CANADIAN CHILDREN

JOURNAL OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN
Spring/Printemps 1998 Vol 23 No1

INVITATIONAL ARTICLES

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The Canadian Association for Young Children | L'Association Canadienne Pour Les Jeunes Enfants

THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

WHAT IS THE CAYC

The Canadian Association for Young children (CAYC) grew out of the Council for childhood Education and officially recognized in 1974 by the granting of a Federal Charter. It is the only national association specifically concerned with the well-being of children, birth through age nine at home, in preschool settings and at school. Members of this multidisciplinary association include parents, teachers, caregivers, administrators, students and all those wishing to share ideas and participate in activities related to the education and welfare of young children.

MISSION STATEMENT

CAYC exists to provide a Canadian voice on critical issues related to the quality of life of all young children and their families.

THE AIMS OF THE CAYC

1. To influence the direction and quality of policies and programs that affect the development and well-being of young children in Canada.
2. To provide a forum for the members of Canada's early childhood community to support one another in providing developmentally appropriate programs for young children.
3. To promote and provide opportunities for professional development for those charged with the care and education of young children.
4. To promote opportunities for effective liaison and collaboration with all those responsible for young children.
5. To recognize outstanding contributions to the well-being of young children.

IMPLEMENTING THE AIMS OF THE CAYC.

1. The National Conference
The National Conference is a highlight of the CAYC. The program includes lectures by internationally renowned authorities on children, workshops, discussion groups, displays, demonstrations, school visits and tours.

2. Provincial and Regional Events
The organization of members at the local and provincial level is encouraged to plan events to deal with the issues and concerns pertaining to young children. These events may take the form of lectures, seminars or a local conference.

3. The Journal
An outstanding multidisciplinary journal is published twice yearly. Articles by nationally and internationally known experts in early childhood education and child rearing are presented in the Journal of the CAYC. Inside CAYC provides information on Association activities.

Membership fees are payable on application and renewable annually on an evergreen basis. To be considered a voting member, fees must be paid no later than 60 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP

Institutional subscribers receive the journal only ($50 per annum for two issues). Members of CAYC, in addition, receive newsletters and special rates for national and regional conferences (per annum; $40 - General; $25 - Student: $75 - Associations). Please direct all subscription and membership correspondence to CAYC.

ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE POUR LES JEUNES ENFANTS

QU'EST CE QUE L'ACJE

L'Association canadienne pour les jeunes enfants, issue du Council for Childhood Education, a reçu sa charte fédérale en 1974. C'est l'unique association nationale vouée exclusivement au bien-être des enfants depuis la naissance jusqu'à l'âge de neuf ans, dans leaurs foyers, les garderies et a l'école primaire. Les membres de l'ACJE-des parents, des enseignants, des employés de garderie, des administrateurs, des étudiants...-sont toutes des personnes intéressées à partager leurs idées en participant à des activités concernant le bien-être et l'éducation des jeunes enfants.

SA MISSION

L'ACJE existe pour faire entendre une voix canadienne sur les questions d'importance concernant la qualité de vie de tous les jeunes enfants et de leurs familles.

SES BUTS

1. Jouer un rôle dans la direction et las qualité des décisions et des programmes relatifs au développement et au bien-être des jeunes enfants du Canada.
2. Créer un forum pour les membres de la communauté de la petite enfance afin de susciter une collaboration active dans l'élaboration de programmes appropriés au développement des jeunes enfants.
3. Encourager et offrir des possibilités de perfectionnement professionnel aux personnes chargées du bien-être et de l'éducation des jeunes enfants.
4. Promouvoir des occasions pour une meilleure coordination et collaboration entre toutes les personnes responsables des jeunes enfants.
5. Reconnâitre les contributions de caractère exceptionnel faites au profit des jeunes enfants.

MISE EN OEUVRE DES BUTS DE L'ACJE

1. *Le congres national*
Il constitue le grand événement de l'ACJE. On y entend des communications prononcées par des sommités internationales dans le domaine de l'enfance et on y participe à des ateliers et à des discussions ainsi qu'à diverses manifestations, des visites d'écoles et d'autres activités.

2. *Les événements provinciaux et locaux*
Nos membres sont invités à mettre sur pied des conférences, des séminaires ou des congrès à l'échelon local ou régional.

3.. *Le journal*
Publications mutidisciplinaire de premier ordre, le journal parâit deux fois l'an. Il regroupe des articles traitant de questions d'education et de formation des jeunes enfants et des écrits d'experts bien connus sur le plan national et international. La rubrique **Inside CAYC** vous tient au courant des activités de l'Association.

Les cotisations doivent être réglées au moment de l'adhésion et renouvelées chaque année. Pour vous prévaloir de votre droit de vote, vous devez régler votre cotisation au moins 60 jours avant l'Assemblée générale annuelle.

ABONNEMENT ET COTISATION DE MEMBRE

Les organismes peuvent s'abonner au journal seulement (50 $ per année pour deux parutins). Les membres de l'ACJE reçoivent en plus le bulletin de liaison et bénéficient de tarifs particuliers pour participer au congrès national et aux événements régionaux (40$ par année 25$ pour les etudiants: 75$ pour les associations). Addressez toute votre correspondance a: ACJE

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Spring/Printemps 1998 Vol 23 No 1

ISSN 0833-7519
Cover Photo by Susan Evans of Steven, Douglas College Daycare
Printed by: Polar Printing, North Vancouver, B.C. Layout Atek

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The St. John's School Lunch Association

The Canadian Association for Young Children (CAYC) presented a cheque to the St. John's School Lunch Association to assist them in their efforts to eliminate child hunger in the City. One in four Newfoundland children go to bed hungry every night and St John's has been identified by the Canadian Council on social development as the city having the fourth highest poverty rate in Canada. On the surface, this may appear encouraging, since St. John's was rated the second highest Canadian city in child poverty back in 1989. However, in its 1997 report, Campaign 2000, the Coalition that seeks to eliminate child poverty in Canada, reveals that the number of poor children has increased by 20% since the 1989 report. The national statistic indicates a 58% increase for the entire country.

In the spirit of partnership, CAYC chose to make a financial contribution to the School Lunch Association because it believes that every child needs nutrition in order to learn and all children should be given an equal chance. The Association operates a non-stigmatizing program that provides a hot, nutritious lunch for primary and elementary school children, regardless of their ability to pay.

CAYC is a national organization specifically concerned with the well-being of children, birth through age nine at home, in child care settings and at school. Funds raised from events, such as national conferences, are used for special projects to support children in need from coast to coast.

CALL FOR ADVERTISING

CANADIAN CHILDREN is a journal distributed to over 700 members of the National Canadian Association for Young Children (CAYC). The journal is concerned with child development, early childhood and primary education. It is a professional journal pulished twice a year. The profile of members of the association and recipients of the journal includes teachers, daycares, primary schools, school boards, colleges, universities and libraries located throughout Canada. The journal provides an opportunity to target decision makers in the field of early childhood education, primary education and child development.

ADVERTISING RATES: Ad space is available in the journal at the following rates: Non Members ¼ page (3-5/8" x 4-3/4") $96.00 CAYC Members ¼ page (3-5/8" x 4-3/4") $79.00 Prices are for advertising space only. Artwork, typesetting, photography, and layout extra. The publication is black and white. CAYC reserves the right to control editorial and advertising content. For further information, or to reserve advertising space contact:
Susan Fraser, Editor, CAYC, 2820 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, B.C. Canada. V7V 1L9, Telephone (604) 922-7969 Fax/Message (604) 922-3456 or Atek@dowco.com

From the Editor

Listening - that is really listening to children, colleagues, and even to oneself was a theme that ran through many of the keynotes and presentations at the CAYC Conference in Winnipeg February 8th to 10th. Ralph Peterson, in his key note address **Practising the Art of Listening to Children** said that listening is at the centre of our work with children and in our relationships with people. It can, however, be dangerous so people avoid it. From personal experience we know intuitively if we are talking to someone and they are not really listening. A conversation that proves satisfying to the participants needs at least two people to be fully involved in talking and listening. If a conversation is to 'grow in energy' one of the participants at least has to be actively listening. We all know when someone on the other end of the phone has turned us off and is only going through the motions of saying "ah ha". Ralph went on to say that "to stay out of the ruts (in a relationship) is being fully present for the other person." Many of the presenters in way one or another emphasised that listening is a critical factor in a young child's development. Every child needs someone to really listen to them. To be genuinely interested in what they have to say. This is an essential factor in language development. Many children who have speech and voice disorders have been competing too hard to be heard, said Monica Gustafson in her presentation at the Conference. She also stresses the importance of listening to children in her article in this Journal. The first question I, as a preschool teacher, always asked parents when they expressed concern about their child's language development was "Are you listening carefully to what the child is saying to you?" Very often, when parents stopped and listened, their child's difficulty in speaking disappeared. Of course, this was not the case every

time but it often helped parents figure out the problem for themselves and then, if necessary, get the professional help needed.

Listening to children is an essential skill in being a successful teacher of young children. I was observing a class, the majority of whom were very energetic four year old boys. The teachers asked me to listen to the children and suggest how they could expand on the children's interests and ideas. On the day that I observed the sun shone brightly after months of rain on the west coast. It was so warm, although it was only February, that the teachers turned on a hose in the large sand area at one end of the playground It was twelve thirty before any one had noticed the time. The children set up gutters at angles and ran water down into lakes which were soon connected to other lakes. They set up a car wash for the trucks which then became a game about 'trucks on fire'. One child spent a long time gazing at a wooden fence that ran along one side of the sand box. I realized that he was trying to figure out how the sand had become plastered high up, way above the children's heads, on the vertical boards of the fence. I wondered how it had myself? What a wonderful idea for a provocation. "How did the sand get up there?" Where else do we see sand stuck on to things? I can think of sandpaper, sand paintings, and even sand trucks. What made it stick? During the time I was observing I saw the possibilities of all sorts of ways a teacher could follow up on the children's ideas. It would be necessary for both teachers and children to be excited enough in the topic for it to develop into a project or as the teachers in Reggio Emilia call it a "progettazione". The more I think about the activities the children and teachers do together in the schools in Reggio Emilia, the more I see the importance of teachers being curious and excited about the things the children are interested in. The more I think about that, the more amazed I am at the lively, intelligent minds that children have and the ideas that they think of. As someone who has spent the better part of my career as an instructor of beginning teachers, I really wonder how we can keep alive that inquiring spirit or even, if necessary rekindle it in the students we teach, so that it is a match for the wonderful minds of children. How can we create teachers, like the ones I observed in Reggio Emilia, who are so engaged with children that the learning experiences become a collaborative exploration initiated by the children and their ideas.

Carol Anne Wien, in her article, **Toward a Pedagogy of Listening: Impressions of the Centre for Early Childhood Education,** Loyalist College, Belleville, Ontario, introduces us to a team of teachers who really know the value of listening to children. She also makes a point that I had never thought of and that is "listening as the environment speaks to children." How many of us have struggled to get children to use space in a classroom the way we believe it should be used and yet year after year children have other ideas about its use. I gained much insight into this by reading "the story of the pillar" in her article.

Sue Bredekamp, in her closing address in Winnipeg, said that children grow and learn in a respectful, responsive and meaningful environment." Listening closely to children, to parents, to the community and to each other has to be central to that process.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Canadian Children is the journal of the Canadian Association for Young Children (CAYC), the only national association specifically concerned with the well-being of children of preschool and elementary age in Canada. The journal is published twice yearly and contains articles, book reviews and announcements of professional conferences. **Canadian Children** is a multidisciplinary journal concerned with child development and early childhood education. Authors from across Canada, and elsewhere, are invited to submit articles and book reviews which reflect the variety and extent of both research and practice in early childhood education and child rearing.

CONTENT

Submissions should appeal to an audience that includes parents, professionals in the field of childhood education and child services, as well as teachers and researchers. Most issues are multi-theme in nature and the editor will attempt to balance articles that are research-related with articles of a practical nature relating to programming, curriculum, classroom practice or child rearing.

FORM, LENGTH AND STYLE;

articles may be of varying length, written in a readable style. Style should be consistent with an acceptable professional manual such as the **Publication Manual** (3rd Edition) of the American Psychological Association. Articles should be supplied on a 3.5" IBM or IBM compatible diskette in either Microsoft Word or WordPerfect and mailed with four (four) printed copies on 21.5 x 28 cm. (standard 8 ½ x 11') paper directly to the editor at the address listed below. If appropriate, authors should send accompanying black and white glossy print photographs , tables, figures or illustrations with complete captions, each on separate pages. Authors are to obtain releases for use of photographs prior to mailing. Please include a brief biographical sketch including the author(s) full name, title, professional affiliation, and other relevant information, such as persons assisting author, grant support or funding agency. It is expected that authors will not submit articles to more than one publisher at a time.

ACCEPTANCE AND PUBLICATION:

The editor will acknowledge receipt of , and review all solicited and unsolicited manuscripts received. The final publication decision rests with the editor, and will be communicated withi9n three months. Manuscripts not accepted for publication will be returned only if a stamped self-addressed envelope is included.

Please send all correspondence and completed manuscripts for publication consideration to: Susan Fraser, 2820 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, B.C. V7V 1L9 (Fax no. 604-922-3456). Or ATEK@dowco.com

GUIDE A L'INTENTION DES AUTEURS

Canadian Children est la revue de L'association pour les jeunes enfants (ACJE) la seule association vouée exclusivement aubien-être des enfants due préscolaire et de l'école primaire au Canada. Elle parâit deux fois l'an et regroupe des articles, comptes rendus de livres et annonces professionnelles.

Canadian Children est une publication multidisciplinaire traitant du dévelopment de l'enfant et de l'éducation de la petite enfance. Les auteurs du Canand et d'ailleurs sont invités à soumettre des articles et des comptes rendus de livres mettant en évidence la variété etl'étendue de la recherche et des approches en éducation de lat petite enfance et en formation de l'enfant.

CONTENU:

Les articles visent un public de parents, de professionnels dans le domaine de l'éducation de l'enfant et des services à l'enfance, ainsi que les enseignants et les chercheurs. En général chaque numéro comprend de multiples thèmes et le rédacteur en chef s'efforcera d'inclure à la fois des articles protant sur la recherche ainsi que d'autres de nature pratique traitant des programmes, des curriculums, des approaches en salle de classe ou de la formation de l'enfant.

FORMAT, LONGUEUR ET STYLE:

Les articles peuvent être de longeur variée et doivent etre rédigés dans un style accessible à tous les lecteurs. La présentation doit être conforme aux normes du **Publication Manual** (3e edition) de lAmerican Psychological Association. Trois exemplaires, dactylographiés à double interligne sur du papier de 21.5 x 28 cm (8 ½ " x 11"), devront être envoyés directement au rédacteur en chef à l'adresse indiquée cidessous. S'il y a lieu, les auteurs devront fournir toutes photgraphies accompagnant les articles tirées en noir et blanc sur papier glacé, tous les tableaux, figures ou illustrations avec leurs légendes, et nous les envoyer chacun sur une feuille séparée. Ils devront obtenir le permis de reproduction des photographies avant de les fair parvenir au rédacteur. Veuillez inclure une brève notice biographique incluant les noms au complet, titres, affilitions professionnelles et autres informations pertinentes telles que les nom des assistants, des supports financiers, des subventions. It est entendu que les auteurs ne soumettront leurs articles qu'à une seule revue à la fois.

REVISION, ACCEPTATION ET PUBLICATION:

Le rédacter en chef accusera réception et considérara tous les manuscrits recus, qu'ils aient été solicités ou non, et soumettra les textes qu'il aura retenus à au moins trois lecteurs externes au comité de rédaction. La décision finale quant a la publication est sous la responsabilié du rédacteur en chef et sera communiquée dans un délai de trois mois. Les manuscrits refusés seront retournés seulement si une enveloppe adressée et timbrée est encluse.

Veuillex adresser votre correspondance et vos manuscrits à Susan Fraser, 2820 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, B.C. V7V 1L9 (Numero de telecopier 604-922-3456). Ou ATEK@dowco.com

Welcoming Place: An Urban Community of Inuit Families

Gretchen Reynolds

Holding my hand, Christian guides me over to a child-sized table in front of a large, bright window. "Let's play here," he says eagerly. His invitation to play with the miniature people is a greeting I warmly accept, because I am curious about this particular set of toys and how a young Inuit child will use them.

The miniature figures have been invitingly arranged on the small table. The four adults, two females and two males, have light brown skin and dark hair, and I notice the women figures wear pants. They are sitting together inside a simple, open-sided building. Two babies are in cribs. Among the several other accessories are two small tents, several coniferous trees, and a couple of smaller outbuildings. Does this setting suggest life in the north to children, I wonder? It certainly contrasts with a city scene.

I wonder if Christian's dramatic play will reflect some of what he knows about Inuit lifestyle in the north. A young child's play often reflects everyday life events, and Christian's daily experiences are situated in downtown Ottawa, a populous, industrialized, urban environment. As a four-year-old, Christian has never visited the north, but his father is Inuk and Christian attends Tungasuvvingat Inuit Head Start, an aboriginal program that opened in March of this year. Christian's Inuk teacher, Ina, and the program's coordinator, Elizabeth Lightford, have told me that parents enroll their children here because, as city dwellers, they want their children to learn Inuit ways and Inuktitut, Inuit language. As Christian and I play for a few minutes, I remember to turn on my tape recorder, and here are snatches of our actual play dialogue.

Christian tells me that the family is waking up to fish for breakfast. Holding one of the women figures, I ask him, "Are you hungry Daddy? We're going to have fish for breakfast."

Ina is working in the nearby art area with several children. Overhearing our play, she calls, "Christian, what's fish in Inuktitut?"

Without hesitating Christian answers, "Iqaluk!"

Ina, "Right! You tell her!"

Christian turns to me, saying, "Iqaluk!"

Indicating a generic wooden figurine, Christian says, "Pretend this is iqaluk!"

We invent a cooking place - the slanted top of one of the baby cribs. I say, "Iqaluk, stay there and cook."

Christian repeats, "Hey, stay there iqaluk, and cook!"

Christian puts one of the men into a tent. I hear him making an alternating breathing and light snoring sound. Then Christian sweetly sings "Rock-a-bye baby on the tree top, when the wind blows the cradle will rock. Rock-a-bye-baby,..."

I ask, "What's the daddy doing?"

Christian answers, "He's sleeping now."

I also ask, "Is the fish cooking?"

Christian answers, "No, it's still alive. It's not cooking. It's going to bite you!"

I respond, "Why are you biting me, fish? Daddy, how do we kill the fish so we can cook it for breakfast?"

Christian says, "We cut it with the knife. Cut! I cutted it."

"How did you cut it?" I ask.

Christian says, "With a big knife."

I add, "That means the fish is going to be ready for breakfast."

A short time later I ask, "Daddy, what do you have to do today?"

Christian responds, "Let's go for a walk and see fireworks! Yahoo! Let's go!"

I ask, "Out here on the ice where the fish are?"

Christian answers, "Yeah. I see it!"

"You're very excited Daddy, what's happening?" I say.

"Look at that one! That's a big one! That's a big dog," shouts Christian's male figure.

Christian stops playing to give me a big hug, saying, "Now you be the daddy, and I will be the mommy."

I quickly discover that my companion is a capable pretend player. In the short time we play together Christian switches roles easily - he is a daddy, mommy, baby, and fish, and he encourages me to play multiple roles as well. Christian's play reveals knowledge of traditional Inuit lifestyle and, with the encouragement of his teacher, he uses some Inuktitut vocabulary. As a city dweller, I assume fireworks are an urban experience, and I ask Christian about seeing them from "out here on the ice" to point out what seems incongruous to me. I wonder if he is describing northern lights, and I am hoping he will expand on the fireworks idea so I will have some clues as to his meaning.

But Christian has a new idea, and I don't want my own questions to interrupt his play. Later I ask Ina about the children's knowledge of northern lights. "Not too long ago we were talking about northern lights," Ina tells me. "Some of them call them northern lights, but some of them call them fireworks. Some of them have seen northern lights before, but not very many of them. They call them fireworks. They almost look like fireworks, because they go ti, tu, ta. They call it ti, tu, ta."

"What is ti, tu, ta?" I ask.

Pointing to three Inuktitut syllabics on the wall in the children's circle area, Ina explains. "That's like these letters here, ti, tu, ta. When they're up in the sky, they look like ti, tu, ta! They go up like this." With her finger in the air, Ina's gesture is a wave-like motion.

The opportunity to play with Christian occurs during my visit to the Tungasuvvingat Inuit Head Start Program in Ottawa. Funded by Health Canada under the Aboriginal Head Start Initiative, the program's purpose is "to enhance the overall development of Inuit preschool children; foster positive parenting skills through support and education; and promote the retention of the Inuit culture and language" (Parent Handbook, 1997). The policy to emphasize Inuit culture and language is stated this way, "The retention of the Inuit culture and Inuktitut language is paramount in this program. Curriculum activities and materials, special events, daily snacks, parent education and parent resources should reflect the Inuit culture whenever possible. Inuktitut will be considered an official language of the program and will be promoted throughout all activities during the day. It is also the policy of the program to employ Inuit staff as much as possible" (Parent Handbook, 1997, p. 2).

I ask to visit this new aboriginal Head Start so that I can observe how the program reflects Inuit culture. As a teacher educator in Early Childhood Education at Algonquin College in Ottawa, I am humbly aware that our training falls far short of promoting students' (and our own) critical consciousness of issues of bicultural/bilingual diversity in children and families. My concerns are echoed in a recent publication of *Canadian Children*, a journal of the Canadian Association for Young Children. In an article on the preparation of early childhood students, the authors cite research in community colleges in three provinces showing that "faculty members believed that the majority of their students were not well prepared to work with culturally, linguistically, and racially diverse populations. Overall, graduates did not feel well prepared to work with diverse populations upon graduation" (Bernhard et al., 1997, p. 26). I am committed to broadening my understanding and telling stories of how early childhood programs in our community appreciate and celebrate cultural differences.

The Inuit were formerly called Eskimo people. They traditionally live in the Arctic regions of Canada, although now there are many Inuit dwelling in urban communities. Among the 400 Inuit who live in Ottawa, there is a sense of community here. I am told that Tungasuvvingat means "welcoming place" in Inuktitut. In an interview with staff and subsequent visit to observe the children's play at the Tungasuvvingat Inuit Head Start program, this is a place where I feel welcomed.

My conversation is with Ina Kuluguqtuq, who was raised in Pangnirtung, Northwest Territories, and Liz Lightford, a Euro-Canadian from Ottawa, Ontario. These women describe the Inuit parents' dreams for their children as the motivation for enrolling them in this program. I also begin to understand that working with Inuit children and families, and teaching traditions and

Inuktitut, is reviving Ina's childhood memories and restoring her identity as an Inuk.

Ina: Parents want children to know about their own culture. They want their children to know who they are and their rules, and their language. The parents don't want to lose their culture. This is a really good way to start their children, to learn their language and their culture. Most of she'd talk about it. She would invite the kids over just to watch her when she's opening the seal, and why this is good for you. That was very interesting to watch, and you believe it, because that's your grandma telling you!

Liz: That's the thing about being down in the south, I think it's a heartache for parents. One thing I learned about Inuit is how important

the parents are from the north. They grew up there and they moved down here. That's why they know about their childhood, which they don't see down here anymore.

Liz: Some of the parents have grown up down here. It was their parents who relocated to the south, and those parents tend to be the ones who have lost Inuktitut. I would say most of the ones who have come from the north themselves still speak Inuktitut.

Ina: When I was growing up, I learned a lot outside, not in a building, like growing up hunting, going camping, all the Inuit lifestyle, and here I want the little ones to know. My grandma, everytime she was doing something, cleaning fish, cleaning seal skin, cutting the meat, she would invite us to watch her, and family is to them and how important home is to them, so when they're away from home, even though Ina chooses to be in Ottawa, the homesickness that she feels and that other Inuit feel is a real heartache. So what I see parents feeling is, they can't go home, or they choose not to go home, but they want their kids to have some of home in the city, and it's a way of passing on themselves through their kids even though their kids can't be in the north learning it traditionally.

Ina: I feel welcome here in this building even when I'm not speaking Inuktitut. It's what I call my second home. Even today when I am trying to plan, trying to think about our Inuit ways, my grandma is coming back. They (memories) are coming back to me since we started this program, gradually they're coming back. For years they've put away somewhere, years. When you love the job they'll come back. That's happening here.

Liz: Some of our children don't look like Inuit! There are several who are blond-haired and very fair.

Ina: They have one white parent. They're Inuk and white mixed. We have four blond Inuit children. But they all know they're Inuit. They are proud of themselves. We have one child who came to school (in March) and didn't want to be called Inuk because she had brown hair, blue eyes, and looked like white. And she didn't want to be called Inuk at all when we first started. But not even two months she started to ask more about Inuit. "How did they do this? How did we do that?" At the end of the program, when she graduated, she was so proud of herself, who she is, that's a very, very, big thing for us to see, especially myself as an Inuit teacher. Who was not happy being Inuk, look at her now. She is so proud of herself that she's Inuk, she was telling her friends that she graduated from Inuk school. It's a big thing.

Gretchen: Do you use Inuktitut when you are speaking to parents?

Liz: Ina speaks Inuktitut to the ones who speak it. They will converse. If a parent knows as little Inuktitut as I do, then the language they converse in is English. Janet was raised mostly in the south, and she understands Inuktitut but doesn't speak it much, so Ina uses Inuktitut with her sometimes, but they usually talk in English.

Ina: Even though she knows she's Inuk. It's very sad to see young mothers that hear Inuktitut. They really want to speak it.

Liz: What's so interesting is the relationship between culture and language. When I hear you get

excited or happy about being around Inuit, it's because you're speaking Inuktitut with other Inuit.

Ina: To me, the language is everything. If I don't speak my language for about a week, let's say I speak only English, I'm craving for something, and I know exactly what I'm craving for, speaking in my mother tongue. When I speak Inuktitut I just relax again, my muscles were all uptight. It's very important, my language. It's always in me, I always speak it, especially around here, and when I see other Inuit I feel more special, especially living down south. When I'm in an English setting I feel smaller. Especially living down here, I feel like I have two sides, one side in English, and one in Inuktitut. That's why so many of us Inuit are losing our language. When we've been down here for long we're just stuck in one, English, because we don't hear Inuktitut anymore. When I'm speaking my mother tongue I feel very strong, more comfortable, I feel good about it.

Gretchen: When I look around the rooms here, I see Inuktitut syllabics in various places and on the walls at children's eye levels. The children's names are in syllabics in their cubbies, you are making a bingo game that uses syllabics, and there are even homemade alphabet blocks. How quickly do the children recognize Inuktitut syllabics?

Ina: All of my circle group learns to recognize their own names in syllabics in less than three months.

Liz: And I'd say most of your circle group knew everybody else's name in syllabics. One of the things we did this summer was to make a tape of Inuktitut songs that Ina had taught the kids, and we sent that home to the parents. Some of those parents will not know those songs. So by singing the songs at home with the children it's possible parents will learn them as well. I can see Jordan, whose memory is very good, and her language is very good, teaching her mom the proper enunciation and everything. And her mom doesn't speak Inuktitut. I'm sure there are some things that go home from this program that the parents don't know the kids will teach them.

Ina: After we opened, about a month later we heard a couple of parents say they are not allowed to say "thank you" in English anymore, it has to be in Inuktitut.

Liz: That may seem like a small thing, but it means so much to our parents.

Gretchen: How do you teach Inuktitut to your circle group?

Ina: You have to use both languages. I teach them syllabics, weather, calendar, months, days of the week, games, songs, and stories. They love their language, they love to learn Inuktitut. As the teacher you have to be involved, let them know that you can do it, and be proud of it, and get involved with the kids.

I am wondering if another reason for circle time is to support children's familiarity with public school routines. I ask, "Do parents also say they want you to get their child ready for kindergarten or first grade?"

Ina: No.

Liz: It is a goal of our program, but because it's an aboriginal Head Start, the other goal takes precedence for the parents, and for Ina, but it doesn't mean that we ignore the other goal to get these kids ready for school, socially and cognitively. Potentially, some of these kids will be here for 3 years before they go to school. It's very hard to know what kind of an impact we're going to have. But we do believe we're going to have an impact on their readiness for school.

I ask Ina, "Do Inuit people traditionally use some form of a calendar?"

Ina: I remember my grandma, when she was telling me a story, that when she was a child, there was no calendar like the calendar we have. We used to ask her, "How do you know what day it is?" She used to tell us the only time we have is what time it is. Up there it's 24 hours of daylight. She used to say the stars and the moon were their time clock. One time I was asking her, "How do you know

when it's time to go to bed when it's 24 hours of daylight up here?" Her parents would tell her when it's time to go to bed. How did they know? That part I don't know.

Liz: Do they have a way of counting a year, because then age would be irrelevant. If you didn't have a month, then you wouldn't have a year, and then you wouldn't count the age of one, or two, or fifty four, right?

Ina: My dad died just recently. He didn't know what month he was born. My mom does. She knows what month and year. But my dad, he knew the year but he didn't know the month. Grandma used to say that the outside is very important to us, being outside, because that's how they learn, that's everything up there. She used to say that everything the human being needs is there, outside.

Gretchen: What other Inuit traditions do you share with the children?

Ina: I do throat singing a bit at home with my two girls. One time I asked the kids here if they know throat singing, and some of them said, "What's that?" So I was singing (she demonstrates), and I said, It's better to have two kids. The sound is more beautiful when two kids are working."

Liz: The next day they did it! Spontaneously in their play they'd go up to someone and say, "Do you want to throat sing?" They made up a variation of throat singing, they put their heads together, which isn't what you do, but they started doing that, so now they all do it. Hands on the shoulders and heads together, they make gutteral throat sounds. So then parents tell us that they'll start doing it at home. The child will be playing on their own, and they'll start throat singing, just on their own.

Ina: I'm learning to do that part myself. Because where I'm brought up, there was no throat singing at all. I'm learning at the same time with the kids, which is more fun too.

Ina explains that up north, when there is a big community gathering, there are always traditional Inuit games. Throat singing is used in a performance, to entertain people. When the interview is over, Ina and Liz invite me to observe the children and the program in action.

I arrive early on the morning of my visit to take in the environment and to observe the children's free play. Some of the early childhood equipment is familiar, but I immediately see how rich the environment is with materials that support children's learning about Inuit culture and lifestyle through play. Dulled ulus (women's knives)* are available at the playdoh table. The book corner contains a shelf full of Inuktitut and English books about Arctic and northern themes, and stuffed animals and puppets that are Arctic animals - bears, seals, whales, and huskies. In the block corner a child helps herself to several seals, a dolphin, and a whale, which she carefully arranges on a child-sized quamutik (Arctic sled) and pulls across the middle of the room. Looking towards the dramatic play area, I see dolls with brown skin, dark hair, and dark eyes, a child-sized amauti (traditional baby-carrying parkas), kamiik (Inuit boots), and caribou skins. In the music corner the children can play on Inuit drums, or they can use the tape recorder to listen to tapes of aiyaya songs and throat singing.

Ina describes one of the games she hopes to obtain soon. "We have seal bones from a seal flipper. You have a sealskin bag with the bones inside. You toss them out, and you can make a dog team, a tent, a family, a seal, a walrus. There's a whole village in that one flipper you play with. I'm hoping to get those because that used to be my favourite game."

Elaine Shipley, a Swampy Cree from Peter Ballentyne Cree Nation in northern Saskatchewan, is the children's other aboriginal teacher. This morning Elaine and two children are playing with blocks, vehicles and miniature people on the floor in front of the big window. Elaine says, "I don't speak Inuktitut, but I'm feeling very soothed that it's around me, because it's a sadness in my heart that I don't speak. It's around everywhere. Especially in the Ottawa area no one speaks enough of their own language, so there's sadness over that. So when I hear it here I know it's one big strong community. And now the children are feeling very comfortable with it."

Having pulled an amauti over her head, Christina holds out a brown-skinned doll to Elaine and asks her to tuck the baby in the amaut (the carrying pouch on the back of the parka). Then Christina finds a space at the sensory table, and begins filling yogurt containers with tiny plastic beads. Christina tells a nearby playmate that she is making birthday cakes, and Elaine and Ina respond by singing "Happy Birthday" in Inuktitut:

Nalliutijuapick,
Nalliutijuapick,
Nalliutijuapick, Christina,
Nalliutijuapick!

On the floor in the art area, Ina and several children are busy painting medium-sized cardboard boxes with sponges they dip in black and brown paint. When she walks past, Liz's comment, "it's going to be a great inukshuk!" is my first clue about the intended use of the boxes. Liz reads

* Spellings and definitions here are from the glossary in Leroux, O., Jackson, M., & Freeman, M. (eds.). (1994). *Inuit Women Artists: Voices from Cape Dorset*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre.

the puzzled look on my face, and points to a large painting by a community member of an inukshuk on a piece of canvas on the wall. It is a cairn built of rocks, it resembles the shape of a human, and it is taller than either of the two Inuit standing astride of it.

I can understand only parts of Ina's conversation with the children, because she switches between Inuktitut and English. Glad once again that the tape recorder is running, I later transcribe a small sample, which Ina translates:

Alright!
We can go like this...
Ajungi! (doing good)
You want to do one too?
Next? My friend Ariana!
Here's your box.
Atiingilirit (Please sit down)
Piujuq, Christina!
(Beautiful, Christina)
Want some more brown?
Qinirtaq? (Black?)
Imaak. (Like this.)
Do the other side.
This is so good.
This part now.
You're finished? Taimaa?
(You're finished?)
Takuliruk! (Look at it!)
Ajungi! (Doing good!)
Nakummiik! (Thank you.)

In answer to my question, "What is 'inukshuk'?" Ina says, "There are a lot of ways you can use inukshuk. They can be used for when you go out hunting. If there was a really good hunting area, you put inukshuk with the rocks. If you're going out looking for caribou in the tundra, as you go further and further, you put small inukshuks so when you're going back you'll know the trail going back home. Also they can be used for challenges, because sometimes rocks are heavier and sometimes they are lighter, and the men challenge each other. There are lots of inukshuks around up north. In a big tundra area, if you're looking for caribou, and you didn't find any for a couple of hours, they put an inukshuk and walk farther, to make sure they don't get lost coming back when it gets dark. We know when we see the inukshuk that we're on the right path."

After tidy-up, the morning concludes with small group circle and snack. Ina conducts her circle group with the older children in Inuktitut immersion. They name the days of the week and the months of the year. They describe the weather, and choose a weather symbol to place on a large wall calendar. Then Ina leads a call-and-response style vocabulary lesson on this month's theme, the family. The children respond enthusiastically.

Ina: I need your help with our Inuktitut. What's mom in Inuktitut?
A child calls: Anaana!
What's dad in Inuktitut?
Ataata.
What's a girl in Inuktitut?
A panik.
What's a boy in Inuktitut?
Irnniq.
What's a grandpa in Inuktitut?
Ataatatsiak.
Grandma?
Anaanasiak.
Okay, can you say them all?
How about dad?
Ataata.
How about anaana?
A child whispers: Say "what's mom in Inuktitut?"
Ina: Yes! What's mom in Inuktitut?
Anaana!
How about a boy like you?
Irnniq.
How about a girl like Kelly?
Panik!
Ina: Ajungi! (doing good)

After all this hard work, everyone is tired and hungry, and circle time ends with food. I notice that preparing for snack is more like an honoured ritual than everyday routine. Ina and the children unfold a cloth which they spread carefully on the floor. The children sit down on it, and in the middle of their circle, Ina sets a tray of food. Today it contains cooked and frozen caribou, whipped cream cheese and bread, apple slices, and juice. I watch the children spreading their own cheese and helping themselves to the fruit from the common plate. Ina sits on the floor with the children. Using an ulu to cut thin strips of frozen caribou, and passing them around, Ina tells me that at first none of the children wanted to taste the meat. As they chew on the caribou, I can see from the pleasure in the children's faces that they now enjoy it.

Several days later I return to ask Ina and Elaine questions about the morning and to give them the photographs I have taken. One of my questions is about the inukshuk. "What did you do with the children's

painted boxes?"

Smiling broadly, Ina says: We made an inukshuk. You want to see it?

Ina takes me out into the front entrance. The painted boxes have been assembled in the shape of an inukshuk, which stands tall from a place on top of the cubbies. Ina explains that there are small rocks in the blockbuilding area for making inukshuks, but that this one will be kept here permanently. She says, "This inukshuk means 'welcoming place.' We know where to go. That's our Inukshuk in here, and we know where to go. We won't get lost in here."

Whenever I drop by the Tungasuvvingat Inuit Head Start, I first check to see that the children's homemade inukshuk is in its rightful place. Knowing its significance gives me pleasure because I feel less like a stranger. I have learned much from my visits here. These particular Inuit families reside in a city thousands of miles away from the environment that is indigenous to their culture, and where it is necessary to use English for survival. Yet because this Head Start is a segregated aboriginal program, the children have an exceptional opportunity to develop a sense of themselves as special, different, and uniquely Inuit. Their parents are also supported because, by being with other Inuit, they are helping one another maneuver with confidence in mainstream bureaucratic systems. A sense of pride in who they are as Inuit is necessary to balance the children's contemporary, urban lives, and to enable them to develop fully biculturally.

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Acknowledgements

Elaine (McDermott) Shipley is an ECE graduate of Algonquin College in Pembroke. Elaine is a Swampy Cree. She was born in northern Saskatchewan, and is part of the Peter Ballentyne Cree Nation. In her tenth year of teaching, Elaine has always taught in cooperative, non-profit programs.

Ina Kuluguqtuq was born in Pangnirtung, Northwest Territories. Ina went to a settlement school in Pangnirtung when she was fourteen. "We were living in outpost camp. Mom and Dad were my teachers. Everything I know today they're from my mom and dad, and grandma."

Ina's first language is Inuktitut. She began learning English when she was fourteen "And it was hard, because I didn't speak English in those days. I found it very hard but gradually I learned." In 1982 she went to Iqaluit for teacher training at the Eastern Arctic Teacher Education Program through McGill University. "I got a job right away in Iqaluit, a job was waiting for me. I was kindergarten teacher in a public school, in Nakashuk School for 3 years, then in Joamie School, grade 2. All the children were Inuit. All the teaching was in Inuktitut, we used no English at all."

Ina met her husband, a Ukrainian, in Iqaluit, and came to Ottawa because his job was transferred here in 1991. Ina has four children and two grandchildren - three years old and seven months old. Ina used her mother tongue and English with her children. "Our girls use English, their first language. They were asking me why I didn't teach them Inuktitut right from the beginning. I answer them, because your dad doesn't speak Inuktitut. If I was to speak to you in Inuktitut, how is your daddy going to feel? So their first language is English, then Inuktitut, and Ukrainian. They understand them but they would answer you in English."

Elizabeth Lightford feels fortunate to be the coordinator of the Tungasuvvingat Inuit Head Start. She has been working in the field of Early Childhood Education for more than twelve years, with infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school age children, and in teacher education at Algonquin College in Ottawa. Liz has an Ontario ECE Degree, a Bachelor of Education, and a Masters of Education. Liz says, "I feel that my life's work is about children and what helps them to learn and grow in the best way they can. I want to work very hard for the families in our program."

A version of this article is being considered for an edited volume called **Playing for Keeps**,published by Redleaf Press

Towards a Pedagogy of Listening: Impressions of the Centre for Early Childhood Education, Loyalist College, Belleville, Ontario

Carol Anne Wien

The municipal schools for early childhood in Reggio Emilia, Italy, have generated considerable excitement in the field of early childhood education across North America in the past decade. The study tours to Italy, the visits to the travelling exhibit *The Hundred Languages of Children* in various cities, the dialogue on the Internet and the textual materials available (eg. Cadwell, 1997; Edwards, Gandini & Forman, 1993; Hendrick, 1997; the Innovations Newsletter; Katz, 1990; New, 1997) have inspired the early childhood education community in North America to work towards higher standards and more complex goals. Katz in her foreword to a recent book on documentation (Helm, Beneke & Steinheimer, 1998) acknowledged, "We are grateful to them [our colleagues in Reggio Emilia, Italy] for setting new standards of early childhood education in both the quality of documentation and the quality of the children's experiences being documented" (p. i). This article highlights impressions of one centre in Canada, its recent work to interpret the philosophy of Reggio Emilia, and examples of how the centre has transformed its practice within a Canadian context.

The centre is located on the outskirts of Belleville, a town of 45,000 on the Bay of Quinte, which opens into Lake Ontario. The energetic Moira River -- black and very fast moving -- swirls alongside Front Street into the bay. It is a town where the lilt of Scottish, Irish and English ancestors -- the United Empire Loyalists who moved north from the United States at the time of the American revolution -- is still heard in the speech of the townfolk. The surrounding area includes a population of 130,000, and a mixed economy of manufacturing and agriculture. The Centre for Early Childhood Education is part of Loyalist College, and provides a model centre for the two-year Early Childhood Education Diploma offered by community colleges in Ontario, Loyalist among them. The centre for children opened on the college campus in 1990 with a new director, Alex Doherty, who brought together the current staff of five teachers: Suzanne Steele, Dawn Szolopiak, Teresa O'Neil, Mary McConnell, and Wendy Lightle. Each year two full-time interns work with them as well as additional part-time staff. The centre is supported by the Early Childhood Education Programme at the college, and was introduced to the work of Reggio Emilia by faculty member Betty Exelby.

The director and staff have worked together for seven years, working with the inspiration of Reggio Emilia for the past five years. Their work as a team is supported in concrete ways by the college administration and faculty: for example, they have visited the Early Learning Centre in Washington, D.C. (when it was associated with Reggio Emilia), the schools of St. Louis, Missouri, and conferences, usually sending the entire team. While costly, this support clearly permits a collaboration among team members that is more difficult if some members of the group have not been privy to an experience others have had. In June 1997, the Centre, together with the faculty for Early Childhood Education, held their first conference on using the inspiration of Reggio Emilia, drawing 150 participants from across Ontario and beyond.

This article shows the movement of the centre from a traditional style of practice towards a unique, particularized practice adapted to its locale. Moments of current practice are rounded out with Alex Doherty's descriptions of how their practice shifted from traditional to new forms. Where material in the article is in quotations, these are Alex's words as she and I chatted about the centre. The practice of teachers in centres is dynamic not static (Britzman, 1991), conflicted, and partly tacit (Wien, 1995). The descriptions here and Alex's comments should be seen as snapshots, traces in a moving stream of experience made at a specific point in time, even as the evolution of that practice continues. The snapshots merely lift out aspects for view. The snapshots (in text) are themselves reflections -- traces of documentation -- whose conscious review may also contribute to shaping practice (Manicom, 1988; Wien, 1996).

Alex's theme is that copying ideas from Reggio Emilia does not work for them. Rather, ideas have to be processed collaboratively by the staff in conjunction with real problems and challenges. Out of this collaboration new forms of practice emerge, some Reggio-like and some unique transformations specific to this staff, this programme, this culture. The article begins with impressions of their environment, and then traces several examples in the development of the environment, such as the story of the pillar, of the overhead projector, and of the rock wall. Lastly, I describe the staff's ongoing experience with documentation. Each example shows multiple aspects of practice and of the influence of Reggio ideas: it is one of the

limitations of linear text to be able to address only one facet at a time.

Impressions of the Environment

While the space that the centre occupies was intended for children, it is, in its fundamentals, an institutional space -- concrete brick walls, heavy bright blue steel fire doors, cold flooring, cool blue-gray walls, high ceilings. On the plus side, it is spacious and has large expanses of windows overlooking a pastoral landscape of grassy fields and green trees. The triumph of the staff is to have transformed a space with a cold forbidding affect into an aesthetic environment full of texture, light, interesting spatial effects, transparency, and whimsy -- on a minimal budget. It is a lesson in how beauty and order can be created out of bleakness.

A visitor to the centre first notices that the environment is richer, more textured and complex than in many Canadian classrooms. Interesting spatial effects are provided by parachutes, canopies, trellises, old picture frames (filled with lace or foil) and suspended in ways that redefine and reshape vertical space to give it softer more flowing shapes, and to change the quality of light underneath. The well-equipped housekeeping area in the preschool room is overhung with angled trellises interwoven with grapevines. They filter the fluorescent light, provide a lower ceiling, and suggest the invitation of an intimate space, a porch or patio; the trellises offer an element that children can choose to respond to in their play. The toddler room has a beautiful white lace-like canopy over its housekeeping area and a huge pale blue parachute hanging from the ceiling in billows around a core. Its shape defines the reading area. Such features push the harshness of the institutional architecture into the background and help make the setting a welcoming place for children.

As the visitor looks more closely, the way the teachers have worked with two familiar principles from Reggio, transparency and relationality, is quickly noticeable. Transparency permits seeing beyond a boundary to other possibilities, to other reference points (Giacopini, 1997). Transparency expands one's vision, one's location in space in relation to other locations. It extends fields of vision, draws one in to see more. In the centre for early childhood education, transparency is

The triumph of the staff is to have transformed a space with a cold forbidding affect into an aesthetic environment full of texture, light, interesting spatial effects, transparency, and whimsy -- on a minimal budget

apparent in open shelving, some of it quite high, to break up the huge vertical spaces. In the toddler room these high spaces are full of plants and large clear containers of brightly colored water -- yellow, green. The jars look like jewels or stained glass windows and are gorgeous. In the infant room picture frames stretched with lace or reflective paper are hung at angles above adult height and make interesting patterns of light and shadow on walls and floor. These change with the appearance and disappearance of the sun. In the preschool room long strings of ivory-coloured beads and bamboo provide a swinging wall between housekeeping and block areas, but it is a wall one can see through or push apart. Moving it produces a sussurating sound that can become part of the play on either side.

The principle of building up relationality concerns all aspects of a programme. The Reggio educators speak of working to provide a context for children's activity (Cadwell, 1997; Rinaldi, 1997). To provide a context suggests that materials are not set out in isolation (Legos in a bin, for instance) but are always placed in relation to other materials so that more complex relations are possible (Legos on a mirrored surface with small polished stones, as seen at Balducci School). These richer relations among materials invite more complex interactions and learning in children. We know that the brains of humans, as pattern seekers, prefer more complex contexts for learning (Caine & Caine, 1991; Howard, 1994; Poole, 1997; Sylvester, 1995). As well, children play longer and with fewer conflicts in more complex play units, something noted long ago (Kritchevsky & Prescott, 1969). One space where Alex and the teachers have clearly worked to build up relationality is the sand area.

The sand area in the preschool room is a little beach. It is on the floor with lots of sand (on a plastic tarpaulin). There are child-size brooms and dustpans close by for the bits that begin to wander onto the floor. (There was less sand on the floor than one often sees around sandboxes.) The sand area was a complex landscape to enter bodily, bounded on three sides and open on the fourth. Across from the open entry side was a large horizontal mirror the width of the area, a shelf at child height for objects or sand sculptures. Along one side was a set of open shelving with implements, trowels, a basket of sticks, a wooden bowl of stones, plastic yellow trucks, a huge ostrich egg. On the left side was an indoor garden composed of tall pampas grass, a bird bath structure full of plants and an arrangement of several small stumps of wood cut to different heights to provide seating. With the exception of large yellow plastic trucks the colours were the restful tones of natural materials -- wood, sand, sticks and stones, the green of living plants. There was sufficient sand for very satisfying play and the children could

walk in and walk out. Reggio educators speak about bringing the outdoors inside (Gambetti, 1997). As a community on a lake, the sand area was a beautiful echo of the natural environment close by, a space that brought the outdoors inside and invited memories and images of the lakeshore. In winter, it called to mind the rhythm of seasons, the promise of summer.

Listening as the Environment Speaks to Children

To hear Alex speak of their work with space provides a view of the impact the staff believe the environment to have on its inhabitants. Alex will say of a grungy dark corner that it "mocks" her -- it bothers, troubles, laughs at her, calls out for attention, reworking. It can take a long time to figure out how to transform a grungy dark corner so it scaffolds children's learning as a "third teacher" (Malaguzzi, 1993). She speaks about light as a participant in the energy of an environment and about how each space has its own *affect*, derived in part from qualities of light and how the staff has worked with them.

They watched for "various energies" in different spaces, and used this information to assess what the children needed the environment to do for them

The centre has three classroom complexes, one each for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. She speaks of the infant room as very serene, calm, and restful, and how "the light tickles their faces, dances in the room". It is a soft light that moves in and out of lace panels trailing patterns over floor and walls. Alex describes it as " a real quiet, slow but warm affect". The affect of the toddler room is soft and serene too, but sensuous: "there's more a feeling of moving your face through your grandmother's sheers." There are, in fact, transparent curtains hanging low, an invitation to touch. The preschool room is more complex, with sharper contrasts in light and shadow, from an end of the room with dim, dark corners to the other end with very bright natural light. "It took us a couple of years to figure out how to work with it: we had to really watch the children."

To grasp what Alex means by "really watching the children", here is how she described the evolution of uses of a windowless indoor space, adjacent both to the kitchen and to her office, a space broken by a rectangular pillar. She said the staff "absolutely hate this pillar" -- because it's huge, breaks up the space, and blocks sightlines. Then she commented:

> But our toddlers love the pillar. Each and every year, new group after new group, they run around the pillar. It doesn't matter what you tell me, this area speaks to the children (saying), "you must run around the pillar, and you must run up and down very joyously."

She described the many different uses of the space the staff attempted, beginning with an eating area because it was close to the kitchen:

> The children couldn't sit in that space for very long. We then thought we'll address the physicality, by putting a gross motor area out there. They literally bounced off the walls. They would get themselves so physical that they couldn't wind themselves down. Then we put the infant-toddler atelier out there: we thought, the toddlers keep going around the pillar, let's make it their space. Well, we were listening to the fact that the toddlers wanted to claim it for their own, but we weren't giving them the proper tools. So then we moved the infant-toddler atelier, because they weren't engaging in atelier –
>
> *-- they were running around the pillar!*

Yes. So finally we said, let's be rhythmic in this space. Children bang away on percussion instruments in the music area as we speak. She concluded: "We had to build a relationship with the space."

But Alex and the staff of the centre did not begin their work with such remarkable attunement to relations between young children and the space they inhabit. She said that when they first heard about Reggio, they were what she termed, "the shopping mall school of early childhood education" with lots of Fisher-Price, attractive Rubbermaid containers and primary colours. She said the staff loved party stores and had wonderful decorations for themes, such as crepe paper bananas and strawberries. It was, she said, "very teacher-directed." How did the staff move from a teacher-directed, theme-based curriculum to a sophisticated scaffolding of the environment that treats it both as a third teacher and as an aesthetic habitat for young children? Somewhere in the previous curriculum, someone noticed that the crepe paper party banana (hung up to stimulate the infants), was not a banana at all, and the question arose of the messages being given to the children. This reaction triggered a stripping of the environment and a commitment to watch the children for cues. They watched for "various energies" in different spaces, and used this information to assess what the children needed the environment to do for them. The Reggio educators spoke during the May 1997 study tour of "progettazione" not simply as

project work or a negotiated curriculum but as a pedagogy of listening: Alex's description of the evolution of uses of the pillar space seems to me an interpretation of "progettazione" as listening (Rinaldi, 1997).

Two other examples of the staff's work with materials, with watching children very carefully for their responses, and with taking Reggio ideas seriously show how their current practice has emerged. One example concerns the overhead projector and another the rock wall.

Light as an Element of Curriculum

When Betty Exelby first introduced the centre staff to Reggio Emilia it was the images of light and shadow that intrigued them. Alex challenged one of the toddler teachers to play with an overhead projector in the middle of the room.

> It became a love affair with light and shadow with this particular group of 18 month-old babies. They started to put their bums on the overhead, their transitional objects -- their teddy bears, their beloved dolls, their shoes, they put each other's heads -- and what began as a "why don't you try" example was a wonderful instance where the wholeness of the Reggio principles was served to us on a platter. We risked to try something different, that technically speaking was not a safe thing to do with toddlers. And we had an interchange between one another saying I'll support you, you support me. What happened was that [the response of the children was so empowering] that they felt we *trusted* them. This was the key for us. ... They felt so trusted, to be able to interchange in something that seemed so complicated and so grown up, that they revered the opportunity. We did not have any instances of the overhead wobbling, something being broken, the glass being shattered. We have a parachute in the toddler room, and we folded one side down. And what they would do is, they would shine the image on the side of the parachute and it became this rapturous delight -- "Look" -- and then they began to dance in the light. They began to dance with each other in the light. They danced with the shadows. They poked the shadows.

For safety reasons (the bulb can burst if the projector is inadvertently bumped) -- the projector was set in an opening in the centre of a small table that totally surrounds and protects it. When this group later moved from the toddler to the preschool room, they wondered where the overhead was, and this precipitated making a second special table and projector and a new shadow screen.

> And so we had to make yet another overhead. And we had to look at how different their experience had become, and how much more complex their understanding of light and shadow. So we had to make another [shadow] screen. We had to look at where the image should be. We had to go back and look at all of our anecdotal records from before. So we ended [up] putting the overhead in the puppet area, so it would shine through the puppet area, into the block area. You could swing the screen down, so they could do more rhythmic music and movement play with their bodies in front of the screen, but behind the screen they could build structures with those geometric shapes, which would show through the other way. It became a very interesting way of meeting the different complexities of the children's play. There was still that, "I gotta dance in there". But on the other side of the screen, the need for the geometric. So, my story's very long-winded, but as opposed to me saying "Giovanni's got a light table, I got to get me one of those" which was [the way] with the triangle kaleidoscope mirror, we came about embracing the light in our own way. So when someone says to me, I see you have a shadow screen, I can tell them the 25 minute story of how the children needed it.

Alex commented that the elements they simply copied from Reggio didn't seem to work so well. They weren't used in integrative ways in their teaching. This was the case with the kaleidoscope, a large triangular-shaped play structure, its interior three sides lined with plastic mirrors, so that you can sit inside and see self-reflections repeated, bent, viewed from odd perspectives. Copying something didn't make it theirs, whereas working extensively with the children's repsonse to the overhead projector made the overhead a process of curriculum that was cherished by the children and teachers alike.

Reciprocity: The Rock Wall

The toddlers' rock wall shows the staff's commitment to observing and attempting to respond to the children's interests and capabilities in a reciprocal way. The rock wall is a low wood channel with its long sides made of clear plexiglass. In the toddler room it acts both as a curriculum material and a divider between the housekeeping area and a passageway. On the wall close by

are panels with photographs of children carrying rocks. Alex told me:

> The children were forever bringing rocks in their pockets, in their hands, in nooks and crannies and we were trying to be the good caregivers by saying, "Oh, you need to leave those outside please. You're going to hurt your friends with them , they might go up your nose".....*And we finally said, well why can we not love the rocks like the toddlers. How can we love the rocks.* So we built the structure. We left it empty. And when the children came in, in the fall, we wondered what they would do with it. We didn't have a model rock, we didn't have a sample. We had nothing around it. And children came in with rocks from outside, like they usually do, and we didn't do the redirective "Heh, why don't you leave those outside" and we let them go through the room. And the first place they went was the rock wall and deposited them. So what we did was we built the structure, and we left it empty and we watched what the children did with it. We made a hypothesis that the children *may* choose to put their beloved rocks in the structure.

What impressed Alex was that the documentation panels of the process of making the rock wall continued to trigger retellings of the story long afterwards. This impressed her because while she thought toddlers might refer to themselves in the photos she had not expected them to retell the story.

> And what they do now is they sit in the rock wall, toe to toe, have a drink of juice, have a cracker, and they "read the panel" and say "Oh, the rock, oh." So that became very significant for us.

These particular panels were still on the wall three years later, the story relived after the original children were long gone. The story of the rock wall is a story of a relationship between young children and the rocks they loved in the outdoor landscape, and how the teachers honoured this love by offering a relationship indoors. A beautiful moment of reciprocity, it was deeply satisfying for both children and adults.

Evolving Documentation

The forte of this group of teachers is their development of the environment as a "third teacher". They use the environment as a source of curriculum that scaffolds the relations of children and adults in the space: Alex said "The thing that we enjoy most [is] -- we're all doers -- we love to move the furniture." She speaks of the vision they had in starting together, of wanting "it to be the best environment that we could make it." If developing the environment using the inspiration of Reggio Emilia has been the area in which the staff has flourished, an area that was less clear and more puzzling concerned documentation. Alex commented that the teachers could confidently tell the story of why a particular corner of a room was developed as it was, but that they were less sure when it came to their documentation. She also commented that the things that worked best for them were done in collaboration and that, thus far, teachers had been doing their own documentation in isolation. Alex's story of their documentation attempts is especially interesting in a Canadian context and can help us see the struggle to work with ideas from another culture and interpret them in ways that fit our own contexts.

...we need to understand why we're doing something before we do it, before we swallow a practice whole

The first attempt of the teachers to document arose around the question of weaving summer experiences of the children into the curriculum when the programme began again in September. "One of the tools we tried and continue to maintain was sending home a Ziploc bag with the children to fill it up -- one Ziploc bag to tell how I enjoyed my summer." While "a wonderful tool" for identifying curriculum, identifying interests, meeting the children and the parents, the ways of using these treasures were perplexing. "Nothing ever seemed quite to work." The treasures ended up in a filing cabinet.

Simultaneously, as the staff worked with curriculum through the cultivation of the environment, they took tons of photographs, and then had the question of what to do with them. Initially, they made attractive displays of these photographs: "We had many images of the children moving through the process of an activity and we would display them on red, blue, yellow, orange, pink kinds of paper." At the same time, she says, "We really weren't threading a message through them; we really weren't telling a story." Since in stripping the environment they had also removed all the bulletin boards, in addition they weren't too sure where to display these documentation panels. But because of the new ways in which they were working with the environment, the panels with their brightly coloured backgrounds looked "too jarring", so they switched to white backgrounds:

> We literally just took the white paper because Reggio did white paper. That was one of our first lessons, that we need to

> understand why we're doing something before we do it, before we swallow a practice whole. But we still had to keep the colours in, so we would frame the pictures in blue -- we couldn't let it go."

At some point, they began to understand the panels "were supposed to tell a story." So they made panels to tell a story: " -- the entire story of why we did what we did, what we did, what happened afterwards, and how much we liked it. All in one panel. It was very overwhelming." They learned they had to have a sense of judgment about how much the reader could take in and they realized they were presenting curriculum as a "fait accompli" to parents.

At the NAEYC conference in 1997 they were able to show some of their documentation panels to Brenda Fyfe, a key proponent and facilitator of the three schools in St. Louis, Missouri that are working extensively with Reggio ideas:

> Brenda gave us input that we need to present more of our hypotheses ... and the children's questions or queries need to be documented right at the beginning.

One of the difficulties in grasping what is meant by Reggio-style documentation is distinguishing between panels that are displays of activity, and panels that make the arduous process of children's thinking visible *because* the adults have followed its course closely, challenged this thinking, nurtured it, and worked alongside it in a sustained way.

Alex commented that their early thinking in making documentation was very linear and teacher-directed and didn't show the reciprocity they were learning to work with in the environment, that the panels were presented in a summary gesture of "here's the story". Alex acknowledged:

> One of our problems with our documentation to this point is that they've all been done in isolation. When we don't do something all together, it doesn't work as well. ...
> One of the things that I think is missing in what I've read of Reggio, and what I've seen so far, is *the need to build the relationship with each other first.* We have to know each other very well.

Alex believes that to teach well together, the team must know each other deeply and that she doesn't see this in reading about Reggio Emilia. I suggest this is an aspect of the Reggio teaching culture so taken for granted as something that must occur in Reggio Emilia, that it is assumed that this fact is understood. Such assumptions are tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1958; Schon, 1983), difficult to make explicit because they are believed to be so fundamental to a teacher's being. In a North American culture, however, where teachers have long worked alone, professional collaboration has to be built up out of cultural patterns that assume isolation in teaching. We have difficulty working together collaboratively in the way the Italians do in part because systemic constraints around time/space organization work against collaboration: teachers scheduled to be with children at all but nap time have no time in which to know each other well across classrooms so that collaboration could become a possibility. Alex also made the point that the principles that apply to the children also apply to the adult, that the philosphy is a whole: "-- trusting the child, trusting your colleagues; collaborating with the child, collaborating with your colleague."

The centre's documentation process continues to evolve. In the preschool room there was a wall that needed painting but wasn't going to get painted ("this wall mocks me, we've got to do something about it") and there was also a concern that the documentation was presented to parents as finished, closed, when the teachers wanted a more open-ended process. The staff had done "lots of brainstorming, how are we going to present documenting as a process and how are we going to hide this wall." In the midst of cleaning and organizing, putting up branches and clotheslines on a Friday, one teacher offered an unfinished quilt to hang over the wall, and someone added clothespins to hold photos.

> We said, "that's it!" It's the unfinished quilt with the unfinished documentation. It's also a particular pattern, someone told us later, that is indigenous to this particular area. It's called a paddle-boat design. The reason it's a paddle-boat design is there used to be a ferry going back and forth from the American side to the Canadian side [of the border]. So it became this wonderful example of simply working with something and when you step back from it, and it resonates with a particular affect, a positive way -- whether it's silly, wonderful, warm, inviting, whatever -- it has a resonance for the collective. You know you've hit it.

This arrival at a solution for two problems, an unsightly wall and a desire for more open-ended documentation, also demonstrates reflective practice.

Reflective Practice

Teaching is a profession in part because it involves design, changing something to make it better.

Herbert Simon (in Schon, 1983) argued that any work concerned with change, with designing things to be better, is professional work. In reflective practice something requires better design in order to reach towards the vision of the problem-solver. The professional makes an attempt, then assesses how it works or "listens to the backtalk" (Schon, 1987, p. 158). It is also a creative process in which practice is transformed as new forms emerge. I asked Alex if most of the change in their practice arose out of problems or challenges that the staff wanted to address.

> Generally they're out of something that motivates, probes us, pokes us to regard it, look at it. And when you really look at something you really see it for the first time. And you really feel it for the first time. And from that there is usually a series of questions that you ask yourself, like why did you put that there, what's that saying to you.
> *So you're really noticing your environment, you're really attuned to it.*
> We really listen to it, and we really feel it.

One final example of documentation shows their inventive solution to a perplexing question. Recall the Ziploc bags full of summer treasures that the staff felt a responsibility for honouring but did not quite know how best to use. Someone saw in a magazine a sort of decoration in the end of a shoebox -- rather like a diaroma. They thought this could be an interesting vehicle for children's treasures and then remembered the baggies in the file cabinet. They also wanted something more interesting in the infant and toddler change rooms to absorb attention and stimulate conversation. As a result, they made a shadow box for each child.

The shadow box is shallow cardboard with a wide matt around an open rectangle, like a deep picture frame. A photograph of the child is featured on the back wall of the opening. The shelf-like interior and the wide matt offer surfaces for treasures that speak to the identity of the child. The teachers too each have a shadow box in the entryway. Alex says that the adults went through the same process as the children and their parents, asking "What do I put in it? Who am I? What represents myself?" These shadow boxes illustrate the whimsy, playfulness and humour of the teachers in this particular locale. Alex's box, for example, includes a Tim Horton's coffee cup, a chocolate bar, a tiny crab for a Cancer, photographs of her son. Susanne's has musical instruments, Mary's has twigs, grasses and vines as though she carries the natural world around her wherever she goes.

But then the boxes become an adult curriculum, a message centre: "It's taken on a whimsical approach, because we seem to like to play jokes on each other. We'll put different things in each others' boxes that may or may not be something that we [would identify with]." So the shadow boxes have become a forum for dialogue, a little teasing, a representation of self but also a recipient of messages that continue a relation and a collaboration.

What is impressive in visiting the Centre for Early Childhood Education at Loyalist College and talking to the teachers is that the ideas and curriculum materials of Reggio Emilia have not been copied, although one can see an increased awareness of light as an element of curriculum, of using the environment as a teacher to scaffold activity and so forth, but that the wholistic ideas/principles of Reggio Emilia have acted as a provocation for explorations of practice. Out of this exploration, the centre and staff have created and constructed new forms of practice that are the interpretation of *this* staff in this specific location in a town settled long ago (by Canadian standards) adjacent to water and sand. To see this centre is to see both the power of Reggio Emilia to inspire and equally to see the power of the local interpretation. We see the power of one group of teachers in a setting with a supportive administration working together to understand and make their own the holistic principals and ecological systems theory approach that Reggio exemplifies (Filippini, 1997).

When I asked Alex what it is that she believes the staff have taken as the basis for their interpretation of Reggio Emilia she responded:

> I think the most powerful thing we have taken, in terms of our inspiration from Reggio, is *listening to the child, using the environment to address the needs and interests of the child: the child as very powerful, the child as full of resources.* That we are also very powerful and we are also full of resources. And that we can meet together and construct learning together.

Particular images of curriculum that have acted as keystones are slowing things down to the rhythm of the child and "keeping things intimate" with a family feel, so that children are in small groups with "significant caregivers" and stay with them through several years.

> We trust each other and we trust the child. You don't have to be in control of the curriculum all the time. You can negotiate it, construct it with the child. It's very powerful! And what it ends up being is a real kick for you as a caregiver. It ends up being far more rewarding. *That's the*

one thing that we want to give to people: that their interpretation will be very rewarding for them. And doing things in this rhythmic, natural way will benefit them as well.

Just as the Moira River courses with energy and swiftness through Belleville, so the centre staff have with astonishing speed transformed their practice from one traditional to the culture of Ontario to something original, their own. As visitors arrive to explore and be influenced by their experience, the impact of the staff's work spreads, like the river into the bay, in ways they cannot anticipate or control. Their work becomes a part of the moving stream of experience connected with Reggio Emilia, a contribution to the landscape of Canadian early childhood that provokes us to invent ourselves anew. Their practice is generative and creative, but best of all, the children are happy.

My thanks to Alex Doherty and the teachers at the centre, to Betty Exelby and to Ray Michol, Dean of the School for Human Studies at Loyalist College, for their collaboration on this article.

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Questions for Collaboration: Lessons from Reggio Emilla

Brenda Fyfe

One year ago, Rebecca New wrote an article for **Canadian Children** in which she described Reggio Emilia's conceptualization of documentation. She explained that it requires adults to observe, interpret, articulate and share what it is that they have learned from young children in collaboration with one another. She comments that it has long been an accepted practice in Canadian and American early education to emphasize the importance of observing and interpreting, but the "additional challenges of articulation and sharing make the role of the teacher akin to that of a collaborative action researcher." (1997, p10). In this article, I will attempt to examine and elaborate these "additional challenges" by identifying a set of questions that teachers are learning to ask themselves and each other as they move toward a negotiated, co-constructed and systematic approach that places documentation at the heart of an emergent curriculum. I will also discuss and frame these questions in terms of documentation, discourse and design, three components that define a dynamic system of learning that is seen in the schools of Reggio Emilia and, which I believe, may help teaching teams deal with the challenges of collaborative action research.

For the past six years I have observed and worked with teachers in St. Louis who have been studying the principles and practices of the Reggio Emilia approach to early education. This group is now known as The St. Louis Collaborative* for the study and adaptation of the Reggio Emilia approach. I have seen these teachers struggle as they search for new patterns of organization and communication that would enable them to apply this learning to their daily work with children and families. Some of the most difficult challenges they faced early in their process of change (Fyfe, 1994; Entsminger, 1994) relate to the collaborative style of work that asks teachers to think, plan, work and interpret *together* (Rinaldi, 1994). I have since observed that as teams of teachers become deeply invested and skilled in the process of documentation, they recognize that documentation is both a challenge and an enabling devise for collaboration.

Good documentation renders a performance record with sufficient detail to help others understand the behavior recorded. Such records enable teachers to articulate and share observations with colleagues. Reviewable records such as written notes, recordings and transcriptions of children's comments and conversation, photographs of significant learning experiences, or samples of children's work can offer the teaching team a common platform that frames and focuses their dialogue and debate about possible interpretations of children's beliefs and knowledge. Documentation supports discourse , the reflective talk among people who are studying each other's perspectives and interpretations with the aim of co-constructing shared understanding. Documentation and discourse enable teachers to generate designs for future learning experiences that have continuity with children's thinking and prior experience. George Forman and I (Fyfe and Forman, 1996; Forman and Fyfe, in press) have proposed that the three components of documentation, discourse and design define a negotiated learning process that we see happening in the schools of Reggio Emilia. These components create a system of causes, effects and countereffects that can be seen in the cyclical process of action research that moves from observation to reflection to analysis to planning to action, and back to observation as the cycle continues.

So where do we begin the process of documentation and how do we do this in a collaborative way? Many teachers are ready and willing to take on the difficult challenge of documentation that makes research a permanent learning strategy for children and adults (Rinaldi, 1994). Many are ready and willing to move beyond observation and interpretation to engage in the full process of action research. But it is a much greater challenge and often a frightening and foreign prospect for teachers to participate in the kind of *collaborative* action research that is characteristic of the work in Reggio Emilia. Loris Malaguzzi, the founder of the Reggio schools, explained that it requires us to leave behind an isolated, silent mode of working. He understood the magnitude of the shift from teaching, learning and researching in isolation to doing this within an interactive collegial relationship. In an interview with Lella Gandini he explained:

> "It represents a deliberate break from the traditional professional and cultural solitude and

> isolation of teachers. This isolation has been rationalized in the name of academic freedom, yet wrongly understood. Its results, certainly, has been to impoverish and desiccate teachers' potential and resources and make it difficult or impossible for them to achieve quality." (Malaguzzi, 1993, p. 64).

This new paradigm of teaching as a collegial and research based activity requires certain shifts in our thinking and practice. These include 1) that we make our observations visible so that we can share them with colleagues, 2) that we consider each others' perspectives as we dialogue, debate and negotiate shared interpretations, 3) that together we formulate hypotheses, predictions and projections about future learning experiences that we might propose to the children, and 4) that we organize, diversify, and coordinate our work in light of these agreements.

These shifts have become apparent in the kinds of questions that I see teachers from the St. Louis - Reggio Collaborative asking themselves and each other. Perhaps the questions could be used as a scaffold, a set of reminders for teaching teams that are not accustomed to collecting, organizing and reflecting on documentation and then using it as a support structure to enable discussion and the comparison of ideas among teachers, children and parents.

The Questions

The first set of questions relate to the initial phase of a *documentation* process. They deal with philosophical as well as very practical and organizational issues that must be resolved if the team is to be successful in collecting reviewable records that serve their purposes.

The second set of questions takes us further into a cycle of collaborative action research that requires teachers to reflect and interpret. The documentation already collected will support the *discourse,* the verbal interchange of ideas. The questions lead us to reflect through the lens of our initial hypotheses and our understanding of child development and research, but also ask us to be open to interpretations that may go beyond these expectations.

The third set of questions move the teachers into the next step in an action research cycle. This involves drawing implications from our reflections and interpretations in order to *design* future observations and learning experiences. This is where observation and reflection inform plans for future action. Reggio educators prefer to use the word "projection" rather than plan because it reminds us that future actions and interactions with children (or parents) must be proposed and negotiated. We must always be open to the possibility that the children will propose an even better way of proceeding.

The fourth set of question take us back to the beginning of the collaborative research cycle. They ask us to anticipate ways to continue the process of documenting the experiences that are to follow. They also remind us to consider how all the stakeholders may be involved in the learning that is taking place.

Set 1 Documentation

What will we observe and study? Why?

The first question may be obvious. If I am going to begin with documentation, I must decide what to document. But, the shift toward teaching as a collegial process insists that this question be considered from the perspective of "we" rather than "I". Whenever possible, the team should deliberate on this question.

This question can be applied to any framework of time - a year, a semester, a month, a week, a day. For example, early in the year, a team of teachers may wish to identify priorities for observation and study through the coming year or for the next semester. An effort is made to align monthly and weekly projections with these priorities, but there must always be an openness and expectation that the context that informed these priorities is ever-changing. Each week and sometimes each day, teachers will need to reconsider and adjust their focus of observation.

The question can also be applied to any part of the learning experience and relationships among the three subjects of education - the children, teachers and families. For example, the focus of observation may be designed to uncover children's interests and ideas in regard to a potential project study. It may be to investigate an area of concern for teachers and parents, such as children's obsession with the latest toy fad. The focus may be on the flow and continuity of everyday experiences. It may be on daily communications with parents.

Another piece of this question is "Who will be observed?" Will the observation focus on a particular group of children or the whole class? Is it important to look at all the children, but in the context of small groups? Is the make-up of the group critical?

Whatever the agreed upon focus, the team should articulate a clear rationale for their decision. Why is it worth observing and studying? Why

is it worth pursuing with children or parents?

What questions or hypotheses might guide our observations?
What are we trying to learn? What do we predict and anticipate about the focus of our observation that might suggest one method of data collection over another? Can we simply observe or do we need to interact or intervene with the children in some way in order to gather the desired information? For example, if we are trying to determine what children think about a proposed subject for a project, what questions might we be prepared to ask?

What tools or techniques should we use to document our observations (e.g. paper and pencil, tape recorder, camera, camcorder)?

Which are best suited to the kind of observation we anticipate? For example, video might be preferred for an action-packed episode. An audiotape recorder may be more appropriate and useful in recording conversations of children. Should we be prepared to take written notes, use observation charts, take slides or photos? Which kinds of records will leave the most interpretable traces? Which are available and in working order?

Do we anticipate being able to use some of the documentation at a later point with children? If so, what form(s) of documentation (e.g. photos vs. slides vs. video vs. transcriptions of conversations) may be best suited for such revisiting? What perspective should our documentation take? For example, should we have photos of what the children were observing as well as photos of the children observing?

Who will collect or record the observations?

If a teacher needs to be involved in the activity being observed, can she facilitate or participate and document at the same time? Will an additional person be needed to document? Can equipment (like a camcorder or tape recorder) be set up and positioned in advance?

If the observation is to be done by one or more teachers with a small group, who will be responsible for the rest of the class?

This is where teams make agreements about the coordination of their work. It may be important here to discuss and come to agreement about plans for supporting the flow of activity that may impact the observation.

When, where and for what length of time should we observe?

Is this an activity that happens at only one part of the day or do we need a sampling of observations that cross time (a day, several days, a week, a month)?

How might the environment be organized to support the observation?

Is it important to have a quiet area, free of distractions? If so, how can we arrange this? Is lighting an issue? Are particular materials or equipment needed? Do we need to consider the arrangement, organization or availability of materials?

Once we have this data what has to be done so that the team can review it?

Does a tape need to be transcribed? Does a video need to be logged or edited? Do observational notes need to be copied and/or distributed? Do photos need to be developed?

When and how will we review this documentation and collectively reflect on it?

Do we have a time and place set aside daily or weekly for the team to study the documentation? If, on occasion we cannot meet, can we somehow do this on-the-fly? Can each team member distribute written reflections on the documentation? Might we consider a meeting with parents to discuss the documentation?

Set 2 Discourse

Reminder: The second set of questions takes us further into a cycle of collaborative action research that requires teachers to reflect and interpret. The documentation already collected will support the discourse, the verbal interchange of ideas. The questions lead us to reflect through the lens of our initial hypotheses and our understanding of child development and research, but also ask us to be open to interpretations that may go beyond these expectations.

Depending on the focus of the observation, of course, these questions will need to be rephrased. The questions listed below assume that the focus of the observation was on the children.

What does the documentation reveal?

- about children's ideas, interests, feelings, opinions, assumptions, working theories
- about the environmental conditions that may have affected their behavior

INSIDE CAYC

President's Message

Maxine Mercer
President, CAYC

Our National Conference, **Canadian Children: Voices To Be Heard**, held in Winnipeg, Manitoba February 8 - 10, 1998 was exciting, invigorating and successful. Those in attendance got to hear presenters give their views on voices that need to be heard on behalf of children and were given opportunities to share their own views during informal discussions and workshops. We were informed that educators of young children have a voice on the ways in which programs are planned and implemented to foster learning and development; likewise parents have a voice as partners and co-facilitators in their children's education and most importantly we were told that we must take time to listen to what children themselves have to say about their learning. It appears that all of us who are involved in the care and education of young children must ensure that voices are heard. The conference left us with many challenging ideas to bring back to our respective workplaces. Sincere thanks are expressed to Margaret Smith and Anne Grewer, conference co-chairs, and all the conference planning committee for a job well done. Canada's children will definitely benefit from such an outstanding effort of professionalism.

Gloria Mclaren has recently completed her term as a Board member. Gloria will no doubt continue her work with CAYC in Manitoba. We will miss her involvement and commitment to the Board. However, we are pleased to welcome three new members to our Board, Ontario's Cathy Ingham, Margaret Smith from Manitoba and Quebec's Louise Ledoux- Hanlon. We are also happy to have Elnor Thompson begin her third term as Nova Scotia's director,

Our next Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, November 22, 1998 in Toronto. The AGM will be in the form of a breakfast meeting. So, if you plan to attend the National Association for the Education of Young Children conference, be sure to join us for the AGM. Three national directors will be elected at that time, as well as, provincial directors for British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick and Newfoundland,

In January of this year, we renewed our contract with RIGOR Marketing Services to carry out the Association's membership services. So far, your feedback has been positive, but we ask you to please let us know if there is something we can do to be of better service to you.

CAYC's Friends of Children Award is now getting the national focus it deserves. Provincial associations are making a point of presenting the award at local events. The Board was fortunate enough to be included in one such event while in Winnipeg. Educators are starting to talk about the award and it's very quickly gaining credibility nationally. This is a unique way to recognize the outstanding contributions our colleagues have made to the profession and we must be sure the tradition continues. Please be sure to submit name of a deserving colleague.

Many exciting things have been happening around the country, but one of the national projects that has made us all proud is the Special Project for Needy Provinces. The Devon Community Centre in Fredericton, NB and the School Lunch Program in St, John's, NF benefited from the generosity of this grant. Both projects provide hot lunches for children living in poverty and have made a significant difference in both inner cities. If you have any ideas of ways in which our Association can affect the lives of Canadian children who are living in poverty, please be sure to let your Director know Although we may only be able to contribute in a small way, we know that anything we do is appreciated and is one step closer to the elimination of child poverty

In 1999, CAYC will celebrate a quarter of a century of providing a voice for Canadian children while demonstrating a commitment to their care and education. Our 25th Anniversary Conference will be held in Montreal in conjunction with the 100 Languages of Children Exhibit work from the municipal preschools of Reggio Emilia. It will be a very exciting time for the Association and a significant part of our celebrations. Our Silver Anniversary will be a unique opportunity to reflect on CAYC's accomplishments and chart the course for the next 25 years

I thank all CAYC members for their continued support and I look forward to the excitement and enthusiasm of our Board members. As members of a national association, we must all ensure that CAYC aims and objectives provide the focus for all our activities and not lose sight of the importance of working on behalf of young children and their families

ALBERTA

Judy Wainwright
Provincial Director,

With the "Hundred Languages of Children" exhibit being in Calgary in the fall of 1997, CAYC Alberta decided to focus professional development workshops on the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education. As a result, three workshops have been held with a fourth scheduled for May 1998. The last workshop featured Pat

Tarr, an art educator and professor at the University of Calgary sharing her expertise on art principles, along with a Reggio-style exploration of various art media. The upcoming workshop will be on various types of documentation, and people doing documentation will display and discuss their approach to documentation.

CAYC is also part of the Calgary Coalition for National Child Day and meetings have already occurred for November 20, 1998!

Attending the CAYC National Conference was exciting and stimulating and the organization and hospitality of Manitoba CAYC was outstanding. A sincere "thank you" to everyone who participated to make this a successful conference. CAYC Alberta is hosting the National Conference in Calgary in spring, 2001. Plans are already underway!

SASKATCHEWAN

Mary Cronin

Provincial Director,

I am very glad to report that this has been another busy period for CAYC. Saskatchewan. A dedicated core of members comes out to the monthly meetings. Our meetings are now held in Davin Elementary school, a beautiful old red brick building close to downtown Regina.

The first event for the year was our Coffee Party for friends and members where Dr. Frances Haug was presented with the Friends of Children Award. About 25 people attended and also viewed a video on preschool in three cultures. Following this, we had some lively discussion and all who participated in the evening were enthusiastic.

In November, the updated version of the *Directory of Children's Services in Regina* (1997-1998) was distributed to different agencies throughout the city. This book, published by CAYC, was printed compliments of Sherwood Credit Union and PrintWest.

Plans are well in place for our Annual Spring Conference on May 1, 1998 at the University of Regina. This year's theme is "Laughing and Learning With Children" where the focus will be on the lighter, yet essential, side of children's lives. The day will be organized around keynote presentations and workshops given by Jenny Chapman and Donna Caruso.

We, the members of CAYC Saskatchewan, continue to be very concerned about the welfare of children. To this end, we made contributions to Hunger Regina, a feeding program for low-income children, and to a preschool that subsidizes the attendance of children from low-income families. We are also discussing the possibility of engaging in more advocacy work on behalf of children who live in poverty. In general, we plan to be more visible in responding to government initiatives that concern children.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Larry Railton

Provincial Director,

Greetings from British Columbia! It was nice to see a delegation of members at the recent conference in Winnipeg. Ralph Peterson, a wonderful speaker, told us stories and provided strategies in being responsive and more passionate in our work with young children. Vera Goodman has a Masters degree in reading. Her thesis examined the roots of reading in book-sharing episodes with 2-year-olds. Vera has agreed to do a 1-day workshop in Burnaby, May 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For further information, call Larry at (604) 522-7584. I look forward to Vera sharing her knowledge. Ralph and Vera are two very dynamic people who support young children and the environments that are very important for children to grow and develop.

In February, while British Columbia is thawing, other parts of the world are still in a winter wonderland. This was true for Winnipeg as the Red River was still frozen. Like school kids, Jenny and I skipped the afternoon session to go ice skating on the Red River. What a great experience; everyone should do this. It was cold, dry, and clear - a perfect day for skating.

For people planning September, mark your calendar for September 25, 26, and 27. Once again, we will have a retreat at Thetis Island. This will be our Third Annual CAYC retreat. No solid plans are made for an agenda. Do you have any ideas? I am sure it will be as much fun as last year. Make your plans and contact Larry to confirm your space. There is limited space, so don't delay.

While we are all busy in our day-to-day lives, it is important to mentor our new teachers. If you know of anyone who needs a little support or cheering, don't be afraid to help out. Until next time, keep your thoughts growing and ask what you can do to stimulate interest and curiosity in your program for the children.

NEWFOUNDLAND

Wayne Eastman

Provincial Director,

It has been a challenging year for CAYC Newfoundland. Several major initiatives have and will continue to affect education in this province. Ottawa's amendment to Term 17 means that our denominational educational system has now been replaced by a nondenominational system whose control rests solely with the provincial government. A second initiative of significance is the development of a draft of the new Child Care Act and Regulations. This proposed legislation will address a myriad of early childhood concerns.

CAYC Newfoundland will formally honor Dorothy Sharpe at the Sixth Annual Provincial Conference of the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland-Labrador. Dorothy will be

presented with the Friends of Children Award at the '98 conference. Even though Dorothy was selected for the award in 1997 it was felt that, because of her tremendous impact on the development of early childhood education in this province, her accomplishments required honoring at a special occasion.

The drive to enroll new CAYC members continued throughout the past months. Presentations were given to various groups on the professional benefits of joining the CAYC family. Further efforts to promote CAYC will continue in the upcoming months. For example, a CAYC presentation will be given to Networking '98. This is a provincial conference involving the nine coalitions of Community Action Programs for Children, as well as the Canada Prenatal Nutrient Program.

Members are encouraged to contact me germane to any concerns they feel need addressing. You can reach me electronically or by mail.My new e-mail is weastman@northatlantic.nf.ca

NOVA SCOTIA

Elnor Thompson

Provincial Director,

Our CAYC group in Nova Scotia is planning a provincial conference on October 23 and 24 in Truro, in cooperation with the Institute for E.C.E. and Development Services and the Early Intervention - Nova Scotia Group.

The theme of the conference is "Charting a New Course: Children and Youth in the New Millennium." The keynote speaker will be Chris Rush who is the "Canadian Trainer for Developing Capable People." He has written a book on resilient children.

The timing of the conference coincides with the provincial in-service weekend for Nova Scotian teachers. Our plans are underway to have all primary teachers notified of this conference and encouraged to attend. Those who are now nonmembers will become members - it will be part of their conference fee.

Our CAYC lost a long time, highly valued member in September when Dr. Jane Norman passed away. She was the keystone to our CAYC membership in Nova Scotia for many years, encouraging provincial conferences and attendance and participation in national ones.

I had not planned to be Nova Scotia director this year - but our plans for a new director fell through, so I am with you again. I could not see us not having a director. I am meeting with our hard working, enthusiastic board members and taking in the conference in Winnipeg in February.

QUEBEC

Louise Ledoux-Hanlon

Provincial Director,

CAYC Quebec was happy to contribute $500 towards the printing of the French translation of the CAYC position statement on *play*. The pamphlet, titled *Le jeu*, will be distributed to all our French-speaking members, as well as to Early Childhood Education students.

The fall conference to be held on Saturday, September 26th, 1998 at Concordia University will provide a unique opportunity for professionals and parents to reflect, discuss, share ideas, and voice concerns. Carol Jonas has accepted to chair the conference. Thank you Carol. Your experience and leadership are important factors in the success of such a professional event. The members of the Steering Committee will offer support and auxiliary services essential to the planning and organization.

The late Wally Weng Garrety, a staunch supporter of children, devoted educator and mentor, has been granted the Friends of Children Award. The award will be accepted posthumously by her children at the fall conference. Wally was an active provincial and national CAYC director. She will be sadly missed by all of us.

It is with anticipated pleasure that CAYC Quebec will host the next National Conference, in Montreal, in the fall of 1999. Carol has accepted to be in charge of planning and organizing this national conference. As well, she has been the force behind bringing the "Hundred Languages of Children" to this Montreal conference. We are looking forward to welcoming CAYC members from across Canada to share in this very special moment.

Do come and join us.

MANITOBA

Margaret Smith

Provincial Director,

As a very new director, I wish to say what a wonderful opportunity I had to meet most provincial directors at the board meetings held before our national conference in February. These people gave me a broader sense of perspective to our provincial work in CAYC. I look forward to getting to know this enthusiastic group better and to more of such invigorating meetings in the future.

Our conference was a good one. Many thanks go out to Anne Grewar, my co-chair, and to the many volunteers who worked so hard to make the whole event flow smoothly. Our speakers - Vera Goodman, Wayne Serebrin and Joan Irvine, Ralph Peterson and Sue Bredekamp - each brought a different perspective to the theme and were most inspiring!

CAYC Manitoba honoured Dr. Imogine McIntyre at a dinner held on February 9. We presented her with the Friends of Children Award and had a chance to hear the many contributions she had made in the field of Early Years Teacher Training. What an interesting and influential lady!

This spring we are planning to honour Hollie Andrew with the Friends of

Children Award, as well. Hollie was one of the first people to get CAYC going here in Manitoba and carried much of it for many years. Her energy and enthusiasm have encouraged many of us working in the Early Years field, especially when the going has been rough.

We are encouraged to see new memberships and renewal of some former members. If there are issues you would like to see addressed by CAYC Manitoba, I would encourage you to let us know. E-mail and phone calls, newsletter and this journal - all help to keep you abreast of what is going on here in the province.

NEW BRUNSWICK

Mollie Fry
Provincial Director,

Directors' meetings and the CAYC Conference in Winnipeg last month made for a stimulating few days and pleasant reunions with fellow directors from across the country.

In New Brunswick, we have welcomed three new members; well, to be precise, we have two new members in this province and our very first Prince Edward Island member! Nancy is really a New Brunswick resident, but has agreed to let us use her address in P.E.I, where she works all week long in order that we can claim a "first" in that province.

In November '97, CAYC had a table at the Subject Council meetings in Oromocto. Peter Gorham and Connie Kavanaugh looked after it. They sold CAYC T-shirts, pens, and tote bags and, just as importantly, displayed association information and membership applications. The meetings were well attended, and the table attracted attention in the intervals between sessions; some people taking membership forms which we hope will find their way back to Rise Bulmer.

We held a pre-Christmas meeting in Fredericton before Christmas, at which we agreed to plan two functions during the coming year. One is an exhibition of photographs of children learning through play in the early grades. Photos are coming in from teachers and we are selecting prior to mounting them for display. We also discussed the possibility of a provincial workshop to take place in the fall. There should be a new director by then so I shall take this opportunity to say "thanks" to the membership. It has been most enjoyable!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Regular Membership $40
Association Membership $75
Student Membership $25

CAYC is a non profit organization
A receipt will be issued with membership card

Please print your name and address and mail to
Risë Bulmer, 612 W. 23rd Street,
North Vancouver, B.C. V7M 2C3
Phone/FAX 604 984 2361
Please make cheques and money orders payable to CAYC

Canadian Association for Young Children

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General meeting and CAYC Board Meeting will be held in Toronto, Ontario on November - 22nd 1988

Call for Nominations

The Canadian Association for Young Children hereby calls for nominations for the board positions of 3 National Directors. This position will be voted upon at the Annual General Meeting in Toronto, Ontario, November - 22nd 1988. The responsibilities for this position will commence in November 1998 for a 2 year term. A nomination form for this position is included in this issue of the journal. Nominations must be received by October 25th 1998. Nomination forms should be sent to the Elections Officer, Elizabeth Munroe, 130 Chinook Drive, Cochrane, AB, TOL OW2
PLEASE USE ENCLOSED FORM

Proxy Form

To be used at the CAYC Annual General Meeting.
Members may appoint any other CAYC member attending the AGM to represent them.

The undersigned hereby appoints:
Maxine Mercer, President of the CAYC Corporation OR

Name.....

Address.....

As proxy of the undersigned, with power of substitution to attend the Annual General Meeting 1998, and at any adjournment(s) thereof and vote on matters of the Corporation.

For, or against, if no specification is made for approval of the Financial Statements.

For the appointment of auditors.

For such business as may properly come before the meeting.

Signature of member.....
Dated this .....day of.....1998
Return this proxy form to:
Elizabeth Munroe, 130 Chinook Drive, Cochrane, AB. T0L OW2
THIS FORM MUST BE RECEIVED 28 DAYS BEFORE THE AGM

- about the interactions and relationships of children
- about the magnitude of the problem or the potential of the subject for further learning
- about connections with home, family or community

Does the documentation verify or refute our hypotheses? What else does it tell us?

Can we draw upon prior experience, observations, understandings of child development or research on learning to help us interpret?

Set 3 Design

Reminder: The third set of questions move the teachers into the next step in an action research cycle. This involves drawing implications from our reflections and interpretations in order to design possibilities for future action (experiences, observations). Reggio educators prefer to use the word "projection" rather than plan because it reminds us that future actions and interactions with children (or parents) must be proposed and negotiated. We must always be open to the possibility that the children will propose an even better way of proceeding.

What are the implications of this data and our interpretations of it for our ongoing work with children and families?

Do we need to do further study?

Given our shared understanding of educational goals, what concepts or ideas have surfaced that are worth pursuing with children?

What experiences or materials might provoke children to further explore and question the ideas that have surfaced?

How might we help children make their ideas visible? Should we ask children to draw their ideas, paint them, sketch them, dramatize them, sculpt or construct them? Can we help them find a reason to do this?

How could such visible representations of thinking support discourse with children, teachers, and parents?

How might we use the documentation already collected to help children reflect on their prior experience or thoughts? How might we use it to help them consider the perspectives and experiences of others?

How might parents become involved in these projected experiences?

How might we organize the environment to support the ongoing experience?

How do we plan to propose and negotiate our designs to the children?

Set 4 Documentation

Reminder: The fourth set of questions take us back to the beginning of the collaborative action research cycle. They ask us to anticipate ways to continue the process of documenting the experience that is to follow. They also remind us to consider how all the stakeholders may be involved in the learning that is taking place.

What tools and techniques will we use to document the next set of observations and experiences?

How will we organize ourselves to carry out these plans?

How might parents and community be involved?

Note: *One might ask many more of the same questions that were posed in Set 1.*

At some point in time, the team will begin to address a question that deals with the development of a comprehensive documentation that may be placed on a wall or in a booklet.

How and when will we analyze and organize a documentation of the larger story of learning? How might we go beyond telling a story to presenting a study? Can we begin a panel by putting up "work in progress?"

There are many more questions and considerations for organizing a publicly displayed documentation of this sort. They will include considerations of a strong and well-placed title and an introduction to explain the context and importance of the experience. The hypotheses of the teachers and children might be included. If it was a long-term project, the team may need to select the key experiences that will represent the essence of the learning that took place. Other tasks include choosing appropriate and good quality records (e.g. photos, transcripts, children's work) that allow the reader to look at the "raw data" so that they might have the opportunity to make their own interpretations. Teacher commentary may be added to frame the data as examples of something more general, some principle that can be applied in new contexts. The best examples of documentation that I have seen also invite inquiry about the children's thinking and predictions about effective teaching. Decisions about graphic layout will effect the power of a display to communicate to potential audiences of parents, children, colleagues and community.

Learning how to make these decisions as a team and delegating

responsibility for the work involved are additional challenges. But the quality of the documentation, it's ability to communicate and engage the reader is much more likely to increase when this work is done in a collaborative way. Consideration of multiple perspectives will contribute to its ultimate power to communicate. Since children and parents make up a large part of the audience that will read the documentation, it can be important to ask for their consultation in the process of organizing a panel or other form of public presentation of learning (e.g. booklet, slide presentation, video).

As teaching teams become accustomed to this collaborative style of work, they may no longer need a list of questions to help them think about documentation or guide their discourse and design. They will inevitably reconstruct these questions and eventually internalize them. But a lesson we have learned from Reggio Emilia is that it is quite important to record the work and the thinking that goes on behind the scenes. Records of teacher observations, hypotheses and projections, actions, and reflections enable the team to study their own thinking and past experiences, and then use this knowledge to inform future work and ongoing professional development.

Ashley Cadwell, a colleague from the St. Louis - Reggio Collaborative, recently said to a delegation of visitors that the Reggio Approach is about questions. I totally agree and think this is what makes it such an exciting and energizing approach. Working in collaboration generates questions. In the process of considering other people's perspectives we are challenged to question our certainties, as Malaguzzi recommended (1993).

When I reflect on the collaborative style of work that I have observed in Reggio Emilia and now in the work of my colleagues in the St. Louis - Reggio Collaborative, I am reminded of three of the habits of mind and heart that John Dewey described in *How We Think* (1933, 28-34). The first is open-mindedness: a disposition to question our prior understandings; "an active desire to listen to more than one side"; the second whole heartedness: to be focused and interested with our "whole heart"; and third intellectual responsibility: a disposition to carry a task to completion, to consider the consequences of projected action. These are the frames of mind that grow as we participate in a continuous cycle of learning that begins and ends with collaborative study.

*The St. Louis - Reggio Collaborative is a professional development network of early childhood teachers and administrators from The College School of Webster Groves, MO: The St. Michael School of Clayton, MO: The Family Center of the School District of Clayton, MO; and Dr. Fyfe from Webster University.

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Children's Transition Experiences from Kindergarten to Grade One

Ji-Sook Yeom

Introduction

Early childhood is a significant period in human development because children at this age are going through a particularly critical period of development in "self-concept, language, and degree of self control and independence" (Love, 1992, p. 5). In many countries the school years of early childhood stretch from kindergarten through the primary division. However, kindergarten and grade one are for many children their first school experiences. In this sense, they are the most important years in a child's life and the transition between them should be as smooth as possible" (Reichert, 1984, p. 5).

Children may have significantly different experiences in grade one than in kindergarten because of the difference in philosophy and curriculum between the two programs. In a general sense, we usually think that formal schooling starts with grade one although many of today's kindergartens look more like grade one (Ham & Perry, 1988). However, in terms of downward extension of primary education, several early childhood educators differentiate them from primary grades (Hill, 1987; Katz, 1987; Spodek, 1985; Spodek & Saracho, 1991). Although this does not always describe every kindergarten and grade one, it is very common for kindergarten programs to be based on learning through play while grade one programs focus on learning academic subject matter through textbooks in more structured environments. Kindergarten and grade one programs are unique in structure, process, and content. These differences may result in children having difficulty socially, emotionally, and physically, as they move from one program to the other program. Researchers indicate that the transition from early childhood programs to elementary school programs can be difficult for young children (Kelly & Kelly, 1985; Mangione, 1992; Yeom, 1996) because there are so many changes in terms of different learning styles (Honig, 1978), social, physical, and emotional stresses (Bohl, 1984), and high expectations for children from parents and teachers (Mayfield, 1983).

Although there has been an educational concern to make children's transitions from preschool to primary school smoother (Blakey & LaGrange, 1987), there has been little research done from the children's perspectives. If we are truly concerned about children's experiences in school, we must be able to observe what is happening in our schools through the eyes of children rather than the eyes of adults. Fine and Sandstrom (1988) maintain that when we study children, we often presume that "our" view of the world will also be theirs. "Such a perspective may cause us to lose the trail of their culture" (p. 10). It is important for educators to know what children experience during their transition period from kindergarten to grade one through their eyes if we want to help them make smoother transitions.

This article explores, through a two year study, three children's learning experiences as they begin kindergarten and move into grade one (Yeom, 1996). The author, through telling the children's stories, describes their transition experiences.

Participants

One boy and two girls, Julien, Joshua and Belle, were invited to participate in this research study. These three children were selected according to the following criteria. First, that they would be continuing in grade one in the same school the next year. A second factor was the order of siblings in their families. The birth order and gender of the children selected varied because this might have affected their experience of transition. Julien and Joshua were eldest children and Belle was the youngest in her family. The three children were also chosen because they lived close to the school so the researcher could easily visit their parents. Joshua was selected because his mother also worked as a volunteer in the kindergarten. The kindergarten, and grade one teachers, and the parents of the three children who participated in ongoing conversations became a group of adult participants.

Narrative Inquiry as a Research Methodology

Connelly and Clandinin (1988) state that human beings make meaning of their experiences of the world by telling and retelling stories, that is, through narrative. To capture the meanings of the children's experiences in more holistic ways and to understand their experiences within their contexts, narrative inquiry was used as a research methodology. The stories of children's experience were shared in narrative form.

Bruner (1990) argues that "one of the most ubiquitous and powerful discourse forms in human communication is narrative" (p.77).

He discusses how very young children "enter into meaning" and how they learn to make sense of the world through narrative. He concludes that "children are predisposed naturally and by circumstance to start their narrative careers in that spirit" (p.97). Children"s own voices are heard when they are allowed to tell their own stories.

Learning to listen to children's stories is especially important for teachers if they are to understand the meaning of schooling from each child's perspective. "Stories are where we must begin-and stories are the clues which will lead us to new ways of knowing" (Polakow, 1985, p. 833). Paley (1986) reveals young children's perspectives by sharing the storytelling and fantasy play of students in her own classroom. She tries to listen to what the children say so she can discover what they mean. For Paley, the children's point of view is "the first order of reality in the classroom" (p. 127). The children's stories provide "the perfect middle ground between the children and me" (p. 128). To tell the stories of the children's experience will be a melding of the world of children and the adult world.

Research Process and Data Collection

Three children were observed in their classrooms during the final two months of their kindergarten year, and during two months at the beginning and at the end of grade one. The author was in both classrooms four or five days a week, for most of the time all day long, but sometimes only for the morning or afternoon session.

The "field texts" were based on field notes from participant observations, informal conversations, open-ended interviews, journal entries, and a variety of formal and informal documents, photographs, and children's work. (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994). These "field texts" which represented aspects of the field experience were created jointly by participants and researcher.

Three of the least structured, open-ended interviews with the children occurred at the end of kindergarten, at the beginning and at the end of grade one. All of the open-ended interviews were audio taped and transcribed.

Examples of some questions asked in the interviews are:

Do you like kindergarten (grade one)? Why do you like it?

What do you do in your kindergarten (grade one)?

Do you have friends (a best friend)? Can you tell me about your friend? Can you tell me what you do with them?

What do you think you will do in grade one?

The Author's Role as Participant Observer

To fully understand each child's life and life experience in a more concrete way meant working side by side with them observing and getting actively involved in classroom activities as a participant observer and assistant to the teachers. The author took the "friend role" (Fine and Sandstrom, 1988) to develop the most trusted relationship with the children. Taking the "friend role" helped to develop a caring and respectful relationship with the teachers and children.

Storying and Restorying the Children's Experiences

Narrative accounts of each child were developed from the author's background knowledge of early childhood education and from sharing field texts with the children's teachers and parents. The purpose of these accounts was to provide stories of life in kindergarten and grade one classrooms and they helped in trying to understand the children's experiences of transition.

Recurring narrative threads, important for the children and the researcher, were identified and these became a filter that allowed examination of the children's transition experiences. When stories of each child's transition experience were reconstructed, they allowed the researcher to examine the continuity of the children's learning experiences.

By retelling the children's real life and told stories, these same stories provided the space for the children's voices so that they gained "the authority and validity that the research story has long had" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p.4).

Transition Stories of Joshua, Belle and Julien

Each child in the study had a different experience during his/her transition. When listening to Joshua, Belle, and Julien's stories, it was noticeable how the quality and timing of their experiences differed from one another. For example, Joshua and Belle worried about being in grade one. Julien did not. However, all three children had expectations about being in grade one when they were in kindergarten. When they began grade one, they were excited about being in a new environment. Soon, however, they felt tired and bored with their activities in grade one. In the second term their self-confidence and joyfulness in the grade one classroom increased. The children had their own meanings of what it meant to be in grade one and to exemplify this, stories are told of each child for three time periods during their transitions: end of kindergarten, early grade one, and late grade one.

End of kindergarten: Joshua and Belle in kindergarten were worried about being in grade one because they did not know what it would be like. For example, Joshua

said, "I don't know anything about grade one." He thought he would have a snack time in grade one and the same amount of school time that is, a half time day, in grade one as in kindergarten. Belle's mother shared Belle's story, "She was worried about how to get along with her friends and new things to do especially writing." When Belle was asked whether she would do the same activities, such as going to gym and singing songs, she said, "I don't know. I've never... I haven't been in grade one yet. I'm still in kindergarten. I don't know." However, Joshua, Belle, and Julien were excited about, and looking forward to, being in grade one because they thought being a grade one student would be fun and they would do many different activities in the grade one classroom than in the kindergarten classroom. They also had expectations of themselves as good readers and writers. For example, when Julien was asked to draw what would be the best thing in grade one, she drew a picture of herself reading a big book. She represented an expectation of herself as a more grown up reader.

Early grade one: Joshua, Belle, and Julien had two different experiences; that is, they felt unexpectedly bored and tired, but they also felt enjoyment. For example, from the beginning of grade one, as a child with asthma, Joshua suffered from the long school days. He was at school for a full day which was contrary to his expectation when he was in kindergarten. In the afternoon, it was difficult for him to be involved with classroom activities because of fatigue and asthma attacks. Joshua's mom said, he used to say, "Tomorrow will be a better day, right mom?" Belle was bored when she had to copy words and to print individual letters. She used to say, "It's pretty boring." She also said, "In grade one it seemed you don't get as much attention. Grade one is not as much fun as I thought it would be." When Julien was asked how she felt about being in grade one, she said, "We stay at school longer than in kindergarten. I like it. But I feel very much tired." Because grade one did not have snack time, Julien often felt hungry and said, "I'm really hungry. One of those days. It takes a little bit of long time until lunch time." However, Joshua, Belle, and Julien "still like grade one," because they like many different activities in grade one better than those in kindergarten, such as reading, writing, making up stories, doing crafts, drawing, and playing with puppets. For example, Belle said,

> It's fun. The teacher is nice and, um, I have a lot of friends there and, um, everyday you got lots of stuff to do and you always have something to do in grade one. We do spelling. we do experimenting and we watch films. Sometimes and, um, we do recess and we, um, we go for gym and stuff. I like music class, too. Sometimes, we have music class right here. But there is... We didn't have music class in kindergarten. Poor kindergarten.

End of grade one: At the end of grade one, Joshua, Belle, and Julien thought they learned many things in grade one and celebrated their growing up. For example, while Joshua thought he did not learn anything in kindergarten, he recognized he worked hard and learned many things in grade one. When Joshua was asked to write about his year in grade one, he wrote,

> I like grade one because it is fun and what I learned about is dinosaurs. There is nothing I don't like here. I like mice and other creatures. I learned about things. I learned about penguins and sharks and whales and fish and all sorts of animal and math.

Julien also thought she learned many things that she had not learned in kindergarten. She said, "I love to read and write. That's why I'm a better reader now. I'm an author of my library book." When asked to write about her year of grade one, she wrote, "I learned lots of stuff in grade one and I learned math, science, bodies. I know lots of stuff I learned. Now, I'm more grown up." For these three children, grade one was a year of learning and having knowledge about new things. From these new experiences, they feel grown up.

Through Joshua, Belle, and Julien's stories, the transition from kindergarten to grade one was seen to be a gradual process rather than a sudden incident. However, there was a certain amount of continuity and discontinuity in the transition experiences of the children. What made their transition experiences continuous and/or discontinuous?. In the following section, what helped make these children's transitions smoother, i.e. more continuous, and what were barriers to smooth transitions is discussed.

What made the Children's Experiences Continuous?

Visiting the grade one classroom: When Joshua, Belle, and Julien were in kindergarten, they had opportunities to visit the grade one classroom through the buddy reading program. They read their favourite books in pairs with their grade one buddies in the grade one classroom once a week for two months at the end of kindergarten. These were good opportunities for them to look around the grade one classroom so they would know what the classroom looked like and what the grade one teacher was like.

Joshua liked to be in grade one because, "Well... well, I see because I went there and I saw lots and lots of

stuff. I like it." Julien and Belle expected there would be no housekeeping centre and Joshua knew that there would be no block centre in grade one. These were their favourite centres in kindergarten. Julien said, "I know, I know it because I went in there before." These three children knew they would have different centres and would have their own desks and chairs. When Belle drew herself doing math in the grade one classroom, she explained, "There is the table. There is my chair..."

Julien and Belle also had great expectations about their grade one teacher, Pat. Julien drew the grade one teacher and said, "This is a grade one teacher. I still like Mrs. Smith [the kindergarten teacher]. I like Mrs. Stewart's curly hair better." Belle also said, "Um, I like the teacher there (in grade one). I just go. I visit their class lots and I see her lots."

Through visiting the grade one classroom, Joshua, Belle, and Julien had some information about what it would be like and were getting familiar with their new environment and their grade one teacher which made them feel comfortable and excited about being in grade one.

Developing friendships:
Friendship was one of the children's major concerns at this particular time, and it was important for them to adjust to a new classroom. At the beginning of grade one, Joshua, Belle, and Julien still shared their "best friends" relationships as they had in kindergarten. During their classroom free time and recess, these "best friends" from kindergarten played together. When Julien was still in kindergarten, one of the reasons she thought she would like to be in grade one was "because some of my friends will be there [in grade one]." At the beginning of grade one, Belle spent most of the time playing with Susan who was her best friend in kindergarten. Friends were important for Joshua as well. He said, "I like grade one because all my friends are there [in grade one]." Having their same best friends and some of the same friends at the beginning of grade one as they had in kindergarten helped the three children make a smoother transition.

Meanwhile Joshua, Belle, and Julien were developing new relationships with their friends through having lunch and playing with them. Joshua developed his "best friend" relationships with Roy, David, and Julien whose mothers took turns having their children at their homes for lunch. The three boys especially were always together, sharing their hobbies and playing soccer together. Joshua explained his relationships with the two boys. "You know, they are very nice guys. We get together and we, we play soccer together. We have lunch together. We go home together. We all stick together." Although I seldom observed boys and girls playing together in grade one, for Julien, these three boys were her best friends because she had more opportunities to interact with them than with the others. For Belle, her "best friends" now became Amy, Sue, and Tracy who always played Barbie dolls with her. These three children's new "best friends" supported and encouraged each other every day of their grade one lives. Free play time, free reading time, library time, and group work time were the times they helped each other and shared their friendships. These changed "best friend" relationships played an important role for Joshua, Belle, and Julien's transitions.

Family support: For Joshua, Belle, and Julien, the "family" became even more important than it had been in kindergarten. They needed family support to facilitate their adjustment to a new program. For example, since Julien's mother was working with the Guides, Julien had a special relationship with her mom that revolved around Brownies. It became much more meaningful for Julien to be a Brownie. Whenever Julien did a craft for free time, she said that she made it for her mom and would take it home for her. She also enjoyed writing about her mom. One day, during free time, Julien made a birthday card for her mom and wrote, "Happy Birthday, mom."; then, she drew a picture of her mom and in her writing book she wrote, "I love my mom because she is nice and wants to have me in her Guide company. This is because she loves me. That's why."

For Joshua, both his mother, who worked as a volunteer in his classroom, and his father, who played with him and was his role model, were important. Having his mother in his classroom helped Joshua feel more comfortable and safe in school, especially since he was a child who needed special attention and care because of several health problems. One morning Joshua smiled and said, "You know what? My mom is coming to help us this afternoon." It was very special for Joshua to have not only his mom, but also his dad in his school. Joshua was excited about coming to the "Book Fair Day" with his mom and dad. He emphasized that his dad was coming. "Ji-Sook! Today, my dad is coming too. My dad is an electrician." It seemed that Joshua was very proud of his dad. One day during "show and tell" time, Joshua showed many trophies and medals which his dad had received. For Joshua, his dad was a role model for adulthood. Joshua spent a lot of time with his dad at home. He was able to practice soccer with him because his dad came home early in the afternoons. It was a great experience for Joshua to have such a special person in his school.

For these three children, the involvement of their parents at school made it much more welcoming and reassuring than it otherwise might have been. When parents and family supported and helped children at

home and were actively involved in their children's school activities, the transition was smoother.

The teacher's help: For Joshua, Belle, and Julien one of the expectations of being in grade one was that of meeting a new teacher. They knew that Pat, the grade one teacher, was nice because they had already met her through buddy reading. Pat also had met these three children and knew about them. Knowing Pat helped make their transitions smoother. For example, Pat knew that Joshua had several health problems. Therefore, when Joshua had an asthma attack, she knew what to do to make him feel more comfortable and knew to phone his mother to give personal homework to Joshua. She also gave instructions to his mother so that he was able to catch up with what the rest of the children learned on that day.

The children felt comfortable being with Pat. They felt secure when they were with Pat. When Pat was not visible in the classroom, the children always asked each other, "Where is Mrs. Stewart?" One day, Pat was in the cloak room arranging the children's bags and lunch boxes during recess. As soon as Joshua and Julien came back from recess, Joshua asked me, "Where is Mrs. Stewart? We have something to tell her."

Joshua, Belle, and Julien expressed their feelings about Pat. Belle said, "I have lots of friends in grade one. Mrs. Stewart is also one of my best friends." At the end of grade one, Joshua finally said, "I'll be having the different teacher. But, Um... you never know where the... you never know the teacher's great or not in grade two." Julien also said, "I wonder, I wonder what our third teacher looks like. Maybe she'll help us. Maybe we'll learn about pigs. I never saw her. I'll be able to go to Mrs. Stewart [the grade one teacher]." As Yardley (1989) said, "If her teacher is right, she can adjust to almost any situation" (p. 1).

What made Children's Experiences Discontinuous?

Extended school days: For Joshua, Belle, and Julien, having longer school days was the biggest change. Although they knew they would have longer school days in grade one, it was a hard adjustment when they faced the reality. Especially after a long summer vacation, spending all day at school was not easy for these young children. After I found them tired in the afternoon, I wrote in my journal.

> For the last two weeks, on one hand, Joshua, Belle, and Julien were excited about being in grade one. However, I found out that they were really tired especially in the afternoon. From my observation, they did not seem to have any energy to do classroom activities. They twisted their bodies and sighed. Sometimes, they were just sitting on the desks doing nothing. Then, when it was recess time or free time, they appeared to be energetic again. I wonder if these children should have had longer school days from the very beginning of grade one. Is there any way that they could have gradually extended school days? I wonder if there was any way that the teacher and parents could help them.

In the first half of grade one, extended school days were barriers not only in terms of Joshua, Belle, and Julien's physical adjustment but also in terms of their emotional adjustment. Long school days impacted their excitement about being in grade one.

Changes in the physical environment: Understanding the learning environment is important when exploring the children's transition experience because it tells about the kind of program in which they were involved. Their learning environment in grade one was different from that of kindergarten. While kindergarten was arranged into play centres, grade one had fewer centres. There were no block or housekeeping centres in the grade one classroom. These had been the three children's favourite centres. Instead, there were Barbie dolls and a puppet play centre. Although Julien enjoyed playing in the puppet centre, she said, "Mostly I prefer the kindergarten classroom. I like the kindergarten classroom better. Because the kindergarten classroom has uh... has free time all the time." Julien missed centre time in kindergarten, especially playing in the housekeeping centre where she pretended mother or daughter roles. Joshua seemed to miss playing in the block centre. He said, "In kindergarten I played with blocks lots of times because it's fun. But in the grade one classroom, there is no block centre." Instead of having many centres, Joshua, Belle, and Julien now had their own desks and chairs. Although these desks and chairs were arranged in groups rather than in rows, most of the time the children were expected to sit quietly and do their own work. They had to adjust themselves to this changed physical environment.

Joshua and Belle's relationship was also influenced by this changed learning environment. In grade one, these children's friendships had developed on the basis of their common interests and the amount of time during which they could freely interact. Joshua and Belle now rarely had an opportunity to play together because there was no block centre, which had been their common interest in kindergarten. While Belle's interest had changed to playing with Barbie dolls, Joshua was still interested in playing with the computer. These two children began to gradually drift apart.

In kindergarten, the boys were observed playing in the housekeeping centre, usually assuming the father's role. However, in grade one, they were never observed playing Barbie dolls while the girls played with almost nothing else. Unlike the kindergarten toys which encouraged communal play, the toys available in the grade one classroom tended to limit the kinds of play in which the children could engage.

Beginning formal instruction: After about one month in grade one, Joshua, Belle, and Julien found particular subjects, such as spelling and writing, boring. Sometimes, the stories which the children had already written had to be neatly rewritten so they could be used to decorate the wall. Sometimes they had to copy the teacher's printing to make a book for the library. While doing these activities, the author heard them say "It's boring." I discovered that this term had several meanings: "not interesting," "difficult," and sometimes "too easy." When not knowing how or what to do, when having to repeat similar work, or especially when academic skills and drills were required, the children said, "It's boring."

The activities in the grade one classroom were divided into time segments according to each subject area. Sometimes these children had to start a different activity before being able to finish the one on which they were working. Julien often said, "I haven't finished yet," or "I need more time." Joshua was also heard to say, " I wanna have more time to finish it. I'm still working." If they did not finish within the allotted time, they had to finish it during their free time or before they were allowed to have their recess. One day, Julien did not have recess because she had to finish her writing. She said, "Oh, no. No recess." She appeared to be disappointed.

Another aspect related to program content was that Joshua, Belle, and Julien said that they liked almost everything in grade one except tests. The grade one class was required to take tests in such subjects as spelling and math as well as the general "Canadian Test of Basic Skills." Some children sighed; some yawned; others wriggled and squirmed in their desks. Joshua, Belle, and Julien were no exceptions. When Joshua was asked what he did not like, he said "tests." He added, "I don't like it. Just a little bit. Because it takes a bit of time to finish it." When Julien said,

> That's a hard one. That is hard because uh... it goes on almost forever. But it's good thing. I just sit. It doesn't... I'd have to sleep in the school if it goes on and on and on forever. Sometimes I like it and sometimes I don't. I like 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10; that has to be good. But if it goes 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14, 15,16, then that's too long.

She meant that she not only did not have enough time for the test, but she also felt bored and tired. Program content for grade one differed from kindergarten in subject matter, time allocation according to subject matter, and tests. These differences gave Joshua, Belle, and Julien a difficult time in making a smooth transition from kindergarten to grade one.

Teacher's expectations: Pat, the grade one teacher, was energetic and totally devoted to her teaching. However, sometimes her expectations of what she wanted the children to do were different from what they could do. When Belle, Nina, and Amy were playing at pretend teaching, I recorded their conversation.

> It was free reading time after lunch. Nina and Belle were sitting in the author's red chair and looking at the books. Amy was sitting on the floor with her back toward them.
>
> Belle: No. You won't get free time. Amy! Amy! Please turn around! Amy! Turn around!
> Nina: Amy! Do you wanna have free time today? (Amy was still sitting with her back toward them.)
> Belle: Amy! Do you want free time? Amy!
>
> Three children laughed.
>
> Nina: O.K. I'll count to three. No free time.
> Belle: Turn around (softly).
> Nina: One, two, three. No free time. Only if you turn around and listen to the book, you get free time.
> Belle: Do you want free time, Amy?
>
> All of them laughed.
>
> Belle: (to Ji-Sook) We're pretending to be teaching.

Through this pretend play the way in which teaching was viewed by children could be seen. Like this pretend play in grade one, sometimes Pat expected the children to choose between either listening to the story or not having any free time. It was a different expectation from that of kindergarten where children had more freedom of choice. Following is a journal excerpt about the teacher's expectations.

> Sometimes I feel that Pat's expectation about the children was a bit higher than what they really can do. Today, Joshua was struggling to find a special word to be part of a sentence in his 'Writing Book'. Joshua said, "I don't know what to write." However, he knew that he could not start to print "b," until he finished his sentence. Finally, he printed "daddy," "I hope daddy and Jessie will feel better." After he showed it to Pat and she had

checked it, he started to print "b." In a sense, teacher's expectations of children are natural. How can we expect the teachers not to have expectations about their students. However, what level should they be?

Higher expectations from the grade one teacher was a barrier to Joshua, Belle, and Julien's smooth transition from kindergarten to grade one.

The Teacher's Dilemma

The help of the grade one teacher, Pat, was important to make the children's transitions smooth. When Pat talked about herself and her personal educational philosophy, she said:

> I am a teacher and a facilitator to ensure that all these children progress at their own ability, at their own level but to all, each and everyone of their potential. I think the greatest thing is that I want them all to achieve success to whatever degree is best for them. I want them to be able to celebrate even through small successes. I don't necessarily compare them to one another, but I compare them to where they come. And I encourage them to do their best and I know that I believe in them and because I believe in them and they do believe in themselves because of our family atmosphere in the classroom. I feel that each and everyone of them feels that they have learned this year and they feel welcome here and that's what I want. And I want to have a warm and caring atmosphere where they are important and we respect each others' feelings, personal beings. We respect anything about each other but in the same token we care for one another. We help here to celebrate each other's learning and we're all here to learn including me.

Like Pat's personal educational philosophy, she was a teacher who facilitated the children's learning, helped and cared for them, and encouraged them to do their best. However, she sometimes had to do what she did not want to do for the children in her classroom. For example, giving tests and strict academic instructions were things with which Pat did not feel comfortable. Pat's dilemma as a grade one teacher was understandable. She knew that evaluating the children with paper and pencil was not a very interesting thing to do. She said, "I know. It's not a fun thing to do for the children but I have to do it." Pat probably felt a responsibility to meet the parents', school's and society's expectations. She also felt a responsibility to meet the curriculum prescriptions of the Program of Studies (1990). Her high expectations might have come from these feelings of responsibility. Therefore, we have to consider whether if it is only the teacher's responsibility when the children say, "It's boring," or "I need more time to finish it." Is there also responsibility that needs to be considered in the context of the school system and the society?

Search for the Possibilities of Continuity of Children's Experience

In helping children to make a smoother transition, some questions need to be considered to ensure the continuity of young children's experience: Has there been collaboration? To what degree do policy makers, classroom teachers, and parents work together? Policy making in early childhood education is usually segregated from the practitioners (Stegelin, 1992; Zigler & Kagan, 1982; Hall & Loucks, 1982). There has been a lack of communication and mutual understanding among the policy makers, administrators, and practitioners. They each have their own communities with different languages and thoughts. Have policy makers been willing to accept teachers' view points and have teachers respected the perspectives of policy makers? Research findings are often ignored by both policy makers and practitioners (Hall & Loucks, 1982). This distance among policy developers, implementers, and researchers contributes to fragmentation between policy and life in school for young children. For example, in this study Joshua, Belle, and Julien felt tired in the afternoon because of longer school days. If we listen to children's voices, would it not be possible to increase the length of grade one school days gradually rather than having longer school days from the first day of grade one? When the children say they are hungry, would it not be possible to allow them to bring their own snacks? When we hear that the three children feel frustrated and bored, do we need to look for reasons? When our expectations about children are not matched with their expectations about themselves, children try to meet our expectations. When children find they are not able to meet adults' expectations, they become frustrated and disappointed about themselves. Curriculum, that is, what we want children to achieve in school, also comes from adults' expectations. If we negotiate our expectations with children and find a middle ground, and if we negotiate curriculum implementation in our classrooms, we may be able to help children make their learning experiences more continuous. From a constructivist view point, knowledge should not be separated from the knower. If we plan and implement curriculum without listening to children, how can children have ownership of it? Constructivists say that curriculum is the process of creation and recreation of meaning through negotiation. Curriculum should be "a moving form" (Grumet,

1988, p. 172) reflecting multiple realities and the negotiation of meaning through experience.

To what extent do classroom teachers, teacher educators, parents, and policy makers share their own philosophy of education with their friends and colleagues? People who work with young children should share basic philosophies of how young children learn and develop. Kindergarten teachers often say that kindergarten philosophies and practices should be applied to grade one classrooms. The grade one teachers complain that children are not prepared for grade one because of the nature of kindergarten. Unless they share and agree on a philosophy of young children's development and learning, how can children's experience be continuous, especially if they are in different structures with different basic values and attitudes? If there is not a consistent philosophy in the two different structures, how can we expect the continuity of children's experience?

People who work with young children also should share their understandings of the importance of parent involvement in the process of young children's transition from kindergarten to grade one. The relationships that teachers build with parents leads to collaboration between home and school and initiates better understanding of children's experiences. Parents of young children also need to acknowledge their role in their children's transition. Bateson (1994) said, "Schooling is part of the spectrum of learning in human lives, but it is not the model for all learning (p. 196). Parents can be the true teacher at home.

Most of all, we need to create a community in which children, policy makers, administrators, teachers, and parents work together. We need to share children's and our stories so that we are able to see the multiple worlds of others, share the meaning with others, and have better understanding of each other and of our children.

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Catherine A. Young has been an educator for twelve years, and presently teaches both Science and Geography at Heritage College, Quebec.

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The Name as Transitional Object: The Development of the Preschoolers' Sense of Self as they Experience the World of Literacy

Veronica Pacini

This paper has benefited from the helpful comments of Carol Anne Wien

Abstract

The written form of the preschooler's personal name represents a key vehicle to literacy by initiating the process of understanding relationships and norms of conventional writing. Using Winnicott's (1971) notion of the *transitional object*, this article shows how the child's name can be seen as a transitional object linking self and the worlds of literacy, as it reviews relevant literature and presents examples of children in a preschool classroom. The written name represents the *transitional object* by re-affirming preschoolers' self concept, and serving as an introduction to the newly discovered role of conventional writers.

Louise and Luke were reading Franklin has a Sleepover (1996), and suddenly they started arguing. I moved closer to ask them why they were fighting. Louise, with tears in her eyes, said: "Luke wants to take the 'L' away from me. He says it's his."

As I observed the key role that the personal name represented in the writing development of children in my preschool class, I considered it essential to explore the power of the name with regard to its importance on emergent literacy. How does the written form of children's names function in their emergent literacy? by considering related literature and examples from my own classroom I explore the relationship between the written name and the notion of self-concept,. By introducing Winnicott's (1971) concept of *transitional object*, I establish the role of the written name as a *transitional object* which re-affirms the preschoolers' self-concept and also initiates them into the community of producers of written language. First, I outline the conceptual framework to reveal the significance of the written form of children's names. I then explore the role of the personal name in relation to preschoolers' development of self-concept.

The Significance of the Written Form of Children's Personal Names

A child's own name is especially important in literacy development (Davies, 1988; Ferreiro, 1994; Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1982; Vellender, 1989; Seefeldt, 1984; Osborne, 1995). Ferreiro and Teberosky, (1982) investigated developing concepts with regard to personal names. In their findings they discovered that the written form of a child's name represents the starting point from which text production evolves and the study of words begins. Osborne (1995) suggested that the name opens the door to the further development of writing skills. Names are "important beginning point[s] for print literacy" (p. 24), and can be used to introduce children to literacy concepts, such as differentiation between pictures and writing, and print orientation. Similarly, Seefeldt (1984) asserted that "names are probably the first thing children will read, but they are also the first thing children write" (p. 25). Seefeldt commented that once children master writing their names, they can handle learning other words.

In another study, Davies (1988) did a survey of how a group of preschoolers learn to print their names. She found that name writing is a "constructive process" that can be anticipated and is recognizable. The name follows a progression through a number of stages -- from "letter-like to standard form" (Davies, p. 21). Additionally, Davies noted that the name writing process is influenced by others in the environment. Adults inform children as to how to write their names. When children are ready to write their own names in standard form, they are also able to write other words (Davies, 1988).

Ferreiro and Teberosky (1982) found that children embark upon a learning process. They work through progressive stages that exemplify their understanding of written language. Ferreiro and Teberosky (1982) determined that children pass through progressively complex stages in the course of their emerging literacy development. Children in the first level are beginning to confront written text and cannot distinguish the difference between the name as a whole and its different parts. Any transformation made to the name is unrecognized by children. For example, Robert (who is one of the subjects in this study) recognizes and writes his name. However, when parts of his name are covered and only the last two letters remain visible, he reads his mother's name. Similarly, when only the first two letters are visible, he reads his

father's name. In level two, children are able to make connections between parts of the full name; however, they cannot match the syllables of the first, middle, or last name. For example, Natalie (another subject in the study) writes her name NAB which represents the writing of her initials (Natalie Andrea Brown). However, as she reads the complete written word, she says Natalie. Further, when the order of the letters is changed, she continues reading her first name. Level three is the state in which children "shift from a correspondence between individual letters and names to a correspondence between individual letters and parts of names (syllables)" (Ferreiro & Teberosky, p. 219). When children in this stage are presented with one part of their name (syllable), they are likely to read it as such, rather than as the whole name. However, they still experience difficulty in segmenting the name into the correct syllables. For example, Alexandra writes and reads her name in the correct order. She reads Alex when the last three letters are covered (Alexan), and also when only Al remains visible. Eventually, children adopt the standard written form of their names, and they recognize the whole as well as the parts of the name (Ferreiro and Teberosky, 1982).

'What's in the name?' Osborne (1995) puts it in a beautiful way when he says "To a small child, many things can be hidden in that name" (p. 31). From a child's perspective, the written form of the name functions as a label, an ownership, an invitation, and an expression of acknowledgment (Davies 1988). Seefeldt (1984) comments that "the historic sense of continuity, self-identity, and the emotions surrounding names make them a powerful tool" (p. 29). Thus, the answers to the question 'What's in the name?' are several and perhaps, as yet, not deeply researched. This article explores one further aspect of this question: What is the relation of the written name to a child's self-concept?

This article encompasses research the author conducted as both a classroom teacher in an Etobicoke preschool servicing primarily middle-class families, and as a graduate student (Pacini, 1996). The method used is qualitative in nature, as the intention is to explore how eight children in the classroom -- three males and five females, between the ages of three and five years old -- understand their relation to their written name. This research was primarily based on spontaneous interviews during classroom activities which lasted approximately ten to fifteen minutes each. Individual interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded. Further, an observation log was kept to record the eight preschool children's process of writing in the classroom. The names of the children have been changed and their participation in the research was completely voluntary.

The Personal Name and Self-Concept Development

Name writing is a culturally determined event following a similar constructive process to other words. It is not a 'unique' case of written language. The author proposes that the written form of the name is a vehicle, a transitional object which reaffirms children's view of who they are, while also linking them to the most important symbol system of their culture. In order to explore this issue, the notions of *transitional object* (Winnicott, 1971) and self-concept are examined.

Winnicott (1971) in his study of infant development stressed the importance of mother-infant relations in the development of self-concept. He believed that infants see themselves as part of the mother. As infants grow, they begin to experience the environment separately and discover that the mother is a separate and distinct object in relation to themselves. This event, Winnicott argued, occurs when infants begin to substitute the mother with an object -- the *transitional object*. This object may be a doll, a teddy bear, a blanket, a mannerism, a word, or a tune. Children "assume rights over the object, and [adults] agree to this assumption" (p.5). What was important to Winnicott was that through the use of a *transitional object*, infants initiate their relationship with the world. As Winnicott stated:

> I think there is use for a term for the root of symbolism in time, a term that describes the infant's journey from the purely subjective to objectivity; and it seems to me that the transitional object (piece of blanket, etc.) is what we see of this journey of progress towards experiencing. (p.6)

Essentially, the distinction between internal and external reality is realized via the transitional object.

What is self-concept? "A person's self-concept is his or her view of what he or she is. It is the characteristics that a person believes that he or she has. These characteristics may be moral ...; functional...; affective ...; relational ..." (Levin, 1992, p. 126). The notion of self-concept is linked to the concepts of self-awareness and self-recognition. During childhood children construct a self-concept, "or a set of beliefs about their own characteristics" (Berk, 1994, p. 438). Particularly, in the case of the preschooler, the notion of self-concept is based upon concrete characteristics -- names, physical appearance, possessions, and typical behaviours (Berk, 1994). Similarly, Bjorklund (1995) stated that, after children can differentiate themselves from other people and objects, they

define themselves in terms of what they do, who they are, how they look, and of how their family is composed.

Yet how does the notion of self-concept relate to the written object of the name? And, how does Winnicott's concept of the *transitional object* come into play in relation to emergent literacy and, more specifically, to the written form of the name? Preschoolers not only continue to be a part of the written world in which they have been immersed since they were born, but they are also evolving into active participants (Whitmore & Goodman, 1995). Children begin to participate in conventional writing by printing their names (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1982). For instance, the children in my classroom recognized that the first word that they learned to write was their names:

> *This is the one I learned first at the other school.*
> *The one that I can write first is mine. My name!*

In other words, children, by recognising their name in written form, experience the initial connection, as a fledgling producer, to conventional writing. The written form of their name, in essence, becomes the *transitional object* through which they re-affirm their self-concept, while also introducing them to the conventions of written language.

Transitional objects, as Winnicott (1971) defined them, stand for "the object of the first relation" (p. 9). Because the personal name is the first conventional written word, it is clearly the object of the first relation between the preschooler and the writing world. In addition, just as infants "assume rights over the object" (Winnicott, p. 5), so too do preschoolers assume rights over their names. One example of this can be seen in the 'territorial' struggle between Louise and Luke, described at the beginning of this article, demonstrating the ownership children invest in their names. They openly express that sense of possession:

> *Other people write their names but not mine. Because this name is only for me.*
>
> *Other children can't write my name because it's mine.*
>
> *I like my name because it's the one everybody uses to call me. And my name is mine.*

As Seefeldt (1984) commented, children's names are a "valuable personal possession" (p. 24).

Thus, the name, as an object, functions transitionally for the preschooler by re-affirming the distinction of the self from the external environment. The *transitional object* and the written name share parallel functions. Winnicott (1971) asserted that "the object represents the infant's transition from a state of being merged with the mother to a state of being in relation to the mother as something outside and separate" (p. 14-15). The name represents the preschoolers' transition from observer to producer of conventional writing. Infants use the object to make the transition toward establishing a separation between themselves and external reality, thereby developing self-awareness. Similarly, preschoolers adopt the name to re-affirm who they are in the written context. Already aware that they are distinct from other people and objects, as can be seen in the ways that they describe themselves, preschoolers continually act and react in a process of self-definition and self-assertion (Berk, 1994). Seefeldt (1984) said that when children use their names to introduce themselves, it is a way to express "I know who I am, I am somebody, I am a unique individual" (p. 28). Children's comments with regard to their written names illustrate that preschoolers write their names in order to view themselves as different from others:

> *I like writing my name so other people know me.*
>
> *I can make a picture of me, but if we want to know who is who we need to write our names.*
>
> *Other people write their names, but not mine*

They write their names to express their self-awareness, re-affirming their sense of being a person distinct from other people and things. Whereas infants use an object for the transition between mother and outside environment, preschoolers use their written name for the transition between observer and producer of conventional writing.

The name is the first written word children produce to describe themselves (Seefeldt, 1984). Seefeldt (1984) argued that children usually use their names when encountering a new situation, such as entering a group for the first time, because they need to feel secure in their identification within the new context. For example, children in my preschool classroom commented that their first association with the role of conventional writer is initiated by means of their names:

> *I can write my name now, and when I get bigger I'm going to learn Frank* [her cousin's name].
>
> *I learned to write my name when I was a little girl. Now I can write it all by myself.*
>
> *I write my name first, and the next one I'm going to write is Mary* [his sister's name].

Preschoolers express that their starting point for further writing development occurs with their names

This represents their personal introduction to the activities of writing.

Clearly, the literature reveals that a child's name is an essential vehicle to literacy (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1982; Seefeldt, 1984; Davies, 1988; Vellender, 1989; Ferreiro, 1994; Osborne, 1995). Name writing is a "constructive process", demonstrating the child's construction of knowledge (Davies, 1988). A recognizable and progressive development can be observed -- children move through stages which illustrate the evolution of their understanding of written language (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1982 Davies, 1988). The written name, as the first word that children write, initiates the process of understanding the relationships and norms of conventional writing (Osborne, 1995), and represents a powerful link to their self-identification. Whereas the *transitional object* is the means by which infants are introduced to the environment that surrounds them (Winnicott, 1971), the written name represents the means by which preschoolers introduce themselves to their newly discovered role as conventional writers. Specifically, the written name is the *transitional object* that re-affirms preschoolers' individual self-concept, and introduces them to their new role as conventional writers.

In Shakespeare's **Romeo and Juliet**, Juliet laments: "What's in a name? That which we call a rose / by any other word would smell as sweet;" (II.ii.42-43). Louise and Luke would certainly disagree. For them, and other children their age, their name is their possession; the object through which they are linked to the expansive written world. If Luke successfully took Louise's 'L' away, her identity would be altered, regardless of how sweet she smelled! Her concept of who she is, wrapped up in each letter and syllable, would be eroded. What's in a name? Quite clearly, much more than the bard himself realized.

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From the Editor's Desk

Upcoming Conferences:

Laughing and Learning with Children: A spring Seminar, Friday, May 1, 1998 at the University of Regina.

Presenters, Donna Caruso, a children's performer and author and Jenny Chapman who is "interested in children's play and play environments and is a mentor to many, and willingly shares her experiences in workshops." Contact Dianne Stark, 4, Malone Crescent, Regina, SK. S4S 5R2

Eleventh National Child & Youth Care Conference, May 27 - 30, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. B3M 2J6. Telephone 902-457-6587 or E-mail Child.Youth.Care.Conference@MSVU.Ca or visit website at http://serf.msvu.ca/ncycc.html/.

The Reggio Emilia Approach to Child Care in Education 14th, 15th & 16th May, 1998 at Loyalist College, Belleville, Ontario. For information phone (613)- 969-1913 or e mail Reggio@loyalistc.on.ca

Continued on page 41

An Exchange Program for Chinese and Canadian Early Childhood Teachers

Glen Dixon

Four years ago, the University of British Columbia and Soong Ching Ling Kindergarten of Shanghai agreed to set up an exchange program for teachers. Our intention is for educators on both sides of the Pacific to have a better understanding of the curriculum and teaching methods in each other's schools, and to become more sensitive to the social, cultural, and administrative context of early education in both countries. By observing and working together, we can at least begin the process of broadening our educational perspectives. Inevitably this leads to learning about some aspects of family life and its influence on educational practices. We are also able to gain insight into how education in each country relates to other aspects of care such as health services, physical education and development, child protection, and parent-child relationships.

Establishing the Program

The collaboration began as the result of Mme Xu Dexin's visit to the UBC Child Study Centre. Mme Xu, Executive Secretary of the Soong Ching Ling Foundation of China, brought a delegation of teachers and administrators to study early childhood education models in Vancouver-area schools. These visits led to the founding of an international early childhood program, developed on the Child Study Centre model, and conducted in English. Under the auspices of the Soong Ching Ling Children's Foundation of Canada, as well, an exchange program was organized for Canadian teachers to work for one year in Shanghai, and for Chinese teachers to visit Canadian sites, including the UBC Centre. As I was the Director of the Centre at that time, I became the Canadian consultant for the program and make yearly visits to Shanghai to monitor their international kindergarten program and meet with Chinese early childhood educators.

In the meantime, Professor Paul Lin of UBC's Department of Asian Studies has helped to establish in Shanghai the China-Canada Child Development Research Centre in order to foster cross-cultural research in child development, family life, and early education. This Centre is now organizing early childhood programs in remote areas of China, setting up an international library of resources, and facilitating research on parental perceptions of children's early learning and related matters.

Cultural Considerations

The success of this type of program depends on the mutual respect and trust of all those concerned. It was important to be able to establish guidelines for both the broad picture and small details, which would be as accommodating as possible for teachers as well as administrators, and this involved sensitive discussion and time for reflection before making decisions.

Sometimes this meant making certain compromises in order to allow for opposing points of view. However, I believe that everyone connected to the program has become more appreciative of each other and values our common goal of learning more about young children.

On my first visit to Shanghai, things were not so straightforward. I went to one classroom to observe four-and five-year-olds at a time when the children were arriving back from a walk to collect leaves. A few minutes into the period, their leaves were incorporated into a giant autumn mural. After the children had made an approved contribution to the mural design, each chose an activity, using other materials around the room. Some played games with friends, while others built with blocks or chose reading books.

It all seemed much like our classes at the Child Study Centre until I noticed that the children finished their activities at exactly the same time and in a manner, I thought, that was too well-organized for such young children. When I questioned my translator, she told me that the teacher had been so nervous about my visit that she had rehearsed the entire lesson the day before. The children were all completing their activities for the second time around.

This showed a typical level of respect for visitors for which China is famous. But since then I have tactfully suggested that I would prefer to see less formal presentations under normal conditions. Subsequent visits to the Child Study Centre by our Chinese colleagues have convinced them that carefully-prepared lessons for visitors are not necessary. They have begun to appreciate and value children's spontaneous efforts and creativity with classroom materials.

Outcomes

This exchange program involves Canadian teachers travelling to China to teach for a one-year period in the Soong Ching Ling Kindergarten international program. Initially, there were four classrooms for children aged three to six, all taught by

teachers from Canada. The program has now expanded to nine classrooms and additional teachers have been recruited from Australia, New Zealand, and England. These teachers serve as the Head Teacher in each classroom and conduct the program in English. However, they all have full-time bilingual (Mandarin / English) Assistant Teachers who ease the adjustment at the beginning

of the year by familiarizing the Head Teachers with school buildings and procedures, and introducing them to the Chinese program teaching staff who work under a separate administration in adjacent wings of the school.

I am responsible for choosing the Canadian teachers who are to work in Shanghai, with help from the Soong Ching Ling Children's" Foundation of Canada. Some of our teachers have stayed on for a second year, and we believe that their teaching experiences in China have been extremely positive. In addition, the international program in Shanghai has proved to be very popular with local parents.

At the same time, one teacher from the Shanghai Soong Ching Ling Kindergarten comes to Vancouver each year for three to four months, to study Canadian early childhood methods and curriculum through participation in various classroom programs. This extended experience begins at the UBC Child Care Centre (formerly the Child Study Centre) but may include spending time in other Vancouver schools. One of the purposes of this study visit is for the Chinese teacher to have close contact with Canadian teachers and parents, at first carrying out and recording observations, but (depending on their communication skills in English) soon becoming involved in classroom activities and working directly with the children under the supervision of the regular teachers.

A delegation of four or five Chinese educators have also been coming to Vancouver each fall for a short period, to visit as many school programs as possible. Since this is usually the first visit outside China for these delegates, we include sightseeing and social occasions in Canadian homes as part of their itinerary, to give them a multi-layered experience. These visits have been particularly useful for the program organizers to learn about each other outside of an academic setting and to appreciate how much we have in common.

An ongoing assessment of the exchange program is being made through written and oral reports, interviews and informal discussions, and my own observations of the visiting teachers, both here and in Shanghai. The cooperation of Vancouver schools has made it possible to provide Chinese teachers with an educational experience that suits their individual needs and interests, and the collaborative effort has so far been seen as very successful. At the present time, we plan to continue the exchange program indefinitely into the future, with opportunities being provided for further cross-cultural study.

Author's note: If you are an early childhood teacher interested in participating in this program, please telephone me at (604) 822-4974

Learning by Creating

Lise Beaudry
Ecole Letellier School, Letellier, Manitoba

Art is such a special time for children. It will delight them for hours. All children young and old are born with the ability to draw and create wonderful, amazing things. All they need is a good art model. An art teacher who loves and enjoys what he or she is doing will attract her students like a magnet. They will want to spend hours making creative fun and artistic explorations. Each project will be fun, unique and produced by them. They will be proud of themselves. Here are two inexpensive fun projects your students are sure to love and enjoy.

Have fun that's important! Fun makes you relax. Relaxation lets your imagination create. Creation leads to production. Production gives children pride. They will be proud of their product and of themselves. This leads to children who believe in themselves. YES I CAN DO IT!

ANTIQUE BOTTLE ART

Things you need:

a bottle of any size or shape,
masking tape, wax, shoe polish, you can use any colour, you can even use two or three colours.
Modge Podge,
scissors and Kleenex

Start creating:

1. Tear or cut masking tape into small pieces.
2. Completely cover the bottle with pieces of tape.
3. You can overlap and discover a pattern you like.
4. Use a kleenex to rub shoe polish all over the masking tape to create an antique look.
5. Cover the bottle with Modge Podge.
6. You can add ribbon to decorate and you can glue paper flowers or birds from old cards on the bottle
7. You can fill your bottle with homemade tissue paper flowers or dried flowers twigs and weeds.

You can be original, for instance, my students used their bottles to hold their original Valentine messages and presented this gift to their parents. They were very pleased with their masterpieces.

LADIES DELIGHT BROOCH

Things you need

one plastic wire glass
one brooch
pearls and glitter
permanent markers
warm oven 375°

Everyone will enjoy creating these "Ladies Delight Brooches." They might even want to make several. It is fast, easy and amazing. Using one, two or three permanent markers colour each wine glass then place as many as you can on a cookie sheet which is covered with foil paper.

Place in a 375° oven. You can open the door after a few seconds and watch it perform magic as it melts and forms lovely flowers right in front of your eyes Each one will be different and unique. Take out and wait a few minutes before touching It cools quickly. Using a glue gun, glue a brooch pin and glue a pearl in the middle of the flower. Decorate with a bit of glitter or leave it plain. It is lovely either way. It is great for a birthday present, Mother's Day, Valentine's Day or Christmas present.

My kindergarten students made three "Ladies Delight Brooches" to give to their mother, grandmother and aunt for a Christmas Party. The ladies were delighted.

Lise is a kindergarten and art teacher at Ecole Letellier School, Letellier, Manitoba. She has offered to be a regular contributor of ideas for creative activities to the Journal. She would be pleased to answer any questions members may have. Send questions to the Editor. ***Canadian Children Journal,*** *2820 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, B.C. V7V 1L9 Or Phone / Fax / Message 604 922 3456. 0r E-mail* ATEK@dowco.com

Language of Technology: Are we making a choice?

Monica Gustafson

Look back...look way back...do you remember how you amused yourself as a child? Most adults will remember playing with their friends. Whether it was playing dolls, having a tea party, making a tent in the backyard or playing a game of baseball in the park, our generation generally spent free time with friends interacting and using our language skills. Birthday parties were fun events where we played Musical Chairs, Pin the Tail on the Donkey or games like Button Button Who has the Button?

Today our children amuse themselves with technology...computer games, television, videos and electronic video games dominate their free time. As parents we should take a critical look at these inventions and the difference between them and good old fashioned playtime with friends. Does the technology ask our child to think? Occasionally, and in fact in some cases, with computer activities they can learn valuable skills if the software is educational. Are they using their imagination...No. Everything is provided with mind boggling graphics. Are they using their communication skills...No. Electronic amusements do not provide the opportunity for them to interact verbally in any manner. Are they interacting with other children...No, most are solitary activities. Even birthday parties today involve opening presents, eating cake and then sitting watching the latest movie on video.

Are we making a choice to provide our children with everything in the latest technology without realizing that we are unknowingly jeopardizing the development of their communication skills?

How many of us sit down to dinner as families together every night? The family dinner table is one of the best times to develop conversational skills. John F. Kennedy, who was considered to be one of the greatest communicators of our time, came from a family where every child was required to bring to the dinner table a current event to discuss. How many of us even discuss with our children what happened in their day at school and take the time to ask them questions about it?

Today's children don't read the story of Snow White...they watch it on video. I have often heard the comment from people when they are asked if they have read the latest book by an author, "Oh I am waiting for it to come out on video." Research has demonstrated that children who are read to on a regular basis at home as preschoolers are more likely to be successful at school. Read to your children and ask them questions about the book, Did you like the story? What should Snow White have done when the women gave her the apple? Which dwarf did you like the best? Present a good model as a reader yourself and set aside some time each week when the TV. is off and everyone sits down and reads.

Encourage imaginative play in your children. Dress up clothes and some old fancy outfits bought at a thrift store can provide hours of amusement for any group of children to dress up and put on a play for their parents. Invite other children over to play...not watch TV. or play video games, or watch a movie. Create an environment where children think, use their imagination, talk and interact with each other and you will be helping to develop what technology cannot; Language and communication skills. Our children will not suffer if we limit the amount of time they spend staring at a screen and being passively entertained, but their communication skills will suffer if we don't.

From the Editor's Desk Continued from page 37

Upcming Conferences Cont

Reflections on the Reggio Emilia Approach: Symposium 11
Presented by Carolyn Edwards and Lella Gandini at Capilano College, May 28th to May 30th
Tel: (604) 984-4988 fax: (604) 984-1758
e mail probb@capcollege.bc.ca

Charting a New Course, October, 23 & 24, Truro, Nova Scotia. This conference will be presented as a partnership between the Institute for Early Childhood Education & Developmental Services and the Canadian Association for Young Children and Early Intervention, Nova Scotia: Contact Anna MacDonell, The Institute for Early Education, 60 Lorne Street, Truro, Nova Scotia B2N 3K3, Fax: 902-895-4487 E-mail IECEDS@ISTAR.CA

Publications

READing is more than **Phonics**
a Parents *Guide for Reading* with *Beginning or Discouraged Readers*
Reading Circles, P.O. Box 33038, 3319 Richmond Rd. S.W., Calgary, Alberta, T3E 7E2

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Inviting Children to Learn Science

Reviewed by Catherine A. Young

Throughout their lives, children express a need to know "why" things happen the way they do. Some of the proposed questions can be tricky to answer, and often it is easier to demonstrate a basic cause-effect relationship than to give an explanation. Experiments provide such an opportunity to show cause-effect. They can also stimulate curiosity and encourage problem-solving skills. The following book is from a series that is designed to answer the questions of why, what, when, who and where. It shows how a child can tackle many thought-provoking questions with the help of a curious adult.

What? Experiments for the Young Scientist. By Robert W. Wood
Illustrated by Steve Hoeft TAB Books

What? Experiments for the Young Scientist is a book of experiments answering questions such as what makes a rocket go, what are clouds and what makes a star twinkle? It uses procedures that require little preparation and household materials. Procedures are illustrated, explanations are given for the results and each section is followed by an invitation for further application or study. Different body senses are appealed to by way of manipulating material and observing change. Experiments are organized by themes, and can be easily used to embellish a favourite story, play or activity. We've launched many a rocket at our house, always with the same thrill. Little does anyone know that we're applying Newton's third law of motion!

The Mitten

Reviewed by Donna Mouzard

The Mitten, adapted and beautifully illustrated by Jan Brett, is an informative and language enhancing picture book for the preschool and school age child. This fable will not only appeal to this group's love of predictable, funny stories, but the educator will also recognize the potential for branching off into activities and discussions on such diverse subjects as; different cultural traditions and/or how animals defend themselves

Jan Brett has adapted an old Ukrainian fable about a child who loses, in the snow, a white mitten that his grandmother, Baba, has knit for him. As each page is turned an increasingly larger animal climbs into the mitten for warmth. Children enjoy the improbability of a mitten stretching to such an enormous size and laugh at the predictability of the smallest animal being the cause of the final explosion as the mitten gives way.

The retelling of this story honors the ability of young children to learn new language by not shying away from using a wide vocabulary. Animals snuffle, jostle, swoop, and lumber along. They have talons kickers, prickles and a muzzle. A child may not know the word silhouette, but the meaning is very clear, even to the youngest child, in Brett's uncluttered double spread illustration of Nicki running to catch his mitten "silhouetted against the blue sky."

Jan Brett has spent many hours in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston studying embroidery and porcelain and it shows in her art and picture books, which are generally set in Scandinavia or the Ukraine. Nicki, the main character, calls his grandmother, Baba, which could lead to a wonderful discussion among a group of young children about what they call their grandmothers and grandfathers. Names given to grandparents often reflect the cultural background of the family.

Even as an adult I never tire of this book, the story is loving and funny. Baba checks first to make sure that her grandson is safe and sound and then she checks to make sure he has his mittens. There is so much to see in Jan Brett's illustrations. Double spreads with the text and the pictures to match are framed with smaller, complementary story pictures and embroidery designs. The left frame shows what Nicki playing near a hidden animal while the animals in the text are arguing over entrance to the mitten. The right frame shows a clearer picture of the animal that will try and enter the mitten on the next page.

The Mitten is a picture book that can be enjoyed by all. Not only are the illustrations and story interesting and appropriate for the preschooler or beginning school age child, but it is also a book which can help children develop many skills and acquire new knowledge.

Friends of Children Award

Hollie Andrew

Hollie Andrew, a lady for whom retirement means a chance to change jobs, has been awarded the CAYC Friends of Children Award for her dedication to teacher training and to ensuring CAYC's presence here in Manitoba. Because of her commitment, many minority women, who perhaps may not have become teachers have done so, many teachers have been encouraged and the children of Manitoba are blessed. We wish to honour her in this way.

Hollie was second oldest of five children. Early life experiences created the determined, spirited person who knew what life was like as a minority. She could create ways to make do with very little and learned almost anything in practical ways. Having completed her early schooling in rural Manitoba, Hollie fell into teaching quite by accident. Asked by her grade twelve teacher what she wanted to do, she blurted out, "a kindergarten teacher." She worked her way through teachers' college, only to be told that she could only be a Kindergarten teacher if she could sing and play the piano. She was so devastated that she almost gave up! Her determination came to her rescue and she went on to teach about twenty-two years in rural one-room, city and northern schools in the public school system in Manitoba and Nova Scotia.

Hollie took university courses while teaching, only taking a year off while teaching in Churchill to complete her B.Ed. at University of Manitoba. Later, when she moved to Winnipeg with her son, her principal challenged her to go to workshops and retreats, to write, read and to think. In 1977, she was seconded by Lionel Orlikow to work at the Department of Education in Evaluation, Research and Policy Analysis. During this time, she and a colleague took the opportunity to visit the British Infant Schools in England. Here, Alice Yardley, of whom she had heard and read, became real. That was also the year she attended her first CAYC conference, her first link with Early Years P.D. Hollie served on the first Early Years Review Committee and was involved with the creation of the Early Years source book, "A Time for Learning a Time for Joy." Returning to the classroom forced her to learn all over again. Finally, she left public school teaching and took her Pre-Masters Degree under Imogene McIntyre. At CAYC Conferences, she continued to go to the sessions that interested her. Once home, she would choose the topics about which she didn't know, and study up on her own. She convinced others to become members of CAYC, hand wrote a newsletter, and drew together others who helped her put on quality workshops and conferences for teachers, and child care workers. Her hard work and commitment is ongoing.

Hollie was invited by Lionel Orkilow, to join the staff of the Winnipeg Education Centre, an inner city campus of the University of Manitoba. Here, she helped immigrant, Aboriginal and economically challenged women to break the cycle of poverty, catch up on academics, get off welfare, and to become teachers in five years thus providing the core area schools with role models. After teaching a year on the University of Manitoba campus, Hollie became involved with Weekend College for Teaching Assistants, mostly mature people, whose families had grown and who had always wanted to become teachers. It has been exciting for her to be part of the incredible stories of the lives of these people and to have the privilege of passing on her enthusiasm for working with Early Years children.

Hollie has retired several times, but some of us think she will never really retire. She will continue to do some Early Years consulting, in-services and provide encouragement to many. Through her, the teachers and children of many economic levels have been able to say, "I have a chance! I can do it!" Well done Hollie.

Elnor M. Thompson

Elnor was born in Halifax and grew up with five younger sisers in Truro, Nova Scotia. She taught in mixed grade country schools for one year in Nova Scotia, one year in New Brunswick. She married and raised three children. Elnor did much volunteering with children's groups, CGIT, daycares, nursery schools etc. She moved to Regina, in 1973 and decided at a "mature" age to go to University and under the guidance of Dr. Frances Haug at the University of Regina, to major in Early Childhood Education. Again, at Frances Haug's urging, she joined CAYC in, she thinks, 1976 and worked with CAYC Saskatchewan helping with provincial conferences etc. She was asked to be a CAYC Director for the Yukon in 1979 (she thinks) because there was no one there available for the position. She wrote to teachers in the Yukon urging their participation. She worked for a year at the University of Regina, Children's Centre and at the South Regina Nursery School from 1977 to 1985. Throughout this time she continued to work with CAYC, attending and participating in conferences.

Elnor became Director for Saskatchewan in about 1981 until 1985. She moved back to Nova Scotia in 1988 where she set up a preschool in the small rural community of Indian Brook, Cape Breton, carrying it on for six years. She continued to be active in CAYC and was elected to be the Director for Nova Scotia in 1993. This is her fifth year in that position.

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FRIENDS OF CHILDREN AWARD

The CAYC "Friends of Children Award" was established to give CAYC a way of recognizing outstanding contributions, by individuals or groups, to the well-being of young children. Hollie Andrew, and Elnor Thompson, are the latest recipients of this award.
If you know someone you would like to nominate for this award, please use the procedure and criteria below.

PROCEDURE

The submission for nomination(s) must come through a member of the board and seconded by a member of the board. Board members can receive recommendations for nominations from other persons or groups.

The nominator will be responsible to obtain approval from the nominee before submitting the name of the nominee with relative background or biographical information

The nomination(s) will come forward at a board or executive meeting from the board member assigned responsibility for the award.

This board member or an executive member will present the nomination and speak to it.

The nomination will be passed by the board and/or executive with a consensus decision.

The award will be presented promptly and in person when possible.

Publicity of the award and the recipient(s) will appear in the journal, Canadian Children, and other publications where possible.

Number of awards per year may vary.

CRITERIA

This may be:-
An individual or group, regardless of age.

Has a history of commitment to the CAYC mission statement and/or aims.

Has shown an outstanding scholarly, advocate innovative and/or practical contribution to the well-being of young children.

CAYC membership not mandatory but encouraged.

Canadian citizenship not mandatory

The Canadian Association
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