discussants with shared feelings or personal information surrounding a book. Giggling, interruptions, or off task behavior, became a naturally evolving part of peer-led discussion making with or without the teacher. Although not promoted, interactions regarded as "other", happened alongside, with, or in spite of literature circle protocol. A poignant example

would be the classmate who interrupted the class daily with short-lived seizures. Another entails settling minor disputes among clashing personalities such as swapping roles purposely to end a disagreement about who had what role. Open-ended, self-chosen extension activities following the reading and sharing of literature circle books were promoted as ways to share the story experience of each book with the entire class in a meaningful way. Puppets, games, posters, and drama became delightful activities and fostered cooperative learning and respect. Extensions were also an effective in promoting interest in the books with others. Snell (1990) would say, one child recommending a book to another as the most effective way to increasing reading motivation.

4.6.4. Responses

The change of teacher's mindset from provider of information, review and evaluation to facilitator or coach on the side, helped define the parameters of this study. My role became not one of telling students whether their reading of text was sensible or not or consistent with my own or a critic's understanding of text. The chief concern became students' responses to text and to one another and the world as they conducted literature circle discussions. From those responses, according to Odell and Cooper (1976) the teacher could more accurately determine what processes students were using or failing to use as they formulated a response, and what processes they already were using but could use more thoroughly, imaginatively, or carefully. The outline suggested by Purvis and Beach (1973, as cited in Odell and Cooper, p. 204, 1976) included personal, descriptive, evaluative and interpretive type responses considered. The procedure to allow responses to happen required a safe environment for sharing freely with minimal constraints of time and protocol.

Personal.

The teacher's role was to encourage open-ended personal responses as students were asked to react to feelings evoked by characters or events surrounding characters in texts, or to one another's responses. For instance, "How do you think you would react if you were Ramona and had to eat tongue?"

Descriptive.

Descriptive responses were encouraged as students were asked to promote questions about story elements, or share passages that represented either narrational, retelling of the work or descriptive aspects of the work whether in language, characters, or setting. Questions were posed to expand information or promote personal opinions about the reading without being too authoritative. An example from the first session peer-led discussion of Ramona Quimby, Age 8, demonstrates the teacher at first listening on the side and then becoming part of the group to help incur discussion. The particular group consisted of clashing of personalities: both Bob and Billy of the study along with two female classmates- Hazel, shy and unassertive, and Betty, gloomy and assertive:

Teacher: Passage Master is next?

Billy: That's Hazel.

Teacher: So you chose... Everyone, this is how you are going to do it. Page 109, paragraph 1. Everyone find it and then she will read it. [The teacher voices some authority here, but in hopes of letting the students present themselves as discussants. In the meantime, Bob shuts the tape recorder off and on obsessively perhaps trying to save tape by eliminating any talk absent of what he considers non discussion and requires some input.]

Hazel: [starts to read with Bob mumbling something] Once more the Quimbys
were comfortable with one another or reasonably so.

Bob: What was it again?

Hazel: [read the second time with more fluency]....

Betty: That's not a paragraph. [She is right. Hazel responds by reading the
remainder of the page.] To which the teacher replies:

Teacher: Why did you pick it?

Alice: I thought it was an interesting writing.

Teacher: The writing's interesting. Does anyone have any thoughts on that?

Bob: [inaudible]

Teacher: [reading]...were comfortable with one another, or reasonably
so...What words stood out for you? What made it a good writing for
you?

Hazel: Like [inaudible]

Teacher: [apparently reiterating] Beverly Cleary's writing was good here. Why
did you think so.

Betty: Cause it made sense.

Teacher: How so?

Betty: It um connected.

[Tape off and on by Bob the controller of technology]

Teacher: [looking for a way to move thoughts along based on Betty's
"connected" comment] What were you going to say? Let's go to
connections.

Bob: [out of role as connector] I connected cause my parents usually talk about me and stuff. Like whenever I get a “B” on a test they talk about it. And then they talk to me.

Teacher: You mean before they talk to you they talk to each other? You hear about it. Do you worry then?

Bob: I can’t really hear them. Sometimes I listen to loud music, not that loud [inaudible]. I can’t really hear it... I can hear the two of them. [typical of Bob’s difficulty with oral expression and seemingly think-aloud performance as he shares his thoughts.]....

Billy: [Billy builds on Bob’s connection with his own experience at eavesdropping, listening under his cushion at night.] Sometimes my dad sees me doing something he doesn’t want me to do, like at night when I’m in bed he’ll like go to his room with my mom and they are like talking about what I shouldn’t have done. Cause they don’t want me to do it... like when I go riding with my cousin and I go off the ramp. And I like to try to jump on the seat. Um , they’ll like see me, they’ll talk about it and tell me not to do it again. Cause he doesn’t want me doing that. Cause we like to do tricks on the ramp and then we were racing across and he came down on the bigger motorcycle which was a gear bike and he saw me doing it since he was with my little sister. He just really didn’t want me to do that (Ramona Quimby Age 8 Transcript, p.4). [Deciphering what students meant in person was at

times as difficult as listening and transcribing taped discussions.]

Interpretive.

Sometimes the teacher intervened, especially in the beginning phase of conducting literature circles while students were struggling with reading and interpreting what they considered to be points of discussion. Prompting students to think about events in books helped promote deeper thinking (or any thinking in this scenario) that may not have occurred otherwise:

Bob: (Passage Master) Finally with a big sigh of relief, Ramona leaned back in her chair and admiring/to admire her work: three cat masks (with) holes for eyes and mouths that could be worn by hooking rubber bands over ears. But Ramona did not stop there.
[Bob did. Teammates continued reading for him:]

Betty: With pencil...

Billy: And paper...[Ramona is going to write a script for the commercial]

Bob: I'm done! [but he hasn't read a paragraph, which is what his group expected]

Billy: Why did you pick it? [elongated discussion banters back and forth and is continued below]

Evaluative.

Evaluative remarks were part of the protocol for discussing texts which the teacher tried to monitor by insisting on explanations of thinking. Students were to consider why they considered a section or word important, interesting, funny, etc. Rosenblatt (1994) describes how readers become involved in approving or disapproving of characters' actions or attitudes, the plausibility of occurrences, or the likes or dislikes of the story as it is presented.

Evaluative remarks:

Teacher: What makes it important?

Bob: It kinda tells what she did that evening. I wrote that it was a good part and a good description.

Hazel: You can kind of see bags, yarn...[continuing with Interpretive remarks...]

Billy: See the picture on the wall? That might be what she'll try to do, try to copy off. [The masks are made, it's the script Ramona needs to write.] I kinda think she's gonna like copy off that cat picture and make masks out of that.

Teacher: It's interesting. [the students' interpretation was being referred to by the teacher in an evaluative way, since Ramona had already made the masks.]

Billy: On the front of the page, kinda like do it.

Teacher: Why do you think she called Sara and Janet?

Bob: Cause she needed help and stuff and she had three plans and her talking...

In this study, encouraging students to assume a variety roles in a literature circle format, allowed them time to practice analyzing text in more careful, thoughtful ways and to extend the ways they transact with texts. The teacher sometimes initiated transactions by asking a question or sharing a comment. Other times, she rotated among discussion groups as silent observer and classroom manager. Students reading and talking about books independently was a goal; however, more importantly, was the goal to have all students reading and sharing literature with

success. This chapter presented the patterns identified for roles, interactions, and responses of third graders discussing books in literature circles and the teacher's role evolving over the course of an entire school year.

5. CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter provides a brief summary of the findings and discusses the conclusions and implications of the inquiries.

5.1. Summary of Findings

Students were required to take on roles to enhance their ability to initiate and carry on their own book discussions in literature circles. The students increased their turn-taking and utterance frequencies during discussion using roles. Over time, roles often became intertwined as one student's thoughts and actions often meshed with another's.

Interactions of third-graders conducting conversations about books in literature circles varied by category and numbers across time and texts. Each student ranked highest in the *Informative* category followed by *Facilitative*. Both the high-ability and average ability-readers' third-ranking interactions category was in making *Solicitations* at 10.1% and 10.5% respectively based on total utterances. In contrast, the low-ability reader *Acknowledged* others with 11.7% of his interactions, his third highest-ranking category, than either the high-ability student at 6.4% and average-ability student at 8.7%. Both the high-ability and low-ability students ranked fourth in making *Connections* at 7.5% and 9.5% respectively based on total utterances for each compared to the average ability student's *Acknowledging* interactions ranking fourth (8.7%) or nearly twice as many times (n=86) compared to making *Connections* (n=42)

ranked as sixth in his total utterance count after *Other* type interactions (n=52) or 5.3% of his total

Responses of third-graders conducting conversations about books in literature circles increased across time. Some fluctuations in turn-taking frequency and categories between texts occurred per student are discussed below.

Interpretive responses- Based on Purves' coding categories for analyzing students' responses to fiction, the category of greatest percentage of increase across time for all ability levels was Interpretative: 94% (Billy, low-ability); 100% (Bob, average-ability); and 88.0% (Thorton, high-ability). Yet Interpretative responses, comprised the lowest total category in all: 198 / 1471 responses or 13.5%.

Personal responses -were tallied as the most frequent type of response made by each student regardless of text: 66.8% (Billy, low ability, n= 265); 49.6% (Bob, average ability, n= 260); and 52.6% (Thorton, high ability, n=240). Likewise, an increase in Personal responses measured by turn-taking across ability levels, time, and texts can be noted except for a blip of six turns between books two and three for Thorton: 68% (Billy); 82% (Bob); and 74% (Thorton).

Evaluative responses- represented an increase in turn-taking across texts and time of 83% for Billy (low-ability) compared to Bob's (average ability) 52% increase and Thorton's (high ability) 53% increase. Fluctuation between texts were noted for each student, however: Billy's turn-taking dropped by three counts from book one to book two before increasing 77% to finally 83%. Bob's turn-taking increased by 50% from book one to book two and remained fairly consistent across the remaining texts. Thorton demonstrated the most evaluative responses in number (131 / 275). His number of responses remained consistent from books one to three (n=26, 26, 24), and nearly doubled (55) in book four (My Side of the Mountain) possibly due to

high story interest. In his Literature Circle Reflection (6/6/02) Thorton ranked My Side of the Mountain as his favorite of the four literature circle books read throughout the year.

Descriptive responses-With the exception of Bob (average-ability reader), descriptive responses represented the lowest cumulative tally of responses for each student. Bob's (n=120) count is represented by steady increase in number of descriptive responses from book one, Ramona, to book four, Wind in the Willows, except for The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (book two) in which his descriptive response count retelling or narrating information from the text doubled. The rich descriptive nature of The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe text suggests Bob's ability to visualize and recall story parts easily to account for his high descriptive response count. Ironically, he reported that the book was his least favorite, compared to the light-hearted frivolity of Wind in the Willows.

The role of the teacher varied across time and texts to influence how students took on roles, interacted and responded. My role in assisting students taking on their roles, interacting, and responding began as *provider of high quality literature* to sustain engaging conversation. Story characters of substance such as Ramona, the Lion, Edmund, Lucy, Stone Fox, Sam Gribbley, Mole, and Ratty, were purposely considered to be quickly engaging to promote student talk about the characters with the same intensity they have for people they know.

“Without high quality literature, it's difficult to sustain an engaging conversation about a book. Genuine discussions arise most often when books are read that contain memorable language, realistic plots, and characters to whom children can relate. Discussions can dip beyond the surface level if a book has a strong apparent theme,” (Hill, Johnson, and Schlick Noe, 1995, p. 44).

Prior to students making book choices, I became *book seller* presenting booktalks with just enough enticing description to capture student interest in Ramona's dilemmas owning up to being responsible, Sam's survival challenge in the wilderness, or the adventures of Mole and Ratty. *The teacher and modeler* role provided direct information and careful guidance and debriefing of the various roles students would be required to know and perform. As dialogue unfolded during literature circle sessions, I became more the *observer and monitor* of students' interactions with the stories and each other as a member of conversation with a question to clarify thinking (mine or theirs):

Teacher: "What's that word up there? PARVEL? (Paravel) [noticing Billy's incorrect spelling and lack of capitalization and wondering what he understood]

Billy: Parvel

Teacher: These are great words- ENGRAVED, PAVILION... [acknowledging vocabulary selection...]

Bob: Yeah, um SPECTERS...

Billy: (starts to speak and is overpowered by Thorton)

Thorton: A certain kind of magical creature is what we are guessing (suggests a group effort)

Billy: Yeah, it's a fairy tale creature [Thorton is talking at the same time.]

Thorton: Because she was...

Bob: Like they're living in a fairy tale land.

Thorton/Bob: sorta...

Teacher: What would you say? [to Chris who is silent] as I moved about the room while students met and talked (book two).

Providing time to meet and discuss books that might initially seem too complex or unfamiliar, such as the layered meaning in The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, with others was illuminating and exciting compared to conjuring the frustration of reading alone. Literature of the study related to one of the toughest of life's situations, on-going illness and death of a beloved family member experienced by Billy and his twin sister and felt by the class itself. Without time and thought-provoking literature, independent reading, resulting in single interpretation, itself, may never have happened. Reading and talking about books with others resulted in multiple interpretations shared by different readers in different ways (Johnson and Giorgis, 1999).

I was *instructor and modeler of role-taking protocol* utilizing cooperative learning strategies such as recorder, encourager, facilitator, or quiet captain-first in whole group presentations, then in small group work-first with familiar nursery rhymes and game format of *Rhyme Square* to the reading aloud and sharing of the first half of Ramona Quimby, Age 8 with students trying out roles individually and practicing discussion making. My gradual release of control helped nudge students forward in actively demonstrating their own skills, developing personal voices of authority, in utilizing cooperative learning strategies with roles and rules, with help asserted from me as needed either by student request or personal observation while guiding on the side. I say gradual release of control even though my expectations for student practice remained always pushing for "peer-led" group action. The moves I made were to let literature circles evolve, to let go early on after initial training with Ramona Quimby, Age 8, and let literature circles happen. Many days throughout the year, five literature circles ran smoothly, with the ever-present tape-recorder in the center of each circle capturing what I couldn't hear day to day, with no other adults (parent helpers are typically used in our building to assist with fifth

grade lit circles) present, except for peer-teacher or administrator observations on occasion. The tape recorder was also a reminder to students that what they had to say was important. At times they enjoyed listening to themselves. My continued support remained available, but with as little authoritative input as possible. An effort to maintain a friendly, non-evaluative stance towards student progress and understanding was made to elicit students' clarity of thinking and freedom to respond.

5.2. Conclusions

1. Taking on roles affected students' ability to initiate and carry on their own book discussions in literature circles in positive ways. Roles became the structured piece that allowed students to focus on a portion of text at a time, especially as newly emerging discussants reading challenging texts and preparing for discussion. Roles and reminders scripted within the Literature Circle Schedule provided memory cues to support discussion. Roles and accompanying rules emphasized the unique abilities of the individual to lead, to follow, to assert, to clarify, and share on a rotating basis. No one could shirk responsibility since the plan for discussion required everyone's preparation and participation.

2. Results over time suggest third graders displayed at least five types of interactions over time and across texts as they conducted conversations about books in literature circles: *Facilitating*, *Informing*, *Acknowledging*, *Soliciting*, and *Connecting*. (A sixth category, *Other*, was maintained to include variances unable to be placed in the above five categories). As was expected, the small, peer-led groups gave all students the opportunity to contribute their ideas to the group discussions. During discussions students contributed to the group construction of meaning whether by *Facilitating* (initiating a new topic, continuing a topic, or keeping discussion on track); *Informing* (providing facts, opinions, definitions, or clarifications);

Acknowledging (confirming, challenging, or ignoring the preceding utterance of another); *Soliciting* (asking questions, giving commands, or requesting); or *Connecting* (connecting experiences, attitudes, and knowledge to text) with each other's ideas, the text, to other texts, media, or their world experiences. Variances of interactions across texts and time contributed to my understanding about what was important to the students, asking how, as McCormack (2001, p. 41) did in Peer Talk in the Classroom, can we as educators know what is important to students unless we purposefully ask them or provide them with a context in which to investigate, examine, and probe their own questions.

3. Results over time suggest third graders utilized at least four types of responses while conducting conversations about books in literature circles: Personal, Descriptive, Evaluative, and Interpretive. Students' personal responses accounted for the most frequent and perhaps most important responses of all students progressing across time and texts. It makes sense that most students given time and opportunity to engage in reading and talking about shared, chosen books would respond with their own storied tales conjured up from the tales they read about. Their high frequency of personal engagement references and questions asked (questions were a required feature of literature circles) attest to the benefit of literature circle events. However, benefits were not born naturally overnight, but from consistent nurturing and nudging of students toward personal engagements with texts throughout the entire year. Likewise, interpretive responses gained momentum as book discussions evolved across texts and time, particularly for the low and average ability readers starting at zero or one interpretive response with book one, Ramona Quimby, Age 8 , and rising to heights 30 times greater in their fourth and final books, Wind in the Willows and My Side of the Mountain. The high ability reader's interpretive responses enhanced 87% from book one, Ramona Quimby Age 8 , to his fourth and final book,

My Side of the Mountain. The average-ability reader held more closely to lower-level descriptive responses across time and texts compared to the low and high ability reader. His serious demeanor, need for knowing facts and following the rules may account for the higher number of descriptive responses deemed narrational, or retelling descriptives about text. Interestingly, *evaluative* responses for the low ability reader increased across time and texts six times from book one to his fourth and final book, My Side of the Mountain. His laid back demeanor blended well with the opportunity (and growing ability) to express his opinion, state evocations of text or comment on the meaning of words or the writing itself.

4. The role of the teacher in shaping how students take on roles, interact and respond has been that of selected voice of authority to manager, guide on the side to actual participant during literature circle discussions. For instance, the *voice of authority* entered one discussion group reminding students to refer to their texts, keep them at hand, (the basis for discussion, i.e.) while roving the classroom:

Teacher: Use your books, fellas. You should be referring to your pages

(schedules and book references) and talking about why you picked them (the teacher referring to vocabulary words). Give some reasons. [Bob had just begun introducing Thorton as Word Wizard after finishing up his Discussion King role.]

Teacher: Gilbert! Now is not the time to work on your next literature circle

assignment! [While others were talking about their book, Gilbert was engaged in writing out new vocabulary words for the next day rather than participating.]

manager: Teacher: That's 11 pages. Is that enough for tonight? Then you can finish

looks like ...maybe not.. maybe the next time? ...Sit down and work on your jobs.

guide on the side:

Teacher: [following a fishbowling session during the training session with

Ramona]: Let's give them a hand! Clap clap clap! Let's go backwards to the passages Tommy picked. The last one I heard him say he chose because it was a scary part, and it really was a scary part. Can you imagine putting yourself in Ramona's shoes?

Student: I don't even want to think about it!

Teacher: What other ones did you think were most appropriate? Group on the outside, was there another passage...

participant- Teacher: I have a connection! Digestion means your food goes through you and you get nutrients out of it for your body. IN digestion is going to mean you need an alka seltzer...you ate too much and now your stomach hurts.

Billy: I did that once. I ate 5 hot dogs.

Teacher: Betty, how did you connect?

5. The instructional venue known as literature circles provided a way for third graders to practice and learn how to conduct their own book discussions using roles. Once the initial modeling phase ended, students were charged with rotating roles, choosing what to read in at least two out of four book selections throughout the year, and deciding how much to read for a given session. The mechanics of the literature circle discussion format became the organizational tool that supported students' exchange of ideas and equal opportunity to be leaders, word experts, passage experts, illustrators, and connectors to literature across time, texts, and abilities while transacting with text. Within the small group discussion settings and given voice and choice of what to read, students were free to exchange ideas in a safe and understanding environment with others reading the same book. The concept of equal opportunity

to be heard at a personal level of exchange enhanced each child's investment in reading based on time appropriated to read and prepare for discussions, and appreciation of literature, based on types and frequencies of responses and interactions of the study. Without a voice, connections may or may not have been heard, let alone made, at the personal level in the classroom setting. Students most often interacted as information givers indicating an understanding of story, followed by facilitative interactions that supported the ongoing nature of discussion and opportunity to provoke deeper levels of meaning about text through discussion.

6. The opportunity for all ability level students to participate in discussions about books became a reality in small group literature circle discussions.

Students of all ability levels participated in literature circle discussions about books because of the built in cooperative learning protocol. Increased support in the forms of reading aloud with another at school or at home; listening to tape-recorded chapters if needed; listening to taped literature circle sessions; creating extended literature circle activities of choice; or through the assistance of a personal aide if applicable, can enable the less-abled, especially, to react to the reading and thoughts of others, subsequently adding to their own interpretations. Key words, however, are opportunity and time to practice participation skills that enhance group understanding.

5.3. Discussion

The desire to hear all students' reactions to literature and provoke deeper levels of student engagement and subsequent enjoyment of story, became the impetus for this study. From its beginning, students were introduced to roles and rules of literature circles, were initiated into the practice of having an opinion about what they read, and immersed in discussing books to the

years' end. Now, marking how we did and what we learned as a classroom and teacher team, comes the end of the study, with implications for instruction and research described below.

The classroom community. Through the building process of establishing small, peer-led literacy groups of students engaged in collaborative talk about texts, using roles as an aid to practice and performance, a classroom community evolved in which the potential of all students was empowered by sharing personal thoughts, actions and feelings about books. Learning occurred as third graders engaged in small group discussions, reflected upon on their shared responses, questioned each other, and revised their thinking. It is the collaborative talk familiar to literature circle discussions that doors open to students' ability to see and hear inner mental processes that are the essence of literate behavior so that they can appropriate them and deploy them for themselves, suggests Wells and Chang-Wells (1992, p.173).

Changes in students' roles. Most significantly, as the learner actively engaged in more and more selecting and organizing of personal thinking about challenging, motivating texts, such as those selected in this study, change toward more independent, competent literacy skills occurred. The format for role taking presented in this study emphasized a variety of ways to talk about texts. What changed was the release of teacher or students' of high-ability authority to carry on small peer-led group discussions with less intervention and higher expectations. Overlapping and sharing of roles occurred as one student completed the thoughts of another or expressed authority out of role as conversations evolved over time. The evolution of role-taking from the rather lock-step, tentative beginnings of discussion making over Ramona Quimby's episodes of life as an eight-year-old to discussions about Mole and Ratty's exploits or Sam Gribble's adventure in the Adirondacks at year's end indicated progress toward an "I can-do" attitude delegating everyone to expert status in his own way, at his own level. What the least

abled reader could accomplish with help one day he could do alone another, suggested by Wertsch (1981, p.30 as cited in Wells & Chang-Wells, 1992, p. 57).

Changes in students' interactions. The collaborative nature of literature circles as contexts for growing literacy skills made optimal the learning process that evolved as students grappled with texts and built knowledge together. Interactions evolved from simply question-answer periods concerning text, baby-stepping into conversations about books, to lengthy periods of sustained discussion about aspects of text. As students were released to ownership of their own discussions and assured respect of that ownership, attributes of the types of interactions suggested by this study (facilitating, informing, acknowledging, and connecting) allowed third graders opportunity to share understanding (and ignorance) among one another, mutually supporting one another, and acting as catalysts to each other knowing and coming to know.

There is no quick-mix method to attaining high-level student interactions to report from this year-long study. The low, average, and high-ability students I selected from my third grade class to follow throughout the year as they read four different books in four completely different literature circles for each book (choice), have demonstrated not only increased ability to carry on book discussions in peer-led groups, but gains in reading comprehension based on standardized testing (CAT5) previously reported, as well. Literature circles are for the majority of students in my experience fun and rewarding for both the teacher to watch unfold and the students to enjoy. Examples of students' reflections about their experience with literature circles follow:

“Yes, (I enjoyed literature circles) because it was fun doing it.” (I learned) “Doing work is important.” (I enjoyed) “Reading the book (most).” (Least?): “There wasn’t.” (I think

our discussions were) “better” (compared to the beginning of the year.) “We discuse [sic] it more.” (My advice to new third graders): It’s fun.” (Billy’s Reflections, 5/06/02)

“I enjoyed this because it was fun and I like books. I learned some people have good ideas. I liked the dicushion (most).” (Least?): “Nothig. [sic] the least.” (I think our discussions were) “exsilent” (compared to the beginning of the year.) “Because we knew more about Lit Circles.” (My advice to new third graders): “It is very fun read a good book.” (Bob’s Reflections, 5/06/02)

“Yes, (I enjoyed literature circles), because I learned how to make discussion. I enjoyed discussion king (the most).” (Least?) [Thorton crossed out the term completely.] (I think our discussions were) “great” (compared to the beginning of the year.) “Because we just did yes or no questions.” (My advice to new third graders): “To always do their job well.” (Thorton’s Reflections, 5/06/02).

Thoughtful planning for literature circles should be the first step toward anticipating exciting student interactions with books. It means first knowing student interests and age appropriate reading material, then supplying a flood of books (noting the best available through various book clubs such as Scholastic or Troll, from teacher swaps, libraries and garage sales) in multiple copies for students to choose from. After choice comes voice. Knowing what the students must be able to do to open a book, browse, read, share what’s interesting, ask questions, to identify connections to the familiar, to talk about the author and what’s good about the writing, to support them in following through as they work to learn new roles and rules of participation, and to then holding steadfast in the belief that over time-whether it be days or

months, students will learn rules and roles of protocol for conducting their own literature circles, will mean celebrating students delighted very quickly with new-found authority to have a say. The way is not easy, but noisy, often confusing, draining, sometimes worrisome [i.e. someone didn't read correctly], yet fun-loving, kid-friendly (my personal experience) and motivating for kids to want to read more. An excerpt of Teacher Notes (4/30/02) may clarify the atmosphere and pace of action with the fourth round of literature circles this year:

“Students are happily in place around the room. They are conscious of being able to be heard and taped. The tape recorder plays an important role, I think, what they say has importance Good question to ask them. Gill is distracted in his group as I look over and he is swatting Rob on the head with the precious book he wanted so loudly as his first choice, Wind in the Willows . [His grandparents are flying in from Puerto Rico today, and he can hardly contain his enthusiasm.]

[In another corner] Sherry is pushing for the next word without stopping and I need to intervene.... Alice asserts “Page 22. I thought it [whiffling] was different.” “Wiffling” and it gets the discussion going. Did she look it up? Sherry says it reminded her of whiffle ball. Alice agreed. Sherry wants to know why Alice picked it. She repeated, “It was different”. ... [Ribsy Group]

[In another corner] “The four boys [including Billy and Thorton] are discussing Sam Gribble’s [My Side of the Mountain] first snowstorm in the wild. As they finish up, Thorton soon has to leave, “Hey...have to go to a viola lesson.” “In the storm?” “Yup!”

[In another nook] The Search for Delicious girl group appears happily engaged. Ellie’s older sister read the book, her mom said, as she came in with Bingo, pet dog of Star Student, Ellie, as students were finishing assigning books.

[In another corner] The Riverhounds [Ribsy, group 2] have not been able to meet because Lisa had no time to read. Students are at their seats preparing....

Changes in students' responses. The responses third graders of varying ability levels made to the texts and among each other within the literature circle format were most often personal statements. Similar findings are suggested by Cox (1994, as cited in Karolides, 1997, p. 31) who observed that children take a predominately aesthetic rather than efferent stance toward literature resulting in personal meaning as she analyzed the responses of the same group of children from kindergarten to grade three. She concluded that the efferent stances usually associated with a more traditional view of reading such as understanding print or explaining a story were always embedded in aesthetic response. Students of this study challenged the text by questioning, hypothesizing explanations, or drawing on personal experience to prove or disprove ideas. Personal statements indicated autobiographical digressions and personal engagements within the work of this study and were the most frequently ranked responses. Evaluative responses indicating statements about the evocation of the work, its construction or meaningfulness, ranked second in type of responses third graders made.

Changes promoted by the teacher. The shift from dominate to dynamic reader/teacher encompassed change more demanding than the traditional procedures involved with typical classroom reading instruction in mandated curriculum. Effort was made to create a classroom of independent readers and thinkers rather than fill-in-the-blank responders looking to the teacher for quick assessment, right or wrong. Guidance and active participation in literature circles were offered to allow students to reach beyond surface understanding in reading to reflect on their experiences with texts over time, to express their involvement or uncertainties (Karolides, 1997).

5.4. Instructional Implications

Reflecting on the findings of this study, several considerations for incorporating literature circles in the third grade classroom emerged. They are described as follows:

1. Use of roles as a way to expedite small group participation in literature circles emphasizes in a positive way students' personal investment in the learning process. Roles emphasize student growth in literacy and communicative skills that warrant focused attention and action with particular aspects of texts, yet rotate and incorporate all learners.

2. Student interaction discussing texts with others is enhanced during literature circle events as opportunity to voice opinions about books is guaranteed. Students have greater opportunity to voice an opinion about books when they are situated in small groups for discussion. The more they voice their opinions, the more engaged they become in the process of learning.

3. Students gain in their ability to respond to texts at various levels of understanding whether personally, in describing textual elements, interpreting, or offering evaluative comments as they progress through reading and sharing ideas about books in literature circles.

4. The role of the teacher as facilitator, guide-on-the side, reader, or silent observer is critical in affecting student growth in ability to take on various roles that implicate increased understanding and appreciation for literature through discussion with others in literature circles. Understanding how children will respond, at least based on this year-long study with third graders, means anticipating personal digressions as well as engagements, descriptive retellings about the text, recognizing what is meaningful to the child, or how he feels about the work (text) itself. With teacher guidance and support, an environment that flourishes with positive interactions with others about books, if not life in general, can be established. With continued

teacher guidance and support students can build a repertoire of responses to literature and literacy events that will enhance their appreciation and joy of sharing books for a lifetime.

5.5. Research Implications

1. An investigation examining the use of the arts to enhance depth and breadth of interpretation of literature should be considered. This study incorporated drawing as a way to extend meaning and encouraged open-ended extension activities such as puppet shows, games, posters, skits to present books. Information might be gleaned from research investigating students' literary interpretations stemming from the arts in a more finite way.

2. An investigation examining the impact of literature circles promoting nonfiction book interest should be considered. The overlay of fiction with nonfiction books as well as artifacts surrounding a topic would enhance learning through literature.

3. An investigation examining the impact of gender towards students' participation and motivation to take on roles, interact and respond during literature circle discussions should be considered. How is student participation affected by same-gender versus mixed-gender discussion groups at various grade levels?

4. An investigation examining the impact of small group literature circle discussions on students' engagement with multicultural literature to expand horizons and broaden world knowledge should be considered.

5. A quasi-experimental design is recommended to study the effects of literature circle participation in terms of student reading achievement, attitude, or motivation to read compared to non-participants of the same grade-level reading the same texts.

6. An investigation examining the impact literature discussion groups

in middle school is recommended for increasing students' social sensitivity, personal validity, goal setting, to provide a broad range of view and temperaments as young adolescents (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 173-174, 192).

7. An investigation examining students' reactions to their taped (audio/video) book discussions might shed new meaning to what it means to interact and respond as a literary critic of one's own.

8. An investigation examining students' conducting literature circles discussions without specific roles, rather journaling and jotting ideas, questions words, pictures, or gathering artifacts to discuss the work, as a means of personal response is suggested. How would the impact of such a years' work compare with the findings of the previous study in terms of renaming roles (as they might evolve), interactions (would they be similar), and responses? What would the role of the teacher be in this study? Would it change drastically? How would data be gathered and recorded?

APPENDIX A

LITERATURE CIRCLE SCHEDULE

Name: _____

My Literature Circle Schedule

by: _____



Chapters ____ through ____

My Job: _____



Date due: _____

Chapters ____ through ____

My Job: _____

Date due: _____

Chapters ____ through ____

My Job: _____

Date due: _____

Chapters ____ through ____

My Job: _____

Date due: _____

Chapters ____ through ____

My Job: _____

Date due: _____



Discussion King



Name: _____

Book: _____

Assignment: CHAPTERS ____ AND ____

You are the Discussion Director. Your job is to write down good questions that you think your group would want to talk about.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Remember some words that are used to begin questions are: What, Why, Where, When, Who, How, If.

Word Wizard



Name: _____

Book: _____

Assignment: CHAPTERS ____ AND ____

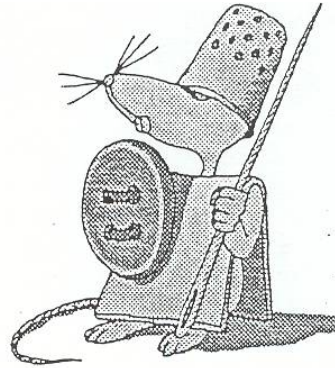
You are the Word Finder. Your job is to look for special words in the story. Words that are:

- new
- different
- strange
- funny
- interesting
- important
- hard

When you find a word that you want to talk about write it down here.

Word	Page	Why I picked it
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Passage Master



Name: _____

Book: _____

Assignment: CHAPTERS ____ AND ____

You are the Passage Picker. Your job is to pick parts of the story that you want to read aloud to your group. These can be:

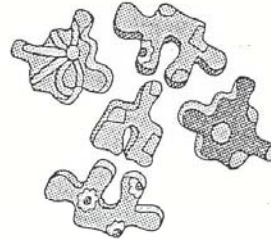
- a good part
- a funny part
- a scary part
- an interesting part
- some good writing
- a good description

Be sure to mark the parts you want to share with a piece of paper or a bookmark. You should write them on this sheet of paper too.

Parts to read out loud:

Page	Paragraph	Why I liked it
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Royal Connector



Name: _____

Book: _____

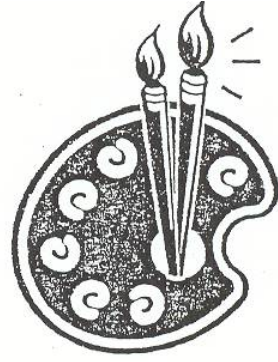
Assignment: CHAPTERS ____ AND ____

You are the Connector. Your job is to find connections between the book and the world outside. This means connecting the reading to:

- your own life
- happenings at school or in the neighborhood
- similar events at other times and places
- other people or problems
- other books or stories
- other writings on the same topics
- other writings by the same author

Some connections I found between this reading and other people, places, events, authors . . .

Masterpiece Maker



Name: _____

Book: _____

Assignment: CHAPTERS ____ AND ____

You are the Artful Artist. Your job is to draw anything about the story that you liked:

- a character
- the setting
- a problem
- an exciting part
- a surprise
- a prediction of what will happen next
- anything else

Draw any kind of drawing or picture you like.

When your group meets, don't tell what your drawing is. Let them guess and talk about it first. Then you can tell about it.

APPENDIX B

LETTERS OF CONSENT



University of Pittsburgh
Institutional Review Board

Exempt and Expedited Reviews
Christopher M. Ryan, Ph.D., Vice Chair

3500 Fifth Avenue
Suite 105
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Phone: 412.383.1480
Fax: 412.383.1146
e-mail: irbexempt@msx.upmc.edu

TO: M. Marlene Morrow

FROM: Christopher M. Ryan, Ph.D., Vice Chair *Chris*

DATE: June 14, 2004

PROTOCOL: A One-Year Study Implementing Peer-Led Literature Circles in a Third Grade Classroom

IRB Number: 0405754

The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed by the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board. Based on the information provided in the IRB protocol, this project meets all the necessary criteria for an exemption, and is hereby designated as "exempt" under section 45 CFR 46.101(b)(1).

The regulations of the University of Pittsburgh IRB require that exempt protocols be re-reviewed every three years. If you wish to continue the research after that time, a new application must be submitted.

- If any modifications are made to this project, please submit an 'exempt modification' form to the IRB.
- Please advise the IRB when your project has been completed so that it may be officially terminated in the IRB database.
- This research study may be audited by the University of Pittsburgh Research Conduct and Compliance Office.

Approval Date: 06/14/2004
Renewal Date: 06/14/2007

CR:ky

Pine-Richland



School District

www.pinerichland.org

Administrative Offices

702 Warrendale Road
Gibsonia • PA 15044
(724) 625-7773
Fax: (724) 625-1490

Special Education Office

School Psychologists
Fax: (724) 625-4460

Pine-Richland High School

700 Warrendale Road
Gibsonia • PA 15044
(724) 625-4444
Fax: (724) 625-4640

Pine-Richland Middle School

100 Logan Road
Gibsonia • PA 15044
(724) 625-3111
Fax: (724) 625-3144

Hance Elementary School

5518 Molnar Drive
Gibsonia • PA 15044
(724) 443-1541
Fax: (724) 443-1290

Richland Elementary School

3811 Bakerstown Road
Gibsonia • PA 15044
(724) 443-1558
Fax: (724) 443-2180

Wexford Elementary School

250 Brown Road
Wexford • PA 15090
(724) 935-4631
Fax: (724) 935-3733

Pine-Richland School District
Office of the Superintendent
James C. Manley Ph.D.
Superintendent
May 19, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

I approve and support Mrs. Morrow's study involving third grade students leading their own discussions about books in small groups known as "literature circles" while taking on roles. My understanding is that students' participation in literature circles will be analyzed in terms of "roles taken, interactions, and responses" across time to indicate any growth or change in each of the three areas. The process of students talking and sharing ideas about books exemplifies best classroom reading practice for producing independent readers and thinkers. The study will be in partial fulfillment of a Doctor of Education degree in Reading from the University of Pittsburgh.

Sincerely,

James C. Manley Ph.D.

Pine-Richland



School District

www.pinerichland.org

Administrative Offices

702 Warrendale Road
Gibsonia • PA 15044
(724) 625-7773
Fax: (724) 625-1490

Special Education Office

School Psychologists
Fax: (724) 625-4460

Pine-Richland High School

700 Warrendale Road
Gibsonia • PA 15044
(724) 625-4444
Fax: (724) 625-4640

Pine-Richland Middle School

100 Logan Road
Gibsonia • PA 15044
(724) 625-3111
Fax: (724) 625-3144

Hance Elementary School

5518 Molnar Drive
Gibsonia • PA 15044
(724) 443-1541
Fax: (724) 443-1290

Richland Elementary School

3811 Bakerstown Road
Gibsonia • PA 15044
(724) 443-1558
Fax: (724) 443-2180

Wexford Elementary School

250 Brown Road
Wexford • PA 15090
(724) 935-4631
Fax: (724) 935-3733

Wexford Elementary School

Date

Dear Parents,

As part of professional development at Pine-Richland School District and doctoral work at the University of Pittsburgh, I am proposing a study of children conducting peer-led book discussion groups known as "literature circles". I will focus on three things in the study: the roles students take during discussions, the interactions that ensue, and the responses students make. The roles include discussion leader, a vocabulary expert, a passage summarizer, a connector of ideas, and an artist.

Results of the study will be included as partial fulfillment of a Doctor of Education degree. It would be helpful to include drawings and direct quotes from children's work in this report. (Of course, individual students or their work would not be identified by real names. Audio taping will be used to collect the data for analysis and will remain confidential.)

To give permission for use of examples of your child's work, please complete the form below and return it to school with your child. If you have any questions, please contact me at school (724-935-4631) or at home (734-443-0071).

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Marlene Morrow

Mrs. Marlene Morrow

Child's Name _____

I consent to the use of examples of my child's work in reports of a study of response to literature through literature circles discussions conducted by Marlene Morrow at Wexford Elementary School.

Parent's signature _____

Date _____

cc: Dr. James Manley
Dr. Robert Johnson
Mrs. Judi Boren
Mrs. Yvonne Hawkins

APPENDIX C

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Student Interview Questions

Introduction

There are three things I'd like to ask you about the literature circle discussions we had last year: 1) *the roles* you took on in the discussions, 2) *the interactions* you had with your classmates in the discussions, and 3) *your responses* to the books and others in the discussions. Your opinions are very important to understand what goes on in third grade literature circles. Thank you for your careful thinking and honest remarks.

Roles In literature circle discussions we took on roles such as Discussion King, Word Wizard, Passage Master, Masterpiece Maker, and Royal Connector. (set of labeled role cards will assist student responses).

1. Were the roles helpful? (Or would you choose to not have them at all?) If so, how? If not, why?
2. How do you feel taking on different roles? Why did you feel that/those ways?
3. Do your feelings change from role to role? If so, how? If not, why do you think so?
4. What would have made the roles easier to do?

Interactions Interactions were the sharing of ideas and feelings—and listening to the ideas and feelings of others about the books in our literature circles.

1. What kinds of interactions helped you to talk about and listen to others talk about books?
2. What kinds of interactions were not helpful?
3. What kinds of interactions helped you to learn and appreciate more about the literature? Which did not?

Responses were the personal feelings and reactions you had from reading the books.

1. How did you respond to the literature? Was it different than how you responded to literature in previous grades/classes? Or was it the same?

APPENDIX D

STUDENT LITERATURE CIRCLE REFLECTIONS

LITERATURE CIRCLE REFLECTION

Name _____ Date _____

1. Did you enjoy Literature Circles? Why?

2. What did you enjoy most?

Least?

3. Did you enjoy Ramona Quimby, Age 8? Why?

4. What did you learn from Literature Circles?

Name _____ Date _____

Literature Circle Reflection

This year in third grade we began literature circles. It's now the end of the year and I would like to know what you think. Look at the first reflection. How have you changed your thinking since then? What have you learned? Would you change anything? Would you like to do more literature circles next year? Thank you for your responses.

1. Did you enjoy Literature Circles? Why? (use the back if you need more space)

Yes because it was a good book
and there were fun projects.

2. What did you enjoy most?

Doing projects.

Least? Why?

It was fun, interesting, and
exciting.

3. What did you learn from Literature Circles?

There was lots of connecting
and tons of Discoction and
words.

4. Did you enjoy the books you read in literature circles? List them and discuss what you liked or didn't like. You may rank them as 1,2,3,4 (best to least).

(1) I like risbey. and
stone fox 1-4

(2) I like mouse
and the motor cyle 4-3

(3) romona quimby
11-4

(4) stone Fox
4-2

5. I think our discussions were worse
compared to the beginning of the year.
Explain.

some people were act silly,
and they were stopping the tape

6. How much did you participate in the discussions? (Circle one below)
About the right amount too much some not enough not at all

7. Compared to the beginning of the year, how have you changed during literature circle participation?

I had more disscocion,
and more questions

8. How did the literature circle schedules help you? (or not?) Explain.

Well, kind of.

Should we use them again next year? Yes

Would you change anything about them? Explain.

No because they a good
the way they are.

9. Should we do literature circles again next year?

Yes

10. What advice would you give new third graders about literature circles?

When you are word
wizard, read the book pick the
words as you go.

APPENDIX E

STUDENT LITERATURE CIRCLE EVALUATION SAMPLE



Literature Circle Evaluation

Name & Number: Amanda 7# Date: 11-2-01

1. How much did you participate in the discussion today?

(circle one below)

About the right amount too much not enough not at all

2. What was the most important point you made during the discussion?

When I had this question: Are the Quimby family going to abroad? Are they why or why not?



3. What was the most important idea expressed by someone else during the discussion? (tell who it was & what they said.)



When someone had a lot of details and a lot of explaining.

4. What group strategies were you good at?

Participating appropriately ☐

Listening carefully ☐

Staying on the topic ☒

Encouraging others ☒

Making good eye contact ☒

Respecting other's opinions ☐

Summarizing what you think ☐

Using a 6-inch voice ☐



5. What could your group do to improve next time?

lowering your voices and letting people disagree and not be silly and pay attention.

APPENDIX F

BILLY'S UTTERANCE CHART FOR THREE AREAS OF ANALYSIS -SAMPLE

Billy's Utterance Chart of Three Areas of Analysis
(Sample)

Ramona Quimby Utterances	Role	Interactions	Utterances	Responses	Utterances
(Okay/The first connection I did/was My mom sometimes calls me a nuisance for some reason.) p. 6	Royal Connector	Facilitate Facilitate Connect	1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal	1 1 1
(Yeah/ It's kinda similar/, but not just like Ramona). p. 6	Royal Connector	Acknowledge Connect Connect	1 1 1	Personal Descriptive Descriptive	1 1 1
(And the second/ was I sometimes throw up in the neighborhood.) p. 6	Royal Connector	Facilitate Connect	1 1	Personal Personal	1 1
(Once I did it two times in a row.) p.6	Royal Connector	Connect	1	Personal	1
(It's really knda disgusting.)p. 6	Royal Connector	Connect	1	Personal	1
(And the third one I did / was my mom is sometimes in a hurry. / She forgot her lunch once.) p.6	Royal Connector	Facilitate Connect Connect	1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal	1 1 1
(That was <i>Supernuisance</i> ./) p. 6	Royal Connector	Inform	1	Descriptive	1
(Turn it off?/ I'll go ask her.) p. 6	Royal Connector	Solicit Facilitate	1 1	Personal Personal	1 1
(Okay/ my first one/ is p. 128) p.10	Passage Master	Facilitate Facilitate Facilitate	1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal	1 1 1
(Ramona's eyes blurry/blurred. Her family had all gone off and left her when she was sick. She blinked away the tears and discovered on her bedside table was a cartoon her father had drawn for her.) / I picked it/ because it sounded like good description./ The second one/was on 141...) p. 10	Passage Master	Inform Inform Inform Facilitate Facilitate	1 1 1 1 1	Personal Personal Evaluative Personal Personal	1 1 1 1 1

p. –Indicates page of original transcript. ()- Indicates speaker's words. / - Indicates utterance.

APPENDIX G

BOB'S UTTERANCE CHART FOR THREE AREAS OF ANALYSIS -SAMPLE

Bob's Utterance Chart for Three Areas of Analysis
(sample)

Ramona Quimby, Utterances	Roles	Interactions	Utterances	Responses	Utterances
(Why were they holding their nose?/ Explain.) p. 1	Discussion King	Solicit Solicit	1 1	Personal Personal	1 1
(What happened in the chapter?) p. 1	Discussion King	Solicit	1	Personal	1
(Anybody can do it/, okay/ Betty?) p. 1	Discussion King	Facilitate Facilitate Facilitate	1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal	1 1 1
(How did Ramona's mom get to school?/) p.1	Discussion King	Solicit	1	Personal	1
(Explain/) p.1	Discussion King	Solicit	1	Personal	1
(I have two jobs./ My connection is/ my connections are/ One connection to my life/ I got sick/ and my mom took care of me./ My mom took care of me.) p. 11	Royal Connector	Facilitate Facilitate Facilitate Facilitate Connect Connect Connect	1 1 1 1 1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal Personal Personal Personal Personal	1 1 1 1 1 1 1
(Ah/ <i>inaudible</i> , my pictures/ <i>inaudible</i> my pictures.) p. 11.	Masterpiece Maker	Facilitate Connect Connect	1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal	1 1 1
Okay/ my job is..../my first paragraph is/ on p. 150/ . I have to read it, /don't I?) p. 13	Passage Master	Facilitate Facilitate Facilitate Facilitate Inform Solicit	1 1 1 1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal Personal Personal Personal	1 1 1 1 1 1

p.- Indicates page of original transcript. () Indicates speaker's words. / Indicates utterance.

APPENDIX H

THORTON'S UTTERANCE CHART FOR THREE AREAS OF ANALYSIS-SAMPLE

Thorton's Utterance Chart for Three Areas of Analysis
Sample

Ramona Quimby Utterances	Roles	Interactions	Utterances	Responses	Utterances
(I'm Word Wizard/ and I picked NUISANCE/ on page 110/ because it was new) p. 1	Word Wizard	Facilitate Inform Facilitate Inform	1 1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal Evaluative	1 1 1 1
(My next word/ was DAWDLE/ on page 110./ And I picked it / because it was new, too.) p. 1	Word Wizard	Facilitate Inform Facilitate Facilitate Inform	1 1 1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal Personal Personal	1 1 1 1 1
(The next one/ was THROB/ and it's on page 111.) p. 1	Word Wizard	Facilitate Inform Inform	1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal	1 1 1
(And then / PLODDED./ I picked it / because it was new/ and it's on page 113.) p. 1.	Word Wizard	Facilitate Inform Facilitate Inform Facilitate	1 1 1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal Evaluative Personal	1 1 1 1 1
<u>Lion, Witch, Wardrobe</u>					
(Hi./ I'm Thorton/ and I'm Word Wizard./ My word/ is PRESENTLY/ on page 56.) p. 8.	Word Wizard	Facilitate Facilitate Facilitate Facilitate Inform Facilitate	1 1 1 1 1 1	Personal Personal Personal Personal Personal Personal	1 1 1 1 1 1

p. Indicates page of original transcript. ()- Indicates speaker's words. / -Indicates utterances.

APPENDIX I

SAMPLE COMMENTS FOR CODING INTERACTIONS

Sample Comments for Coding Interactions

Acknowledging- Confirmation, challenge, or ignoring of the preceding utterance of another.

Confirm: S1: He's gonna have to go to an orphanage.
S2: Yeah, an orphanage

Challenge: S1: Their mom doesn't make that much money maybe at work.
She makes just enough to buy stuff at the store.
S2: Actually, Ramona's mom does get a lot, enough money but,
but, her dad is taking the art lessons so he's using up money
that they um get working.

Ignore: Disregard of a preceding request for a turn to talk
S1: Like I did a flip once, then I did a flip once, then I did a dive
S2: It'd be funny if you did a flip then a 360 dive
S1: That'd be cool.
S3: Once my dad, he grabbed me...*
S2: There's a diving board here, here, and here. Look! There's a
diving board here, here and here.
S3: Once my dad...*
S2: Jump, jump, jump, front flip twice...dive, that'd be cool!
S1: Yeah
S3: Once my dad...*
S1: I'd like to see that
S2: What?
S1: I'd like to see that.
S2: That'd be cool.

Facilitative- Initiating a new topic, continuing a topic, or showing discussion maintenance

Initiating a new topic: Introduction of a change in discussion topic.
S1: My third question is, "Why do you think Ramona's mom would
lose her job?"

Continuing a topic: Commenting that adds to the current topic.
S1: Sometimes I almost miss my bus.
S2: I always miss my bus.
S1: Humph
S2: I like missing the bus cause I'd rather be in a comfortable seat,
inaudible), AND country music.

Discussion maintenance: Commenting that keeps the conversation on track.

"We're going over the same exact speech again."
"Okay, I think that's good."

Informative- Providing facts, opinions, and definitions, reporting..

Fact: "She had it (the book report) based on a commercial, a cat food commercial."

Opinion: "And he thought they were a nice family."

Definition: "A receptionist is someone who works in an office, answers the phone."

Clarification: "She didn't really like sleepovers cause she had to sleep on the
floor and it said at the end of the chapter she didn't really want to
but she wanted to see her friends and stay over night."

Solicitation- All questions, commands and requests

Question: Do you know what it means?

Command: Read. Read.

Request: S1: He might not have enough money anywhere to live.
S2: And, REALLY, really, they will think Willy's not around
any more to pay the bill IF Grandfather dies.
S3: Still, if he DOES pay the bills, *what's gonna pay the other bills that come later?*

Connective: Connecting experiences, attitudes, and knowledge to text.
"One connection is I did book reports this year. We all did."

Other: Utterances such as sound effects, chuckling, or back channels (uh, um), word play, voice changing

APPENDIX J

SAMPLE COMMENTS FOR CODING RESPONSES

Sample Comments for Coding Responses

Personal: Autobiographical digression or personal engagement with the work.

Autobiographical digression- *The first connection I did was my mom sometimes calls me a nuisance.*

Personal engagement with the work- *Okay, my first one (word/passage) is on page 128.*

“Ramona considered his answer. She had always looked upon commercials as entertainment, but now she thought about some of her favorites.” [reading text portions].

Descriptive: Narrational, retelling descriptives about the text.

Narrational- *That was “Supernuisance” [referring to the chapter].*

Retelling descriptives about the text- *Yeah. It’s kinda similar, but not just like Ramona. “I’m just saying, I think it’s later on Toad says, “Let me steer the barge and she says, ‘No!’”*

Evaluative: The evocativeness of the work, about the construction of the work or the meaningfulness of the work.

“I picked it because it sounded like a good description.”
““Where there’s a will there’s a way”... and I picked it because it was important to the story.”

Interpretive: Interpretive statements of parts of the work, or the whole work.

“It was kinda a funny name.”
[Response to whether Badger was a bully] *“He is a little mean to Toad. He was mean to Toad and stuff.”*
“It was like the other way around. Rat was kinda mean to Mole before because he didn’t want to go see Badger, because he was afraid of him.”

“...Badger looked at Toad very suspiciously.” And it means sly, mysteriously kinda.

APPENDIX K

PORTION OF TRANSCRIPT FROM RAMONA QUIMBY AGE 8

Froggies: Ramona Quimby Age, 8 10/31/01 Ch. 6-9 (Bob, Billy, Betty, Lucy)

Bob: My first question is Why were they holding their nose? Explain

Betty: because Ramona threw up and the teacher said hold your nose if you want to cause usually barf smells.

Bob: What happened in the chapter? Explain. [ANYBODY CAN DO IT, OK BETTY?]

Lucy: she threw up and

Bob: She threw up and

Bob: How did Ramona's mom get to school?

Lucy: She took a taxi

Bob: [after the fact] explain

Lucy: the car broke down

Billy: and then she had to take a taxi to school to pick her up.

/Role change/

Betty: Okay. My word is forefingers. Forefingers. I picked it because it was different and my second word is explode and I picked it because it was funny. And I picked typewriter because it was interesting. And I picked excused/ exhausted [*exhausted because it was different- but cut off by Zach manning the tape recorder.*] *NO DISCUSSION OR READING SENTENCES, PAGE NOS GIVEN- WRITTEN ON SCHEDULE, THOUGH.*

Role change

Bob: Okay, who has passage master NO!! Wait, is it royal connector? Wait, yah, yah, passage master, you.

Lucy: she felt comfortable [com fert a fert a ble] ?

Bob: [continues to stop and start the tape] Are you passage master?

Lucy: Yeah

Bob: It's supposed to be a paragraph

Teacher: You're on pg. 109 then[looking at schedule] look it up!...(encouragingly) waiting: Have you finished your discussion already?

Unison: Yep

Teacher: You did?

Bob: We had questions and that.

Teacher: Everyone responded?

Uh huh.

Betty: No, Billy you had yours...

Billy: interrupts with: Yeah, I responded about how she got to school

Bob: yeah

Billy: and ah

Bob: and what's happening in the chapter, why they were holding their nose, we did that And then Betty did hers.

Teacher: What was your job Betty?

Betty: Word Wizard

Teacher: Could you all find the words in the chapter? Did you look them up like we did in the fishbowl? Did you do that? Will you do that now? [directing someone to sit on the floor with everyone else]

APPENDIX L

PORTION OF TRANSCRIPT FROM THE LION THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

The Lion , the Witch and the Wardrobe, C.S. Lewis (Book 1 of *The Chronicles of Narnia*)

Bob, Thorton, Billy, Ned

RE: 1/9/02

Chapter 1 Lucy Looks into the Wardrobe

Thorton: I'm Discussion King for today and here's my first question: What exactly happened so far?

Bob: well um

Billy: It's kind of like um

Bob: BILLY! Well like um there's three kids that area like um, ...yeah, 4 kids in this like mansion type thing. One person, Lucy, she goes into a wardrobe with coats and then she's outside in the snow. She sees this weird-looking person, creature,

Thorton: chuckles, ha ha

Bob: with goat feet, a regular body, a beard, an umbrella, and 2 boxes in his hands and he has a tail and arms.

(whispers- indicating give some input)

Ned- story is a very good story-and I like it a lot

Billy: I do.

Ned: (whispering to Thorton, next question...)

Thorton: (questions for...)? What was Lucy doing when she found out about the wardrobe?

Bob: she wanted to go:

Ned: She found like,

Billy: she went into this room and

Ned: she um, found, she put it on . No, she didn't put it on. She found this closet behind the wardrobe and there were these...and she kept walking through a bunch of coats. Er...ah

Bob: Okay, I'll talk. See, there's a wardrobe. She walks through like 2 rows of coats, 2 like 3 racks of coats and finally she reaches her hand out to see if it's the end and she feels something crunchy. But there's no end to it, but then she's outside.

Billy: Yeah.

Thorton: Question 3 is, Do you think the other kids will believe Lucy? (Because she is the youngest? He has written in the schedule)

Ned: umm ah, no

Billy: no

Bob: no

Thorton: why do you think so?

Bob: Well because, no, because um she's really, she's the youngest and she's probably inaudible

Thorton: she has like the biggest imagination

Bob: yeah

Ned: yeah

Billy: Yeah, like a kid my [does not continue]

[not rushing here at all]

Thorton: um...

APPENDIX M

PORTION OF TRANSCRIPT FROM STONE FOX

Re: March 19, 2002 Jiminey Crickets Team, Tape 1, Side A [Thorton, Bob, Alicia, Kaya]
(Chapters 3 and 4) of Stone Fox
In Unison: Today is March 19, 2002...

ROLE-CHANGE

Bob: And I'm Discussion King.

Alicia: We all are.

Thorton: And everybody's discussion king.

Bob: And my first question is "Would you want to grow up would you want to grow potatoes / potatoes and have Search light for a pet? Explain.

Alicia: No!

Thorton: Um...the potatoes, the potatoes

[someone is talking at the same time... "die"?]

Thorton: I wouldn't exactly love because it would be so much labor and all day

Other: Yeah,

Thorton: just working, but Searchlight would be okay cause Searchlight seems like a smart dog. It'd be fun ta go on the sled and stuff.

Bob: Okay.

Alicia: And because, um.....Searchlight would be a nice dog.

Thorton: It would like take care of you

Alicia: Maybe She would pull your sled.

Thorton: Yeah, She would like she would like pull you in your sled like up a hill

Alicia: Yeah, she'd

Thorton: [speech overlapped] like if you were going sled riding

Alicia: Yeah, She could em, pick the potatoes that are rotten and throw them on the ground.

Thorton: umm

Bob: Maybe eat them

Thorton: Ah, I don't think [interrupted by Bob]

Bob: Just kidding! [inaudible]--- Bob says, "Yeah, it is" (but I do not know what he means)

Thorton: ah, nah,.

Bob: Yeah it is. [not sure what he is referring to here]

Thorton: Okay, Next question?

Bob: Oh! Next question. Do you think grandfather will die? Explain

Alicia: No

Thorton: [talking at the same time] ah,

????: "yeah" [who said that?]

[interrupted by Alicia] I think probably....

Bob?: (perhaps) breathes a sigh... and tries to say "probably"...

Alicia: I think probably but is drowned out by Thorton.

Thorton prevails: I don't think so cause he's like one of the main characters and main characters usually don't die. (giggles)...inaudible....

Bob: Well, it could get like to the end and die at like the last chapter.

Thorton: interrupts: Well, *The Finish Line* pretty much says he'll be in a dog race.

Bob: overlaps the two with "Ah," [light bulb thought thanks to Thorton]

APPENDIX N

PORTION OF TRANSCRIPT FROM WIND IN THE WILLOWS

Apr. 30, 2002 Gill, Ben, Alan, Bob Wind in the Willows Ch. 1

1. My name is Gill, and I am Ben, I am Bob and I am Alan.
2. Alex says, "First we will start off with Gill as DK."
3. Gill: DK- My first question is : Who went to Mole's house?
4. Alan: Well, actually Mole went to Rat's house.
5. Bob: Yeah,
- 6 Gill: Yeah
7. Bob: That's what I mean... Mole went to Rat's house for a picnic or something?
/overlapped by Ben who I can't understand. {no one else seems to be listening to him}
8. Alan: yeah
9. Ben: Yeah: inaudible
10. Alan: And, he just got out of his hole to have a nice spring.
11. Bob: spring, yeah....spring
12. Gill: My second question is, "Who was picking up with a laugh?"
13. Bob: ah, I forget....ah Mole.
14. Alan: Was that Toad or Badger?
15. Bob: Nah...
16. Ben: Okay
17. Alan: Okay, I think it was, wasn't it Mole picking up with a laugh?
18. Gill: No, It was Rat
19. Bob: Yeah oh, yeah. It was Rat. Rat or Mole because they're....
20. Gill: yeah, it was rat, though
21. Alan. Something funny happened.
22. Bob: Yeah
23. Alan: It was like...
24. Gill: I forgot what happened.
25. Alan: I'll look it up. Maybe it's in the next chapter.
26. Gill: No, it's in the same chapter
27. Ben: No, it's in the chapter number one!
28. Bob: ah,
29. Alan: It was rat, it was rat. Um
30. Bob. It was rat because
31. Alan: Because mole
32. Alan: asked why don't we stay out here all day. Then he was like HEEEE heee.
33. Bob: yeah.
34. Alan: Then he said like well we have to go ashore because we have a picnic lunch
everyday.
35. Bob: yah
36. Alan: Okay, third question?
37. Gill: Who said it was too much at the picnic?
38. Ben: Mole
39. Bob: Yeah
40. Bob: Mole they had too much food. / Benny is inaudible talking at the same time as
41. Ben: Yeah, they didn't have any time to breathe. And everyone else said that was too little.

APPENDIX O

PORTION OF TRANSCRIPT FROM MY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN

My Side of the Mountain April 30, 2002 Billy, Thorton, Dan, Jon
April 30- May 23, 2002 Tape 1

Billy: Today is April 30. 2002. and I'm Discussion King. And my first question was

"Why was he [Sam] trying to keep the fire low?" until 9:00 in the morning, he's like trying to keep it really low...

Thorton: Maybe so if there's any other one there it doesn't catch fire, get his bed on fire, like spread all over where he lives.

Jon: Maybe

Thorton: Jist a thought

Billy: Yeah, might be a thought

Thorton: True

Billy: It might be near some straw

Thorton: Might be right beside it. I think that's what it said in the book. Right beside it.

Jon: It could have been windy. You know how we talked about wind... (*Flames and Rebirth-one of our last anthology stories- some inaudible*)

Thorton: That's true.

Jon: Then it could catch onto his coat

Thorton: Or something like that. Onto his bed, coat, something like that. Maybe it could get to the roots of the tree somehow. That would be ____ic

Billy: Bad person

Thorton: Then the tree falls over, then there's a big hole in the ground. Billy, next question?

Dan: Wait, I haven't said anything. Maybe it might be maybe it might

Thorton: butts in: Maybe he'll keep it low then have it in the morning. Cause he would want to keep it high if he wanted to still have it in the morning.

Dan: Well

Thorton: butts in: Maybe

Dan: Maybe he keeps it low

Thorton: [interrupts] : Maybe he'll keep it low while he fishes so whenever he's fishing it won't catch everything on fire. And then, um, whenever he comes back, he's gonna get it get a little higher and cook his fish.

Thorton: True

Dan: Or maybe, maybe, maybe...it can't jump up and burn the fish

Thorton: Ummm

Billy: ya don't want to burn the fish

Thorton: Yeah, but I don't think – did it say he was cooking fish at that time? .

Dan: I don't remember...

Jon: Here, I'll check. I'm not sure. I'll check. Ch. 3?

Thorton: See, I don't think it did. I don't remember it saying that. Wait, I'll check. Maybe it was on the side of the walls where he had put the piles of wood.

? I don't see it.

Thorton: wait, "The fire smoldered. Oh, it says it doesn't take much fire to warm you in May.

Billy: Oh

Jon: Oh,oh, OK

.

APPENDIX P

BILLY'S INTERACTIONS BY CATEGORY ACROSS 4 TEXTS

Billy's Interactions by Category Across 4 Texts

Billy-Low	Facilitate	Solicit	Inform	Acknowledge.	Connect	Other	Total
DK: RQ	9.0 (1)	63.6 (7)	9.0 (1)	18.2 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5.6 (11)
DK: LWW	25.0 (5)	20.0 (4)	25.0 (5)	30.0 (6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	10.2 (20)
DK: SF	10.9 (11)	14.9 (15)	42.6 (43)	27.7 (28)	2.0 (2)	2.0 (2)	51.5 (101)
DK: MSMT	9.2 (6)	13.8 (9)	32.3 (21)	18.5 (12)	23.1 (15)	3.1 (2)	64.0 (65)
DK: Total	11.7 (23)	17.3 (35)	35.7 (70)	24.5 (48)	8.7 (17)	2.0 (4)	22.7 (197)
WW: RQ	48 (12)	0	2.2 (11)	4.0 (1)	0 (0)	4.0 (1)	9.3 (25)
WW: LWW	20.7 (24)	50.9 (59)	19.8 (23)	7.8 (9)	0 (0)	.9 (1)	21.9 116
WW: SF	34.1 (28)	1.2 (1)	53.7 (44)	9.8 (8)	1.2 (1)	0 (0)	30.9 (82)
WW: MSMT	25.5 (26)	4.8 (5)	55.9 (57)	6.7 (7)	0 (0)	6.7 (7)	37.9 (102)
WW: Total	27.7 (90)	20.0 (65)	41.5 (135)	7.7 (25)	.31 (1)	2.9 (9)	37.5 (325)
PM: RQ	43.3 (13)	3.3 (1)	46.7 (14)	6.7 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	12.3 (30)
PM: LWW	50 (35)	0 (0)	41.4 (29)	2.9 (2)	1.4 (1)	4.3 (3)	25.5 (70)
PM: SF	36.2 (17)	2.1 (1)	51.1 (24)	6.4 (3)	4.3 (2)	0 (0)	17.2 (47)
PM: MSMT	37.5 (36)	2.1 (2)	54.2 (52)	4.2 (4)	1.0 (1)	1.0 (1)	35.0 (96)
PM: Total	36.9 (101)	1.5 (4)	43.4 (119)	4.0 (11)	1.5 (4)	1.5 (4)	28.1 (243)
RC: RQ	30.8 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7.7 (1)	61.5 (8)	0 (0)	14.9 (13)
RC: LWW	20.0 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	80.0 (4)	0 (0)	10.3 (9)
RC: SF	14.3 (3)	4.8 (1)	14.3 (3)	0 (0)	66.7 (14)	0 (0)	24.1 (21)
RC: MSMT	6.8 (3)	2.3 (1)	0 (0)	13.6 (6)	65.9 (29)	11.4 (5)	50.6 (44)
RC: Total	13.3 (11)	2.4 (2)	3.6 (3)	8.4 (7)	66.3 (55)	6.0 (5)	10.5 (87)
MM: RQ	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MM: LWW	1.0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7.1 (1)
MM: SF	50.0 (2)	25.0 (1)	0 (0)	25.0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	28.6 (4)
MM: MSMT	9.2 (3)	16.7 (2)	16.7 (2)	16.7 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	64.3 (9)
MM: Total	42.9 (6)	21.4 (3)	14.3 (2)	21.4 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1.6 (14)
Totals: (utterances)	26.8 (231)	12.6 (109)	38.2 (329)	11.2 (94)	9.2 (77)	2.6 (22)	(862)

Abbreviations: RQ: Ramona Quimby Age 8 LWW: Lion, Witch and Wardrobe SF: Stone Fox MSMT: My Side of the Mountain
DK: Discussion King WW: Word Wizard PM: Passage Master RC: Royal Connector MM: Masterpiece Maker

APPENDIX Q

BOB'S INTERACTIONS BY CATEGORY ACROSS 4 TEXTS

Bob's Interactions by Category Across 4 Texts

Bob- Ave	Facilitate	Solicit	Inform	Acknowledge	Connect	Other	Total
DK: RQ	37.5 (3)	62.5 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	.82 (8)
DK: LWW	9.9 (20)	19.4 (13)	26.9 (18)	16.4 (11)	0 (0)	7.5 (5)	6.8 (67)
DK: SF	22.2 (28)	27.0 (34)	31.0 (39)	11.9 (15)	0 (0)	7.9 (10)	12.8 (126)
DK: WWL	15.6 (96)	29.2 (28)	33.3 (32)	18.8 (18)	0 (0)	3.1 (3)	9.1 (96)
DK: Total	22.2 (66)	26.9 (80)	29.6 (89)	14.8 (44)	0 (0)	6.1 (18)	30.2 (297)
PM: RQ	30.4 (17)	7.1 (4)	48.0 (27)	12.5 (7)	0 (0)	1.8 (1)	22.5 (56)
PM: LWW	59.0 (32)	8.9 (5)	30.0 (16)	5.4 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	22.5 (56)
PM: SF	43.5 (27)	4.8 (3)	25.8 (16)	4.8 (3)	14.2 (9)	6.5 (4)	27.4 (62)
PM: WWL	48.6 (36)	1.4 (1)	40.5 (30)	2.7 (2)	0 (0)	6.8 (5)	29.1 (74)
PM: Total	45.2 (112)	5.2 (13)	35.9 (89)	6.0 (15)	3.6 (9)	4.0 (10)	24.2 (248)
WW: RQ	45.2 (14)	0 (0)	48.4 (15)	3.3 (1)	0 (0)	3.3 (1)	8.4 (31)
WW: LWW	45.8 (38)	1.2 (1)	45.8 (38)	7.2 (6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	23.2 (83)
WW : SF	23.9 (27)	3.5 (4)	50.5 (57)	10.6 (12)	0	11.5 (13)	31.7 (113)
WW: WWL	30.8 (43)	1.5 (2)	54.6 (71)	2.3 (3)	3.8 (5)	4.6 (6)	36.3 (130)
ww: Total	34.2 (122)	2.0 (7)	50.7 (181)	6.2 (22)	1.4 (5)	5.6 (20)	36.1 (357)
RC: RQ	25.0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	75.0 (3)	0 (0)	6.7 (4)
RC: LWW	64.3 (9)	0 (0)	7.1 (1)	7.1 (1)	21.4 (3)	0 (0)	24.1 (14)
RC: SF	7.1 (1)	0 (0)	7.1 (1)	15.0 (2)	71.4 (10)	0 (0)	24.1 (14)
RC: WWL	38.5 (10)	3.8 (1)	3.8 (1)	0 (0)	38.5 (10)	15.4 (4)	44.8 (26)
RC: Total	36.2 (21)	1.7 (1)	1.7 (1)	5.2 (3)	44.8 (26)	6.9 (4)	5.9 (58)
MM: RQ	66.6 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	33.3 (1)	0 (0)	13.0 (3)
MM: LWW	80.0 (4)	0 (0)	20.0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	27.4 (5)
MM: SF	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MM: WWL	20.0 (3)	13.3 (2)	46.7 (70)	13.3 (2)	6.7 (1)	0 (0)	65.2 15

MM: Total	39.1 (9)	8.7 (2)	34.7 (8)	8.7 (2)	8.7 (2)	0 (0)	2.3 (23)
-----------	-------------	------------	-------------	------------	------------	----------	-------------

Totals:	33.5 (330)	10.4 (103)	37.6 (370)	8.7 (86)	4.3 (42)	5.3 (52)	(983)
---------	---------------	---------------	---------------	-------------	-------------	-------------	-------

Abbreviations: RQ: Ramona Quimby Age 8, LWW: Lion, Witch, and Wardrobe, SF: Stone Fox, WWL: Wind in the Willows
 DK: Discussion King WW: Word Wizard PM: Passage Master RC: Royal Connector MM: Masterpiece Maker

APPENDIX R

THORTON'S INTERACTIONS BY CATEGORY ACROSS 4 TEXTS

Thorton's Interactions by Category Across 4 Texts

Thorton-High	Facilitate	Solicit	Inform	Acknowledge	Connect	Other	Totals
DK: RQ	35.3 (6)	17.6 (3)	29.4 (5)	17.6 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4.5 (17)
DK: LWW	26.3 (15)	32.6 (18)	31.6 (18)	7.0 (4)	0 (0)	3.5 (2)	15.1 (57)
DK: SF	11.8 (14)	23.6 (28)	48.7 (58)	9.2 (11)	0 (0)	6.7 (8)	31.6 (119)
DK: MSMT	14.1 (26)	14.1 (26)	61.4 (113)	6.5 (12)	0 (0)	3.8 (7)	48.8 (184)
DK: Total	16.2 (61)	19.9 (75)	51.5 (194)	8.0 (30)	0 (0)	4.5 (17)	37.4 (377)
WW: RQ	58.8 (10)	0 (0)	41.2 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11.8 (2)	6.5 (17)
WW:LWW	55.7 (64)	1.7 (2)	38.3 (44)	1.7 (2)	0 (0)	2.6 (3)	43.9 (115)
WW: SF	46.4 (26)	1.8 (1)	44.6 (25)	1.8 (1)	0 (0)	5.4 (3)	21.4 (56)
WW: MSMT	40.5 (30)	1.4 (1)	55.4 (41)	2.7 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	28.2 (74)
Total: WW	49.6 (130)	1.5 (4)	44.7 (117)	1.9 (5)	0 (0)	2.3 (6)	26.0 (262)
PM: RQ	44.7 (17)	0 (0)	43.2 (16)	10.8 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	14.0 (37)
PM: LWW	50.9 (27)	0 (0)	43.4 (23)	1.9 (1)	0 (0)	3.8 (2)	20.0 (53)
PM: SF	62.1 (18)	0 (0)	37.9 (11)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	10.9 (29)
PM: MSMT	15.1 (22)	10.3 (15)	50.7 (74)	8.9 (13)	7.5 (11)	7.5 (11)	55.1 (146)
Total PM	31.7 (84)	26.5 (15)	46.8 (124)	6.8 (18)	4.2 (11)	4.9 (13)	26.3 (265)
RC:RQ	50.0 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	.50 (3)	0 (0)	9.7 (6)
RC: LWW	14.3 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	14.3 (2)	71.4 (10)	0 (0)	22.6 (14)
RC: SF	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	8.3 (1)	91.7 (11)	0 (0)	19.4 (12)
RC: MSMT	0 (0)	3.3 (1)	10.0 (3)	6.7 (2)	76.7 (23)	3.3 (1)	48.4 (30)
Total RC	8.1 (5)	1.6 (1)	4.8 (3)	8.1 (5)	75.5 (47)	4.8 (1)	6.2 (62)
MM: RQ	33.3 (1)	33.3 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	33.3 (1)	0 (0)	7.3 (3)
MM: LWW	0 (0)	45.5 (5)	0 (0)	9.1 (1)	45.5 (5)	0 (0)	26.8 (11)
MM: SF	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MM: MSMT	18.5 (5)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	18.5 (5)	44.4 (12)	7.4 (2)	65.9 (27)

Total: MM	14.6 (6)	17.1 (102)	4.9 (2)	14.6 (6)	43.9 (18)	4.9 (2)	4.1 (41)
Totals: (utterances)	28.4 (286)	10.1 (102)	43.7 (440)	6.4 (64)	7.5 (76)	3.9 (39)	(1007)

Abbreviations: RQ: Ramona Quimby Age 8, LWW: Lion, Witch and Wardrobe, SF: Stone Fox, MSMT: My Side of the Mountain.
 DK: Discussion King, WW: Word Wizard, PM: Passage Master, RC: Royal Connector; MM: Masterpiece Maker

APPENDIX S

SUMMARY OF STUDENT INTERACTIONS

Summary of Student Interactions

Student	Facilitate	Solicit	Inform	Acknowledge	Connect	Other	Total
DK Billy-L.	11.7 (23)	17.3 (34)	35.5 (70)	24.5 (48)	8.7 (17)	2.0 (4)	22.5 (196)
Bob-Av.	21.5 (64)	26.9 (80)	28.3 (87)	13.1 (39)	0 (0)	16.1 (18)	33.1 (288)
Thorton-H	16.2 (61)	19.9 (75)	51.5 (194)	8.0 (30)	0 (0)	4.5 (17)	43.3 (377)
Total DK	(148)	(197)	(351)	(117)	(17)	(39)	(871)
WW Billy-L.	33.5 (90)	3.0 (8)	49.1 (132)	9.3 (25)	.37 (1)	4.8 (13)	33.4 (269)
Bob-Av.	34.2 (122)	2.0 (7)	50.7 (181)	6.2 (22)	1.2 (5)	23.3 (19)	42.5 (357)
Thorton-H	49.6 (130)	1.5 (4)	44.7 (117)	1.9 (5)	0 (0)	2.3 (6)	31.2 (262)
Total WW	(342)	(19)	(430)	(5)	(6)	(38)	(840)
PM Billy-L.	36.9 (101)	1.5 (4)	43.4 (119)	4.0 (11)	1.5 (4)	1.5 (4)	32.1 (243)
Bob-Av.	45.2 (112)	5.2 (13)	35.9 (89)	6.0 (15)	3.6 (9)	4.0 (10)	32.8 (248)
Thorton-H	31.7 (84)	26.5 (15)	46.8 (124)	6.8 (18)	4.2 (11)	4.9 (13)	35.1 (265)
Total PM	(297)	(32)	(332)	(44)	(24)	(27)	(756)
RC Billy-L.	14.1 (11)	2.6 (2)	3.8 (3)	9.0 (7)	70.5 (55)	6.4 (5)	39.4 (78)
Bob-Av.	36.2 (21)	1.7 (1)	5.2 (3)	5.2 (3)	44.8 (26)	6.9 (4)	29.1 (58)
Thorton-H	8.1 (5)	1.6 (1)	4.8 (3)	8.1 (5)	75.8 (47)	4.8 (1)	31.3 (62)
Total RC	(37)	(4)	(9)	(15)	(128)	(10)	(198)
MM Billy-L.	42.9 (6)	21.3 (3)	14.3 (2)	21.4 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	17.9 (14)
Bob-Av.	39.1 (9)	8.7 (2)	34.7 (8)	8.7 (2)	8.7 (2)	0 (0)	29.5 (23)
Thorton-H	14.6 (6)	17.1 (7)	4.9 (2)	14.1 (6)	43.9 (18)	4.9 (2)	52.6 (41)
Total MM	(21)	(12)	(12)	(11)	(20)	(2)	(78)

Based on Utterances

DK-Discussion King WW-Word Wizard PM-Passage Master RC-Royal Connector MM-Masterpiece Maker

APPENDIX T

FREQUENCY OF UTTERANCES IN FLOOR-TAKING ROLES

Frequency of Utterances in Floor-Taking Roles Across 4 Texts								
Student	Role	RQ	LWW	S Fox	MSM	WWL	totals	
Thorton (H)	DK	4.5% (17)	15.1% (57)	31.6% (119)	48.8% (184)	n/a	377	
Bob (M)	DK	2.7% (8)	22.6% (67)	42.4% (126)	n /a	32.3% (96)	297	
Billy (L)	DK	(11) 5.6%	(20) 10.2%	(101) 51.3%	(65) 33.0%	n/a	197	
Thorton (H)	WW	(17) 6.5%	(115) 43.9%	(56) 21.4%	(74) 28.2%	n/a	262	
Bob (M)	WW	(31) 8.7%	(83) 23.2%	(113) 35.7%	n/a	(130) 36.4%	357	
Billy (L)	WW	(25) 9.3%	(59) 21.9%	(83) 30.9%	(102) 37.9%	n/a	269	
Thorton (H)	PM	(37) 14.0%	(53) 20.0%	(29) 10.9%	(146) 55.1%	n/a	265	
Bob (M)	PM	(56) 22.6%	(56) 22.6%	(62) 25.0%	n/a	(74) 29.8%	248	
Billy (L)	PM	(30) 12.3%	(70) 28.8%	(47) 19.3%	(96) 39.5%	n/a	243	
Thorton (H)	RC	(6) 9.7%	(14) 22.6%	(12) 19.4%	(30) 48.4%	n/a	62	
Bob (M)	RC	(4) 46.9%	(14) 24.1%	(14) 24.1%	n/a	(26) 48.8%	58	
Billy (L)	RC	(13) 15.7%	(5) 6.0%	(21) 25.3%	(44) 53.0%	n/a	83	
Thorton (H)	MM	(3) 7.3%	(11) 26.8%	n/a	(27) 65.9%	n/a	41	
Bob (M)	MM	(3) 13%	(5) 21.7%	(0) 0%	n/a	(15) 65.2%	23	
Billy (L)	MM	n/a	(1) 7.1%	(4) 28.6%	(9) 64.3%	n/a	14	
Totals		261	630	787	777	341	2796	

APPENDIX U

BILLY'S TURN-TAKING FREQUENCY IN ROLES ACROSS TEXTS BASED ON TRANSCRIPTS

Billy's Turn-Taking Frequency in Roles Across Texts Based on Transcripts
(Low Ability)

Page	Role	Text	Turns	Group Turns
17	DK	RQ	8	34
25	DK	LWW	13	54
6	DK	SF	23	51
22	DK	SF	7	20
27	DK	SF	5	9
1	DK	MSMT	23	102
30	DK	MSMT	12	49
Totals			91	319
			[28.5]	[40.0]
12	WW	RQ	7	19
13	WW	LWW	7	21
32	WW	LWW	20	51
17	WW	SF	10	24
23	WW	SF	4	11
28	WW	SF	1	1
8	WW	MSMT	19	68
36	WW	MSMT	15	49
58	WW	MSMT	4	8
Totals			93	252
			[36.9]	[28.4]
10	PM	RQ	14	31
2	PM	LLW	10	22
7	PM	LLW	1	1
15	PM	LLW	6	16
23	PM	SF	5	12
28	PM	SF	6	12
15	PM	MSMT	19	58
46	PM	MSMT	8	21
Totals			75	173
			[43.4]	[19.5]
6	RC	RQ	7	18
4	RC	LWW	2	5
28	RC	SF	9	15
27	RC	MSMT	19	77
Totals			37	115
			[32.2]	[13.0]
0	MM	RQ	0	0
5	MM	LWW	2	4
29	MM	SF	3	6
29	MM	MSMT	4	18
Totals			9	28
			[32.1]	[31.6]

Key:

Roles

DK- Discussion King

WW- Word Wizard

PM- Passage Master

RC- Royal Connector

MM- Masterpiece Maker

Texts:

RQ- Ramona Quimby, Age 8

LWW- Lion, Witch, Wardrobe

SF- Stone Fox

WWL- Wind in the Willows

APPENDIX V

BOB'S TURN-TAKING FREQUENCY IN ROLES ACROSS TEXTS BASED ON TRANSCRIPTS

Bob's Turn-Taking Frequency in Roles Across Texts Based on Transcripts
(Ave. Ability)

Page	Role	Text	Turns	Group Turns
1	DK	RQ	4	10
8	DK	LWW	9	22
18	DK	LWW	13	35
1	DK	SF	22	87
9	DK	SF	10	28
21	DK	SF	11	28
29	DK	SF	16	38
8	DK	WWL	17	42
27	DK	WWL	17	44
37	DK	WWL	8	21
43	DK	WWL	13	37
Totals			153	382
			[40%]	[41.7%]
18	WW	RQ	12	26
10	WW	LWW	12	33
27	WW	LWW	9	26
10	WW	SF	28	69
22	WW	SF	8	18
30	WW	SF	7	13
16	WW	WWL	14	35
34	WW	WWL	17	42
48	WW	WWL	12	25
Totals			119	287
			[41.4%]	[31.3%]
13	PM	RQ	22	88
14	PM	LWW	7	14
24	PM	LWW	1	1
33	PM	LWW	7	20
30	PM	SF	6	12
20	PM	WWL	9	28
39	PM	WWL	4	8
Totals			56	171
			[32.7%]	[18.6%]
11	RC	RQ	1	2
7	RC	LWW	1	1
31	RC	SF	5	11
7	RC	WWL	4	8
26	RC	WWL	4	10
Totals			15	32
			[46.9%]	[3.5%]
11	MM	RQ	2	6
7	MM	LWW	1	2
31	MM	SF	3	7
7	MM	WWL	5	19
27	MM	WWL	3	11
Totals			14	45
			[31.1%]	[4.9%]
N=			357	917

Key:

Roles

DK- Discussion King
WW- Word Wizard
PM- Passage Master
RC- Royal Connector
MM- Masterpiece Maker

Texts:

RQ- Ramona Quimby Age 8
LWW- Lion, Witch, Wardrobe
SF- Stone Fox
WWL- Wind in the Willows

APPENDIX W

THORTON'S TURN-TAKING FREQUENCY IN ROLES ACROSS TEXTS BASED ON TRANSCRIPTS

Thorton's Turn-Taking Frequency in Roles Across Texts Based on Transcripts
(High Ability)

Page	Role	Text	Turns	Group Turns
2	DK	RQ	12	25
1	DK	LWW	7	27
5	DK	LWW	16	89
15	DK	LWW	7	29
6	DK	SF	34	88
15	DK	SF	12	46
27	DK	SF	16	46
37	DK	SF	5	19
7	DK	MSMT	10	31
33	DK	MSMT	40	113
56	DK	MSMT	25	54
Totals			184	511
			[36.0]	[53.7]
1	WW	RQ	1	1
8	WW	LWW	4	8
19	WW	LWW	24	67
17	WW	SF	2	3
25	WW	SF	8	18
38	WW	SF	1	1
15	WW	MSMT	3	5
47	WW	MSMT	7	16
Totals			50	119
			[42.0]	[12.5]
9	PM	RQ	14	32
11	PM	LWW	4	7
28	PM	LWW	7	18
28	PM	SF	5	11
38	PM	SF	1	2
20	PM	MSMT	14	22
Totals			45	112
			[40.2]	[11.8]
4	RC	RQ	4	15
14	RC	LWW	2	4
34	RC	LWW	5	8
38	RC	SF	6	16
6	RC	MSMT	6	13
53	RC	MSMT	16	45
Totals			39	101
			[38.6]	[10.6]
5	MM	RQ	4	14
14	MM	LWW	2	6
35	MM	LWW	6	13
0	MM	SF	0	?
54	MM	MSMT	13	56
7	MM	MSMT	7	20
Totals			32	109
			[29.4]	[11.4]

Key:

Roles:

DK-Discussion King

WW-Word Wizard

PM- Passage Master

RC- Royal Connector

MM- Masterpiece Maker

Texts:

RQ- Ramona Quimby Age 8

LWW- Lion and the Wardrobe

SF- Stone Fox

MSMT My Side of the Mountain

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allington, R.L. (2002). Moving forward with literature circles. Foreword, in J. P. Day, D.L. Spiegel, J. McCellan, & V.B. Brown. New York: Scholastic.
- Almasi, J. F. (1995). The nature of fourth graders' sociocognitive conflicts in peer-led and teacher-led discussion of literature. Reading Research Quarterly, 30 (3), 314-351.
- Alvermann, D.E. (1997). Adolescents' negotiations of out-of-school reading discussions. Reading Research Report No. 77, Athens, GA: National Reading Research Center
- Alvermann, D.E., Dillon, D.R., & O'Brian, D.G. (1987). Using discussion to promote reading comprehension. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Alvermann, D. E., O'Brien, D.G., & Dillon, D.R. (1990). What teachers do when they say they're having discussions of content area reading assignments: A qualitative analysis. Reading Research Quarterly, 25 (4), 298-322.
- Antaki, C. & Widdicombe, S. (1998). Identity as an achievement and as a tool. In C. Antaki & Widdicombe (Eds.). Identities in Talk (p. 1-14). London:Sage.
- Anzul, M. (1993). Exploring literature with children within a transactional framework. In K. Holland, R. Hungerford & S. Ernst (Eds.). Journeying: children responding to literature (pp. 187-203). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Applebee, A. N. (1978). The child's concept of story: Ages two to seventeen. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Applebee, A.N. (1996). Curriculum as conversation: transforming traditions of teaching and learning. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Aries, E. J. (1976). Interaction, patterns, and themes of male, female, and mixed groups. Small Group Behavior, 7, (1), 18.
- Astin, A.W. (1979). Four critical years: Effects of college on beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.
- Atwater, R. and Atwater, F.(1966) Mr. Popper's Penguins. New York: Scholastic.
- Atwell, N. (1987). In the middle: Writing, reading, with adolescents. Boston, MA: Heinemann .

- Au, K. H. (1980). Participation structures in a reading lesson with Hawaiian children: Analysis of a culturally appropriate instructional event. Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 11, 91-115.
- Babbitt, N. (1975). Tuck everlasting. Zephyr Cove, New York: Sunburst.
- Babbitt, N.(1968). The search for delicious. New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). Speech genres and other late essays (V.W. McGee, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press
- Bandermann, E. (1997). Engagement with text through social interaction. Dissertation Abstracts International. 59(06), p. 1913, University of Toronto, Canada. (UMI No. NQ27762).
- Bandura, A. (1977). Social learning theory. Englewood Cliffs: NJ, Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Barnes, D. (1975). From communication to curriculum. New York: Penguin.
- Barnes, D. (1993) Supporting exploratory talk for learning. In L.M. Pierce & C.J. Gilles (Eds.),Cycles of meaning: Exploring the potential of talk in learning communities (p.17-34). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Barnes, D. & Todd, F.(1977). Communication and learning in small groups. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.
- Barnes, D. & Todd, F. (1995) Communication and learning revisited: making meaning through talk. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers Heinemann.
- Bayer, A.S. (1990). Collaborative-apprenticeship learning Mountain View, CA : Mayfield Publishing.
- Beach, R. (1983). Attitudes, social conventions and response to literature. Journal of Research and Development ,16 , 47-49.
- Beach, R. (1993). A teacher's introduction to reader-response theories. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Beach, R. and Hynds, S. (1991). Research on response to literature. In R. Barr, M.L. Kamil, P.B. Mosenthal, & P.D. Pearson (Eds.). Handbook of reading research: Vol. II. (453-489).
- Berger, L. (1996). Reader response journals: You make the meaning...and how. Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 39, 380-385.
- Borders, S., & Naylor, A. (1993). Children talking about books. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Bowran, R.K. (2001) How teachers' use of literature circles reflects a transactional view of reading. Dissertation Abstracts International 62(06), p. 2056 (UMI No.3016085) Auburn University.

- Brownell, W., & Smith, D.R. (1973). Communication patterns, sex, and length of verbalization in speech of four-year old children. Speech monographs, 40, 310-315.
- Bruffee, K. A. (1999). Collaborative learning, higher education, interdependence, and the authority of knowledge. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cazden, C. B. (1986). 'Classroom discourse' in Wittrock, M. (Ed.), Handbook of Research on Teaching (3rd ed.) New York: Macmillan.
- Cazden, C. B. (1988). Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books Inc.
- Cazden, C.B. (2001). Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Chase, N. & Hynd, C. (1987). Reader response: An alternative way to teach students to think about text. Journal of Reading. 30, 530-540.
- Cleary, B. (1964). Ribsy. New York: Scholastic.
- Cleary, B. (1965). The Mouse and the motorcycle. New York: Scholastic.
- Cleary, B. (1981). Ramona Quimby, age 8. New York: Troll, Special Edition. Avon Books.
- Coleman, J. S. (1986). Youth: Transition to adulthood. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Collay, M., Dunlap, D., Enloe, W., & Gagnon, G.W. (1998). Learning circles, Creating conditions for professional development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.Press, Inc.
- Cook-Gumperz, J. (1986). The social construction of literacy. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cox, C. (1997). Literature-based teaching: A student response-centered classroom. In N..Karolides (Ed.) Reader response in the classroom, Mahweh, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Cox, C. & Many, J. (1992). Toward an understanding of the aesthetic response to literature. Language Arts, 69, 28-33.
- Crawford, K., & Hoopingarner, T. (1993). A kaleidoscope of conversation: A case study of a first-grade literature group. In K. Pierce & C. Gilles (Eds.), Cycles of meaning (pp.261-273). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Dahl, R. (1982). The BFG. New York: Scholastic.
- Daniels, H. (1994). Literature circles, voice and choice in the student-centered classroom. York ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

- Daniels, H. (2002). Literature circles, voice and choice in book clubs & reading groups. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Davala, V. (1987). Respecting opinions: Learning logs in middle school English. In T. Fulwiler (Ed.), The journal book (pp. 179-186). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton-Cook.
- Davis, (1994) Secret of the Seal.
- Day, J.P., Spiegel, D.L., McLellan, J., & Brown, V.B. (2002). Moving forward with literature circles. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Dewey, J. (1938) Experience and education. New York: Collier Books.
- Dias, P. (1992). Literary reading and classroom constraints: Aligning practice with theory. In J. Langer (Ed.), Literature instruction: A focus on student response (pp. 131-162). Urbana, IL : National Council of Teachers of English.
- Dix, T. (1993). Cycles of professional growth: Evaluating literature discussion groups. In K. Pierce & C. Gilles (Eds.), Cycles of meaning (pp.179-186). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton-Cook.
- Dugan, J. (1995) Enhancing less-proficient readers' literary understanding through transactional literature discussions. Dissertation Abstracts International. 57(07), p. 2942. (UMI No. 9637855), University of Pittsburgh.
- Edwards, E., & Mercer, N. (1987). Common knowledge: The development of understanding in the classroom. London: Methuen/Routledge.
- Eeds, M. & Peterson, R. (1997). Literature studies revisited: Some thoughts on talking with children about books. The New Advocate, 10 (1), 49-58.
- Eeds, M., & Wells, D. (1989). Grand conversations: An exploration of meaning construction in literature study groups. Research in the Teaching of English, 23, 4-29.
- Elbers, E. (1996). Citizenship in the making, Themes of citizenship in children's pretend play. Childhood, 3. 499-514.
- Elbers, E., & Streefland, L. (2000), "Shall we be researchers again?" Identity and social interaction in a community of inquiry. In H. Cowie & G. der Aalsvoort (Eds.) Social interaction in learning and instruction. (pp. 35-51).Kidlington: Oxford: Elsevier Science, Ltd.
- Encisco, P. (1992). Creating the story world: A case study of a young reader's engagement strategies and stances. In J. Many & C. Cox (Eds.), Reader stance and literary understanding (pp. 75-102). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Erickson, F. (1986). Qualitative methods in research on teaching, In M.C.Wittrock (Ed.), Handbook of research on teaching. (3rd ed.) (pp. 119-161). New York: Macmillan.

- Evans, K.S., Alverman, D., & Anders, P.L. (1998). Literature discussion groups: An examination of gender roles. Reading Research and Instruction, 37 (2), 107-122.
- Fall, R., Webb, N.M., & Chudowsky, N. (2000). Group discussion and large-scale language arts assessment: Effects on students' comprehension. American Educational Research Journal, 37 (4), 911-941.
- Fiderer, A. (1988). Talking about books: Readers need readers, In J. Golub (Chair, and the Committee on Classroom Practices), pp. 59-65, Focus on collaborative learning, Classroom practices in teaching of English. Urbana, IL:National Council of Teachers of English.
- Fisher, E. (1996). Distinctive features of pupil-pupil classroom talk and their relationship to learning: How discursive exploration might be encouraged. Language and Education, 7, 239-257.
- Fourlas, G. & Wray, D. (1990). Children's oral language: A comparison of two classroom organizational systems. In D.Wray (Ed.). Emerging partnerships: current research in language and literacy (p.76-86). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Fox, M., & Wilkinson, L. (1997). No longer travelers in a strange country. Journal of Children's Literature 23 (1): 6-15.
- Freedman, L. (1993). Teacher talk: The role of the teacher in literature discussion groups. In K. Pierce & C. Gilles (Eds.), Cycles of meaning (pp. 219-235). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Frey, A. (1992). Rhyme square. Carlsbad, CA: Interaction Publishers, Inc.
- Fuhler, C. (1994). Response journals: just one more time with feeling. Journal of Reading, 37, 400-405.
- Galda, L. (1992). Evaluation as a spectator: changes across time and genre. In J. Many & C. Cox (Eds.), Readers' stance and literary understanding (pp.127-142). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Gambrell, L. & Almasi, J. (Eds.). (1997). Lively discussions! Newark, NJ:
- Garan, E. (1994). Who's in control? Is there enough "empowerment" to go around? Language Arts, 71, 192-199.
- Gardiner, J. R. (1980). Stone fox. New York: Harper and Row.
- Gee, J. P.(1988). The narrativization of experience in the oral style. Journal of Education, 167, 9-35.
- Gee, J. P.(1992). The social mind: Language, ideology, and social practice. New York: Bergin & Garvey.

- George, J.G. (1959). My side of the mountain. New York: Puffin.
- Gilles, C. (1990). Collaborative literacy strategies: "We don't need to have a circle to have group." In K. Short & K. Pierce (Eds.), Talking about books: Creating literate communities. (pp.55-68).Portsmouth,NH: Heinemann.
- Gilles, C. J. (1993). "We make an idea": cycles of meaning in literature discussion groups, In K.M. Pierce & C.J.Gilles (Eds.), Cycles of meaning: Exploring the potential of talk in learning communities.(pp. 17-34). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Gilles, C. J., & VanDover, M.(1988). The power of collaboration, In J. Golub (Chair, and the Committee on Classroom Practices), pp. 29-38, Focus on collaborative learning, classroom practices in teaching of English. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Goatley, V., Brock, C., & Raphael, T. (1995). Diverse learners participating in regular education "Book Clubs" Reading Research Quarterly, 30, 352-380
- Goier, Renee (1996) A descriptive study of literature discussion groups in a fourth-grade classroom. Dissertation Abstracts International, 57/09, p. 3855, (UMI No. 9703743). Northern Illinois University.
- Graddol, J., Maybin, & V. Stierer (Eds.). Researching language and literacy in social context (p. 131-150). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Guthrie, J. T. & Alvermann, D. (1999). Engaged reading: Processes, practices, and policy implications, New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hamilton, V. (1974). M. C. Higgins the great, New York: Macmillan.
- Hansen-Krening, N., & Mizokawa, D. T. (1997), Exploring ethnic-specific literature: A unity of parents, families, and educators. Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy , 41 (3): 180-189.
- Hauschildt, P.M., & McMahon, S. I. (1996). Reconceptualizing 'resistant' learners and rethinking instruction: risking a trip to the swamp. Language Arts, 73 (8), 576-586.
- Harste, J. C., Short, K.G. & Burke, C. (1988). Creating classrooms for authors. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Haslet, B. J. (1983). Communicative functions and strategies in children's conversations. Human Communication Research, 9 (2), 114-129.
- Heath, S.B. (1983). Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hepler, S., & Hickman, J. (1982). The book was okay. I love you- social aspects of response to literature. Theory into Practice, Vol. 21, p. 278-283.

- Hill, B.C., Johnson, N.J., & Schlick Noe, L.S. (1995). Literature circles and response. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers.
- Hill, B. C. & Van Horn, L. (1995). Book club goes to jail: Can book clubs replace gangs? Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy 39 (3): 180-188.
- Hoffman, L. W. (1972). Early childhood experiences and women's achievement motives. Journal of Social Issues, 28 (2), 129-155).
- Holt, J.C. (1967). How children fail. New York: Dell.
- Holt, J. & Halliwell Bell, B. (2000). Good books, good talk, good readers. Primary Voices, Vol. 9 (1) p. 3-7.
- Introduction to Shared Inquiry (2nd ed.). (1991). Chicago, IL: The Great Books Foundation.
- Jacque, D. (1993). The judge comes to kindergarten. In K. Holland, R. Hungerford, & S. Ernst (Eds.), Journeying: children responding to literature. (pp. 43-53), Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Jewell, T., & Pratt, D. (1999). Literature discussions in the primary grades: Children's thoughtful discourse about books and what teachers can do to make it happen. Reading Teacher, 52 (8), 842-850.
- Johnson, D.W. and Johnson, F.P. (1991). Joining together: Group theory and group skills. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Johnson, D.W. & Johnson, R.T. (1994). Learning together and alone. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., Holubec, E. J. & Roy, P. (1984) Circles of learning: Cooperation in the classroom. Association for Supervision and Curriculum and Development.
- Joiner, R., Messer, D., Light, P. and Littleton, K. (1995). Investigating the relationship between communicative style and productive interaction. Paper presented at the 6th European Conference for Research on Learning and Instruction, Nijmegen, the Netherlands.
- Kaufmann, G., et al. (1997). Examining the roles of teachers and students in literature circles ,c across the classroom contexts. In K. Linzer, K.A. Hinchman, & D. J. Leu (Eds.) Literacies for the twenty-first century (pp. 373-384).
- Keefer, M.W., Zeitz, C. M., & Resnick, L. B.(2000). Judging the quality of peer-led student dialogues. Cognition and Instruction, 18 (1), 53-81.
- Keene, E. O. & Zimmerman, S. (1997). Mosaic of thought: teaching comprehension in a reader's workshop. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- King, A. (1989). Verbal interaction and problem-solving within computer assisted cooperative learning groups. Educational Computing Research, 5 (1), 1-15.

- Kletzien, S., & Hushion, B. (1992). Reading workshop: Reading, writing, thinking. Journal of Reading, 35, 444-451.
- Klinger, J., Vaughn, S. & J. Schumm (1998). Collaborative strategic reading during social studies in heterogeneous fourth-grade classrooms. Elementary School Journal, 99, (1) 3-22.
- Knapp, M.S. (1995). Teaching for meaning in high-poverty classrooms. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Knipping, N. & Andre, M. (1988). First grader's response to a literature-based literacy strategy. In B. Nelms (Ed.), Literature in the classroom: Readers, texts, and contexts (pp. 69-79). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Knoeller, C. (1994). Negotiating interpretations of text: The role of student-led discussions in understanding literature. Journal of Reading, 37, 572-580.
- Kohl, H. (1967) Thirty-six children. New York: New American Library.
- Kohn, A. (1996). Beyond discipline. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Konigsburg, E. (1969). From the mixed-up files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler. New York: Antheum.
- Kozal, J. (1967) Death at an early age. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Kumpulainen, K & Wray, D.(2002). Classroom interaction and social learning, From theory to practice. London: Routledge/Falmer.
- Ladousse, G.P. (1987) Role-play. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Langer, J.A. (1990). Understanding literature. Language Arts, 67, 812-816
- Langer, J.A. (1995). Envisioning literature: Literary understanding and literature instruction. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Laskin, D. and Hughes, H.(1995). The reading group book. New York, NY: Plume/Penguin.
- Leal, Dorothy J. (1992). The nature of talk about three types of text during peer group discussions. Journal of Reading Behavior, Vol. 24 (3) pg. 313-338.
- Lewis, C. S. (1950). The lion, the witch, and the wardrobe. New York:Harper Collins.
- Light, P., Littleton, K., Messer, D. and Joiner, R. (1994). Social and communicative processes in computer-based problem solving. European Journal of Psychology of Education, 19 (1), 93-109.

- Lockheed, M.E., & Harris, A.M. (1984). Cross-sex collaborative learning in elementary classrooms. American Educational Research Journal, 21 (2), 275-294.
- Lyman, L., & Foyle, H.C. (1990). Cooperative grouping for interactive learning: Students, teachers, and administrators. Washington, D.C.: NEA Professional Library.
- Maccoby, E.E., & Jacklin, C.N. (1974). The psychology of sex differences. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Macgillivray, L. (1995). Second language and literacy teachers considering literature circles. A play. Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 39 (1): 36-44.
- Maloch, Anna E. (2000) Scaffolding student talk: the teacher's role in Literature discussion groups in a third grade classroom. Dissertation Abstracts International. 61(03), p. 934. (UMI No. 9964904). Vanderbilt University.
- Malcom, Sandra Lee. (1998). A book-ends approach: Implementing literature circles to foster emergent literacy in kindergarten. Dissertation Abstracts International. 60(01), p. 63, (UMI No. 99915894). Pennsylvania State University.
- Many, J. E. (1991). The effects of stance and age level on children's literary responses. Journal of Reading Behavior, 23(1) p. 61-82.
- Many, J., & Wiseman, D. (1992). Analyzing versus experiencing: The effects of teaching approaches on students' responses. In J. Many & C. Cox (Eds.), Reader stance and literary understanding (pp. 250-276). Norwood, N.J: Ablex.
- Marks, T. A. (1995). Gender differences in third graders' oral discourse during peer-led literature discussion groups. Dissertation Abstracts International. 56(08), p. 2997, (UMI No.9539701). University of Maryland.
- Martinez-Roldan, C., & Lopez-Robertson, J.. (2000). Initiating literature circles in a first-grade bilingual classroom. Reading Teacher, 53, (4): 270-281.
- Mason, E. (1970). Collaborative learning. London: Ward Lock Education, New York: Agathon, (1971).
- Maybin, J. (1993). Children's voices. Talk, knowledge and identity. In D. Graddol, J. , Maybin & V. Stierer (Eds.). Researching language and literacy in social context (pp. 131-150). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- McCormack, R. L. (1995) Learning to talk about books: Second graders' participation in peer-led literature discussion groups. Dissertation Abstracts International 56(04), p. 0524 .(UMI No. 9535976), Boston University.
- McCormack, R.L.(1997) . Eavesdropping on second graders' peer talk about African trickster tales. In J.R. Paratore, & R.L. McCormack (Eds.) Peer talk in the classroom (pp.26-43). Newark, DE: International Reading

- McMahon, S. (1994). Student-led book clubs: Traversing a river of interpretation. The New Advocate, 7, 109-125.
- Mehan, H. (1979). Learning lessons. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mercer, N. (1994). The quality of talk in children's joint activity at the computer. Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 10, 24-32.
- Mercer, N. (1995). The guided construction of knowledge. Bristol, PA: Multilingual Matters
- Mercer, N. (1996). The quality of talking- children's collaborative activity in the classroom. Learning and Instruction, 6, 359-377.
- Merriam, S.B. (1998). Qualitative research and case study applications in education. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Miles, E. (2002). Wind in the willows retold from Kenneth Grahame (1908), New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman (1994) A. M. Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. (2nd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mizerka, Patricia, M. (1999) The impact of teacher-directed literature circles versus student-directed literature circles on reading comprehension at the sixth-grade level. Dissertation Abstracts International. 60(09). p. 3307. (UMI No. 9944939), University of Illinois.
- Muller, N. & Perret-Clermont, A.N. (in press). Negotiating identities and meanings in the transmission of knowledge: analysis of interactions in the context of a knowledge exchange network. In J. Bliss, P.Light, & R. Saljo (Eds.). Learning sites. Social and technological contexts for learning. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Murnane, R. J. & Levy, F. (1996). Teaching the new basic skills: Principles for education children to thrive in a changing economy. New York: The Free Press.
- Noll, E. (1994). Social issues and literature circles with adolescents. Journal of Reading, 38, 88-93.
- Nystand, M. & Gamoran, a. (1991). Instructional discourse, student engagement , and literature achievement. Research in the Teaching of English, 25, 261-290.
- O'Donnell, Melissa A. (2001). It's all in the preparation. An interpretive look at how one teacher prepares her students for participation in literature discussion groups. Dissertation Abstracts International. 62(03), p. 948. (UMI No. 3008898), University of Pennsylvania.
- O'Flahavan, John, F. (1989). Second graders' social, intellectual, and affective development in varied group discussions about narrative texts: an exploration of participation structures. Dissertation Abstracts International. 50(11), p. 3479 (UMI No.9010972), University of Illinois.

- O'Flahavan, J. F., Stein, C.M., Wiencek, B.J., & Marks, T. (1992). Intellectual development in peer discussion about literature: An exploration of the teacher's role. Final report to the National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- O'Flahavan, J. F., Wiencek, B.J., & Marks, T. (1993). Social interpretive development in third grade teacher-assisted and peer discussions about literature. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Reading Conference, Charleston, SC.
- Olmstead, Christine M. (2001) Improving comprehension using online literature circles: a university-elementary school collaborative project. Masters Abstracts International, 40(1),p.22 (UMI No. 1404902). California State University, Fullerton.
- Olson, W. C (1949). Child development. Boston, MA: Heath.
- Paratore, J.R. & McCormack, R.L. (Eds.). (1997). Peer talk in the classroom, learning from research. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Pardo, L.S. (1992). Accommodating diversity in the elementary classroom: A look at literature-based instruction in an inner-city school. Paper given at the National Reading Conference, San Antonio, TX, December, 1992.
- Paterson, Patricia, O. (2000). Negotiation of text in peer-led discussion groups. Dissertation Abstracts International, 61(06), p. 2221 (UMI No. 9977044). Georgia State University.
- Peterson, R. & Eeds, M. (1990). Grand conversations. New York: Scholastic.
- Philips, S. (1972) Participant Structures and communicative competence: Warm springs children in community and classroom. In C. Cazden, V. John, and D. Hymes, (Eds.) Functions of language in the classroom , New York: Teachers College Press.
- Phillips, T. (1990). Structuring context for exploratory talk. In D. Wray (Ed.), Talking and listening (pp. 60-72). Leamington Spa: Scholastic.
- Potter, J. & Wetherell, M. (1987). Discourse and social psychology: beyond attitudes and behavior. London: Sage.
- Protherough, R. (1987). The stories that readers tell. In B. Corcoran & E. Evans (Eds.), Readers, texts, teachers (pp. 75-92). Montclair, NJ: Boynton-Cook.
- Ransom, J. C. (1941). The new criticism. Norfolk, CT: New Directions.
- Raphael, T., & McMahon, S. (1994). Book Club: An alternative framework for reading instruction. The Reading Teacher, 48, 102-116.
- Rickey, Melissa J. (1992) Literature circles in process in elementary classrooms. Dissertation Abstracts International 53(06), p. 1829. (UMI No. 9230428), University of Washington.

- Rogoff, B. (1994). Developing understanding of the idea of communities of learners. Mind, Culture and Activity, 1, 209-229.
- Rosenblatt, L. (1978). The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press,
- Rosenblatt, Louise M. (1982). The literary transaction: Evocation and response. Theory into Practice (21) p.268-277.
- Rosenblatt, L.M. (1991). Literature-S.O.S.! Language Arts, 68 (6), p. 444-448.
- Rosenblatt, L.M. (1994). The reader, the text, and the poem: the transactional theory of the literary work. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Routman, R. (1991). Invitations. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Samway, K., Whang, G., Cade, C., Gamil, M., Lubandina, M., & Phommachanh, K. (1991). Reading the skeleton, the heart, and the brain of a book: Students' perspective on literature study circles. The Reading Teacher, 45, 96-205.
- Schlick Noe, K.L. & Johnson, N.J. (1999) Getting started with literature circles. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.
- Scott, S. C. (1992). Reading into literature groups: A classroom study of student-directed literature discussion groups. Dissertation Abstracts. 53(08), p. 2683, (UMI No. 9224776), University of Pennsylvania.
- Sebesta, S., Monson, D., & Senn, H. (1995). A hierarchy to assess reader response. Journal of Reading, 38, 444-450.
- Sharan, S. (1990). "Cooperative learning and helping behavior in the multi-ethnic classroom." In H. C. Foot, M. J. Morgan, & R.H. Schute (Eds.), Children helping children,. New York: Wiley.
- Short, K. G. (1986). Literacy as a collaborative experience (Intertextuality, reading, writing). Dissertation Abstracts International 47(05), p. 1674. (UMI No. 8617833). Indiana University.
- Short, K. & Burke, C. (1991) Creating curriculum. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Short, K., Kaufman, G., Kaser, S., Kahn, L., & Crawford, K. (1999). Teacher-watching: Examining teacher talk in literature circles. Language Arts, 76,(5), 377-385.
- Sinclair, J. & Coulthard, R. (1975). Towards an analysis of discourse: The English used by teachers and pupils. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Slavin, R.E. (1983). Cooperative learning. New York: Longman

- Smith, K. (1993). A descriptive analysis of the responses of six students and their teacher in literature study sessions. Dissertation Abstracts International, 54(03), p. 809 (UMI No. 9320660), Arizona State University.
- Smith, M. (1992). Submission versus control in literary transactions. In J. Many & C. Cox (Eds.), Reader stance and literary understanding (pp. 143-161), Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Spiegel, D. L.(1998). Reader response approaches and the growth of readers. Language Arts,. 76 (1), 41-47.
- Steinbeck, J.(1952), East of Eden, New York, NY: Penguin.
- Stevenson, R.L. (1990). Treasure island: A Troll illustrated classic. New York: Troll Associates.
- Stewart, R., Paradis, E., Ross, B., & Lewis, M. (1996). Student voices: What works in literature-based developmental reading. Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 39, 468-478.
- Swift, K. (1993). Try reading workshop in your classroom. The Reading Teacher, 46, 366-371.
- Teasley, S. (1995). The role of talk in children's peer collaborations. Developmental Psychology, 31, 207-220.
- Treasury of Literature (1995), A place to dream. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace &Company.
- Tudge, J. (1992). Processes and consequences of peer collaboration. A Vygotskian analysis. Child Development, 63, 1364-1379.
- Turner, J. & Paris, S. (1995). How literacy tasks influence children's motivation for literacy. The Reading Teacher, 45, 662-673.
- Tyack, D. & Cuban, L. (1995). Tinkering toward utopia: A century of public school reform. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- van Ments, M. (1999). The effective use of role-play, practical techniques for improving learning. London: Kogan Page Ltd.
- von Unruh, V.F. (2000). Grade five student's discussion of novels: Factors affecting change in discourse. Masters Abstracts International. 39(01), p. 26 (UMI No. MQ51496). Simon Fraser University, Canada.
- Watson, D. J. & Davis, S.C. (1988). Readers and texts in a fifth-grade classroom. In B. F. Nelms (Ed.), Literature in the classroom: readers, texts, and contexts. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English (1988). pg. 64-65
- Webb, N.M., Troper, J. & Fall, J.R. (1995). Constructive activity and learning in collaborative small groups. Journal of Educational Psychology, 87, 406-423.

- Wellman, D. K.B. (2000) Implementing literature circles: Three case studies of teachers in transition. Dissertation Abstracts International, 61(10), p. 3960 (UMI No. 9990659). The University of Toledo.
- Wells, G. (1999). Dialogic inquiry. Toward a sociocultural practice and theory of education. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wertsch, J.V. (1981). The concept of activity in Soviet psychology. In G. Wells & G.L.Chang-Wells, Constructing Knowledge Together. p. 57.
- Wertsch, J. V. (1985). Vygotsky and the social formation of mind. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. 67.
- Wohlking, W. & Gill, P.J. (1980). Role-playing: The instructional design library, Vol. 32, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications.
- Wollman-Bonilla, J. E. (1991) Discourse practices and the social construction of meaning in small groups literature discussions among sixth graders and their teacher. Dissertation Abstracts International 52(06), p. 2091 (UMI No. 9134789). New York University.
- Yardley-Matwiejczuk, K. M.(1997). Role play, theory and practice. London: Sage Publications, Ltd.
- Yocum, J. (1993). What's a bustle? In Holland, K, Hungerford, R.& Ernst, S. (Eds.), Journeying: Children responding to literature. (pp. 91-113). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.