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Case Studies of Emergent Literacy in a Special Population

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Faculty of Education
University of Ottawa

by
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ABSTRACT

Case Studies of Emergent Literacy in a Special Population

The purpose of this research study is to examine the emergent literacy of seven special needs youngsters who are included in a regular classroom. The special needs of these children, according to school authorities, ranges from autism, Down's syndrome and fragile x syndrome to severe language and intellectual impairment. There are few studies which address the emergent literacy of these special needs children. If special educators and regular teachers are to provide appropriate literacy instruction for these children, it is essential to investigate the ways these youngsters experience, participate in, use, and understand literacy. This dissertation responds to that need through a field-based qualitative study.

The research design is that of an in-depth case study, with the researcher acting as the prime instrument of data collection and analysis. The case study has an ethnographic orientation and is interpretive in nature. The qualitative approach to data collection and analysis ensured thick, comprehensive descriptions and explanations using a systematic series of phases to investigate the seven youngsters' experiences with literacy in multiple contexts (school and home). Gathered over 44 weeks, the types of data collected, include audio recordings of focused interviews with the parents, teachers, teaching assistants, principals, and any others relevant to the child's instruction, as well as videotaped classroom observations, observational notes, focused literacy tasks developed from **An Observation Survey** (Marie Clay, 1993) and **Literacy Tasks** (J. Harste, V. Woodward & C. Burke, 1984), notes from school records and documents, artifacts of the children's written products from home and school.

The data was analysed across the seven youngsters and described from the perspective of four themes: **Beliefs/Values: about literacy, about inclusion; Experiences with and**

Participation in literacy; Characteristic uses of literacy at home and at school; Uses of literacy and language.

The findings from this special needs population indicated that the home literacy settings of all these youngsters were highly convergent while the classroom settings were divergent. The parents' and educators' beliefs/values about inclusion and literacy played an important role in each child's literacy achievements. Despite the differences in their special needs, as evident in their written products, the children were similar in their use of literacy and their understanding of literacy concepts. The results of the study of this special needs population bear a remarkable similarity to the emergent literacy findings of researchers who have examined non special needs populations. Verbal proficiency among this special needs population did not appear to be a necessary prerequisite for them to demonstrate differing uses of literacy.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a plethora of literature and research on early literacy knowledge and the understanding of written language possessed by youngsters before they enter formal schooling. The vast majority of this research has been carried out on children attending early childhood programs, both inside and outside of formal school settings. This research describes the importance of emergent literacy, proposing that literacy is an evolving process. Young children learn much about literacy before they enter formal schooling (Taylor, 1983; Bus, Van Ijzendoorn & Pellegrini, 1995; Clay, 1991; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984). The research of these authors has challenged many pedagogical practices. For example, it is no longer considered sound practice to delay the teaching of writing until students demonstrate some beginning reading ability. Nor is it considered sound practice to ignore literacy activities in the home. Teachers actively counsel parents about the importance of reading daily to their children from birth. For example, using predictable texts as the child's first books or building upon the child's own unique language experiences through literature are common practices in many classrooms. So too is recognizing and developing early intervention strategies for some readers before they begin to demonstrate the negative traits of low self-esteem and active dislike of reading. The concept of emerging literacy then has had a tremendous impact upon language and initial literacy instruction in schools (Teale & Sulzby, 1987; Clay, 1993; Heath, 1983; Wells, 1986; Pinnell, Fried, & Estice, 1990; Pellegrini, 1991).

Definition of Terms

In order to increase understanding and clarity the following definitions are outlined:

(a) Literacy: The term is used here to describe the interconnected processes of reading and writing, but it encompasses more. As is indicated in Harris & Hodges The Literacy Dictionary (1995) through a quote from Soares (1992): "...the concept of literacy involves a set of structures ranging from individual skills, abilities, and knowledge, to social practices and functional competencies, to ideological values and political goals." p.140

(b) Reading: The term is used to reflect the process in which a child engages to construct **meaning** from print or signs or printed symbols. Reading is viewed as a process that becomes more complex and flexible the more the child practices it in a supportive environment with personally meaningful text.

(c) Writing: The term is used to refer to the process during which a child consciously produces symbols or letters or letter-like forms in an attempt to construct a written thought. The more a child practices writing in a supportive environment and begins to use his/her affective domain to express and describe his/her unique experiences in print the more complex the process becomes.

(d) Literacy Event: This term is noted by Williams (1991, p.59) who uses Anderson & Stokes (1984, p. 26) definition of a literacy event as "...any action sequence involving one or more persons in which the production or comprehension of print plays a significant role." In other words, printed text is the focus of the action including an affective response.

(f) Emergent literacy: This term views a child to be engaged in the process of becoming literate, a continuum which begins long before formal schooling. The term is used here to refer to the reading and writing processes that proceed from birth to the point at which a child reads and writes conventionally. Emergent literacy has intimate connections to a child's language by supporting and fostering it.

(e) Special Needs: This term, instead of the more common term **developmentally disabled**, is used in this study. It refers to students who have been psychologically described as having severe or moderate learning difficulties, characterized by a limited potential for academic learning due to delayed intellectual development. These individuals typically have a mental age which is significantly below their chronological age, resulting in a significantly slower learning rate when compared to their same-age peers. Children with Down's syndrome, Fragile X syndrome, various forms of autism, or with pervasive developmental delays often fall into this special needs population.

(f) Inclusion: This term does not appear in any legislation but is cited by Lipsky & Gartner (1996) from the [U.S.] National Centre on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion as: 'the provision of services to students with disabilities, including those with severe impairments, in the neighbourhood school, in age-appropriate general education classes, with the necessary support services and supplementary aids (for the child and the teacher) both to assure the child's success - academic, behavioural, and social - and to prepare the child to participate as a full and contributing member of the society.' (National Study, 1995, p.3)

Statement of the Problem

Very few studies are available that address the literacy of students who have special needs. Even fewer consider these same children's emergent literacy progress, and still less have studied them in inclusive settings. In fact, prior to the 1960s the general belief was that these youngsters could not learn to read (Singh & Singh, 1986). It had been assumed that such children needed to concentrate on developing initial verbal language and other types of skills, particularly self help skills associated with personal grooming or hygiene already attained by most typical children. If these children learned to read and write, it was considered somehow an isolated case. This study intends to challenge some of these assumptions and subsequent practices.

From the moment of birth, children in this special needs population have meaningful experiences with spoken language similar to their typical peers. Like all children, these children see print around them in their environment, on street signs, on store packages in the supermarket, on boxes and cans in the kitchen at meal times, and in magazines, books and newspapers in the house. The lucky ones see their parents or siblings read. They are read stories before bed time or share in story time at their daycare centre. Young special needs children, like all young children, are trying to make sense of their literacy and language worlds around them. But how are they doing this?

The expressive language of many of these children often evolves on a slower continuum than their typical peers. Increasingly these special needs children are included in regular classrooms with other children who are expanding their language and literacy. There is a need to investigate the ways in which special needs youngsters acquire emergent

literacy given the nature of their experiences with language. If special educators and regular classroom teachers are to provide appropriate emergent literacy instruction for these children, it is essential to investigate the ways in which these special needs children experience, participate in, use, and understand literacy. The present study responds to this need by exploring in multiple contexts the emergent literacy experiences of individual special needs youngsters who are each included in a regular classroom. Using an in-depth case study format, it systematically explores across school and home contexts each youngster's emergent literacy experiences.

Positioning the Research

What is challenged here is the notion that literacy can best be described by linear, hierarchical models such as argued by Chall (1983), where reading in particular is described in a sequential set of grapho-phonemic elements that can be taught to youngsters in carefully controlled lessons. Most special education curriculum and evaluation is based upon this stimulus-response view of learning, which distorts the complexity of literacy learning. Too often, students in special education classes are drilled on a series of isolated reading skills arranged into a skill hierarchy. In these cases, reading is viewed as objective, scientific, and a value-free process. Writing is viewed as a separate skill, a content area unto itself. Regardless of isolated skills mastery, these children cannot be called literate unless they can orchestrate their reading skills fluently, flexibly, and in particular and diverse contexts. This deprives them of a vital life skill necessary to become a full participant in our society. It prompts the question: need it be so? More than thirty years of

experience, variously as a reading clinician, special education teacher, consultant, and administrator, has radically changed my assumptions about the literacy potential of these children. This shift in perception is due to my own experiences teaching special needs children literacy constructs, working in homes with their parents and in schools with their teachers. This background has shaped and influenced much of my current thinking about literacy teaching in special education and regular classrooms.

A renewed interest in teaching literacy in special populations has emerged during the last decade. It has been combined with the gradual movement away from the self contained special education classroom toward the placement of special needs children in regular classrooms. There is a need for the improvement of effective practices of literacy in special needs populations. I am no longer comfortable with reading and writing programs that put principle stress on the eradication of errors. In the same manner that Morrow and Smith (1990) see emergent literacy in relation to young children, I adhere to an holistic view of beginning literacy for special needs youngsters, that is,

as the result of children's involvement in reading activities mediated by more literate others....It is the social interaction accompanying these activities that makes them so significant to the child's development. Not only do interactive literacy events teach children the societal function and convention of reading; they also link reading and writing with enjoyment and satisfaction and thus increase children's desire to engage in literacy activities...(p. 3)

This argument of Morrow and Smith (1990) provoked me to question whether their view would hold true for special needs youngsters who are included in regular classrooms. I take the position that even very special needs students' literacy development can be fostered by immersing them in authentic language activities. They need to observe others engaged in literacy and they need to receive positive feedback on their approximations.

Underlying this view is the assumption that all children learn holistically (Giroux, 1987). I believe that special needs children, like all children learn about literacy by actively trying to make sense of it within contexts meaningful to them. Children do not make sense of literacy by analysing meaningless fragments. Much literacy learning is first learned in a social setting, with a significant adult serving as a mentor and guide. I feel this emphasis on the social aspects of literacy reflects Vygotsky's (1978) general theory of intellectual development that all higher mental functions are internalized social relationships. It would seem to support all children being together in a regular classroom regardless of their special needs.

Interestingly, Holdaway (1979) seems to incorporate ideas from Vygotsky (1978) when he describes four processes that he feels stimulates literacy in children. I contend that these apply to special needs children and reinforces their inclusion in regular classrooms. The first process is that all youngsters must observe literacy behaviour. Integrated very special needs students have this opportunity in their regular classrooms. For example, they are read to and see other children reading and writing for themselves. Such a situation would not necessarily be present in a self-contained, segregated special education classroom where the majority of students do not provide competent literacy models.

The second process relies on collaboration with an individual who provides encouragement, motivation, and help for the child. I have seen collaboration accomplished for very special needs students through a supportive classroom teacher, a teacher assistant, and a peer or cross-age helper in an inclusive setting. Wells (1986) documented the importance of a significant adult for a child's language expansion and future literacy

growth. The presence of such an individual is one of the principles of *Reading Recovery*™, which Clay (1993) contends leads to success for children.

The third process relates to practice. Like all students, special needs students need daily individual practice where each can try reading and writing, make corrections and experiment with their skills. They need to be trusted to learn to read and write, as Smith (1982) puts it. Practice of this kind is not often seen in a self-contained, segregated special education classroom. Instead, most special education students move along a lock-step, hierarchical skills continuum for their practice.

The fourth process, performance, is perhaps the most neglected for special needs students. They need to share their reading and writing with others in their class and significant supportive adults at home. Through ethnographic studies, Heath (1983) emphasizes how important a youngster's home culture is to his/her context of learning. Studies by Ferrero & Teberosky (1982) found literacy learning at home played a significant role for children. These are essential ingredients to successful literacy expansion for all children, says Smith (1978). In small, self-contained classrooms, it is difficult to share a variety of reading and writing experiences due to the homogeneity of the class members' abilities.

To accomplish this in a regular classroom means accepting that special needs children might require specialized means of communicating, such as through sign language, computer assistance or other means. Nonetheless, they can and do learn language when it is active, participatory and interconnected, as noted by Stires (1991), Bilken (1993) and Koppenhaver et al.(1992). Like Traux & Kretschmer (1993), I maintain that "children with

special needs may vary from their age peers, making connections in their own time and in their own ways; but the steps in the learning process become points to value and study, rather than steps to be ignored..."(p. 593). The assumption in this study is that the special needs child's reading and writing, like that of a typical child, reflects his/her own unique experiences and relationships. All children make meaningful contributions and have legitimacy when literacy learning is viewed as an evolving complex system.

Background

The concept that there is literacy learning before formal schooling is a theoretical notion that has framed much recent literacy research (Wells 1986; Dyson & Genishi, 1994). These researchers view children as sense-makers actively seeking to understand their worlds. Children are agents acting upon the world in which they live, not passive recipients of information. They are trying to understand the individuals, objects, actions, and interactions they encounter.

Children learn language with little or no effort as they seek to interpret their worlds. Without formal instruction children come to comprehend and produce complex, age appropriate language forms through everyday experiences with their parents, siblings and peers, thus learning the spoken language of their environment (Wells, 1986; Dyson & Genishi, 1994; Heath, 1983). In a similar way, children seek to make sense of their written language worlds by seeing print at home, on television, and in the community. Children not only witness from birth the reciprocal relationship between adults and print but also they

puzzle out how print works as they encounter it. (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1992; Teale & Sulzby, 1989; Dyson, 1981).

The knowledge and use of oral expressive language, as well as written language, expands as children engage in social situations in which communication and understanding are a means to an end. However, there is evidence that special needs children do acquire expressive language through interactions with significant persons in their lives, but not at the same rate as typically aged children. A growing number of educators now take issue with this type of statement:

....Children with cognitive, syntactic, or semantic deficits are also likely to show delays and differences in pragmatic aspects of communication. Children who were born prematurely, have significant medical problems, or are mentally retarded are less able to engage in the conversational dance during infancy and hence are at risk for pragmatic deficits beyond what would be expected based on their cognitive abilities alone....Some conditions particularly affect the social emotional or pragmatic aspects of communication development. A number of factors may result in the child being less able to be involved in communicative interactions or for the adult to be less able to read the child's involvement. (Westby, 1994, p.217)

Pellegrini (1991) sees this as assigning blame to these children. It is assuming that there is so much wrong with the child that they are therefore 'at risk' for failure in school. It does not value them as individuals within a mainstream school culture. They are perceived to have such large communication barriers that this becomes part of the rationale for isolating these children in special classes where they can receive intensive language programming and therapy from professionals. However, if these children are physically isolated in special classrooms with only peers like themselves, the interactive experiences conducive to language learning are even less frequent. When extensive conversations with typical same age children are limited, the opportunities for expressive oral language are curtailed, as the

special needs children interact and explore their oral language worlds only with others like themselves.

The Literacy World of the Special Needs Student

All children use language to learn, and therefore learn language. Language is an integral part of all the learning taking place. Most five year olds have had extensive language experiences and can be considered linguistically proficient before they begin school. Like their typical peers, special needs children use language for learning, but the language base from which they proceed may be very different as it is usually not in tangent with their peers. The central mission of special educators of these children has been to support and expand the children's spoken language first.

Typically, special educators have adhered to the notion that spoken language is the foundation for written language development. Special education programming has focused on spoken language acquisition, because when they enter school special needs children, in contrast to their same age peers, are still acquiring a fundamental language base with which to signify and internalize their experiences and interactions. Much of the literacy research involving special needs children has focused on sight-word approaches, skills of word analysis and oral reading error correction (Connors, 1992). Literacy research seems to have been focused almost exclusively on the identification of individual words (Gast et al., 1990; Gerten, 1985). Initial literacy programmes for special education children usually begin with the recognition and printing of individual letters. These skills are taught in a systematic and hierarchical fashion, based upon the assumption that youngsters must master the individual

components of printing before being encouraged to write. These components are isolated from the notion of deriving meaning from text and have little intrinsic value for the pupil (Teale and Sulzby, 1986). This developmental or readiness model encourages special needs children first to dictate stories about something they have drawn. Children are then asked to overwrite or underwrite the dictated message if they are able. Rarely are special needs children encouraged first to try writing about what they have drawn, particularly if they have not mastered recognition and reproduction of all the letters in the alphabet. This traditional method of beginning literacy teaching is common in special education, perhaps because of fundamental historical assumptions now embedded in the practices of special education. These assumptions have shaped special education literacy practices and programmes, and directed research in special education.

Rarely considered with respect to special needs children has been the notion that spoken and written language develop from birth. As a result, little research from this perspective has focused on special needs children's learning of literacy. The theoretical idea that both spoken and written language develop in an integral fashion from birth signals a belief that all children, even these very special needs children, are in the process of becoming literate. Such thinking ascribes legitimacy to all children's earliest literacy concepts and behaviours. Working from this literacy perspective, researchers (Goodman & Alterger, 1981; Dyson & Genishi, 1994; Clay, 1993) have investigated typical young children's literacy learning from linguistic, social, and cognitive orientations.

Rationale

There has been very little exploration of young special needs children's pathways to literacy largely because it has been assumed that during the early years these children due to their impairments are learning initial verbal language or sorting out language structures. Williams (1991) points out this assumption in her case study of hearing impaired children whose literacy programming often follows a similar route to the very special needs student. She is one of the few researchers who has documented the language and literacy worlds of profoundly deaf pre-school children. She illustrates in her case study that there are remarkable similarities between her deaf children's language and literacy worlds and those of their hearing peers, despite the diversity in their language. Are there remarkable similarities between the language and literacy worlds of some very special needs children and typical children despite their diversity?

Significance of the Study

This study adds to theory by exploring the literacy progress of seven special needs children whose experiences with literacy appear to parallel the experiences of typical children described in the research literature. It has been suggested that the diversity of young children's experiences with language and literacy both in their homes and in school settings influences children's acquisition and growth of literacy (Heath, 1983; Taylor, 1993; Harste et al., 1984, Williams, 1991, Clay, 1993).

Research Questions

This study explores emergent literacy with very special needs youngsters by posing the following research questions:

1. What role does literacy (reading and writing) play in the life of special needs children?
 - (a) How is literacy (reading and writing) experienced and used at home?
 - (b) How is literacy (reading and writing) experienced and used within the classroom?
 - (c) What literacy (reading and writing) knowledge do these children demonstrate as they participate within these two worlds?

2. What is the nature of the characteristics of emergent literacy (writing and reading) for these special needs children?
 - (a) Do they demonstrate specific characteristics similar to typical children in their written products and reading development?
 - (b) What types of written products do they demonstrate?
 - (c) What strategies do these children use to write?
 - (d) What strategies do these children demonstrate when they read?

3. As these individual special needs children gain control over the literacy system, how does this affect their total language development?
 - (a) For them are literacy development and language acquisition mutually supportive?

Overview of the Research Study

The research questions provided the initial focus for the development of the methodology for data collection and analysis. However, like Dyson (1981) I expected that

new questions might arise in the process of investigating these questions, particularly in relation to verification of the methodology employed in this study. This circumstance is characteristic of qualitative methodology (Merriam, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Wolcott, 1990). The researcher encounters unanticipated but related critical questions basic to understanding issues in the study. These questions have been included as they occurred within the progress of the investigation.

Chapter 2 is a focused literature review based upon my positioning. Chapter 3 describes the research methods used to investigate the research questions. It also includes a description of the data analysis process, issues of gaining access, and introduces the case study children. Chapter 4 provides a thematic perspective of the adults beliefs/values about inclusion and about literacy and describes the children's early years and their individual inclusive settings. Chapter 5 continues with a different thematic perspective, describing the children's literacy at home and at school. Finally, Chapter 6 not only relates the major findings to the research questions, but also raises issues that occurred during the course of the study. It closes with a personal epilogue.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate in detail the literacy of special needs students who are included in regular classrooms. These children from the moment of birth have experiences with the language of their parents, siblings and peers. They are trying to make sense of the actions and interactions taking place around them. Given the increased incidence of these children being included in regular classes, it is important that educators provide appropriate initial literacy instruction for these children. Can we assume that the findings and implications of the literature based upon the experiences of typical children apply to these very special needs children? The focus of this study will be on the emergent literacy of these students. As Dyson (1981) and Williams (1991), point out children use language to learn literacy and through literacy learn language. They found that a reciprocal relationship exists between the two experiences.

The bodies of literature relevant to this study are those that describe: (1) viewpoints of beginning literacy; (2) traditional literacy achievements of special needs children; and (3) studies of inclusive education of special education children. Each will be reviewed here for discussion.

Viewpoints of Beginning Literacy

In this section, the viewpoints of beginning literacy and the questions posed form a background for the next section, which details what often happens in literacy teaching in special education. This section is an attempt to highlight traditional special education

literacy teaching, despite recent findings in literacy and language learning. This study's three research questions draw upon research work in these areas.

Researchers such as Goodman & Alterger (1981), who focus on the linguistic understandings of .Goodman (1994) has typical children, use this as a means to explore and examine how children seek to make sense of initial literacy (written language) in a way similar to their development of oral language. Most typical children are aware that spoken and written language communicate a message. While searching to understand the message, they develop control over the strategies of comprehension and production. The child writer and reader does something very different said Goodman (1994) "creating a text with a meaning potential, readers will use to construct their own meaning." p.1094

This growing awareness of the phonologic, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic systems of language occurs through the child's use of oral language. Halliday (1980) argues that the pragmatics is not a separate system, but a component of the semantic system of language. The pragmatics, in this sense, is the choice of language that children make in social interaction and the effects of these choices on others. Choices will vary according to cultural demands. They in turn contribute to understanding the written language's orthographic and grapho phonemic systems. Read (1975) and later, Gentry & Gillet (1993), looked at the ruled governed relationships that children generate in their invented spellings. None of the current studies reviewed applied the research of these authors particularly to special needs children.

This situation carried over to Dyson (1981), who has categorized children's oral language function during composing. She indicates the components of the pre-conventional

writing process and describes the narrative style of each of her kindergarten case study children. She notes that there is a great deal of variability in her children's early writing processes, depending upon the individual child's writing purposes and knowledge of written language. It is particularly interesting that the variable role of oral language depends upon the children's writing purposes, as well as their knowledge of written language. No mention of special needs children appears in her study, so it is unknown whether her findings can be applied to these children.

Other researchers (Taylor, 1993; Dyson, 1981; Deford, 1984; Harste et al. 1984; Dyson & Genishi, 1994; Cook-Gumperz, 1986) view literacy as a socially-constructed process. The focus of their research is in the typical child's construction of meaning as it takes place in a meaningful social interaction. Typical children come to understand about the function, form and uses of print through meaningful integrations with other writers, readers and multiple texts. The experience with print, as well as the social dynamics, are as important in fostering the typical child's construction of meaning.

Researchers such as Harste et al. (1984), investigating literacy development within typical early childhood, have embraced the theoretical notion of the child as an active constructor of meaning. These researchers engaged many young children, ages 4 through 6, in five informal literacy tasks. These literacy tasks included the children's responses to environmental literacy. They focused on the typical child's construction of literacy from the perspective of his/her linguistic, social, and cognitive development. Language and literacy learning are viewed as integral and simultaneously occurring processes. Demonstrations of children behaving in literate ways are their personal constructs of literacy (Harste et al.,

1984). This social construction of literacy, when explored more fully, draws upon the tenets of sociolinguistic and cultural anthropology. Literacy becomes group specific and involves ways of using written language to serve social purposes in everyday life. This emphasis on context for children's literacy learning has led researchers (Heath, 1983; Frière & Macedo, 1987; Harste et al., 1984; Taylor, 1983) into documenting the influences of the school and the child's home and community. The social construction of literacy has been very scarce in the research literature concerning very special needs children even when they are included in regular classrooms. Applying the findings of these authors to a special needs population would need to be researched in classrooms where special needs children are included to ascertain whether similar results would occur.

Ferrero (1985) adapted a cognitive perspective in exploring the hypotheses typical children make about writing. She took a Piagetian stance in her work as she explored the logic typical children brought to the physical forms of writing. She found that many of the early written language findings of Clay (1975) and Read (1975) were true for preschool children of highly literate parents. She found they were true for preschool children from low socio-economic backgrounds whose parents had limited conventional literacy. She believed their original constructions were influenced by their intellect as they transformed print into meaning. The perceived intellect of special needs children has often dominated the kinds of literacy these children are exposed to in school. Research questioning this premise for special needs children is rarely done, because it is assumed that their intellect is the major influence in the constructions of their literacy.

Marie Clay (1966) was one of the first to use the term "emergent literacy" in her work with at-risk youngsters in New Zealand. Out of her work grew the Reading Recovery program (Clay, 1975, 1978, 1991, 1993). Literacy is seen as a body of cognitive knowledge about print and a set of processes for using that knowledge. She places a new kind of emphasis on the knowledge that a child acquires about language, reading and writing, claiming this acquisition begins early in a typical child's literacy. A dynamic relationship exists among communication skills as each influences the others, as they are acquired over time. Again, Marie Clay did not have special needs children in her original research population, so it would be extremely interesting to look at the dynamic relationship of special needs communication skills to see if her findings hold true over time for them.

Researchers Pinnell, Fried & Estice, (1990), building on Clay's work through the Reading Recovery™ Centres, document observable stages along a literacy continuum. For example, scribbling is viewed as rudimentary writing, a precursor to writing. By taking an emergent literacy perspective, scribbling is a significant product to get from a typical child. If this is the case, the scribbles of a special needs child have significance as well.

In the last decade there has been research around the holistic interpretive view of progress in reading and writing. That is, a view of reading and writing that sees it as a shared phenomenon of features, as described by Goodman (1986), Calkins (1991), Graves (1983), Clay (1991), Dyson (1985), Bissex (1980), Farr (1985), and Gentry & Gillet (1993). As more and more observations are made over time detailing the descriptive features of children's reading and writing, these have combined to form a more comprehensive definition of literacy acquisition in typical children. Collectively these

observations have led many researchers and practitioners (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986) to assume that the construction of literacy in exceptional children is the same as in typical children. That might be the case, but the research to support this notion is limited.

Traditional Literacy Achievements of Special Needs Students

The research on the literacy achievements of children with Down's Syndrome, autism or a pervasive developmental delay has been sparse or totally absent from the literature. This state of affairs probably reflects two factors. First, most individuals were in some kind of care facility. These institutions were run along the lines of hospitals, staffed by those neither trained in teaching nor expected to have competencies in academics. The emphasis was on social skills training. Second, this lack of academic content fell in line with the accepted medical and psychological view that leaned towards the primacy of biological factors in determining and limiting intellectual capacity (Buckley, 1985; Colasent & Griffith, 1998). It was assumed that these children were irremediable; academic success from such youngsters could not be expected. Conners (1992) reports that research on reading was virtually nonexistent prior to the late 1960's because of the belief that these children could not learn to read. This view is also supported by Singh & Singh (1986a).

Subsequent research on this belief indicated that perhaps the notion was misguided. There are research reports from the 1970s (Brown, Huppler, Pierce, York & Sontag, 1974; Brown et al., 1972; Brown & Perlmutter, 1971; Brown, Hermanson, Klemme, Haubrich, & Ora, 1970) showing that, through the use of behavioural techniques, these children could be taught basic sight words. Much of the research on reading and instruction since that time

has been dominated by sight word approaches. Conners (1992) has a review of this literature up to the end of the 1980s. The dominant types of studies on sight word instruction involve the techniques of delay, picture fading, and picture integration. Demachak (1990) and Schoen (1986) both have general reviews of research on response prompting and fading techniques. The other focus has been on word analysis skills and oral reading error correction. The majority of studies reported on by these authors are with children who are in separate special education classes, either in elementary schools or in specialized settings. Goodman (1994) has summed up this notion of literacy when he wrote that

.....in the traditional view of reading and writing, accuracy in word identification and orthography are paramount. Without these the reader or writer is not viewed as successful but demonstrating poor literacy. Little attention is paid to the reader/writer's intentions to make sense out of a given text. A reader is viewed as passive not an active user of language. The text controls the reader. A writer is viewed as creating a text to completely represent the writer's meaning,..... p.1094

Even today this type of beginning literacy teaching is common in special education curriculums. Perhaps that is because of some fundamental historical assumptions now embedded in special education curriculum practices. These assumptions have not only shaped special education literacy practices but also have directed research with special education children. These assumptions are worth reviewing. The challenge, first posed by Skrtic (1991), relates directly to a rationale for inclusive education.

Five Assumptions About Special Education

First, the whole culture of special education has borrowed from the medical world and its concerns for pathology, diagnosis and scientifically prescribed treatments. Friedson (1970) describes this phenomenon well when he writes:

...The characteristics that mark a "profession" are its claims of "knowledge of an especially esoteric, scientific, or abstract character" and of work that is "extraordinarily complex and non-routine, requiring for its adequate performance extensive training, great intelligence and skill, and highly complex judgement". (p. 106, & p. 153-154)

The medical profession claims this prestige and authority and so the closer special education programmes and practices come to emulating the medical profession, the greater their increase in prestige and position. That may be why many of the current literacy practices and programmes used in special education reflect this medical treatment model.

Second, many special education programmes and practices are adhered to because of the researcher's claims of scientific validity. Special education programmes are prescribed as treatments for the special education youngster. That lends credibility to the medical model which requires a treatment for an existing pathology, the second assumption inherent in special education.

Under these conditions, the third assumption to view school failure as the result of some undisclosed pathology in the student that requires treatment then seems reasonable. The pathology is usually psychologically or sociologically based, according to most school assessment reports. Few would disagree that there is pathology involved in students who are severely developmentally disabled, visually or hearing impaired. However, their failure in school could be the result of the intrinsic nature of the school system, which has been

unable to adapt enough to accommodate their individual needs. (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987; & Kauffmann, Gerber & Semmel, 1988)

By positing a pathological basis for students' failure, responsibility is removed from the institution, the school and teacher, and placed upon the student. That means then that the need to change institutions, to rectify social conditions affecting an individual child, to appropriate more resources for social use is unnecessary within a school setting when the root cause is perceived as medical (Skrtic, 1991). Coles (1978, p. 398) sums the situation up well with the statement: ".It is an explanation of a social problem that attributes its cause to the individual failings, shortcomings, or deficiencies of the victims of the problem."

The fourth assumption of a political need for classification follows logically from positing a pathological basis for students' failure. The result is that special education systems, educators, and researchers are locked into using assessment tools that document the pathology view. Even if the special educator agrees that a student deficit orientation is inappropriate, there is the necessity of having a diagnosis of the pathology because of the current special education legislative demands. Most current legislation in the United States, such as Public Law 94-142, passed in 1975, and its successor, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), or the 1982 amendments to the School Act in Ontario, Canada are based upon descriptors of disabilities or deficits that the student must meet to qualify for special education services or extra resources. Children are assessed then in relation to the severity of their disability. Until the funding methods changes, there are financial reasons for maintaining the present situation. However, it is rare that these

children are viewed in any other way. Nonetheless, there are researchers who are now questioning this view. According to Dudling-Marling (1994), Bilken (1993) was one of the first to use facilitated communication techniques with autistic individuals, challenged fifty plus years of research in special education:

By extending his work with Facilitated communication to individuals with Down's Syndrome and other people previously considered mentally retarded, Bilken challenges conventional notions of intelligence and, by implication , taken-for-granted assumptions about normality.. p.240

Lipsky & Gartner (1996) state that a growing number of educators now believe that many standardized tests are culturally biased and result in too many special education placements. Ysseldyke (1987), who completed a comprehensive review of the literature on referral and assessment, found a larger number of African American or Hispanic children in special education. Lipsky & Gartner (1996) point out that

testing is not simply a pernicious function; its premises also implicate racial and ethnic discrimination, and are based upon an erroneous understanding of intelligence as a fixed and largely inheritable characteristic that can be precisely measured and that can provide an accurate predictor of success in school and life. p.765

Gould (1981) leads his reader through the history, personalities and concepts involving race and intelligence. More recently Singham (1995) reviews the issues on race and intelligence in a concise article. What emerges time and again is that children's linguistic, social, and cognitive abilities are rarely viewed in an interactive holistic manner as starting points for academic programming. More often than not, children's linguistic, social, and cognitive abilities are viewed as deterrents to academic programming. The work of Buckley & Bird (1993) in the United Kingdom, Pieterse & Yola (1984) at

Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia and Farrell & Elkins (1995) at the University of Queensland, in Brisbane, Australia, bring these notions into question. These researchers all found that exciting academic progress in literacy resulted from their work with special needs children, progress that far outstripped the literacy expectations often held up for these children.

Thus the reasons for doing assessments and making decisions about children in schools is driven by motives that are political or economic or that seek to maintain status quo (Keogh, 1988; Kauffmann, 1988; & Skrtic, 1991). These researchers claim that diagnosis is not objective nor in many cases, is it in the least useful. The motive and objective of the diagnosis rarely points to affecting changes in literacy instructional strategies, but instead to affecting changes in students which will allow them to be fitted into an existing pre-packaged instructional sequence. Such a practice seems to legitimize the idea of teaching as intervention and supports an authoritarianism within the institutional structures (Berthoff, 1987). The result of these assumptions is that although all students have distinctive needs, special educators often use instructional methods that do not best serve an individual student's special needs. Often one instructional package is considered suitable for all students.

Several researchers (Stainback & Stainback, 1985; Stainback, Stainback & Forest, 1989; Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987; Thousand & Villa, 1995; Roach, 1995,) describe ways to address individual needs without sorting students into homogeneous sets. These researchers question the rationality of a segregated special education system. Currently many special education classes are segregated according to disability. Hence, all

developmentally disabled students would be together in one class. Given the weak effectiveness of special education instructional practices and the economic, psychological and social costs of labelling, it is hard to justify the special education system as rational and clearly points to the need for re-examining this practice (Algozzine & Ysseldyke, 1986; Stainback & Stainback, 1984; Keogh, Gallimore & Weisner, 1997).

Keogh (1988), Kauffmann, Gerber & Semmel (1988), and Skrtic (1991) describe the current system of special education in terms of fostering a political agenda. It supports the allocation of scarce resources that special needs students cannot receive unless they are classified and assigned to an instructional setting. The instructional settings have been developed in accordance with existing special education legislation. This method is politically expedient but is educationally disastrous! Often the school's view is that these youngsters could not possibly benefit from the regular curriculum, as their pathology would not allow it. This approach has wrought havoc with the lives of many students who are constantly reminded of their inadequacies and defects while in segregated settings. It has encouraged passivity or learned helplessness in many of them. This sorting role, says Lipsky & Gartner (1996, p.766), ". . .limits expectations of the former (special needs child) and gnarls the attitudes of the latter (those who remain in general education)."

The case history of one of these youngsters is described eloquently by Taylor (1991) in her book, **Learning Denied**. The attitudes and practices described in the book illustrate the inadequacies of non-adaptability within the mainstream system to meet individual special needs. It also points out the failure of regular education to instruct all students for full political, economic and cultural participation in the community.

The fifth and last assumption upon which much current special education practice rests is perhaps the most limiting of all. It is the view that only incremental technological improvements or isolated skills mastery are indications of progress (Skrtic 1991). This assumption is the direct result of instructional practices that stress isolated skill learning, or "eradication of error, the mastery of minute, meaningless components that make little sense to the child....rarely does it result in the child's use of writing as a tool for learning and enjoyment." (Graves, 1985, p.125) Special needs youngsters are rarely encouraged to compose text themselves, because it is assumed that they have limited language to bring to this task. This traditionalist view of literacy as linear in development locks these youngsters into mastery learning of certain mechanical skills, such as letter recognition and sound symbol recognition, before moving onto composing or reading continuous text. Many traditional special education instructional programmes concentrate only on one aspect at a time, leaving out the affective domain. Unfortunately, there appears to be very little research to counter the acceptance of for this view (Thruax & Kretschmer, 1993).

Underlying the traditional linear approach to literacy is the belief that youngsters' academic competence is judged solely on how well their word calling, isolated decoding, spelling, handwriting, and grammar conform to pre-established school standards. The greater the degree of conformity to grade/age established school standards, the better a special needs student's literacy is said to be (Mosethal, 1988). This traditional linear approach to literacy also has a socio-political dimension (Giroux, 1987, Edelsky, 1992, and Goodman, 1992). The implications of applying this linear definition of literacy ensure that the reading and writing of very special needs children remain insignificant. Implicitly

it labels them as poor readers and writers, the antithesis of progress since they are unlikely ever to conform to society's standardized grade/age norms.

It is upon these practices that the current system seeks to justify itself. The very special needs student then represents a pathological problem to be diagnosed (labelled) and fixed by deficiency driven remediation (Taylor, 1991). Success or failure in literacy in the standardized program depends upon the statistical number of items learned and recorded. To dispute such data is to challenge a fundamental convention of standardized reading tests. These are based upon the key assumptions of decomposibility of knowledge into elements and the decontextualization of knowing, whereby it is assumed that if we know something we know it in any context (Resnick, 1990). Special education literacy practices have reinforced this concept through teaching very special needs students isolated skills often in isolated settings. Researchers, Pieterse & Yola (1984), Rhodes & Dudley-Marling (1988), Pierce & McWilliam (1993), Bilken (1993), Koppenhaver, Coleman, Kalman, & Yoder (1992), Bos (1988), Sunstein (1991), Truax and Kretschmer (1993), Buckley & Bird (1995), Farrell & Elkins (1995), and Colasent & Griffith (1998) are among the growing ranks of special education researchers who now dispute these ideas, particularly when it comes to instructional practices related to literacy.

More recently, authors such as Stires (1991) and Sunstein (1990) accepted the notion that by employing the instructional strategies advocated by Rhodes & Dudley-Marling (1992), special needs students could learn literacy. Keefe & Keefe (1993) did the same, working with learning disabled youngsters. Five (1992) has written about her experiences over a ten month period when she decided not to send her special needs students out of her

classroom for remediation. Buckley & Bird (1995) report on their successful literacy work in England with children with Down syndrome explaining how teaching them to read has had an impact on their language. Farrell & Elkins (1995) report from Australia on longitudinal studies on secondary students with Down syndrome who have learned to read and write while in inclusive settings. Most recently, Colasent & Griffith (1998) have written about their experience of how children with autism responded to oral stories, as well as their knowledge of story structure. All these researchers are building evidence in support of the view that special needs children learn similarly to typical children. However, as Walmsly (1983), Bos (1988), Traux & Kretschmer (1993), and Colasent & Griffith (1998) point out, this kind of research is relatively recent and sparse. Graham & Harris (1988) add their voice by calling directly for more research on how all special needs children learn to compose.

Studies of Inclusive Education for Special Needs Children

Lipsky and Gartner, (1996) argue that, "inclusion provides all students with a quality of education that is both individual and integrated, citing recent court cases that support their contention that all students can and should be educated in the same classroom." (p.762) These authors point out that the term "inclusion" does not appear in any legislation. They cite the working definition of the [U.S.] National Centre on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion found in Chapter One. As Lipsky and Gartner (1996) report, the National Centre on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion found among its key findings that, "in general, the 1994 and 1995 national studies, as well as other

evaluation studies....report positive student academic, behavioural, and social outcomes for students with disabilities.. "p.779 This finding is of particular significance to this study as the majority of students in the studies reviewed did not have severe special needs. The bulk of the studies were concerned about gains in self-esteem, engagement in social interaction, and positive attitudes by classmates. None of the studies cited directly addressed students with very special needs and their literacy progress while in an inclusive setting. This absence points to the need for a study such as the present one, in order to describe the nature of the literacy that children with special needs learn in an inclusive setting.

Lipsky and Gartner (1996) point out through their research that the overall trend towards inclusion in some parts of the United States indicates that special needs students do make improvements in their behaviour and social and academic outcomes. They quote a report from the Michigan Department of Education, addressing a serious issue facing many Boards of Education here in Canada:

When one contrasts such [positive student] indications with the fact that there appears to be little, if any, evidence in research to support superior student outcomes as a result of placement in segregated settings, one must seriously question the efficiency of spending ever-increasing sums of money to maintain dual systems...(Final Report, 1993, p.5-6)

The Lipsky and Gartner (1996) paper contrasts much of the evidence both positive (National Study, 1994, 1995) and negative (Shanker, 1994; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995; Kaufman, 1994) concerning inclusion. They argue that if inclusion is implemented well, it meets the individual needs of a full range of students. These authors offer seven necessary factors for inclusion:

(1) visionary leadership at all levels;

- (2) collaboration from all stakeholders;
- (3) refocused use of assessments by special education service providers;
- (4) reorientated supports to staff and students;
- (5) reorientation of funding to favour inclusion;
- (6) effective parental involvement through meaningful substantive input;
- (7) adopting of effective instructional practices alongside curricula adaptations.

These criteria can be applied to inclusive settings for evaluation purposes and could be used as a tool in reviewing individual cases. Caution would be necessary, however, the issue of inclusion is charged with controversy within education circles. Inclusion of very special needs students into regular classrooms challenges educators' beliefs, attitudes and assumptions about the education of these students. It raises issues such as the belief in these students' capacity to learn. It raises issues of special education literacy teaching. Inclusion confronts the educator with finding ways for very special needs students to reveal their competence. In short, the issue of inclusion challenges the status quo in any school when it is first introduced.

Summary

Three research questions of this study draw upon research from a variety of areas and, in doing so, raise other speculations, many of which go beyond the scope of this project. When literacy is viewed as a social construct, it raises concerns about how special needs students demonstrate their personal constructs of literacy. For example, are they the same or different from the constructs found by Harste, Woodward & Burke (1984),

constructs which this study only touches upon because this project did not have hundreds of special needs children to observe. Further speculation arises out of the research on family literacy (Taylor, 1993). For example how is literacy experienced in the homes and community of special needs children? Can parallels be drawn to typical children in these areas? This study contributes some research in this area about these special needs children and their families but this area of concern could become a complete research topic on its own.

The orthographic and grapho phonemic systems of typical children has been thoroughly researched (Read, 1975; Gentry & Gillet, 1993) but few studies have included a consideration of special needs children. It has been assumed that different patterns, rather than the same ones, occur for special needs children because their language usually is perceived as so different, as they seek to make sense of initial literacy. This study can begin to contribute to the research on whether special needs children's literacy patterns are totally divorced from typical children's progress and can identify the ways in which special needs children work toward literacy. A study beyond the scope of this project, one which examines many more special needs children in both inclusive and special education classrooms, would be required in order adequately to address this issue.

Research has shown that the variable role of oral language depended upon the children's writing purposes and knowledge of written language (Dyson, 1981). This finding raises the issue of special needs children who are in inclusive settings and exposed to meaningful interactions with other writers, readers and multiple texts. This study partially will address whether these special needs youngsters display any of the intentional purposes

for writing like the typical children in Dyson's (1981) study, but this area could be a whole study unto itself.

The research on the cognitive perspective of literacy rarely includes special needs children and thus leads to speculation about what kinds of written symbols special needs students construct about writing. It is often assumed that the influences of intellect plays the dominate factor in the original constructions of special needs youngsters (Ferrero, 1985). It is assumed then that there is no dynamic relationship among the communication skills for special needs children as each influences the other over time (Clay, 1991). This project will begin to challenge this assumption.

This chapter describes the traditional literacy worlds of special needs students and the literacy practices found in many traditional special education classes. That description led into the assumptions about special education that support these literacy practices. Questions about these literacy practices are only beginning to be challenged by some special educators but these literacy practices are very entrenched within special education and their impact as this study will suggest is far reaching. The last section describes the challenges of inclusion and some of the research studies in the area. Few studies, however, describe the literacy practices used in inclusive settings, the essential thrust of this study's investigations.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to investigate in detail the emergent literacy of special needs children who are included in regular classrooms. It will be done by systematically investigating, across home and school contexts, the reading and writing of selected children. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research methods to be used in this study. Research guided the choice of methodology and the steps used to conceptualize the thematic framework implemented to describe the data. The chapter concludes with brief introductory biographies of the children.

Rationale for an Interpretive Case Study Research Design

This study is grounded in the works of early childhood literacy research and uses multiple research tools to examine the complex dimensions of special needs children's literacy acquisition. It involves intensive case studies with an ethnographic orientation. The techniques will be similar to those used by Williams (1991), notably classroom observation, informal interviews, informal literacy tasks, and participant observation. The application of multiple research tools provides an in-depth and broad look at the chosen children's social and cognitive constructions of literacy. The theoretical perspective of this research, the characteristics of an emergent literacy perspective, and the kind of research questions to be investigated make it an interpretive case study. Although the research questions remain the focus for the study, other questions and issues that required addressing arose while reviewing the literature and the collected data. Some questions were beyond the scope of the study and remain to be researched with these children or others.

Case study research by definition occurs under normal conditions so that the researcher retains the holistic and characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 1989, p.14). In this case study research design, the research questions dictated investigating emergent literacy events as they occurred within the normal conditions of the classrooms and homes of the special needs children. Only then could the nature of the children's experiences with, participation in, and uses of reading and writing be investigated. A case study allows for in-depth investigation of phenomena in context, holistically and in detail so that the dynamic nature of emergent literacy is viewed in all its complexity. For this reason a case study methodology was chosen for this research.

According to Yin (1989), the goal of the case study is "to understand classes of events through the careful examination of specific ones." (p.219). Case study research seeks to explore the processes and dynamics of practice. The case study is interpretative because the primary instrument for data collection and analysis is the researcher who mediates the data, making the case study interpretivist (Merriam, 1991). In this case study the specific events of each special needs youngster's emergent literacy will be investigated and mediated through the researcher, resulting in this being an interpretivist case study.

The goal is to uncover the meanings that a particular special needs youngster assigns to events and to understand how those meanings shape learning and behaviour. The interpretative aspect of this research enters into play in the researcher's attempts to understand and report the youngsters' meanings. Providing a comprehensive description of each case grounded in the data gives the reader the opportunity, as Williams (1991) puts it, to experience vicariously:

the setting and determine the basis upon which the investigator made analytical interpretations. In a sense, the reader is provided the opportunity to co-analyse the case (Erickson, 1986) and develop naturalistic generalizations from the case report to other known contexts... (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 , p.59)

To generate the thick, comprehensive description necessary for this type of case study, Williams' (1991) model was chosen. In her case study of three profoundly hearing impaired children, she uses multiple data sources and an ethnographic orientation in the data collection and analysis. She then develops categories after data collection to apply to the corpus of data, describing these in great detail for each case study. For this study, it meant developing themes to describe a special needs youngster's experiences with, participation in and characteristics of their literacy within their family and with their teachers and classmates at school.

This ethnographic orientation becomes interpretivist because it views the perspectives of each member of the group, considering how their beliefs and values influence them. By employing an ethnographic focus, the particular beliefs and attitudes of the teachers, teacher assistants, administrators and parents toward particular instructional approaches for reading, writing and language learning for very special needs children might be uncovered. The value each individual places on the role of language and literacy in the lives of special needs children might also emerge.

Research Design: Gaining Access

Due to the nature of this project, all individuals' privacy had to be respected. This consideration meant that the project had to be approved and vetted by the University Ethics

Committee as well as the Ethics Committee for the three school boards from which the case study children were drawn.

The biographies begin with Jennie, followed by David, Daniel, Tommy and Megan, and conclude with Kristy and Chelsea. The total amount of time, across all the seven youngsters, was 44 weeks beginning in the spring of 1995 and continuing through to the spring of 1996. Because of the nature of emergent literacy, only the youngsters' first names have been retained. All other names and/or place names are fictitious. In many cases, as requested by the researcher the names used were picked by the participants themselves.

The researcher met with all the parents before having contact with any of the youngsters. Two conditions were discussed with the parents. The first was that before a youngster was selected, some initial observations would be made to ensure that the child in question was in what the school considered to be a regular classroom. The second consideration was that all school personnel had to agree to the project and be willing to work with the researcher once they fully understood the project and their roles. This condition required initial meetings with staff to inform them about the goals of the project, to outline clearly their roles if they chose to participate, and to answer their questions. These meetings took a considerable amount of time and are included as part of the 44 weeks.

Research Design: Selection of the Youngsters

The following criteria were used to select the children:

1. The youngster's parents must be willing to participate in the study.

2. The classroom teacher, teacher assistant, and school administrators must be willing to participate in the study.
3. The youngster must be considered to have special needs (developmental disabilities) by their board, with a minimal of other handicapping conditions.
4. The youngster must demonstrate a willingness to interact with the researcher.
5. The youngster must be full time in a regular classroom.
6. The youngster must be demonstrating some early literacy skills. i.e. book handling skills, word recognition, reading continuous text, writing name, letter string writing, etc.

Research Design: The Settings: The Children's School and Homes

As much as possible the schools and children chosen for this case study had to be voluntarily selected. This meant that the school personnel, parents and youngsters all had to participate in the research and the school site had to be a regular classroom. Some candidates were eliminated because all these conditions were not met. The individual classroom settings and the homes for each child will be described later in chapter 4. There were six school sites but seven homes visited as two children, David and Daniel, attended the same school.

Research Design: Data Gathering Techniques

To begin this project a pilot case study on one youngster over a nine week period validated the literacy activities and the other data gathering techniques. From this first case study of Jennie, the project was expanded to include six more special needs youngsters.

The following specific procedures were used at home and at school: noting participant and classroom observations, undertaking focused interviews, engaging in focused literacy activities, gathering artifacts such as written products (past and present), and reviewing school records, such as assessments and documents. As much as possible, all the activities with the youngsters were videotaped and/or audiotaped for either transcription or review to provide a comprehensive data pool for ethnographic analysis. The data gathering sources, summarized in Table 3.1 offer an overview of this section on methodology. Tables A and B, in Appendix 1, provide details of the adaptations made to the work of Clay (1993) and Harste et al. (1984). Table 3.2 lists the focused literacy tasks developed and used in this study. Tables C, D, E, and F, in Appendix 1, detail the actual phases the researcher used and the exact data source generated during each phase. The phases were adhered to for each child to provide consistency in the data gathering process. This approach was deemed necessary because of time constraints and the distances between sites. Checklists for each child were developed to ensure that the same activities occurred for each youngster during the same phase.

Table 3.1: Summary of Data Gathering Sources

Activity: At School	Data Source
Classroom Visits	observation field notes videotaping & Audio taping classroom writing samples
Focused Interviews	Audio taping (20 transcribed)
Focused Literacy Tasks	videotaping and/or Audio taping written products
Reviewing Documents	Ontario School Record (OSR) Special Services Board File (if available)
Activity: At Home	Data Source
Home visits	observation field notes
2 Focused Interviews	Audio taping (14 transcribed)
Reviewing artifacts	written products e.g. school notebooks, artwork, cards etc., listing home library books, magazines, newspapers, etc.
Focused Literacy Tasks	list of environmental products, Audio taping of child story reading & copy of parent and child's letter

Research Design: Focused Literacy Tasks

Using Clay's (1993) Observation Survey as directed within this case study proved inappropriate, as no very special needs (developmentally disabled) children had been part of the original normative sample and the children in this study were all chronologically much older. However, the tasks themselves were within the capabilities of all these children. Adaptations were made to every aspect of the Clay's (1993) Observation Survey (see Table A in Appendix 1), which formed part of the basis for what is referred to in this study as the focused literacy tasks. In many cases the activity was transformed into a game. This action was taken because the case study children were already encouraged to interact with their

peers within their classroom through learning games. Games then seemed the most suitable way to steer the adaption as the children already enjoyed playing games with their peers. They provided excellent focused activities in which the children could engage within the classroom in order to demonstrate their literacy knowledge. The youngsters would be more likely to engage in the task if it was presented as a game to play with another classmate. Such an approach was also in keeping with the inclusive philosophy for these youngsters. Incorporating these tasks into the classroom created situations to evoke the students specific knowledge and understandings of literacy in their multiple environments. It was felt that they might or might not demonstrate specific literacy knowledge during classroom observations. These focused tasks, combined with the data observed in the classroom and at home, are representative of the youngsters' current literacy.

The Literacy Tasks used by Harste et al. (1984) were already informal tasks. That is there was no normative data as was the case with like in the Observation Survey attached to these tasks. They did have directions on how to do the tasks. The original directions from these Literacy Tasks were adapted as outlined in Table B in Appendix 1: they were either turned into games, embedded into classroom routines, or combined with another task. As much as possible, the original intent of the Literacy Tasks was retained by the researcher when the adaptations were made. Writing activities were adapted to use both at home and in school, as the researcher wished to capture a normal literacy activity. For example, where the case study child read with a significant adult. An added bonus of these adaptations was to note some of the other classroom children in a normal inclusive situation. Their reactions to the case study children became an important part of the observations, as they offered

insights into how typical classroom children interact and respond in inclusive classrooms. The decision was made to use limited numerical scores and to focus instead on describing and analysing how each of the children handled the tasks to see whether any patterns of emergent literacy were evident. An overview of all the focused literacy tasks is found in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Overview of Focused Literacy Tasks Used

Number	Task
1	Environmental Print Games: 1 - Products, 2 - Photocopy of Product & 3 - Print
2	Language Experience Story
3	Uninterrupted Writing & Drawing
4	Reading a Book - for 3-4 Running Records
5	Phase 1: Receiving & Reading a Letter (at school & at home) Phase 2: Writing and Reading a Letter (at school) & at home - optional item
6	Game 1: Tic Tac Toe - Letter Identification (upper & lower case) Game 2: Tic Tac Toe - Letter Sound Identification Game 3: Tic Tac Toe - Word for Initial Letter
7	Game 4: Tic Tac Toe - Sight Word Identification
8	Concepts About Print (CAP) using Sand or Stones books (Clay, 1993)
9	The 10 Minute Race Game - writing vocabulary
10	Dictation - using forms a, b, c, or d (Clay, 1993)

Data Collection Phases for School and Home

The activities used in the current study are outlined below as a series of phases covering both school and home. The activities within the phases across the children were fairly consistent. Slight variations arose due to school schedules and the availability of school personnel. As activities neared completion for several youngsters in phase one, more youngsters and schools were added. The phases do not correspond to actual weeks, as the

researcher collected data from the Spring of 1995 through to June of 1996. During any one phase in the course of a week the researcher was spending full days in at least 3 schools . Only one child, Jennie, was observed through all the phases at one time. As well all the Focused Literacy Tasks were videotaped and many were audiotaped at the same time.

Tables C, D, E, F in Appendix 1 are an attempt to indicate the multifaceted aspect of this study and document the actual steps (phases) the researcher followed to obtain the data. That is, the detailed how, what and why of the data gathering sequence.

Data Collection Phase One: Gaining Entry

Phase one goals were: (1) to establish an entry into the schools and homes of the case study children; (2) to get the required administrative paperwork (the consent forms) completed; (3) to set up workable schedules for ongoing activities at each school site and with each teacher and parent; and (4) to start focused literacy tasks. For additional information about the phases see Appendix 1. During this phase the role of the researcher was more that of an observer. The focused interviews with the educators were usually scheduled as first activities as the consent forms from them were easier to obtain. However, the consent forms for the whole class needed at least a week's turn around and no video observation times could be set up in the classrooms until the consent forms from all the class members were returned. The teachers, principal, assistants, and parents were all given the same one on one focused interview during this phase, so scheduling all these individuals within one school and home was a juggling act. This stage of the proceeding was a good time to review school records in the child's Ontario School Record (OSR).

After the first week of observation, during this phase Focused Literacy Tasks 2: Language Experience Story and the first running record from Task 4: Reading a Book were scheduled as they involved observing the teacher assistant working with the focus child. At home, the parents undertook their first focused interview and collaborated on the preparation of Focused Literacy Task 1: Environmental Print Games. Parents were asked to begin gathering artifacts illustrating the child's present and past literacy efforts. Parents were left with protocols for their second focused interview and a date for their second home visit.

Data Collection Phase Two: Establishing Relationships

Phase two goals were: (1) to establish a relationship with the focus child, the classroom students, and all school personnel; (2) to begin using the school personnel as informants and provide training where needed; and (3) to complete more Focused Literacy Tasks. It was during this second phase that the researcher began to move, within the classroom and in relation to the focus child, from the position of observer to that of participant observer. Through Task 3: Uninterrupted Writing & Drawing and by watching the four Task 6 Tic Tac Toe Games being played with the classroom children, some of the interactions between the case study child and peers were captured. Relationships between the researcher and participants were also initiated. Portfolios of the child's school writing were compiled, on with the teacher and teacher assistant acting as informants about the context and origin of the artifacts. The second running record from Reading of A Book, Task 4 was accomplished by the researcher watching the teacher assistant reading with the

child. At home, the second focused interview with the parent(s) was audiotaped and discussion about the artifacts collected begun.

Data Collection Phase Three: Acting as a Participant Observer

Phase three goals were: (1) to continue gathering data; and (2) to assume a role of participant observer with the focus child and with all others at each school. The child did the third Task 4 Reading a Book, either with the researcher or the teacher assistant for a running record . The teacher assistant and researcher collaborated on how best to introduce Task 8: Concepts About Print (CAP) and Task 10: Dictation. Together they decided on which form the child could relate to best on Task 10. Explaining the directions of the CAP to the teacher assistant was also necessary. Task 9: The 10 Minute Race Game was again a collaborative effort between the researcher and the teacher assistant. The object of this game is to elicit from the child all the vocabulary words he/she can write in a given time frame. The Environmental Print Game 1, using actual products, was undertaken by the researcher, with the teacher assistant acting as a participant observer. The teacher assistant continued during this phase to collect writing samples from the child. During the third home visit, the researcher and parent collaborated on writing a letter for the child to receive and read for Task 5. The optional item of Task 4: Reading a Book at home was explained to the parent and an audiotape was provided.

Data Collection Phase Four: Bringing About Closure

Phase Four goals were: (1) to complete any remaining data gathering; and (2) to bring closure to each school and home site. Depending upon the school and child, this phase not only drew the study to a close for the schools and families, but also allowed for tidying up any left over tasks undone. During this phase the child received a letter from his/her mother as part of Task 5: Receiving and Reading a Letter. The letter was delivered by the researcher. The child then collaborated with the teacher assistant or researcher to Task 5: Writing and Reading a Letter. The child did the fourth running record for Task 4: Reading a Book. Every classroom parent who gave permission for their child to be videotaped received a thank you letter, along with a thank you letter to the student. Each of the teachers, teacher assistants, principals, and other significant teachers also received a thank you letter. The school secretarial staff, whose cooperation was an invaluable help, also received a thank you letter. All the school personnel thank you letters were copied to their immediate superiors or superintendents. At home, as part of the optional items in Task 5: Receiving and Reading a Letter at home, the case study children received, via their parents thank you letter a letter directed to them. It was left up to the parents as to whether they wished to assist their child in answering the letter for the optional item of Task 5: Writing and Reading a Letter at home. All the case study children's parents were left with a contact address and telephone number should they wish to contact the researcher in the future.

Specific Techniques Employed: Classroom Field Observations

Some of the classrooms integrated their activities around themes that incorporated the traditional subject areas such as language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and technology. Other classrooms followed a more traditional format, where language arts was done at a scheduled time. After the first week of observations, the amount of classroom observation time was negotiated with each of the participating classroom teachers to maintain the classroom routines, as well as the normal literacy learning environment necessary for this research to be successful. The individual classrooms are described in chapter 4 under the heading inclusive setting.

Specific Techniques Employed: Videotaping and or Audio taping

The purpose of the videotaping was two-fold: first, to capture spontaneous literacy events in the classrooms and, second, to have a record of the focused literacy tasks from each classroom site. All videotaping was carried out by this researcher. The videotapes offered insights into the classroom routines which might otherwise have been missed. Videotaping allowed for detailed re-examination of this researcher acting in the capacity of a participant observer with the case study child and, at the same time, recorded what was happening in the classroom as a whole. The videotapes also captured the case study children's non-verbal language in the regular classroom setting and offered a data source for language functions and strategies applied by each child. A total of 51 hours of video tape resulted from this activity. Audio taping of task 4 along with the video taping, was used as a backup for the running records, as the voice quality was better.

Specific Techniques Employed: Focused Interviews

To contribute to the youngsters' sociological background and to maintain a multiple perspective of each child's emergent literacy, the same focused interviews were done with each child's classroom teacher, teacher assistant, principal, parents and, where appropriate, the resource teacher. A few days before the interviews, interviewees were given a copy of the topics, allowing them to thus to have the opportunity to think about their answers and, if they wished, to jot down notes to refer to which they could refer during the interviews. It was hoped that during the focused

interviews, the classroom teachers' and teacher assistants' beliefs and values would emerge, either implicitly or explicitly, and subsequently be observed in the classroom.

The school principal was interviewed because it was believed that his or her

Topics for First Focused Interview

1. How children learn to read
2. How children learn to write
3. Instructional programmes to support answers 1 & 2 above
4. How children best learn language
5. How classroom environment supports topics 1-4 above
6. Any other relevant comments

philosophy would perhaps influence the classroom practices. The parents were interviewed using the same questions. This decision arose out of the findings of the pilot study, which suggested that it would be useful to know whether parents' views were in agreement with those of school personnel. It was felt that differing ideas between parents and school personnel could impinge upon home and school communication. The topics addressed during the interview are stated in the text box.

Interviews ranged in length from 20 to 30 minutes for the teacher assistants, classroom teachers, and significant others to one hour or more for the principals and

parents. A total of seventeen and a half hours of data resulted from this first formal focused interview. All of the **Significant School Adults** and the **Parents (mother)** named in each **Child's Pertinent demographic information table** at the end of this chapter did this first focused interview. In addition, the parents had a second, two hour focused interview to obtain from the parents point of view a comprehensive knowledge of each individual youngster's own history. The topics¹ addressed in this parent interview are listed in the Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Topics Addressed in Parent Interview

Topics	Descriptors
1. About Literacy	the child's favourite book(s), reading time, writing/drawing habits and/or activities, questions about print, first interest in books, first attempts to draw, library visits, first recognition of name, parents reading habits
2. About Language	when speaking began, speech therapy, how communication occurs, parents' role in language stimulation, courses taken
3. About Special Needs Children	when special needs first realized, explanations given by medical authorities, choice of inclusive setting, reaction of authorities and school system
4. About General Information	describe your child, describe what is especially important to know about your child, special activities, favourite TV programmes, playing with other children, describe your child when playing alone
5. About Family Background	parents education, occupation, siblings' ages & male /female
6. Additional Comments	any additional information the parents might feel relevant to this research

Toward the end of the first home visit each of the parents was given a copy of the topics so that they could have an opportunity to think about their answers and, if they wished, jot down notes for themselves prior to the interview date. Since this interview took up to two

hours, it usually comprised the whole second home visit. Each of focused interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. Collectively, they form thirty one and a half hours of data. The focused interviews from each school site were examined for common themes. The corpus of data was then re-examined cross sectionally by role (i.e. teachers, teaching assistants, principals, parents) to ascertain whether common themes existed among individuals holding comparable positions.

Specific Techniques Employed: Written Artifacts

Collecting the case study children's past and present writing samples facilitated an overview of the types of written products they have produced (Dyson, 1981). These materials were collected because,

these written pieces documented the children's individual constructions of literacy and the ways in which they initiated, absorbed, and synthesized the social and educational influences on their written language development. (Williams (1991, p.74)

In order to gain an historical perspective of the children's past and present writing undertaken at home, during home visits time was spent with each parent discussing the origin of the samples, as well as the children's age at the time of their creation and the context in which the samples were produced. In each classroom a similar process was carried out with the teacher assistant and the classroom teacher. Comments were noted about the type and amount of assistance the child received. The written artifacts from each case study child were labelled and categorized using Dyson's (1981) Writing Purposes.

Specific Techniques Employed: Other Documents

Other documents examined for the case study included the children's Ontario School Record (OSR) file, which housed copies of their report cards, written notes from their parents, their records from their Individual Program/Identification Review Committee (IPRC) and, in some cases, their Individual Educational Program (IEP), and reports from speech language pathologists and/or teachers. In one case, the School Board Special Services file contained copies of the OSR file. The parents readily shared all the reports from medical personnel they had at home but which were not in school files. The other significant areas of data were found in the parent/teacher communication books, which the teachers and teacher assistants often used on a daily basis to communicate between home and classroom.

Analysis Process

After I withdrew from the field, I reviewed all the data on each child. This activity required rereading, sorting, and coding all the gathered field notes, analysing the focus literacy activities, transcribing the focused interviews, reviewing the videos, and placing into chronological order the artifacts collected for each child.

I analysed the data inductively, using procedures similar to Williams (1991) who based her analysis on Strauss & Corbin's (1990) grounded theory analysis. This method necessitated the creation of a concise, theoretical formulation of the data that was grounded in the children's experiences, as reflected in their literacy, language and inclusive settings. At the same time, I searched for instances in which the youngsters demonstrated reading

and writing traits similar or dissimilar to those Dyson (1981), Harste et al., (1981) and Clay (1994) discuss in their work with non-special needs children.

Trustworthiness

In this study trustworthiness was established through intensive engagement, triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checks. Whenever possible, immediately following an activity and videotaping, I discussed the results with the teacher, teaching assistant, or parent in a mini-debriefing session. This action allowed me to confirm with the other research informants the data obtained and to maintain a perspective. It served as a member checking process that helped to confirm for the researcher the experienced reality for, as Williams (1991) notes,

researchers cannot escape the influence of latent a priori theories or assumptions about their investigations. As the primary data collection and analysis instrument, what the researcher sees emerging from the data is a result of his/her own interpretive lens. Consequently the investigator employs certain operational techniques to establish the trustworthiness of the investigation i.e. to confirm with the research informants the information presented, to ensure the emic perspective... p.87

For example, the frequent classroom and home visits permitted me to build up a rapport with the case study children, as well as with the teaching staff dealing with the individual child. It also allowed me to acquaint myself with some of the other staff at each school site. A trusting relationship was necessary to carry out the research as it maximized the possibilities of identifying the characteristics of literacy that the focus children displayed. This is, as they became more knowledgeable, during the course of the project about that for which I was looking, the staffs would be attentive to indicators of literacy

occurring in my absence. They would then very excitedly report these to me upon my return to the school.

I also used key informants to verify the data analysis results from the running records. I met with a Reading Recovery leader and a Reading Recovery classroom teacher. Both provided clarification or challenges to interpretations I had made on the running records. These one-on-one peer debriefing sessions allowed me to receive advice based on their experiences with the running records.

Issues in Gaining Access to The Case Study Children

With seven youngsters involved in this study, negotiations to gain access to the children varied considerably with the three individual school boards. In fact, these negotiations took much longer than I had anticipated. The biographies later in this chapter begin with Jennie, followed by David, Daniel, Tommy, and Megan, and conclude with Kristy and Chelsea. They proceed in the order in which I first met the children, their parents and teachers. It also reflects the time line for the study. As it turned out, the story of gaining access also illustrated the socio-political dynamics of special education discussed in Chapter 2, which came into play during these case studies and could not be ignored. It was an unexpected event and worth reporting here not only because of its socio-political overtones, but also because of what it illustrates about inclusion, as well as the attitudes and beliefs about children with differences. Like Wolcott (1990), I recognize, that pure description does not exist. In detailing the events that follow, my own subjective reactions are part of the context.

I chose the working definition of inclusion to use was the one cited by Lipsky and Gartner (1997) and developed by the National Centre on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion:

To restate it from Chapter 2:

Inclusion is the provision of services to students with disabilities, including those with severe impairments, in the neighbourhood school, in age appropriate general education classes, with the necessary support services and supplementary aids (for the child and the teacher) both to assure the child's success - academic, behavioural, and social - and to prepare the child to participate as a full and contributing member of the society. ("National Study," 1995, p.3) (cited in Lipsky and Gartner, 1997, p.763)

When this study was originally conceived I networked within the public school board for which I had worked, letting it be known that I was searching for a special needs child with whom to work for a pilot study. The focus of the pilot study was to test a methodology before proceeding to a larger study. I was looking for a special needs youngster located in an inclusive setting, as well as a school and parents who were willing to work with me. In January of 1995, I received an interested response from Jennie's teacher assistant, school and parents. I then approached the Board's ethics committee for formal permission to work in Jennie's school, explaining that due to the nature of the study it was necessary to have the cooperation from both home and school personnel. The pilot study proposal went forward and I was granted permission to proceed without any involvement from the Board's special education department. Upon completion the results of that case study were submitted to the Board's Research Advisory committee, the school and Jennie's parents. Jennie's parents were so enthusiastic about the study that they agreed to sign another permission form for a larger study. I heard nothing from the Board, but as the 1994/95 school year was coming to a close, I received favourable comments from the school personnel with whom I had

worked. During the summer of 1995, I was approached personally by Kristy's principal and Chelsea's teacher, both of whom were employed by from two different schools in Jennie's Board. News travels fast in Boards. They had heard of the pilot project and wanted the children to be considered for the larger expanded project. They believed that their schools contained special needs youngsters in inclusive settings who might make suitable candidates. Both had already taken it upon themselves to "feel" the parents out concerning their willingness and interest in participating in a research project.

I had hoped to get quick approval to include more children in September 1995. I had been advised to submit my proposal to a joint ethics committee serving four Boards. This committee was made up of members from two public boards and two separate boards because special education services for the types of children in whom I had expressed an interest were shared amongst them. It was also suggested that this would give a greater scope to finding suitable youngsters for the project. I felt that the broader reach of this committee would provide greater potential access to youngsters suitable for the project. I considered it an excellent suggestion at the time.

The proposal went forward to the committee at the end of September 1995; approval was returned subject to some revision of the project. Except for the expansion of the number of youngsters, the project initially submitted to the committee Board was the same as the pilot study proposal that originally had been approved by Jennie's public Board. The first issue of concern about the larger project was raised by a member of Jennie's Board. This individual now objected to the permission letter for the parent/guardian because I had included a section for the signature of the case study youngster as well. A revised letter,

excluding a place for the child's signature, had to be resubmitted to the chair of the committee for approval. The letter for the parent/guardian of the non-focus classroom youngsters was fine. It included a place for the regular classroom youngster's signature. No explanation was given why the focus youngsters were to be disenfranchised other than it was not necessary to have their signatures. I suspected this change was required because the sanction of the special needs children was not part of established special education procedures.

I felt the project did require the knowledgeable cooperation from all the classroom children in the study, including the focus child, who is a member of the class. I felt it was within the rights of the individual child to be informed and be as knowledgeable as possible about the activities in which he/she had agreed to participate. It recognized the case study child's contribution to the study. It assumed expectations of these children. It valued their sanction.

I encountered resistance similar to that about which Thomas Skrtic (1991) wrote so eloquently in The Special Education Paradox: Equity As the Way to Excellence. In his far reaching critique of special education, he write of the critics who resist revisionist methodologies: "Their criticism stops at the level of special education practices...[without] questioning the assumptions in which these practices are grounded." p.150 I was certainly going against current practice by having special education children acknowledge their participation in the research through the simple act of signing their name. Special education children do not sign the permission forms giving them entrance to special education

placements, only their parents/guardians do. This situation is a legal requirement and standard practice in special education systems.

On the other hand, I thought there might be another assumption operating about the capacity of these youngsters to understand what they were signing. As Skrtic (1991) outlines, many special education practices are based on the belief that

—disabilities are pathological conditions that students have; differential diagnosis is objective and useful; special education is [a] rationally conceived and coordinated system of services that benefits diagnosed students; and progress results from rational technological improvements in diagnostic and instructional practices. (p.152)

It would logically follow on such an assumption that the focus case study children in this research could not possibly understand what they were signing. This act of signing then seemed to be viewed as an unacceptable special education practice. I wondered if by allowing the special needs children to sign the letters of permission, the four Boards would have had to assume that these special needs youngsters had some competencies like other children. I felt that even at these beginning stages indicators were starting to emerge with respect to the way special needs youngsters were viewed by those in authority. Was I going to find the same perceptions at work in the schools and classrooms?

The second stipulation by the four Board ethics committee was that in order to have access to any special education youngsters, I would have to work through the special education departments of each of the Boards. When I questioned the need for this involvement, I was told these were high needs children who fell under Special Education Departments' mandates. Thus it was already clear to me that the level of competency ascribed to children labelled special education was understood by those in authority to be different and that, accordingly, when it came to research they were to be treated differently

as well. With regular students (those not labelled special education), only the schools would become involved in an approved Board research project, not a Board department, such as the Special Education Department. Again Skrtic (1991) springs to mind, for he writes that, "special education is a rationally conceived and coordinated system of services that benefits diagnosed students..." p. 152. The four Board ethics committee would properly assume that it would be helpful to me as a researcher to work through the Special Education Departments in order to find suitable candidates. Skrtic (1991) points out that it is assumed that the labelling and sorting carried out by special education departments provides a "differential diagnosis [that] is objective and useful.." (p.152). They saw no other way to provide me access to special needs children.

I deliberately had chosen not to use the diagnostic criteria for mental retardation as defined by the American Psychiatric Association. Past experience had alerted me to the fact that many parents of special needs children consistently would not allow their offspring to be tested and labelled by special education systems. Such parents had steadfastly refused to see labelling as useful and objective. In fact, they often viewed the psychological testing as educationally limiting to their child. According to many special education definitions outlined by school boards, their child could be refused a place in a regular classroom based upon the test results. These definitions and codes which rely heavily on an IQ score, are based on the degree of severity reflecting the level of intellectual impairment. These are based upon the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders DMS-IV (1994) and are as follows:

A. Significantly sub-average intellectual functioning: an IQ of approximately 70 or below on an individually administered IQ test (for infants, a clinical judgment of significantly sub-average intellectual functioning)

B. Concurrent deficits or impairments in present adaptive functioning (i.e., the person's effectiveness in meeting the standards expected for his or her age by his or her cultural group) in at least two of the following areas: communication, self-care, home living, social/interpersonal skills, use of community resources, self-direction, functional academic skills, work, leisure, health, and safety.

C. The onset is before age 18 years.

317	Mild mental retardation	IQ level 50-55 to approx. 70
318.0	Moderate mental retardation	IQ level 35-40 to 50-55
318.1	Severe mental retardation	IQ level 20-25 to 35-40
318.2	Profound mental retardation	IQ level below 20 or 25
319	Mental retardation, severity unspecified: when there is strong presumption of mental retardation but the person's intelligence is untestable by standard test. (p.46)	

The descriptive definitions I chose to use (see chapter one) do not fit into any of the participating Boards' special education labelling systems. Their categorizations are based upon a psychometric deficit definition of disabilities. By choosing to use a different type of definition for the children in the study, I ran afoul of established special education definitions and practices. I was not viewing special education youngsters from the same pathological perspectives. The special education database could not easily locate names and schools of the type of youngsters I was seeking because I had chosen to use different descriptors. My background knowledge and experience within the local community provided me with the knowledge of where some of these youngsters in inclusive settings were to be found. Gaining access to them was going to be a challenge if I was forced to go through each of the established Special Education Departments of each board.

I had overlooked the fact that these particular children, sorted and consigned to special education by legislative requirements, carried with them legal issues. Sometimes these issues were politically contentious as well. There are elaborate special education practices to one must adhere which have to be rigidly because of legal requirements. These

have been developed to "protect" the special education child and the privacy of the parent, and to ensure an adequate "placement" for the student. Feeling that they knew their youngster's needs better than special education authorities, parents of children in inclusive settings have often run afoul of school board's accepted special education practices. These parents favoured a regular classroom placement with special education services support. I had been naive in thinking that school boards, with whom parents had had past disagreements about their children's education, would welcome unconditionally a researcher into inclusive classrooms.

Inclusive education has not been enthusiastically embraced by Jennie's Board. Through the courts in the past, this public school board had worked actively against inclusion for special needs children. Only an out of court settlement with the parents of one such child had opened the way for the inclusion of Jennie into the regular classroom. Special needs youngsters are still largely viewed from a medical model of disability that requires special treatment. This special treatment translates into a special "placement" and a separate education system, all practices which are very logically based if one accepts the idea of underlying assumptions set out by Thomas Skrtic(1991). Clearly, in Jennie's case, as well as other inclusive cases present within the board, the "placement" was different. It was considered "full integration" and rarely referred to as inclusion. This circumstance raised the question: In this board and perhaps others, what were the values and attitudes towards special needs children and their parents held by those gatekeepers of special education? Perhaps "inclusion" would not be considered a desirable objective for these children despite parental approval and wishes. A researcher wishing to investigate these

situations would not be welcomed enthusiastically. What would happen if I were to question what Skrtic (1991) described as "progress results from rational technological improvements in diagnostic and instructional practices" (p.152). What if I were to find progress in academic achievement among special needs children that affirmed the parental desire to have their children in a regular classroom setting? Such a finding would question the current special education status quo and practices.

Jennie's School Board required an additional cover letter for the superintendent of special education explaining the project. I submitted this letter to the manager of special education who in turn forwarded it to the superintendent's office. I then waited for a response. I assumed that the superintendent would send from his/her office my original letters, along with a covering letter. This assumption proved incorrect.

The reply when it came, informed me that my letters, previously approved by the Board's ethics committee, were now considered too long and too complicated for the parents to read. I felt the parents needed to be clearly informed as to what they and their children were agreeing. My special education department contact related to me that the real objection to my letter was that it required parents to respond, with a positive or negative answer, directly to me as the researcher. Such a practice was unacceptable as all names and responses, both positive and negative, had to be funnelled through the special education department. Positive responses would be forwarded to me by the special education department. Based on the criteria listed in my proposal, I was informed that I would be provided with a list of birth dates and the gender of individual children who might participate in the study. No names were given to meet this stage and I was to have no direct

access to parents. The rationale was to protect the confidentiality of the parents and children. However, there appeared to be a control issue operating.

The special education department would maintain control of who I selected for the research project because they would choose which parents received a letter. My experience told me that some parents would be suspicious of a request coming from the Superintendent's office, especially if, in the past they had had differences of opinions over their child's "placement". This intervention on the Boards' part is a way to block access to youngsters whose parents in the past had proved "troublesome". I use the word "troublesome" to mean those parents who had dared to question the Board authorities about their child's education.

In light of these experiences, the following observer comments began to form: When research is involved, why should only the superintendent in charge of special education have contact with the parents of special needs youngsters in inclusive settings? That question led me further to query: Is there something else operating here? Are there present values and attitudes, ones which a researcher might question, which the system would rather not have examined? Why was my access to these children and their parents being delayed? Was it by design? or Were the policies and practices being expressed by the Board a reflection of the nature and the extent of its valuing of these individuals with differences?

By mid October 1995 I began to doubt that permission would indeed be forthcoming. By the end of the month I had heard nothing from the other two school boards who had agreed to participate in the research project. As the "fates" would have it, during the last week of October I was approached by a parent advocate from a local support group

who wished me, during the first week of November 1995, to speak in a public forum about my research project. My audience would be the parents of children who were advocating inclusive settings for special needs youngsters. The parent advocate indicated that they were willing to share their stories about their disagreements with the Boards in question with respect to gaining access to an inclusive classroom setting for their children. The socio-political elements of inclusion were beginning to take on a personal meaning for me as the clock ticked away, and I had yet to gain access to any special needs children!

After I gave my presentation, I was approached by the mothers of Tommy, Megan, David and Daniel. They wanted to know if their children would qualify for the study. These children attended schools within the two other Boards where I had permission to work but from which I had heard nothing. Armed with a list of names (children and parents) and schools, I re-contacted the head of the Special Education Department in the separate Board and the head of the Research Department in the other remaining public Board (other than Jennie's). I forwarded to them again a copy of the approved research proposal. These Boards accepted the fact that the University Ethics committee and the Four Board Ethics Committee had approved the project. They asked for no changes. They were very pleased that I already had names of interested parents as they had been anxious about how to give me access to suitable youngsters. They were also more than willing to contact the principals on my behalf in order to provide an initial introduction via phone. I was to make directly all subsequent contacts with the schools and parents, without any requirement to involve the special education departments. That was a change from Jennie's Board and perhaps due to a different Board bureaucracy. At the time, I suspected that requests from

the grass roots, that is, from parents, had made the difference. It was much later that I came to the realization that it was the request from these particular parents which had made the difference (see the early years for these children in Chapter four). Tommy's and Megan's mothers both sat on their Board's Special Education Committee. They were politically active. David's and Daniel's mothers had been very active in their local school and their children were well known to the special education department in their Board. These parents were perceived to have power.

By the first week of November 1995, I had begun phase one in the schools attended by Tommy, Megan, David, and Daniel (see Appendix 1). During the first week of December, I received a list of birth dates from Jennie's public Board. In making my selection from the four proffered, I picked birth dates to correspond to those of Jennie, Kristy and Chelsea, then returned the list to the Special Education Department. A week later I was notified to pick up the "opened", returned permission forms. Jennie, Kristy and Chelsea appeared on the list. With only a week to go before the Christmas Break, I contacted Kristy's and Chelsea's to set up Phase One (see Appendix 1) which I wished to begin the second week of January 1996, when school resumed. Kristy's principal and Chelsea's teacher offered to phone the children's parents before the Christmas Break to give them a progress report and to see if they were still ready to participate: there would have been no point in meeting with the two school staffs' in January had the responses been negative. To everyone's relief, not least of which mine, Kristy and Chelsea's parents remained interested in proceeding.

By the end of January 1996 all the parents of the focus children had been contacted. I was by that time into Phase Two (see Appendix 1) with Megan, David, Daniel and Tommy and Phase One with Kristy and Chelsea. So despite access delays of over four months, I had obtained permission to work with seven special needs youngsters. All the youngsters were considered by their school boards to have such special needs that, had their parents not requested an inclusive setting, the children would have been in segregated special education classrooms away from their community schools. The difficulties in gaining access to these children raised questions for me with respect the meaning of inclusion in these boards and the attitudes and beliefs of those in authority concerning special needs children in regular classrooms. I speculated that I might have to address some of these issues when I got into the schools.

Developing Themes

To begin the process of developing themes I undertook yet another pass through the data, using the research questions as starting points and my guide to the formulation of the themes. As illustrated in Table 3.4, I took from the research questions key words such as literacy, experienced, used, participates, characteristics, specific, written products, types, strategies, language, and support.

Table 3.4: Research Questions and Key Words

Research Questions	Key Words
<p>1. What role does literacy (reading and writing) play in the life of very special needs children?</p> <p>(a) How is literacy (reading and writing) experienced and used at home?</p> <p>(b) How is literacy (reading and writing) experienced and used within the classroom?</p> <p>(c) What literacy (reading and writing) knowledge do these children demonstrate as they participate within these two worlds?</p>	<p>role literacy</p> <p>experienced</p> <p>used</p> <p>participate within</p>
<p>2. What is the nature of the characteristics of emergent literacy (writing and reading) for these very special needs children?</p> <p>(a) Do they demonstrate specific characteristics similar to typical children in their written products and reading development?</p> <p>(b) What types of written products do they demonstrate?</p> <p>(c) What strategies do these children use to write?</p> <p>(d) What strategies do these children demonstrate when they read?</p>	<p>characteristics</p> <p>written products</p> <p>types</p> <p>strategies</p>
<p>3. As the individual child gains control over the literacy system, how does this affect their total language development?</p> <p>(a) For them are literacy development and language acquisition mutually supportive?</p>	<p>language</p> <p>literacy</p>

I was looking for themes that would tie all the multifaceted pieces of data together into a theoretical framework. Such a framework would allow me to examine each child's literacy from a school and home perspective and to explore the literacy of all the children from the same perspectives since the themes arose directly from the research questions. This process helped to focus my attention on the data in direct relation to the research questions I had posed in Chapter One.

However, as I proceeded to examine the huge corpus of data more closely, especially the focused interviews and my field notes, other powerful themes emerged. The first concerned the beliefs and values of inclusion held by the various significant adults within the world of the child. The second was the beliefs and values of literacy held by these adults. When I posed my original research questions, I had overlooked completely the

significance of the inclusive setting and its influence on literacy. The impact of these beliefs soon emerged. It became more and more evident as I read and reread the focused interviews and reexamined my notes on the process of gaining access to the children that this phenomenon was a theme to be included. Research with children who fall under the special education mandate is affected by political, social, and contextual factors that are often unique to their functioning. What I had overlooked was that these factors have implications that will in turn affect the research. Many of the issues stem from external factors that influence special education and the individual child's situation (Mertens & McLaughlin, 1995). As they emerged from the data pool, I could not ignore these beliefs/values. In order to tie all the data together, I needed to incorporate this information into a thematic framework. Finally, I ordered the themes into a sequence that would make sense when used to describe the data and the children.

The next step was to define the terms I used in developing the themes. Under each of these themes, additional questions were posed as situations occurred that sent me back to the main research literature in the thematic area. This process resulted in my developing indicators to support each theme. This whole process was non-linear

because, with each additional pass through the data, more indicators to existing themes were added.

Themes Used in Analyzing the Data

- Beliefs/Values: About Inclusion, About Literacy
- Experiences with, Participation in Literacy
- Characteristic Uses of Literacy at Home and at School
- Uses of Literacy and Language

Theme 1: Beliefs/Values: About Inclusion, About Literacy

Beliefs/Values refer to explicit or implicit statements made, or behaviour exhibited by either the peer or adult during the course of the investigations. During the focused interviews with the adults who had contact with the child, it was hoped that their values would emerge through their conversations. Like Williams (1991), I realized, that the child would be influenced by the beliefs/values of the adults in their lives. In addition, the classroom observations and home visits offered an opportunity to verify through their actions the consistency of the parents, teachers and teacher assistants beliefs/values. I was looking for what the adults believed and valued about literacy in general, and especially the literacy learning of special needs learners. I had questions regarding how the instructional philosophy of the adults translated into the classroom or home; what aspects of literacy the adult emphasized at home and/or in the classroom; the importance in reading and writing of correctness versus exploration; the emphasis placed on text meaning and on sound symbol correspondence; the emphasis placed on writing and language; and finally, whether the child ascribed a value to literacy by choosing literacy as an activity when other options were available. Posing these questions helped to develop some of the theme indicators noted in Chapter Four.

Originally I had planned to devote very little attention to inclusion since I did not see it as an important variable in the child's literacy learning. I had believed that formal instruction would play the greater role in the child's literacy. I had forgotten what Smith (1988) had said about learning: "We learn from other people, not so much through

conscious emulation as by "joining the club" of people we see ourselves as being like, and by being helped to engage in their activities." p. vii

During the course of this study, however, it became increasingly clear to me that the way various individuals in the study valued inclusion directly affected the way each focus child learned literacy. The studies cited by Lipsky and Gartner (1996) in their piece on evaluation of inclusion programs note that: "the research and evaluation data on inclusion indicate a strong trend toward improved student outcomes (academically, behaviorally, and socially) for both special education and general education students" p. 770

The adults interviewed in this study made explicit or implicit remarks about inclusion of special needs children into regular classes. At the same time, the peers of the focus child made value statements about inclusion through their interactions. I wanted to capture these phenomena. Some of the questions I posed for myself while examining the data helped to focus my attention on inclusion. I had questions about whether the adult had very set opinions about inclusion of special needs children; whether these opinions varied or stayed the same while working with the special needs child; whether the special needs child reacted to peers and the sensitivity peers used to include the special needs child; and whether any of these circumstances had an impact upon the literacy learning of the individual special needs child. The observations resulting from these speculations eventually contributed to the indicators found in Chapter Four.

Theme 2: Experiences with and Participation in Literacy

In this study I define experiences with literacy as those occasions when a literacy event (reading or writing) was initiated in the child's presence by a peer or adult. For example, if an adult or peer suggested that they read or offered to write or read something for the child, a literacy event would occur. Such events would also include those occasions when the child, at home or at school, had the opportunity to see others engaged in literacy activities. I drew upon the studies of Dyson (1981) who researched typical kindergarten children, Taylor (1983) who considered family literacy, Senechal, LeFevre, Thomas, and Daley (1998), who examined home literacy on the development of oral and written language, and Williams (1991), who studied hearing impaired children.

Participation in literacy, on the other hand, refers to occasions when the focus child responded to literacy events. An example would be when the child was included in a writing or reading activity where they imitated some reading or writing type behaviours. Under this theme the child might respond to reading or writing done by another peer or adult. This theme is linked to the emergent literacy studies reviewed by Sulzby & Teale (1986), where researchers suggest that these behaviours often grow out of interactive adult or peer activities with the child. These activities contribute to their literacy learning. This theme is supported by the research of Senechal et al., (1998) cited above and that of Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) who focused on the efficacy of reading to preschoolers. The indicators found in Chapter Five were based the work of these researchers, as well as that which I was witnessing.

Theme 3: Characteristic Uses of Literacy At Home and At School

It is under this theme that an attempt is made to capture those occasions in which the child demonstrates literacy by using his/her literacy strategies at home and at school. Characteristic uses of literacy refers to those occasions when reading/writing was initiated by the child or adult/peer. When I reviewed the parents' focused interviews, it was not uncommon for a mother to report on her child's use of reading or writing in play activities, a revelation that supports family literacy research studies (Taylor, 1983; Rowe, 1998).

At school children demonstrated characteristic uses of literacy through their writing and reading strategies. When it came to the issue of a child demonstrating different components in the writing process, I not only drew upon the work of Dyson (1981) but also reached back to the work of Gentry (1985). I combined the latter's work with Clay's (1975, 1991) original and updated studies. Using the work on young children of these researchers helped to focus my attention on exactly what was happening during the exchanges in the classroom. The focused literacy tasks, such as the dictation activities and the word writing activities, allowed the children to demonstrate the strategies they used. I was able during these activities to determine whether there was any coherence between the message and the graphics and, whether the child attempted to formulate an identifiable level of linguistic organization such a word, phrase or even sentences. While sifting through the data to develop the indicators in Chapters Four and Five, often I found it very useful to use the technique of question-answer.

I was looking for the child's attempts to segment an oral message while writing. This type of work was pioneered by researchers such as Henderson & Gentry (1985). Whether the children could do any part of this segmentation by themselves or with assistance from another became an important observation. To determine such an action on the child's part required looking for evidence in their writing of cursive -like script, randomly selected letters or letter like forms. It also meant looking for some systematic orthographic procedures of encoding, such as whether the child used a subset of alphabet letters their name for example when writing; whether the child used an unconventional syllable-based strategy, such as writing a number of syllables per syllable, or used letter name strategy or sound symbol correspondences; whether the child requested the spellings of words from the adult or another child or used a word list; and whether the child for example, appeared to determine the spellings through visual recall. When it came to mechanical formation, I was looking for conventionality of symbols. For example, whether the letters looked like letters or constituted a mixture of letters and other letter-like forms; whether the production of symbols was easy for these children to produce; whether there was any obvious spatial arrangement, including evidence of conventional directional patterns or parts there of, such as starting at the top left and moving to the right and then returning to continue writing on the next line. Or perhaps, whether there was any evidence of reversals or left out spaces between their words.

Clay (1975, 1993) has done extensive work on the properties of decoding a message. Drawing on her work, I looked in the children's written message for some types of systematized orthographic procedures, whether the children requested that their message be

decoded by another, or attempted to do some or all parts by themselves became an important observation here. All of these observations contributed to the indicators for the characteristic uses of literacy at home and at school.

Artifacts were provided by the parents' files, the teachers' files and those written products that the children produced during the focus literacy tasks. In her study of a kindergarten classroom Dyson (1981) identifies nine different types of written products. I decided to incorporate much of her list into this theme but added a written product which was solely computer generated. This addition recognized that some of the children in this study produced much of their written products via the computer. Because I was looking for written products which indicated the focus child was intending to communicate through writing, I was interested in finding the focus child's first scribbles, as well as other efforts that approximated labels or captions, drawing and/or writing intermingled, as well as approximations of notes, cards, lists, letters, attempts to write/practice the alphabet and/or parts of the alphabet, or book-like written products. By closely examining the written artifacts, with the pertinent adult serving as key informant, I hoped to see some patterns emerge that approximated what other researchers had found with young children (Dyson, 1981; Clay, 1991; Gentry & Henderson, 1985; Graves, 1973).

The artifacts I collected from school and home clearly illustrated commonalities between the focus children in this study and what Dyson (1981) found with her young children at school. The writing behaviours observed were either seen in the classroom or reported to me by the parent/teacher as they informed me about an artifact. All the mothers in this study had saved written products. They could elaborate on the occasions when these

artifacts were produced by their child as these mothers spent a great amount of time with their child, often in one on one situations. Based upon Dyson's (1981) work then, I developed questions to serve as reference points when viewing the data and interviewing the parent or teacher. Not all questions were used with every artifact or with every child. It depended upon the type of written artifact the child had produced and whether the parent could elaborate upon it. In this manner, I could infer some of the purposes behind the written products. The parent could usually remember the child's age at the time of writing, as well as the circumstances surrounding the writing's creation. I used the following questions informally to uncover for each artifact the children's writing purpose. This data became the basis for the indicators of literacy characteristics at home:

- Was there any identifiable purpose behind the child's writing of the artifact? In posing this question, I wished to learn whether the parent remembered if the child had any identifiable purpose to write other than to make marks on the paper.
- Did your child tell you what this said or ask you what does this say? The second purpose related to occasions when the child created a message but might or might not have known what it said.
- Did your child practice writing letters on their own or only with prompting from you? The third purpose refers to occasions when the child practised by hand or on the computer conventional symbols such as the ABC's .
- For what did your child tell you this writing stood ? The fourth purpose refers to occasions when the child attempted to draw, label or write a caption for an object or individual in the environment.

- What precipitated the child's writing of this artifact? The fifth purpose involved the child's attempts to make a particular type of written object, such as a book, list, letter.
- What were the circumstances surrounding the child when he/she wrote this artifact? The sixth purpose centred around the child's attempt, through the creation of something such as a list of friends to organize and record information in writing.
- What were the feelings the child was trying to write about here? In the seventh purpose, the child attempted to express in writing feelings or experiences of self or others.
- Did your child tell you what this artifact said? The last purpose involved the child's attempts, perhaps through writing a speech or by telling someone something, to communicate a particular written message to an audience.

Through the field observations and during the focused literacy tasks I developed from the research of Harste et al., (1984) and Clay's (1993), I obtained the specific strategies used by the children used. For example, using adaptations from the Clay's (1993) Observation Survey, I observed what they specifically knew about letters, sounds, phonemic segmentation, graphic principles, directional behaviour, visual scanning, specific concepts about orthographic conventions including punctuation, and hierarchical concepts about words, letters, and sentences. It was at this point that I was anxious to see whether the children could, when reading a continuous text put all their knowledge together. Adapting Clay's (1991) technique of Running Records (RR) allowed me to analyse the ways in which children were applying the reading strategies they had learned. This meant incorporating the extensive work on miscue analysis of Goodman et al. (1987) and Clay (1993) on running records. RR are always done on familiar text. That is, texts the child previously has read at

least once or twice. In most cases, I was able to take at least three running records from the child and occasionally I was able to take more. I tried to take a sample of texts ranging from easy to difficult. The three texts were pre-selected by the teacher assistants and then the child self-selected the text for the running record. The running records assisted in determining the extent to which the child demonstrated the understanding that text carries a message. The results of these observations became the indicators for the characteristics of literacy at school.

Theme 4: Uses of Literacy and Language

This theme refers to the use of language to support literacy initiated by a child in response to a literacy event. I was able to capture some events on video tape while the child was engaged in all the focused activities. I drew on the early work of Halliday (1973), as well as Tough (1977), Dyson (1981), Harste et al., (1984), and Williams (1991). For example, in Harste et al., (1984), the young children were asked to describe familiar environmental print objects; their utterances were then analysed with respect to functional, categorical, or specific language responses. In my study, this activity yielded the best and most expressive language data, so I looked for instances in which the children during this activity used similar responses. However, I also wanted to learn if they used graphics at all, even if they could not provide a specific accurate oral response and this activity demonstrated this point.

In her research rooted in the earlier work of Halliday (1973) and Tough (1977), Dyson(1981) developed five language functions: representational, directive, heuristic,

personal and interactional. She used these functions to classify the utterances of the children in her study. As I analysed the language utterances used by the children in the present study while they were doing environmental print activities, I incorporated the language findings of Dyson's (1981) study. For example, I considered whether a child used representational language to describe events; whether a child used directive language to direct the actions of self or others; whether a child used heuristic language to seek information; whether a child used personal language to express feelings and attitudes; and, whether a child used interactional language to initiate, maintain and terminate social relationships. This data, once collected, could be used to develop this theme's indicators.

The next step was to triangulate the multiple sources, first within each case study and then across all the children. Each of the themes was assigned a colour highlight. Such designations permitted interpretations of all the data sources, which in this study includes field observations, videotapes and audiotapes, home visits, written products, and interviews. Therefore, the children's written products, transcribed interviews, and videotapes could be cross-referenced once all the data was colour coded. This method allowed for the expansion or contraction of the indicators as the data pool was reviewed. It thus facilitated the addition of indicators I had previously overlooked but which arose out of the analysis of the data. Once all the data was colour coded, I could cross reference across the children with relative ease which assisted in the choice of examples discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

The Children's Biographies

This chapter ends with a brief biography of each child to introduce the children. A summary table follows for each child, listing the key adults in the youngster's school and home lives. I received permission to retain the first names of the children. All other names and place names are fictitious. In all cases the participants were requested to pick their own fictitious names. Where the participants declined to do so, I assigned them an alias.

Jennie: Jennie was 10.9 years old when her case study began. She is a perky, light brown haired girl with a ready smile on her lips. Like many children her age, she wears glasses. She is highly verbal and easy to understand. During the study she was in her third year at her present school but in her sixth year of formal school. She was in a grade four placement of a grade four/five split. Jennie is the youngest of two siblings. Her fifteen year old brother Mike, is in high school. The family has a dog named Sammy. Jennie and her family live in a lovely large bungalow on a quiet street a few blocks from Riverbend P.S., her community school. The semi-rural small town in which Jennie and her family live is an upscale bedroom community close to a large urban centre in Ontario. Her parents, Kate and Doug Whyte moved from Quebec, where they had lived for two years, to here about three years ago. Since Jennie's birth, they had lived in two other urban centres. The family moves were due to Doug's work in the military. Both parents are professionals. After Jennie's birth, Kate became a stay-at-home parent.

Jennie gets to Riverbend P.S. by bus. Her teacher, Steve Flemming, and her teacher assistant, Christine Gardener, are employed by a public school board system that encompasses both rural and suburban communities. Riverbend P.S. is a junior kindergarten to grade five dual track (French and English) school under the care of Leah Chen, the

principal. At the time, Riverbend did not have any board special education classes. Riverbend is the only public school in this town, so extensive renovations over the years have produced a bright, inviting, sprawling, red brick one-storey school building. The school draws children from a relatively affluent and highly educated population in the town as well as from families in the surrounding rural areas. Children from this community are bussed to a nearby town to attend middle school (grades 6,7,8). Table 3.5 contains the pertinent demographic information about Jennie.

Table 3.5: Jennie's Pertinent Demographic Information

Age beginning/ending	10.9/10.10
Grade	grade 4 (grade 4 / 5)
No. of years in school (JK-present)	6
School	local community, public board Riverbend P.S.
Significant school adults	Steve Flemming (teacher), Christine Gardener (teacher assistant), Leah Chen (principal)
Siblings	brother, Mike 15, Sammy the dog
Community	semi-rural, affluent small town
Parents	Kate & Doug Whyte

David: David was 8.6 when I first met him. He is a shy angelic-looking child with blonde hair and large, enquiring eyes. He is a tall, slim boy. In fact, he appears to be taller than the average eight year old. At the time of the study it was his fourth year in school. David is the middle child of three siblings. His 14 year old sister, Violet, is in middle school. A younger, 6 year old sister, Marcy, attends grade one in the same school. His parents, Joan and Roy Brassington both have university degrees. Joan is a teacher and Roy currently is a stay-at-home parent.

The family lives in a lovely bungalow on a street backing onto the schoolyard. The area is an older suburb in this large city. Barton P.S. is a JK to grade 5 school under the care of Emily Grafton, the principal. It is part of the second public school board system in this study and does not house any school board special education classes. A very old two storey brick and stone building, it has been upgraded many times but its high ceilings, huge windows, wide corridors and staircases harken back to school construction of yesterdays. It feels inviting despite its antique appearance. A separate, newer one storey building housing an additional 3 or 4 classrooms has been built behind and slightly to the side of the main school. One has to go outside and walk a short way across the schoolyard to get to this building. Directly behind this structure are two portable classrooms. Despite the number of buildings the schoolyard is huge and expansive.

Daily Roy walks David and his sister, Marcy, up their street and across the schoolyard to the door of Susan Grant's grade one/two classroom. David is assigned to the grade 2 in Susan's room. Noreen Carling is her teacher assistant. As the family lives so close to the school, David goes home for lunch and is picked up by his dad. Many of the school's students are bussed into the facility due to the Board's open boundaries policy ensuring that many children do stay for lunch. A summary of the pertinent information about David is found in Table 3.6

Table 3.6: David's Pertinent Demographic Information

Age beginning/ending	8.6/9.0
Grade	grade 2 (grade 1 / 2)
No. of years in school (K-present)	4
School	local community, public board (Barton P.S.)
Significant School Adults	Susan Grant (teacher), Noreen Carling (teacher assistant), Emily Grafton (principal)
Siblings	2 sisters: Violet, 14 & Marcy, 6
Community	urban neighbourhood
Parents	Joan & Roy Brassington

Daniel: Daniel, 7.11 when I first met him, did not hesitate to tell me that after Christmas he would be 8. For his age Daniel is of average height and weight. He has dark brown hair and luminous eyes that often harbour a mischievous twinkle. Like David, this was his fourth year in school. This engaging little boy lives with his mother, Barbara Lawford, and 10 year old brother, Hank, in a garden home complex in a suburban area of a large urban centre. Their recently acquired one year old dog, Buddy, greets all visitors with a friendly bark and wagging tail. Barbara is a stay-at-home parent who for four years has been separated from her husband, Bill Nixon. As they still live relatively close to each other, both parents play an active part in their children's lives. Many week days and most weekends Daniel and his brother spend with their dad. Barbara volunteers weekly at Daniel's school, both in his classroom and in the lunchroom at noontime. Bill also gets involved in school activities, such as school trips and parent teacher interviews. Both mum and dad have community college certificates, the former in the social services area and the latter in computer repairs. In fact, mum has worked with special needs people and elderly adults.

Because of the open boundary policy of this public school board, Daniel is bussed to Barton P.S. He too is in grade two, but not in the same class as David. Daniel's teacher is Mrs. Evelyn Smith. She has a multi-grade structured classroom. Mrs. Cathy Jones is the teacher assistant who works with Evelyn. A summary of the pertinent information for Daniel is in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7: Daniel's Pertinent Demographic Information

Age beginning/ending	7-11/8-05
Grade	grade 2 (multi grades 2-5)
No. of years in school (K-present)	4
School	non-local community, public board Barton P.S.
Significant School Adults	Evelyn Smith (teacher), Cathy Jones (teacher assistant), Emily Grafton (principal)
Siblings	1 older brother, Harold (Hank), 10; Buddy the dog
Community	suburban neighbourhood
Parents	Barbara Lawford & Bill Nixon

Tommy: Tommy was 10 years old when I first met him in the grade 4 class of Carla Maxwell's grade 4/5 split at St. Peters School, which is in the separate school board system. Like Jennie, it was his sixth year in school. Tommy has dark brown hair and very large brown eyes, which are hidden behind tinted glasses. His small face is dominated by his second teeth and a delightful toothy smile which lights up his solemn face. Like many children his age, he needs to grow into his teeth.

Amy and Joe Cosmos, Tommy's parents, are both professionals. Joe has a degree in physics and computer science. He works for a large company in computer support. Amy has a degree in child psychology and biology and prior to Tommy's birth, worked for

Health and Welfare. After Tommy's birth, Amy found her career too demanding and for the meantime has opted to stay at home. Tommy's family and his 12 year old brother, Tyler, live in a large, new two storey house in an up-scale, suburban division of a small town close to a large urban centre. The children from this community usually attend local community schools within either the public or separate board. Tyler attends his local community separate board school, which is within walking distance of the family's house. Tommy, however, is bussed to St. Peters, a separate school that is a twenty minute to half an hour drive outside his local community but within the same separate school board. St. Peters is a very small JK to grade 6 school in a suburb on the edge of a larger urban centre. The school complex is a one-storey building, probably built during the 1960s to accommodate a larger school population than is now present. As a result, half of the school space is used for the Board's curriculum consultant offices. It also has the space to house a special education class. The school's principal is Anne Parker. The teacher assistant who works with Tommy is Wendy Tamor. A summary of pertinent information for Tommy is in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8: Tommy's Pertinent Demographic Information

Age beginning/ending	10-6/11-1
Grade	grade 4 (grade 4/5)
No. of years in school (JK-present)	6
School	non-local community school, separate board, St. Peters
Significant School Adults	Carla Maxwell (teacher), Wendy Tamor (teacher assistant), Anne Parker (principal)
Siblings	1 older brother, Tyler, 12
Community	suburban community town near large urban centre
Parents	Amy and Joe Cosmos

Megan: Megan was 11.3 when I first met her, at which time she proudly informed me that she had just had her birthday. In fact, her birthday had been in September and it was December when we met, but obviously her birthday assumed an important position in her life. Megan is a young lady with a winning twinkle in her eye and a mischievous smile on her lips. Her brunette pony-tailed head is what you first see as her attention is often focused on a story book, both in and out of class. Despite being two years older than her classmates, as she is short in stature for an eleven year old, and she blends in with the others in her grade 4 class. Like Jennie and Tommy, Megan was in her sixth year in school.

Megan is the second child of Veronica and Jim Spencer. Her older sibling, John, is 15 and a freshman in the local high school. Both of Megan's parents are professionals and have a military background, which is where they met. Megan's Dad is a major in the military. Her mum, Veronica, resigned her commission after Megan's birth to remain at home to care for her daughter. Veronica holds a science degree in food management. The family have lived in the same large urban centre since Megan's birth and currently they reside in a garden townhouse on a quiet suburban street not far from Megan's school, St Bartholomew (St. Barts). The family dog, Spike, from the second floor landing greets all visitors with joyful barking.

St. Barts is a junior kindergarten to grade six community school and falls within the separate school board. It is part of the same separate school board system as Tommy's school, St. Peters. Unlike St Peters, St. Barts has two grades per grade level up to grade six. No school board special education classes are housed here. It is a bright, sunny, sprawling single storey school building set in a suburban neighbourhood. The surrounding garden townhouses and single-family homes are a typical suburban mix. These suburbs form part of a larger metropolitan area close to a major city. The majority of children in

this neighbourhood attend their local public or separate elementary schools. The principal of St. Barts is Thomas Moffet. Megan's grade 4 teacher is Patricia Townsend. Ava Jones is the teacher assistant who works with Megan half time. A summary of the pertinent demographic information for Megan is in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9: Megan's Pertinent Demographic Information

Age beginning/ending	11-3/11-7
Grade	grade 4
No. of years in school (JK-present)	6
School	local community school, separate board St. Bartholomew(St. Barts)
Significant School Adults	Patricia Townsend (teacher), Ava Jones (teacher assistant), Thomas Moffet (principal)
Siblings	older teenage brother, John,15; Spike the dog
Community	suburb of large urban centre
Parents	Veronica & Jim Spencer

Kristy: Kristy, 12.7 when we first met, was the eldest of the youngsters at the beginning of the study. She was in grade 5 and in many ways a pre-adolescent like her contemporaries in her class. She loves to experiment with different hair styles for her long rich dark brown hair, which compliment her gorgeous big blue eyes and long black eyelashes. She has a heart-stopping smile. She takes pride in her appearance, choosing her outfits carefully to blend in to the group, as young girls do at this age. She has a 15 year old teenage sister, Alice, who attends the local middle school and whom she idolizes. Kristy can hardly wait to begin grade 6 next year at her sister's middle school. Kristy is the second child of Mary and Thomas Allyn. Mary, who has taken college courses in early childhood education, worked in pre-schools before her children were born. She is now a stay-at-home parent who is active in her community and school. Thomas is attached to the Criminal

Intelligence Division of the RCMP. His formal education includes university courses in law and criminology.

Lanceville P.S. is a small school in the hamlet of Lanceville, is located on the outskirts of a large urban centre. Part of the same public school board system as Jennie's school, Riverbend P.S. at this time it houses no school board special education classes. Unlike the other rural communities in this project, Lanceville is very much a bedroom suburb. The school is surrounded by well kept, single family homes. Only a few quiet streets make up this compact community, which is not experiencing housing starts like other rural communities in the region. The Allyn family live on a quiet street that runs at a right angle to the back of the schoolyard and nearby park. A short, three-minute walk down the street from the Allyn's two-storey house puts you in the school grounds. The family has lived here since Kristy was eligible to go to school public school.

I first met Kristy in the spring, when she was in Matthew (Matt) Caldwell's grade five. It was her seventh year in school. Sylvia Hyman, who had been with her since grade two, was her teacher assistant. The other key adult players in her school life were Carol Holdaway, her resource teacher, and Gareth Scott, her principal. All these adults have been in the school as long as Kristy has been a student there. A summary of the pertinent information about Kristy is in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10: Kristy's Pertinent Demographic Information

Age beginning/ending	12-7/12-10
Grade	grade 5
No. of years in school (JK-present)	7
School	local community, Lanceville public board
Significant School Adults	Matthew (Matt) Caldwell (teacher), Sylvia Hyman (teacher assistant), Carol Holdaway (resource teacher), Gareth Scott (principal)
Siblings	teenage sister, Alice 15
Community	semi-rural bedroom community
Parents	Mary & Thomas Allyn

Chelsea: Chelsea was 9.7 at the beginning of this study. The eldest child of Ruth and Jacob Collins, she has a six year old sister Lisa, and a Donny, baby brother, Donny, who is 14 months old. A very large dog named Moose round out the family. The family lives in a charming turn-of-the-century red brick farm house which is located off a rural side road outside the small rural town of Petersville. Ruth is a nurse and works a few evenings a week up the street at the local senior's nursing home part time. Jacob works for the county as a foreman and takes over the child care responsibilities during the evenings when Mum is nursing.

Chelsea is an energetic young lady with fine, soft brown hair and twinkling expressive eyes. She wears glasses held on by a sports strap, which keeps them from going askew on her tiny nose. Chelsea attends grade 2 at Hillside P.S., which is part of the same public school board system as Kristy's and Jennie's schools. Like David and Daniel, she was in her fourth year in school. Hillside is a K to grade 8 public school and serves this old established rural town and the surrounding countryside. Petersville is close enough to a large urban centre to have a growing number of up-scale commuters, who daily trade the

half-hour commute to the city in order to live in this tranquil small town. Hillside P.S. has been a part of the town life for a long time. The students graduate to the local high school, which is literally up the street from this public school. Hillside has at least two segregated special education classes and accommodates most of its own special education students. Children such as Chelsea, however, do not usually attend these special education classes because they are considered to have special needs beyond the scope of these special education classes. Children as young as Chelsea are bussed 45 minutes to the city where their special education needs are considered to be better met by classes offered there.

Through my work as an educational consultant for this public school board, I had previously met Chelsea when she was a five years old. Due to changes in my job assignment, I had no contact with her for the next few years. At a conference on inclusion, her teacher, Diana Cooper, approached me about becoming involved in this project. Chelsea, she told me was now nine years old and a member of her grade two class. Lisa Lincoln was her teacher assistant. The principal of Hillside P.S. is Marlene Walmsly. A summary of the pertinent information about Chelsea is found in Table 3.11.

Table 3.11: Chelsea's Pertinent Demographic Information

Age beginning/ending	9-7/9-10
Grade	grade 2
No. of years in school (K-present)	4
School	local community school. Hillside P.S. public board
Significant School Adults	Diana Cooper (teacher), Lisa Lincoln (teacher assistant), Marlene Walmsly (principal)
Siblings	younger 5 year old sister, Lisa & brother, Donny, 14 months; Moose the dog
Community	rural small town, Petersville
Parents	Ruth & Jacob Collins

Summary

Chapter Three describes the research methods, rationale and the data analysis process used to investigate the literacy development of the focus children. It also describes the types of adaptations that were made to the work of other researchers to develop the focused literacy tasks used with each child. The descriptions of the four phases of data gathering provide an overview of the activities. These techniques were ethnographic in orientation and the analysis procedures were interpretivist. The intense engagement, triangulation of the multi data sources, and key informant checking were used to establish trustworthiness of the case studies. The chapter continues with a detailed interpretive description of the issues encountered during the process of gaining access to the focus children, their parents and schools. It then discusses the way in which themes developed and concludes with introductory biographies to the children.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS: THE BELIEFS AND VALUES

Utilizing a thematic perspective, Chapter Four begins with the individual stories of the children's early years and inclusive settings. By examining these aspects of the children's lives, I was able to illustrate the theme that had emerged out of the data: **Beliefs/Values About Inclusion, About Literacy**. To retain the authenticity of their stories, people and places are referred to by name rather than as subjects or participants. Whenever transcriptions are used, the speaker's alias name and position are given in the excerpt's introduction; subsequently, only the first initials appear the transcript. In order to provide the sense of an unfolding story, I decided to try and capture the events as they took place. However, I recognize that even in trying to detail the events, my own subtle analysis came into play (Wolcott, 1990). I tried to reflect back to the previous child or children, asking questions about what I was learning about them individually, and collectively, as the research progressed. In doing so, I hoped to retain in their stories the aspect of a case study narrative. I view case study research from the perspective of a qualitative research paradigm. In this study, I felt that endeavouring to gain insight into and an understanding of the perspectives of those being studied offered the promise of adding to the knowledge base about these types of school situations and the children within (Merriam, 1988).

Theme 1: Beliefs/Values: About Inclusion, About Literacy

As it seems naturally to follow the children's introductions, I begin with the theme **Beliefs/Values: About Inclusion, About Literacy**, which describes the children's early years. This description provides each child's personal history, up to the time I came upon

them in their current inclusive settings. As the research progressed, it became clear to me the extent to which the parents' beliefs and values towards the type of education they wanted for their children had been shaped by their initial encounters with medical authorities, pre-schools, school staffs, or their communities. For that reason I felt it necessary to include the information about each child's early history.

I carry this theme forward when describing the children's inclusive settings, feeling that the beliefs and values of the teachers, teacher assistants and principals had helped to shape the children's inclusive settings as well as their literacy programs. In my commitment to the unfolding perspective that supports this section, I have included excerpts from individual focused interviews, informal conversations and telephone conversations. As many unedited excerpts from the various individuals appear as space allowed, as I wanted the reader to hear as much as possible the personalities of the speakers. Consequently, some of the excerpts are rather long. In light of that fact, I have provided text boxes that summarize the highlights of the speakers' beliefs and values. Endnotes in Appendix 3 provide further data to support my assessments of the individuals' beliefs and values. At the end of this section, I have summarized and pulled out indicators that support this theme.

Jennie: The Early Years

After Jennie's birth, her Mum became involved with an infant stimulation programme that she had read about in the newspaper. Realizing right from the start that her daughter had special needs, she took the Hanen infant language stimulation programme twice while her husband took it once.² Kate had opted to stay home with Jennie because,

Kate....no one knows your child like you do or is willing to take the time with such large classes these days...(Excerpt from: parent telephone 30/05/95)

Through the infant stimulation program they had attended, Kate and Doug provided a literate background for their daughter right from the start. Because reading was important to them as individuals, they both read a lot and thus provided models of literacy for their children.³ Kate's first experiences with the school system appeared to be positive. They were living near a military base in Ontario. The school system appeared to be welcoming to a child with special needs:

Kate....Well, it started off with the nursery school..a normal nursery school, she had a resource teacher with her. She did fine. Her brother, who is four years older than her, of course went into school first and he started kindergarten because they didn't have JK (junior kindergarten) then...the teachers got a chance to know Jennie...or at least to see her...because I would go into the school, on school trips or helping the library or whatever. We were around!(Excerpt from: parent interview 19/04/95)

This strategy worked well for Jennie. When it came time for her daughter to enter the formal education system, Kate so to speak already had paved the way. She recounts the story of her first contact with this school system.

Kate....They had [had] a chance to see her..there was a great principal there. I mean that's where it starts, I'm sure. The principal said, "We don't need an IPRC [Identification Placement and Review Committee] if we need that we'll go for it but I don't see any need for that! And if we need an aide, we'll get one." And she went through junior kindergarten and they arranged an aide to help her, I think it was...in November or December..November I believe and it worked out really well. The teachers...just excellent support...just wonderful! And you know the kids, the kids were really nice to her. You know they had seen her around...(Excerpt from: parent interview 19/04/95)

All seemed to be going well for Jennie until the family had to move to Quebec, at which point things started to fall apart for Jennie and the family. Kate recalls this stressful time. The Quebec school Board into which they had moved had a policy of segregating special needs children into classes that could be located quite far from their neighbourhood.

Having been caught up in much red tape and in the school language debate as well, Jennie was allowed into a local school. But as Kate points out:

Kate...It was horrible!! It was really bad!...they were way behind...they kept children segregated and in our case...[it] meant a big bus ride...just horrible!...and here I am trying to get education for my child, who is special needs!.....I think actually the real work of getting Jennie into the school came from the principal again! She fought for us....You have to have a special form... when you are from another province to allow your child to be taught in English..(Excerpt from: parent interview 19/04/95)

She did manage to get Jennie accepted into the local school. However, that was only the beginning. This period was a highly stressful time for the family, as they were not even living a house but out of a motel as they waited for their house to be made ready. Kate recounts the story of the misplacement of Jennie into a grade one without any support except from Kate herself:

Kate....they started her off in grade one and after three weeks that was ridiculous! They didn't have an aide yet and I was going in, and we had just moved, and we were living in a motel. We got up at seven in the morning.....drive the kids, my husband to work,... then I drove the kids to school and I stuck around the school all day....trying to help Jennie! I didn't have my place... then we moved in and all this and I didn't have a chance to unpack...it was just really difficult! So that [grade one] wasn't working out too well so they suggested that she go into [full time] kindergarten and that worked out quite well!so they got an aide, eventually!...she was bilingual because the kindergarten was bilingual every other day,....(Excerpt from: parent interview 19/04/95)

Jennie had not displayed any significant behaviour problems at her former schools because, as Kate pointed out, Jennie had always been social and taken everywhere with the family. Needless to say under this kind of family stress Jennie rebelled. According to Kate she displayed significant behaviour problems, which made a poor situation even worse:

Kate...Jennie really rebelled. She went [to] ...really bad behaviour...she'd stand too close behind the kids. Just intimidating behaviour, really bad!because of the move...she didn't know anybody...and oh, it was just awful! The other kids were like, "ugh eek" that sort of thing....it was not a good situation..(Excerpt from: parent interview 19/04/95)

Finally, things did settle down and the school was able to provide some teacher assistant support. During those two years, Jennie completed a full day kindergarten programme and a grade one. Having learned from the experience, Kate and Doug were determined not to go through that kind of stress again. When it came time to move back to Ontario, they house hunted in an area where they first had checked out the schools. Kate sums up the process:

Kate.....you would pick the school first, ...almost before your house..check the schools....I mean ...the principal first...if you have time you write ahead, if you know where you are going to be...(Excerpt from: parent interview 19/04/95)

Jennie's inclusive class placement was highly valued by her parents, even though the process was sometimes rocky, as it had been in Quebec. No thought of giving it up for a self contained special education class even arose when the family moved back to Ontario. They had learned from experience that the administrative staff makes all the difference as to whether inclusion will be successful, so they sought out a sympathetic principal and met with Mrs. Leah Chen at Riverbend P.S.⁴ Although Jennie is a child with Down syndrome Kate and Doug Whyte chose from the beginning of her school career a fully inclusive setting for their

Jennie's Mother: Kate's Beliefs & Values

About Inclusion

- special needs children need models
- principal is key school person for inclusion to work
- encourage social activities (school & community)
- make certain lots of people (school & community) see child before enrolment
- know what you want - research system
- be low key but firm
- keep in close touch with school - a communication book important
- be available to school as helper
- never give up when things get bad

About Literacy

- provide lots of oral stimulation
- model reading
- encourage library use
- read, have lots of stacks of books
- encourage paper/pencil stuff
- frequently do review of skills as games

daughter. A special education class never occurred to them as an option. They insisted on inclusion and took on school systems in order to fulfil that goal. The reasons they valued inclusion are summed up by Kate:

Kate...Because it doesn't make sense to keep them segregated because they'll [then] always be segregated. You don't model proper behaviour if you are segregated, especially someone like Jennie! She models! (Excerpt from: parent interview 19/04/95 #2 home visit)

At this point in time during the project, what struck me about these parents was their remarkable tenacity, and the political savvy they had acquired through experience. They learned to deal with red tape and school policies that did not support their objectives. Rather than being defeated by stressful experiences of dealing with school authorities, they set about to gain knowledge about how the systems worked in order to make the systems work for their child. I could not help but ask what happens to those children and parents who do not do this? Is this why attitudes and beliefs towards meeting special needs in the mainstream are so slow to change? Not enough parents question the systems or have the time to research how to make the system work for them, feels Kate. As I met other parents and asked them to tell me their children stories, these issues surfaced again and again.

Lipsky and Gartner (1996), in their comprehensive review of the issues dealing with inclusion, point out that the history of American students with disabilities is not unlike other groups who have been excluded from services. They maintain that the valuing of these individuals determines their place. Usually one or two courageous individuals set out to change the status quo for their own personal reasons but soon realize that they are dealing

with larger issues, ones that encompass entrenched beliefs and values. I would see elements of this phenomena among many of the parents involved in this project.

Jennie's Inclusive Setting

Jennie's school was in a semi-rural area close to a larger urban setting. Riverbend Public School is a junior kindergarten to grade five dual track (French and English). At the time of the study it was the third year in which the school staff and administration had fully integrated high needs special needs students. Having such students included in the classroom was no longer a novel idea. Jennie had been assigned a full-time teacher assistant, Christine Gardener, who had been with her since she entered grade two. Christine did have other duties, but her main assignment was to work with Steve and to support Jennie in his classroom.

I asked Christine to comment on how she viewed literacy from the perspective both of non-special needs children and of Jennie in particular:

Christine.. Okay, I think they [non-special needs children] need a good background of hopefully having their parents read to them as they are very small....[U]sually they get to know certain stories almost by heart through doing that as they learn to recognize letters and letter sounds and they still sit with their parents and read stories. Eventually, they start being able to pick out some of the easier words, like cat as an example, and so they pick up from there and they hear it reinforced in different places - playing with friends and so forth, and then eventually pre-school. So I think that is probably how they pick it up in general. Kids with disabilities tend to have a much more difficult time with that. They are still for the most part quite capable of doing it, but [it] just takes a little longer and sometimes you have to work at different angles. I'm working with a couple of kids right now other than Jennie who are learning to read. We do a lot of phonics work. We need to work on word sounds....

Dean - Would you do the same kinds of things with kids like Jennie? Do you think that they would follow a similar pattern?

C - Sort of, ... but I would do it differently. We have books with pages of phonics to work on it. With Jennie, that doesn't seem to be the best route for her. I tried using some of those and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. She doesn't have [an] interest in that method, which doesn't help either, so what I tend to do is use the reading strategies with her where I will state a word, help to sound out parts of it, and get her to write down what she hears. We do a corrective form of the word right after that so she can see in some cases where there is a difference and, by lots of repetition, she eventually picks it up. (Excerpt from teacher assistant interview 9/03/95 p.1)

Notice that Christine assumes that a child in difficulty with beginning literacy has to have phonics in heavy doses. She found it did not seem to work with Jennie so she tried other things. One thing I saw her successfully doing was converting all the discrete phonic skills into games. Here she was able to engage Jennie in reviewing the phonics and sight words she wanted her to learn.

D - You sort of alluded to writing. Where does writing fit in?

C- I think writing helps to reinforce the letters in the head and as they sound out, because I know she does that too. She will sound out - I will make a sound with a letter. She will copy me in the sound and then write down what she thinks it is. She is getting a lot better at connecting the sounds with the letter shapes.

D - Do you do this with the regular kids as well? Is that the same sort of idea?

C- I suppose we have. I never really thought about it intently for them because regular kids seem to pick it up a lot faster and have a stronger background in it, where a child like Jennie is coming along with it. Her spelling is certainly a lot better and her reading is a lot better. That has come after months, years, of repetition. (Excerpt from teacher assistant interview 9/03/95 p.1)

She seems to believe that writing helps as well. In class she still believes that she must do the majority of the note taking for Jennie but she encourages Jennie to write a sentence about a story after she has read it. It was after the reading that Jennie and a peer decided orally what to write. I watched as the peer helped Jennie to write the sentence; Christine wrote a correct model on a sentence strip for Jennie to use later. A strong

Jennie's Teacher Assistant: Christine's Beliefs & Values about Inclusion

- engineer cooperative learning for special needs children

- daily give one to one drill & practice

- scaffolded skill to text reading

- create games to engage Jennie

- use themes from regular curriculum

About Literacy

- reading starts at home with parents reading stories

- children learn stories by heart

- letter and sound recognition comes next, followed by sight words

- kids with disabilities take longer

- basically the same methods work with both

- phonics are harder for special needs children to learn

- writing helps to reinforce the sounds

- lots of oral rehearsal pre writing it down

- lots of modelling

- accept approximations then compare with actual text

emphasis on skill work still remains in Jennie's school literacy program. The reading of continuous text is not the main focus.

During this study Jennie remained in her grade 4/5 class for all subjects but received individual tutoring from Christine every day in the resource room. That tutoring was in the language arts and maths areas, which rotated so that she was not missing the same activities every day in her classroom. Her classmates rotated on a roster to come with her to "help". That peer spent about half an hour with her at each tutorial and alternately read a story with her, played a word or math game, and assisted her in writing a sentence and putting it back together, all under Christine's direction.

While in the classroom, Jennie followed the same subject themes as the rest of the class. The differentiation of her curriculum was left to Christine, subject to Steve's approval. Christine picked out for example, key vocabulary for Jennie to learn that fell within the themes, or condensed a class novel, such as "Charlotte's Web". Here Christine describes what she did operationally in the classroom with Jennie.

Christine...[I]f they are all sitting together, say at the front of the class, listening to the teacher, who is explaining a task or discussing some aspect of whatever it is,.....reading a story or a paragraph of information. ... after which she either would end up coming back and working with me, where upon I would try to go over the material that had been discussed, because she doesn't attend that well on her own. I would reinforce what it is that she is supposed to be learning at her level, if I can get some kind of understanding with her. We often will have some kind of written assignment where she and I will do the writing together. She can't sustain writing lots during one period of time, so if there is a lengthy passage, I will write it. I may have her copy some of it or fill in certain words. Sometimes I have her work with another child in the class who has been attending through it [class presentation by the teacher] and should have some knowledge of the task that they are to do. I have them work together [I am] monitoring it so they stay on topic.....As long as one keeps in mind that it is going to be at a different pace and level, she is paired with another child for working most of the time. The regular children in the class are not paired off, but this is a situation that I have gotten permission from the teacher to do because I think it is [a] better method of teaching for Jennie's learning.....variety helps rather than just always being stuck working with me....She gets the chance of working with others....her peer group. She tends to be more interested in what she is doing..(Excerpt from teacher assistant interview 9/03/95)

Christine had a regular student desk as opposed to a large 'teacher type' desk. Her desk and three others, formed a group of four at the back of the room, so that there were in the cluster two peers, Christine, and Jennie. For the most part, Christine did not interact with the class unless asked to by Steve directly. During whole class lessons, she sat beside Jennie at her desk. When the class was called to sit on the floor at the front of the classroom, she did not accompany Jennie. Christine interacted with the two peers who were in the cluster, as they appeared to be students who like Jennie, could benefit from additional cuing to stay on task. They would sometimes ask her questions, but usually they asked the teacher. There appeared to be an unstated assumption that Christine was there to assist Jennie. Her close proximity to Jennie while in the class reinforced this assumption.

Steve Flemming, Jennie's grade four/five teacher, has had experience with special needs children in the past. He describes what it is like to have Jennie in his class, how he views this in a positive light, but it also reflects his values about inclusion:

Steve....I have had a couple of kids that have been seriously physically disabled with blindness, that sort of thing but not like Jennie.....I think mostly [!] enjoy [having her in the class] I mean, Jennie is the type of child that; I mean she creates a lot of extra work - she creates a lot of extra fuss sometimes, but she also carries with her an innocence that nobody else has in there [classroom]. It's that kind of thing that can be used to our advantage for the other kids, from the point of view of modelling behaviour and having them understand that because she is disabled, developmentally doesn't mean like she's not a person, and she has to be treated as a person. She is not a little puppy that needs to be dragged from here to here if she is not behavingSo I think from that perspective, I think that it is certainly a challenge but it is a fun kind of thing and certainly not a terribly onerous tasks at all. (Excerpt from: teacher interview 28/04/95 p.5)

He talked about teaching the other children to accept diversity within their world. That it was alright to be different in his classroom was evident. He acknowledged how he viewed having Jennie in his classroom was an advantage for her language development but at the same time, it illustrated how he was able to meet her needs using the teacher

assistant. He talked about the need for children to hear and practice language as, in his mind, it is so closely, related to their literacy development. He recognized this need in Jennie as well.⁵

The need to practice and hear

language was totally consistent with his views about literacy development for this age group; those views are summarized in the text box. Steve had 28 children in this grade 4/5 split, so the room was very active with what I would call controlled talking.

He encouraged the children to work both individually and in cooperative groups. His emphasis on language was seen in his ability to get these children clearly to express

themselves orally. He felt there was a very

strong connection between oral language development and writing and reading. All children needed lots of models to speak correctly if they were ever to read and write with a degree of fluency. He encouraged them to use their imaginations and feelings in their writing, rather than drawing upon TV episodes. He talked about the importance of getting children to visualize what they were reading, so unlike the TV culture of their world where it is done for them. He read to them a lot and they discussed and shared perspectives.

Jennie's Teacher: Steve's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- special needs children need modelling of language like regular children
- support of another adult (teaching assistant) needed in the classroom
- children learn about diversity with a special child in their class
- it's a fun challenge for a teacher to teach this kind of child
- special needs children learn in lots of the same ways

About Literacy

- read a lot to children using expression
- encourage and model oral language
- there's strong connection between oral language and literacy
- share reading through cooperative activities, large group lessons
- integrate subjects using multi-media
- spark kids imaginations with open ended writing activities

His style of teaching was strongly encouraged by his principal, Leah Chen, who felt he had in his class happy, productive learners. She believed Steve's class could accommodate different types of learners.⁶ Leah viewed literacy as a continuum, with perhaps some children coming to school with more exposure to literacy activities at home. She liked to see direct phonics teaching in the primary grades as one aspect of the program. Here is what she says about literacy learning:

Leah....[C]hildren learn quite quickly that reading is talking written down and many children understand that before they even come to school and will say: "Mommy write down what I'm saying" or "What did I just write here Mommy ?" when they have done some scribbling... or to one of their parents. Some of the reading aspect or certainly reading aspect doesn't come as readily to many children as it does to some and it really has to be trained, practised, drilled [through] a lot of repetition. A variety of approaches are normally taken. Certainly the whole language approach or whole word approach, an experience chart type approach when children are in a kindergarten setting where their stories or their news or their show and tell is written down on a chart and with no consideration as to a controlled vocabulary. Children may learn words like fragile and marvellous and may be able to read those with no problem at all but certainly not know the phonetic sounds of the words or how to break words down, how to decode. In the Grade 1 and 2 years, there is certainly a lot more emphasis on the phonics and I shouldn't dismiss that in kindergarten, there is a lot of emphasis, as in the Sesame type approach - today we are learning the letter p and what things start with p and what sound does p make and the whole integration. Put your body in the shape of a p, trace p in the sand, etc. but certainly as part of the decoding process that children learn, the phonics is emphasized. (Excerpt from principal interview 10/03/95 p.1)

I felt Leah still adhered to the notion that children who encountered difficulty in acquiring literacy needed specific training, practice, drill, and repetition activities. That is controlled vocabulary and language broken down into pieces with lots of drill and practice. The more severe the disability, the more the children required this type of learning method. This view seemed to me to be a contradiction. What was needed instructionally for regular students in the classroom, such as looking at the whole contextual aspect of language, had to be different for children in difficulties. They needed to focus more on individual skill items:

Leah... Children who start getting into difficulty or falling behind their peers or learn in non-traditional ways certainly need a lot more specific drills, specific explanation of words and what language is and what the words and sounds and symbols are and what is represented in a printing or writing situation and certainly children with severe disabilities there has to be a lot more of the metacognition, teaching children to understand what it is they are thinking, whether they are seeing an explanation all the way - a lot of coping strategies so that a process that comes very naturally and very rapidly with some children, who can read and write by the time they are 3 to a certain extent, is broken down into little tiny parts, so that each little step of the way is analyzed and broken down even further, so that explanations and practice and drills and shaping and approximation and so on, are techniques and strategies that bring a child to the point where he can do some reading and writing and feel comfortable with at least printing a name or being able to recognize a name or place, favourite pet's name, specific items, safety words - stop, exit, hospital, whatever.... (Excerpt from principal interview 10/03/95 p.1)

Jennie's Principal: Leah's Beliefs & Values

About Inclusion

- differentiate curriculum & goals
- keep children with age peers
- provide support to teacher and student
- be conscious of process

About Literacy

- reading is talk written down
- scribbling one of first stages
- eclectic programming important
- phonics very important for slower children
- lots of drill and practice needed for slower children

She did qualify this idea when I

asked her directly about teaching writing to special needs children. There did not seem to me to be a lot of acknowledgment that these children follow any of the same patterns or a continuum. The training she talks about is training of the child not training of the educator:

Leah....well writing is talking written down. Children [non-special needs] love to write and they start with a scribble and ,as I said before, read me what I wrote. When items are labelled in a pre-kindergarten or kindergarten class, pictures are drawn and you say, tell me a story about your picture and write down what the child says and they get the idea of hooking the words and the verbalization and the written - the print...
 D. - Do you feel that the special needs children do the same thing?
 L. - ...No, and I think that's where the training does come in. Now, I shouldn't say blatantly no. I think there are approximations too. It takes a lot longer and certainly [there's] the need to practice. The need for drill. The need to explain exactly what it is. This is - this is the letter B and it's the first letter of your name Bobby. Here we'll practice making a B. Can you recognize a B somewhere else? That again is focusing, a lot of putting a lot of emphasis on individual things and why it is that way. (Excerpt from principal interview 10/03/95 p.2)

This type of dual philosophy of literacy teaching is not uncommon among those who have had lots of experience in special education curriculums, where it is not unusual for literacy teaching to be taught in bits and pieces out of context. Koppenhaver et al (1992) found this to be true, but also found that children with developmental disabilities learned as

much or more when this philosophy of chopping up the literacy teaching was abandoned. Creating language rich environments proved to be more productive in stimulating emergent literacy learning in these children. In other words, creating classrooms more like Steve's regular education classroom.

Jennie's principal, Leah Chen, came from a background familiar with special education, as she had been a vice-principal in Jewel School, the Board school where all the children had special needs. The Board policy during her there was to place all children with special needs into this segregated school setting. Since Jennie is a child with Down Syndrome, she would have been considered a candidate for this type of segregated setting. By the time of the study, however, Leah was committed to inclusion in her school and worked as a volunteer with the larger community to promote this concept. In endnote 7 she describes how she sees how a lesson at Jennie's grade 4 class could work operationally. I think her ideas about literacy learning for Jennie were evolving.⁷ This principal talked about adjusting the goals and tasks to suit the level of the child, much the same as Christine was doing. Learning to differentiate the curriculum is one of the major stumbling blocks to successful inclusion. Yet these educators were shifting their thinking away from the traditional model of making the child change to fit the curriculum. They were moving towards accommodating diversity within the classroom (Poplin & Cousins, 1996). Christine and Leah really were talking about how best to support Jennie in the classroom and facilitate her literacy learning.

David: The Early Years

When he was an infant, Joan and Roy Brassington felt their young son was exhibiting normal physical development. They realized, Joan recounts, all was not 'quite right' when her mother and others observed some differences about David:

Joan...My Mom noticed that my niece who is a year younger than David could do things that he couldn't do... That was Christmas when he was about two and half years old.... She didn't think that his development was normal..... [Joan's mother]A little bit later ..[I] asked the pediatrician if there was anything wrong and he said, he may not just be quite as mature as his peers and we were a bit surprised to hear that from a pediatrician....boys walk late, boys talk late, boys toilet train late and ...so these are all things that people just attributed to David being a boy.....Now that spring, I used to go to the Y to a pre-course natal fitness...there was a woman there looking after the babysitting though, she actually gave them a kind of nursery school while they were there and she told me at one point when I was starting to question,....she said look, "I am not qualified to say what's wrong with David ,but there is something different about him - something not quite normal in his development"....and my brother was hereand he only saw David for an afternoon or not very long - a couple of days or something ...he wrote me a letter,.....a very strongly worded letter that [said] I had better do something about my kid because he won't look me in the eye, he [David] still wets and soils his pants ...he doesn't speak the way other kids speak and so on.....and he could just tell from that limited experience that David was not normal. (Excerpt from: # 2 parent interview 15/02/96)

As a result of these comments, David's parents arranged for their son to see a new pediatrician and a referral for a complete assessment (physical, including a hearing test, speech/language, occupational therapy, psychological) followed. David was aged three years and four months when this action was taken. Joan recalls the stress of these events:

Joan.....They say kids who manifest these symptoms, these behaviours and so on are classified under this category autism and they explained a bit, what autism was at the time, but I didn't catch any of the explanation...[I was] kind of reeling from the effect....(Excerpt from: # 2 parent interview 15/02/96)

A diagnosis of autism led to a renewed search for a medical cause by the local Children's Hospital, someone there suggested genetic testing. David finally was diagnosed as a child with Fragile X Syndrome. About 4% of individuals with autism are found to have Fragile X Syndrome. His parents then set out on their own to find out as much about this syndrome as they could. ⁶ What followed was a search for help. Interestingly, what

they perceived at the time about medical authorities, recalls Roy, was that, "You had to know the questions to ask..." (Excerpt from: # 2 parent interview 15/02/96). The problem then was that Mum and Dad didn't know what were the right questions to ask. They did get involved with Children at Risk, which provided home programming and, assisted Mum to access the social services network by filling out the forms for her.⁹ David ended up on a waiting list for a preschool program for severely disabled children, but as Joan remembers,

Joan....I think in hindsight I'm just as glad he never went there....He's never been in a segregated setting.....by March (1991) he had a special needs worker, the following September he was in an integrated spot at Twin Oaks Nursery School and there he had a really super resource teacher. Now she only came in once a week....They got a volunteer to work with him two other afternoons...He had a wonderful year there-This resource teacher gave me extra information, a lot of extra support. She was very helpful when I was preparing for that case conference to get David a school [public] and I did things like...I got involved in [an] Integration Action group too and ...went to one of their conferences. So just...different ways I found help and support..(Excerpt from: # 2 parent interview 15/02/96)

**David's Parents: Joan's & Roy's Beliefs & Values
About Inclusion**

- school boards are reluctant to include special needs children in regular classes
- learn about your own child's disability
- use resources in community to help support inclusion
- communicate a lot with the school and teachers
- other children are sensitive to special needs children
- adults are the ones who find acceptance difficult
- inclusion means educating the adults
- there is more stimulation in the regular classroom

About Literacy

- reading to children is how they start to learn
- spoken and written language go together
- it takes longer for special needs children to learn
- special needs children need to be guided more in their learning
- hearing others read and association with them is important

After David completed this pre-school program, his parents began the process of finding a kindergarten program for him. Joan and Roy already had David's older sister, Violet, in the school which backs onto their street, so it was natural to seek out Barton P.S. for David. Because Joan is a teacher, she knew she needed to present a case for David to be there. She felt, like Jennie's Mum, that David's entry would not automatically be welcomed by the school. According to Joan,

Joan....school boards are still reluctant to integrate kids. They find it a burden ...they feel that ...they have got their special programs up and running so why can't the kids get their help there, I think it is the thinking behind that...(Excerpt from: # 2 parent interview 15/02/96)

Joan is a teacher so she is able to recognize the power dynamics operating within school boards, particularly when it comes to special education practices.

David's Inclusive Setting

David completed kindergarten and two years in grade one before I had the pleasure of meeting him, his family and school staff. He is placed in a grade one/two split in Barton P.S., a Kindergarten to grade 5 school. This older school building is in a public board in a suburban setting. This particular school board allows parents to apply to come to this school regardless of their school boundaries in which they live. This school and its teachers have embraced a philosophy that encourage more active involvement with the parents of all their students. Parents are actively encouraged to become involved with their child's class, teacher and program and they readily do so. A large parent volunteer contingent is always in the school. The staff have all chosen to teach in this environment. Susan Grant, David's teacher, has been in the school for over ten years and his teacher assistant, Noreen Carling, for at least five. The medium of instruction is English only, as there is only a core French programme (no French immersion classes in the school).

David has had the advantage of having had the same classroom teacher and teacher assistant for three years, since he spent two years in grade one before being placed in grade two. After the first year of having David in her class, Susan agreed to keep him as she felt

comfortable with him and she enjoyed working as a team with Noreen. Over the three years, these two ladies had worked out a mutually beneficial classroom strategy, one in which Noreen did not work solely with David. The children came to believe that they had two teachers to help them. In fact there were two teacher's desks in the room, both tucked away to the side of the classroom, back to back. Noreen moved about the room regularly to assist children other than David. She

helped with children at a cluster of tables near the teachers' desks. The classroom had tables and chairs at which the children worked at rather than individual desks. Centres were arranged round the room, including a small classroom library, sand and toy play area, arts and crafts, a row of three computers, a listening centre, children's mailboxes, and a rug and rocker for story time or class group lessons. All children routinely placed papers on Noreen's desk for correction. Seat work appeared to be regularly marked by Noreen, who then turned them over to Susan for review. No one seemed to hesitate calling upon either adult for assistance.

**David's Teacher: Susan's Beliefs & Values
About Inclusion**

- recognize slower pacing for special needs child - be patient
- special needs children learn in amazingly similar ways
- use teaching assistant to help teacher and all class children
- lots of contact with home to co-ordinate efforts
- be enthusiastic about special child's efforts
- provides lots of modeling
- include special needs children only in experienced teacher's classes

About Literacy

- eclectic programming necessary to accommodate many different learners
- read to children every day
- label everything and draw on environmental print
- patterned and predictable books important
- encourage pretend reading through memorization
- encourage invented spellings in writing
- include specific phonics in programme

This classroom welcomed parents and there always seemed to be some parent visitor present who had been given a significant job for the day. This classroom was a warm,

inviting place. It gave the impression, to any visitor of being a learning environment.

When I asked Susan to share her philosophy and experience about how children learn to read, much of what she said could be seen in the way she had set up the classroom:

Susan... A lot of the kids that I get in this sort of age group don't have a lot of reading skills when they arrive. They have an ability to memorize certain things and so I give them these little borrow books that have one word [and] one picture and that works into a pattern book type where they are reading a little sentence that is the same all the way through, with one picture-related word on each page. So that sort of progresses and once they get through a series of those, they are usually reading quite well on their own. But there is a certain amount of memorization, picture association. They build up a sight vocabulary but work is stuck all around the classroom....I make them go back and use those words when they are writing and reading so that it's not for me to tell them how to spell a word. They are supposed to remember where it is and find it. I think at home they learn a lot through just driving around in a car and passing McDonald signs and things like that....

D- What about the instructional programmes that work supporting your ideas?

S- I have a series of readers and it just sort of gets divided up and I ended up with one but I am using [it] in a combination with oral books sometimes in a series, in combination with my own resources that I have built up over the years so I have got a lot of books here and it's not just the readers that I use. I have a phonics program that I have pulled from different areas, that I have sort of fitted into the year so all of that sort of ties in together. I sort of developed my own way of coping with all sorts of materialsThere are instructional programmes that the kids see,.....and I've got examples like reading rainbow ;...- a book which I adore. All those sorts of things when they are little - all feed into this sort of thing for the listening, for the reading and writing and that sort of thing. Computer programmes now are geared for that sort of thing as well. (Excerpt from teacher interview 7/12/95 p.1)

Notice that she recognizes the importance of home activities and that children learn literacy within the context of home and community. She still feels that she must focus on phonics. It is very important in her programme. She takes the children through a sequenced phonics program that over the years she developed for herself. She went on to describe more of her literacy programme, which had a healthy emphasis on continuous text reading, using the little books she talks about. She included David in her whole literacy programme, simply accepting the stage he was at in his literacy. Here is what she had observed about David:

Susan-....Now, ... David ...is exposed to all those things but in addition he is also having some help at home with a special helper. [She] goes to his house and she ties in with the things that we are doing in the classroom. So ,he is getting the individual attention from Noreen, he is getting individual attention at home

plus the group things that he is getting here in the classroom. So I sort of feel that he is getting a lot things lambasted onto him so many times.

Dean- He's presented similar kinds of material but just from different people?

S- Different ways and different people. That's right. And I think that is what has helped him. He has got phenomenal memorization, but in the writing section it really became obvious. As I was writing little notes for this and that, he would start out by scribbling and doing little signs and pretending... They [the children] are writing and they are saying things that we can't understand, so we get the meaning from those by asking them to tell us but they start out by writing their name - they write family names. things like that, so there is a purpose to their writing and [with] the kids in the classroom the same thing. They tell me the things that they have done that are meaningful to them and it carries on from there. So, .. what might be one wordat the beginning of the year. It turns into a sentence.... as the year goes on and then they turn into their own little stories about what they inventedas the year progresses..... (Excerpt from teacher interview 7/12/95 p.2)

To support literacy development in her classroom, Susan describes what appears to be a very eclectic program, one in which she uses the best materials she can. She recognizes the need to integrate reading and writing and that children progress from simple to more complex understandings as the year progresses. The books she used for her "Borrow a Book" program were from the reading series Ginn 2000 or the output of other publishers who publish series of levelled small books. The books she used for lessons varied according to the theme she being studied. She chose stories from readers to fit these themes, because the multiple copies allowed the children to do group work and often a skills page to go with the story was present. Daily the children as a group did write with her up at the front as she modelled the writing process. She would take oral sentences from the children and write each in a different colour so that they could recognize their sentence on the chart. David, along with the other children, was encouraged to participate in this activity. All the children had journals and in which they wrote at least three times a week. Invented spellings were encouraged in their writing. Each day Susan had a skills lesson in which she introduced a sound or word family. This lesson was often linked to the larger

theme she was doing. There was a noticeable emphasis on oral language in this class.

Because Susan believed young children needed to hear good literature, and so she read to them daily:

Susan - I think [children learn language] mainly from good role models and from talking and interacting with their peers, with their parents and extended family when they are young and listening to good literature I think that helps when they are read good books as opposed to some books that may not have the best things in them but I think that's where they best learn the language is just hearing good stuff.

Dean- What about David?

S- I think it probably goes the same for him as well. He's got a mother that speaks very clearly and easily to him and I think the rest of the family carries along and the helpers that he's got at home. (Excerpt from teacher interview 7/12/95 p.3)

Susan went on to describe where she saw David in his writing and how certain she was of his abilities. She seems to be describing a child whom she believes has a lot of untapped potential and who, with lots of input, can and will learn. At the time I interviewed Susan, the other grade two children in her class were able to write much more than David, but this did not seem to faze her. Her complete acceptance of his abilities was refreshing. She did not appear to emphasize David could not do in her class, but what he could do. Moreover, she celebrated those achievements:

Susan.....But with David he is very much with the family names, writing family names and his own name. We are encouraging him to write his last name and we are also encouraging him to spell [the names of] his siblings and his extended family. We also have a list from the parents so that we know how to spell them correctly to help him but he brought in a book the other day that he had made at home. His Mom was at home sick. She had made him a little booklet and it had all the family names in it that he had copied from somewhere. He's got a lot stored up here. (points to her head)....I think there is a lot more of ... concentrating on getting repetition from David and of course just getting David to physically do printing and cursive - the progress that he has made, and this is the third year we've had him, it's just been phenomenal just to see that the control that he has got in his pencil now because of practice..... We started out with big markers and big lines and just to get the formation and now he can quite easily write. It's light but it's not always on the lines but the formation is there.... But a lot of words come out so much more clearly than when he first started and he can say long strings of words that are sentences for me to put up on the daily message, whereas at the beginning if I got David, Mom, store - I was excited.

D- Really telegraphic?

S- That's right, but now he can go on. He said something [about] David's Mom made some cards with [but] all I had [run out of] space... it [his message] went on, even longer than that. ... For the daily message yesterday talking about who she was making cards for and things like that.... It's a big family - it's so important to him.....Enthusiasm for all efforts is an important thing that we need to have in the classrooms

and at home and I think David gets that at home and enough patience. (Excerpt from teacher interview 7/12/95 p.4)

Susan seemed to be saying that he was learning language and writing the same as the others. Although she recognized that for David lots of repetition was necessary, she considered the basic classroom program to be beneficial to him. She went on to say how important the teacher assistant had been, as well as her own experiences as a teacher. She felt that inclusion works if the teacher is experienced. I would add self confident as well, and willing to accept the special needs child's stage of learning. These ideas came through in Susan's next comments about her classroom environment supporting all the children:

Susan.....- Well, I try to provide good resources- games, lots of books, lots of manipulatives for them. He does a lot of his own simple drama, David does. He does a lot of dramatic play himself, little men and little dinosaurs. He has his own little things going but just to have an encouraging and supportive environment for all the kids, that goes along for David as well. So that he can have that positive thing and I don't think he would have done what he has accomplished in the last few years if he had not had Noreen to work with him on a one to one basis because she can keep him there and keep him on task as long as she feels it is possible to get things done. I think that the teacher has to have an ability to understand the development of skills and what needs to happen in a certain block step process as you go along. There are new teachers that come on staff that sometimes don't have the experience and the background to help them do everything in the right order and I know I've been asked to help some of them that have come onto staff to try and help get them up to speed and I think that helps if the teacher has got the experience to deal with it. So any other comments that I have that I feel are relevant: I think parental support and encouragement for school and all learning activities. Not just school things but things outside of the school that are supporting learning even going to piano and ballet and all those sorts of things are important for kids to have those skills. (Excerpt from teacher interview 7/12/95 p.2)

What was interesting here was Susan's complete acceptance of David and her confidence that inclusion of him in her class was to everyone's benefit. She enjoyed working with David and never once said having a special needs child was a burden or caused extra work. Susan was lucky this year in the fact that her class was small, less than twenty children were in this grade one-two split. She also had a hearing impaired child in

this class and she wore a phonic ear most of the time. There was lots of activity in this classroom all the time.

Noreen, who had been working with David for three years, was a very experienced teacher assistant who enjoyed working with Susan as well as David. She had a gentle and caring, but firm manner, with all the children. She talked first about how she felt 'regular' children learned literacy. Notice the emphasis on reading to children and pointing out words in context, things which she did as a parent.

Noreen.....How children learn to read: I find reading books. The more books you can read to a child from early age, right on until they can start reading themselves, is a great way.... Sometimes they are memorizing words that they see ,but I find reading from a parent's point of view is a very good thing to do. Pictures, a lot of pictures are very good, making up some word cards. Puzzles, you can make puzzles up with words..... Word lists where they can go back ,see the word is not so good, sounding out the words - once you sound it out to them, they seem to get it right away.

Dean - Now, what you are saying is for regular kids, do the same kinds of ideas that you have expressed here work for David? (Excerpt from teaching assistant interview 6/12/95)

She carried these strategies into her work with David and I felt she was amazed that it was working. It was as if she didn't really expect him to be so successful. I wondered if this was because he was a special needs child.

Noreen- For David I like reading books to him. He is just- he just loves it when you read a book to him and where sometimes I think he too also memorizes -The pictures are good for him to relate the words to the picture. He's more memorizing but then, now, sometimes we wonder even where it comes from because he will know the words and you read a book to him once and he's got it, so he's doing very well there.

D- How about how children learn to write?

N- As a beginner, if they are having problems, you can use sandpaper, sand, felt cards, then move on to wipe off cards, holding their hand and going over a letter with them and then have them do it on their own - doing it on the blackboard. I think showing them is very important.

D- Is this important for all children and David as well?

David's Teacher Assistant: Noreen's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- language models important
 - develops sensitivity in other children
 - lots of social learning happens for special needs child
 - special needs child grows academically
- About Literacy**
- reading to children early
 - encourage memorization at first
 - helping them use words list around the classroom
 - encouraging independence through practice
 - pace slow
 - model language
 - use tactile methods and games skill learning
 - discuss pictures in the book

N- Yes. Practice sheets and then working on their own in say a book or paper of some sort. I find working slow if they are having a problem, work slow and they get it. Showing them on the blackboard - one on one types of things.

D - Now what about the instructional programmes?

N- Some of the things you have to make up yourself. There is a lot of teacher's material that you get different ideas from. I will go to Mrs. Grant and ask her if she has an idea of what we could use or and then you take it from there - make-up something or expand that. Also getting back to the writing... Making up books out of chart paper which [was how] we started with David because at that point, he wrote very large ... Then slowly brought the paper size down then his printing got smaller. That was another thing for the writing. The instructional programme I would say comes mostly from the teacher using various different books or ideas she has had over the past. (Excerpt from teaching assistant interview 6/12/95)

Noreen took her direction from Susan, but she did feel that she had to develop curriculum materials on her own. She knows the importance of reading to children and having them practice on their own. She took writing to mean the mechanical formation of the letters, something which she had spent a lot of time working on with David. She had David copying a lot and doing over writing. These activities constituted writing for her. When I asked her to show me examples of David's composing, she seemed puzzled, saying that he couldn't do any. Unlike Susan, she did not see David as a writer who could compose, but only as a copier. I suspected she had this view because she saw him as a special needs child and she considered composing to be an activity beyond his capabilities. Perhaps she felt he had set limits to his potential.

Noreen knew the importance of language modelling for all children and for David as well. In her comments about inclusion, she linked this issue to how she saw David interacting in this classroom. Her comments about the other children's interactions with David offer interesting insights into how the 'regular' children in the class viewed him.

N-Yes, I think he has learned a lot from being in a regular class - seeing how the other children do it, and he has followed on some things, some things not. I think seeing other children at work then he is very enthused to try it because they are doing it. . I think it's good for him to be in the regular stream seeing how the other children work, play. Play is a big thing, learning to share, cooperation. It is a very good thing for David.

D - Have you seen growth in that area?

Noreen... I find talking slow, having a child look at your mouth when you are saying a word or sound or letter. If they do say a word wrong, I correct them and usually - you may have to do it a couple times but usually they will catch it the first time. I think learning from their peers [they serve as] ..role models - they pick it up there.

Dean- Have you seen that happen with David?

N - Oh, most certainly..... He still does not talk back to them that well one on one but he is watching how they are playing, how they do talk. Now, he's getting that he is talking more than what he ever has. I think its through help from the other children. The other children are very supportive of him, protective and if something should happen in the yard or in the class, they will come back and tell us that this has happened, where [as] David won't speak up and tell us. But they will speak on his behalf and they are very protective of him.

D- Would that be similar to any other child in the class do you think?

N- Not really I think they know that David is - they have never really come out and asked - that he is different but I think it's hard to say. But I find that they are all very good with him - all very good with him (Excerpt from teaching assistant 6/12/95 p.2).

Because she had been working with him for three years Noreen could see growth in David not only in the area of language, but in the area of acceptance as well. The children, without being told, accepted and protected David. This sensitivity to the special needs child was something I had seen in Jennie's class as well.

David's and Daniel's Principal: Emily's Beliefs and Values About Inclusion

- give teachers support for special needs child
- whole school must support special needs child
- parents part of that support
- other children benefit from special needs child in their milieu

About Literacy

- children learn to read in a variety of ways
- phonics is important for grounding in reading
- provide lots of opportunities to write and read
- encourage talk in the classroom
- suspects all children learn the same must tailor program to the child

David's principal, Emily Grafton, had her office across the hall from David's classroom. During the year and a half that she had been principal, she daily had the opportunity to see David as he came and went to class. The decision to have David included in Susan's class had not been hers, so this was a relatively new experience for her to observe. Her comments on inclusion were interesting because she is talking about David,

who is the child across the hall. The caring atmosphere is what she emphasizes as well as the importance of supportive parents. She sees inclusion from the benefits of the social values it promotes in the other children. She cites parental support as critical. She felt it works in this classroom because of the additional aid of the teacher assistant. In fact, she could not envision any other way to support inclusion. Inclusion for her was an add on to existing classroom practices:

Emily....[I] think it is very important for schools to be accepting of all children and, in our school, we have a wide variety of children with different kinds of needs - developmental needs, ethnic needs, social needs ...I think the whole attitude of the school, the teachers, the parents, the care staff, the secretaries, everybody who works with the children, should be one of openness and caring and a responsibility to those children ... I will go back to the child who is across the hall from my office, because I see him more just because of the proximity. That teacher has really established a welcoming environment for that child. All the children in that room support and work toward the child as far as I can see. I don't see any teasing..... I don't see any putting down or anything like that and that's strictly from the teacher and the education assistant creating an environment of acceptance. ...I think that's what we want to do in our whole school for all our children.....I think we benefit by having those children in our school. Like, I think it creates an empathy and a warmth and ..teaching our children who are average, if you want to say that, to accept and understand people who are different. I think they bring as much to us as we give to them. It's a reciprocal thing and I think that's very important to remember that we do gain a lot from them.....You need special parents to work with those children too..... I think for the parents of those children, the support they give the classroom teacher is very important because the classroom teacher can become discouraged at times ..If the parent supports them and says whatever you are doing is great, that makes the teacher feel that whatever effort they are giving is worthwhile because sometimes with those children the steps that they make is very small compared to the others and they can get discouraged. They can work, you know, for months and months and months teaching them to say one word and if the parents appreciate what they are doing, really, that's all the teachers need, is that little incentiveOne more thing I could addis the teacher aid who works with them is imperative. I can't see any of those teachers in the class without a teacher aid because they couldn't spend the time that they need to with that child and I also think that it is important that the teacher aid or the educational assistant follow them for a couple of years - I don't mean for their whole school life because maybe they would get quite attached, but they have that same one for a year or two just because that trusting relationship is what is helping them grow and develop. (Excerpt from principal interview 8/12/95 p.5)

Like Jennie's principal, Leah Chen, Emily could see the benefits for the school as a whole, as well as for the special needs child. I thought it interesting that she saw acceptance by the whole staff as important for the growth of these special needs children, but offered no formal way to involve them. Clearly, she saw the teacher assistant role as

primary for the special needs child. Leah Chen, Jennie's principal, felt this was important as well. When I asked Emily about what she believed about reading, she indicated that she viewed beginning reading development as hinging on phonics, while writing was more developmental in nature. She was concerned about finding the 'right' method to teach special needs children. The way she made this statement caused me to think she really thought there was one method. Her ideas about language development have evolved, she said, from her early teaching days in the 1960s, when a quiet classroom was the norm. She saw the encouragement of talking in the classroom as a positive step.¹⁰ Emily's philosophy is eclectic. She reflected exactly what was happening in Susan's class but her ideas about inclusion and special needs children learning literacy were not consistent for the next child in this project, who was also a student in her school. That child was Daniel. He was viewed differently and I found it fascinating that Emily saw Daniel and David as both being in inclusive settings.

Daniel: The Early Years

Daniel developed significant seizures at 16 months of age and was medicated for a partial complex seizure disorder. The medical authorities at the time told Barbara and Bill that:

Barbara.....there was none - explanation is unknown why he had seizures and they called the term idiosyncratic - it sounded funny because it always reminded me of idiots - as if we needed to hear that....but he falls into 60% of cases unknown [according] to the neurologist...To him it was sort of like the good news... that we don't know why, because if they do know why sometimes... it's something much more serious and, of course, being young at 16 months, ..younger children have a higher percentage of outgrowing a seizure rather than an older child, or adult, which is good news..(Excerpt from parent interview 13/12/95)

Needless to say, Daniel was regularly monitored by the neurologist and, when we first met, had been seizure free. Towards the age of three, his Mum insisted the neurologist do an assessment because Daniel's speech and language were not developing like his brother, Hank. As Barbara recounted the events of that time, it was clear that, like David's Mum, she was the one who was instrumental in getting an assessment, not her pediatrician¹¹. Daniel was diagnosed with a severe speech and language disorder, one that made him extremely difficult to understand. Barbara explains the history here:

Barbara...His first speech assessment was when he first turned 3. I recognized there was a difference or delay I should say, around the age of two or two and a half, so then we inquired and went on a waiting list [for assessment]...Communication was usually done by gestures and grunts or pointing, though I always instinctively knew what Daniel wanted....(Excerpt from parent interview 13/12/95)

After Daniel was assessed, Barbara became involved with the Hospital's speech and language pathologist:

Barbara....[She] came into my home and also into nursery school and her role modelling was where I learned my experience to work with Daniel at home ...We were on another waiting list and we went to a private speech pathologist...We were with her, I am sure, for over a year, until we got into the school board....(Excerpt from parent interview 13/12/95)

Like the other mothers, Barbara herself sought out help for her son. She was willing to take the time to work on Daniel's speech, even when there were cutbacks in the education system and the family had to draw upon its own resources. Barbara, like Jennie's and David's mums, already had an older child in the public school system. She intended to use those contacts to assist in finding a placement for Daniel as she explains, an alternate situation arose first:

Barbara.....Well, actually, I was very fortunate because my older son already was in the Board and I was involved as a volunteer in the Board and was quite comfortable with the teachers and principal at the time. ... I originally planned to put Daniel into [this same school] ...What happened was he got accepted into

another nursery school that he was on a waiting list for, with a full time resource teacher. Now he was there for six weeks and it did not work well...It didn't work out for Daniel. Six weeks I think we were there, just 6 weeks and I took him out...There was one teacher I felt very uncomfortable with...She was abrupt in her mannerism...[then] an incident had occurred at school...The way they handled it was inappropriate because it obviously upset him. I think he felt very bad....I had just uncomfortable feelings about, you know, this and that and I just felt uncomfortable...just little things...trying to make Daniel into somebody else...(Excerpt from parent interview 13/12/95)

So Barbara re-approached her community school and explored with the principal the feasibility of Daniel going into a junior kindergarten. She got a positive response because,

Barbara.....before Christmas time she [principal] called me up and told me that,.... Daniel would be starting junior kindergarten and that they had given a part-time TA (teaching assistant) (Excerpt from parent interview 13/12/95)

Barbara had already had one poor experience with inclusion, so it was natural for her to be more sensitive about this new situation. Consequently, she looked for lots of acceptance for herself and her child from the teacher. She quickly realized that she was lucky that Daniel was not a behavioural problem. She commented on her perceptions of acceptance of Daniel into the junior kindergarten program:

Barbara.....The teacher, I didn't particularly feel comfortable with - I felt that she probably didn't want this. She wasn't really cooperative with me...communication wise, but the other teachers knew me and the resource teacher there for the school....He would go in frequently and the other TA attached to this school would check in on Daniel. The principal and everybody was quite pleased and I think what really surprised me was that I would hear the comment from one of the TA's was that he doesn't have a behavioural problem and very fortunate for us that he didn't because maybe that would give them [the school] an excuse to get him out or [suggest] that he didn't belong here....(Excerpt from parent interview 13/12/95)

Daniel proceeded into kindergarten at the same community school with the same teacher assistant. Barbara found speech and language lacking in her words, but settled for a consultation model rather than withdrawing Daniel from the class. When Daniel was ready for grade 1, it was strongly suggested to Barbara that she agree to place Daniel in a

segregated special needs class. This recommendation was made, according to Mum, because,

Barbara....after, I think it was kindergarten, we changed principals. We had a new principal and there was a suggestion of Daniel being put into the special needs class.....I declined him being registered into that class because he had come into a regular junior kindergarten.....anyway so I said no, ...so, I don't think they really liked that. I didn't get a lot of flack, but I think they would have preferred that [special class], but I said no.....Daniel went into Grade 1 and the TA was still there but only part-time and there was another special needs [child] there in the class. Actually, it was a year of a lot of trial and pressures....

Dean: Was this the year that he had 2 teachers too?

B: Yeah, and I was glad because he got his kindergarten teacher. I was glad that the teacher left and his beginning teacher had left, he was getting his kindergarten teacher into the grade 1 programme and then we still had the part time TA...What would happen with the other child who had high need...she would go into the special class for a period of time in the afternoon because the teacher was left alone with basically, with over, what? 28 kids, ...so the TA from the school - a full time TA who did all the school would come to do the programme ,so I think what the school did , they did very well, pulling together the classroom moves....And then they also had a volunteer to come in to do reading - take kids out of the class and also Daniel was one of them,... And also during the afternoons some of the other kids were taken out, the ESL, into another program. So that helped the teacher with the work load of maybe 20 kids. So sometimes you see a large amount...so it was very busy ...because it was such a large class,....I mean a lot of those kids were also slow who weren't IPRC'ed [Identified as Special Education] -there were others who were language delayed and others who were ESL, just straight from the other countries.. (Excerpt from parent interview 13/12/95)

Daniel's Mother: Barbara's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- principals make a difference
- community resources important
- being with other non special needs children important to development for modeling
- acceptance of special needs child by teacher important
- parent involvement in school necessary

About Literacy

- children learn to read within their home environment
- special children need lots of fun practice with skills through games
- being read to a lot
- try lots of strategies

What is interesting here is the reference to the change in principals, as it seems to bear out what Jennie and David's parents had already found out: that is, that the administrator in the community school does make the difference concerning the continuation of inclusion. In this case, the parent was satisfied and the child was happy and learning in his inclusive classroom. However, this feeling could not have been wholly shared by all those in the school, otherwise why did they want a change? Barbara's comments above

reflect her sensitivity to the authorities feelings about her parental decision to keep Daniel in a regular grade one. The authorities wanted him in a segregated special education class in another school. Her comments illustrate how a school' own agenda can subtly work against the best interests of the included child. In this case, that agenda was to place Daniel in a segregated class or at least to make his parent somehow feel guilty for the school's difficulties and sparse resources. It is interesting that Barbara talks about all the class needs, but not Daniel's. It is as if Daniel's needs were not equally as important as those of the others in the class.

It is not unusual for a school to share with the parents of a special needs child the difficulties they are having meeting the needs of the other children in the class. In doing so, they deflect the parents concerns away from the needs of their own child. I was struck by the fact that Barbara never mentioned the lack of adequate speech and language therapy for Daniel. His need for this service did not go away just because he was in the regular class. An attitude from school authorities of "what can we do?" is not uncommon. School authorities embrace the attitude that, you (parent) wanted your child in the regular class and he/she is there. In my own experience, I have seen a school stall over providing adequate resources for a special needs child who they strongly felt should have been placed into a segregated class. A slow response to scheduling the appropriate therapy or simply prioritizing the child lower on the waiting list are characteristic of such a situation. The rationale behind such actions is that the parents got the inclusion placement with teacher aid support, so they should not expect more, because the system had not been set up for more it. If parents want more resources for their child, they should agree to put their child into

segregated classes where the resources are provided. For many in the school system, inclusion is still viewed in terms of a placement. The placement label is "in a regular class" rather than a designated special education class. The system is set up in such a way that resources are attached to the locations of the most needy children, most of whom are usually in the special education classes. In other words, the resources are tied to locations. If a very needy child is not in a special education class, the system does not appear to have the flexibility to handle the situation very effectively.

Barbara was very committed to helping her son learn to read. She recognized early that Daniel needed more attention and was willing to put in the time and energy at home. She read to him like she did to her older son. Reading was an important skill she wanted Daniel to acquire. Here she talks about her older son learning to read and explains how she draws on this knowledge to teach Daniel. Drawing on Daniel's environment, she used manipulatives and loads of one-on-one informal teaching:

Barbara...Basically [we taught our older son to read] ...from the stories that we had reading to him ever since he was a young child and we did the same thing with Daniel. Always being introduced to books in the bathtub, phone letters, showing examples of us reading stories or, if we were at church, also reading the Bible ...when nursery school time came along there was reading also with their peers. This was also [the case] with Daniel. He was in a nursery school prior to the school system, so there has always been books available.... and I guess maybe the pictures were also very important....The colouring books which might have the big car andyou would have car written underneath or you would spell it. It really depended on how creative and where they were at and what they were willing to do. So I feel that the children learn to read within their environment and [through the] awareness that the parents help to bring out to them.... like the stop signs ... what the street signs says, the number of the building....the number on our door... grocery shopping and recognizing the cereal boxes and what it says.....realizing that Daniel did have some special needs and was behind, maybe not as focused as my first son, sort of brought it into being more creative for me...using a tile mixI tended to use tools to point which letter is with the tile.. then you would slip the tile into the middle to spell a word.... We would start on his name...Daniel, cat, bunny - the things that were very important in his life that were printed under photographs or paintings that he might have attempted to have made.....It was a combination, when I first realized he started to spell - needed to spell was in junior kindergarten and it was like at that point he would recognize a lot of his letters but I don't think he was reading bunny what he was doing was spelling a lot b-u-n-n-y rather than saying bunny and then I would say, " What's that?" then he would say, " bunny," so the words were associated with the picture, like the flash cards for example, and as the flash card got a little bit more advanced,

without the words, sometimes that would be a little bit more of a challenge for him but we use tools, we use a lot of talking and pointing it out (Excerpt from parent interview 13/12/95 p.1).

This was a mother committed to having her son learning to read and overcome his communication difficulties. After Daniel's first year in his community school, he moved to his present school and class as a grade 2 student, which is where I first met him. Daniel tries very hard to make himself understood. He repeats what he is trying to communicate, without getting frustrated or angry at me. Acting out behaviour has never been an issue with Daniel. If he couldn't make himself understood after several attempts, he would shake his head, as if to say I had the communication problem, not him. He would then move on to something else.

Daniel's Inclusive Setting

I found it fascinating that Daniel was in the same school as David and considered to be in an inclusive setting. The approach taken with this child was totally different, especially in view of what Emily Grafton, his principal, had shared with me about inclusion and her views about literacy learning. Daniel's class was in a portable at the back of the main school building, as far away from the principal's office as was physically possible. This dingy portable is reached only by going outside and walking a short distance across the school yard. It is a mixed age group class, with children from grades two to five. All the children in Daniel's class have special needs of some kind. Most had been labelled and identified as special education children, but either their parents for one reason or another wanted them to attend Barton P.S. and not a segregated special education class, or they

were on a waiting list for a placement. The location of the class was familiar to me, as many special education classes are located far from the school administration.

There was a limited classroom library, but lots of readers and workbooks from a programme called Reading Mastery, published by SRA were available. Reading Mastery is a highly sequenced reading programme; first developed in the late 1960s, it was spruced up for the 1990s. Two computers sat in a corner of the room and were used as rewards for the children who were able to finish their work. The room was not set up with centres, as David's had been, but more along traditional classrooms lines, with desks and chairs grouped according to grade levels. Some total group teaching took place, but not in language arts or mathematics. These subjects were taught in small groups by the teacher or teacher assistant. Like David's class it was small, with under 17 students.

Cathy Jones, the teacher assistant, worked with all the children in groups set up by Daniel's teacher, Evelyn Smith. Cathy worked with Daniel's group the most, so I was very interested to hear her views on literacy learning and inclusion:

Cathy....I firmly believe in phonics...Even with the kids that have difficulties ,the more phonics they get, the better their attack skills and they feel that they are able to do better. When they can give you a sound, they get all excited when it's the right one. Learning to write...Doing their journals.....Well, for a lot of kids they are afraid to put it on paper. They are afraid to make mistakes. But when you can convince them that one letter is fine - I can understand what word you are trying to put down by just putting one letter. It gives them the confidence that they need to start listening more to what they are saying in their heads so they can put down more sounds...The more words that they are exposed to, like a lot of books, but not thick books, like one sentence on a page, fairly large print, books that rhyme, things that they can pattern...(Excerpt from teacher assistant interview 8/12/95 p.1)

It is clear that Cathy believes that phonics is the beginning of reading for all children and especially for children like

Daniel's Teacher Assistant: Cathy's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- special needs children should not be in the regular class but small classes
 - require highly structured teaching
- About Literacy**
- phonics is the way to start all children to read
 - expose children to lots of books, large print and patterns

Daniel. She felt they needed lots of direction, which is what she called the reading programme. She did not think Daniel should be included in any class but the one he is in now:

Cathy...Daniel doesn't really stick out like a sore thumb [here] but if he [would] did in a regular classroom. It's not the place for him... And I know why his Mom wants him in a regular class and wants him included in everything, but he was really disappointed this morning when he only got one of his spelling words right and didn't get a star and we weren't making him do spelling because of that, but she said, "Well now, he has just as much right to earn a star as anybody else and he should be included and he doesn't know what he is printing."

Dean- His class now is a "regular class" but a lot of those kids look like they have had difficulties?

C- Yes, everyone of them does, that's why they are there.

D- But it hasn't been designated as a special education class?

C - No, but all of the kids have been tested, some are waiting placement... They have all had some kind of testing done but they haven't been through the whole psychological and diagnostic tests done, but every single one of them does have a problem in some area. (Excerpt from teacher assistant interview 8/12/95 p.3)

It would seem that the whole concept of adapting the expectations and programme for someone like Daniel was beyond Cathy's experience. She just thought Daniel's mother was daft and somewhat mean by implication, to insist he do all the things the other children were doing, even though he couldn't. Adjusting the programme never entered the equation. I wondered why, but got some hints when Cathy told me about Daniel's 'regular' class. Cathy told me the class was set up in response to the school's need to provide intense remedial instruction for children identified by the classroom teachers. Some of these children had significant behaviour problems, while others had academic difficulties. All of the children in this class were considered to be "unable" to have their needs met in the regular classroom. In other words, this class was based upon a lot of the assumptions that Skrtic (1991) and Cousin and Duncan (1997) describe as common to special education, most notably that the children in this class were to blame because their school experience had not gone well. It was assumed that it was the school's job to determine what was wrong with

these students and direct them into curricula and a classroom that could provide for their learning needs. Daniel's class was not identified as a segregated special education class by the central School Board, but it in fact served the school as such. The class was referred to as a "structured, small regular class" and that is what Daniel's Mum and the other parents had been told. However, for all intents and purposes, it operated as a special education class; no non-special needs children were in it. Thus, although Daniel was included here, inclusion meant a placement mirroring special educational practice. Such is a deeply rooted value among some educators, who hold pluralism and equity in contempt. All these special children had to be grouped into one class. I thought this was particularly odd in light of the principal's view about David's inclusion. Then I remembered that David's Mum had asked me about this class, as in one of the case conferences that she had with the school, this class was offered to her as an alternate to Susan's class. Joan had refused the option of Evelyn's class for David.

Evelyn's thoughts on how children learn to read directly contradicted what I was seeing in the class instructional programme. However, when I reread what she had said about children with lower abilities, her class programme made sense. What she believed to be appropriate for a regular class did not carry

through to this class, supporting my observation that this class was not a regular class.¹² She went on to tell me about the importance of oral language and the need to read to children a lot. She liked to accept

**Daniel's Teacher: Evelyn's Beliefs & Values
About Inclusion**

- special needs children need structure
- small classes out of mainstream
- direct teacher instruction for special needs children

About Literacy

- learning the sounds is very important
- regular class children learn differently from children with lower ability
- reading to children important

approximations in their writing. However, all the children in this class had every piece of writing corrected by Evelyn or Cathy. Accuracy was stressed. She was slightly uncomfortable with the Reading Mastery programme, but was trying it out this year. It was as if when it came to special needs children she didn't trust her own instincts about how children learn. Structure meant reduction of language into discrete bits, each of which had to be mastered before moving onto more of the same. So a contradiction existed between what Evelyn said she believed and what she practised in the classroom.¹³

Lingering questions remain as to why Daniel ended up in a quasi-special education class. David, who was in the same school, was in an inclusive setting, perhaps it was because Daniel's Mum and Dad were not the same kind of professionals as David's parents. Barbara was a single Mum, not a teacher like David's Mum. Barbara would have had little in her background that would have helped her to recognize the kind of class her son was in. Perhaps the school authorities counted on her being unable to recognize and question Daniel's placement. David's Mum and Dad had been very proactive, demanding and getting inclusion for their son. Moreover, David's family was already part of the school community as his older sister had gone to the school and his younger sister was in the school. David was walked to school every day by his Dad. Daniel and his brother had transferred into the school and they came on the bus. Daniel's Mum did volunteer regularly at the school but she wasn't visible every day, the way David's Dad was. Both parents appeared equally committed to inclusion, but the reality for each child in the same school was very different.

Tommy: The Early Years

Amy and Joe Cosmos', son, Tommy was born without incident and, up to four months, appeared to attain the normal physical milestones. His mother became concerned at that time because, unlike his older sibling Tyler, Tommy's head was not developing normally. In fact, it had fused together, causing cranial stenosis, a life threatening situation. The months of hospital stays, the major surgery, and the placement of a shunt at the base of his spine that followed, set him back to infancy and placed him on a different learning path. Amy described this stage of Tommy's life as being quite traumatic as he was not yet two years old when it occurred.¹⁴ She recalled what the medical authorities told her about the dismal prognosis for Tommy and her reaction to this news.¹⁵ Amy went on to say that Tommy would never again follow the same growth patterns as his older brother Tyler. Once Amy's initial shock at the medical authorities' assessments wore off, she took stock of what she could do as a parent, including researching the available community resources. She worked with Tommy at home and had him placed on every waiting list for extra resources. He was medically fragile at this time, but she persisted:

Amy - Tom had quite a few hospital visits, everything from asthma to really unusual viral fevers or whatever. No known cause but [he] needed hospitalization [for] shunt problems and, every time we have a shunt problem, we have the possibility of brain damage. And one step forward and two steps backwards and that is going to be a continual battle and also migraines.Well, I said [to the medical authorities] I will take half of what you say and throw out the rest and that's what I did. Tommy didn't fit any medical support group - he wasn't a Down Syndrome child, he wasn't a CP child, he wasn't an Autistic child and he still does not fit any one category so we fell down every crack we could find... And no, I found out about the Hanen Programbut Tom could speak, by the time I could actually use it because I lived at the hospital [at this time]... I had a duffie bag in the car because I never knew if I was coming home so I just couldn't commit to a whole lot of stuff.... we just did not know and I even don't know if it would have helped... because I had labels on everything in the house and we played games and I had books and we had music playing in the house 18 hours a day. We went nuts with Raffie and Sesame Street but we had it...Tom could tell you numbers in Spanish at the time because he memorized them ...So actually I don't know I think Tom is a language disorder child rather than a language delay and because of the brain injury. Tom does have a brain injury.....it wiped out speech and that's why they said it was a miracle that Tom

could talk because the speech area was gone, and I said, but Tom got speech from music and that's in another area of the brain.(Excerpt from #2 parent interview 8/02/96)

Mum describes Tommy's first schooling in a special needs nursery school attached to a hospital setting, and the impact on her. She then explains her search for a local nursery setting for her son.

Amy-It was really hard to watch this little 2 and half year old go in a taxi and do that. But we didn't like it because it was not an integrated setting and they didn't promote integration either. Tom was the only child in there that even stood and none of them speak... How can Tom learn to speak if he never hears it and that was the big argument. It was plain walls, no colour, it was nothing against the other children but it was not a normal setting. You did not see a cross-section of kids. You only saw very severely handicapped children in some instances.....

..... But how can you model behaviour when you never see a child walk or a child talk, so we took him out of there. He stayed in there for 6 months - Mom got educatedand we looked elsewhere. So he ended up in community co-op...He would go 3 mornings, 2 afternoons, 3 afternoons, 2 mornings, whatever combination we could get him into..... He stayed there until 1990 and then we movedand it was just too far to drive....They had a resource teacher on staff and the numbers were so good and they always had 2 parent volunteers, so you were looking at a ratio of 3 kids to 1[adult] a lot of the time. Not always, but most times and in that programme, we brought in speech therapy, ... And then eventually I convinced them to bring it to our home..... He ended up going to the [local] Nursery School [after the move] and they brought in an Itinerant Resource teacher....He was 5 and he stayed there for a full year. We didn't send him to school until he was 6 and the numbers I would say.... 10 kids max....He was still doing half-days, but he was in there every day for a half-day slot. And then outside of that, we did music therapy and we did piano and we did swimming.....A pretty full day and, on top of that, I have had a special needs worker for Tommy since he was 3, so I would write up a programme and we would just follow through it and upgrade the goals and how difficult it became or whatever. Tom was a busy kid.(Excerpt from #2 parent interview 8/02/96)

As the time drew near for Tommy to attend school, Amy approached the community separate board school in her area, the same school Tommy's older brother was attending. It was just five minutes away from their house. Like Jennie's Mum, she had taken Tommy with her when she volunteered for school trips, so the school staff knew Tommy existed:

Amy....Well they had all seen him because every field trip Tyler went on, I brought Tommy because I was parent helper for Tyler's class and he always wanted his brother, so I asked the teachers and it was fine, so Tom came in tow....They knew he was coming.... This is not a child who was hanging off the chandeliers or banging into walls or anything. He is quiet as a mouse but they saw him. They knew he was going to eventually hit the system...(Excerpt from #2 parent interview 8/02/96)

Like Jennie's Mum, she used the tactic of lots of exposure, having her special needs child seen to be doing normal things in the community.

She hoped this exposure would allow the staff to get over their fear of a special needs child, and encourage their acceptance of him. Events unfolded for Tommy, not unlike they had for Jennie. She encouraged school officials to view Tommy in his pre-school setting when he was 5.¹⁶ Mum being the determined parent, was determined to have the school accept her son

Tommy's Mother: Amy's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- children learn more from being with peers
 - supportive principal makes a difference
 - most schools slow to change educate staffs for future special needs children
 - supportive teacher a must
 - all children belong in community
 - work in partnership with school
 - develop a flexible attitude
 - listen to parents information about their child
 - draw on community resources
 - take your child every where from birth
 - learn your parental rights and learn to articulate them
 - never give up just re-group
- #### **About Literacy**
- read to children at home
 - provide rich literate environment
 - provide technical support to assist special needs child - computer
 - provide home practice and support

into a regular classroom by the time he was 6. She very powerfully tells the story of her encounters with the separate board of education:

Amy....They saw him again at nursery school and Mrs Brown, from Student Services, came to my home to interview us, which we all chuckled about, but looking back at it, I guess she had to really understand in her head. The reports she was reading on Tommy were all wonderful reports but she had to figure out for herself and, actually see Tommy, if what they were writing was actually what Tommy was. And she agreed. She said yes. "Tom can go to school. We will have an IPRC, which we needed to do, and we'll put him in St. Matthews. "[their local community school] She did ask me if I was interested in any of the other system classes because of Tommy's needs, and I said no. I said, "Tom can cope in an integrated setting" and our belief was that we raise[ed] him that way for many reasons, and she said, "okay let's try it". We had our IPRC from hell - 17 people telling us why Tommy did not belong at St. Matthews, but we won the war or we won the battle. In the end, everyone said ,okay let him go to St. Matthews. ...[Then a] big change at school, [the] new principal, Betty Colder, didn't like the fact that the decision had been made already because she wasn't part of the decision.(Excerpt from parent interview 8/02/96)

At that point in time, Mum thought everything was going to be alright for Tommy in his school setting. Note, however, that she was offered another setting, just as Daniel's mother had been. This setting would have been in a completely segregated school, operated

jointly by four area school Boards. Having refused this option from the outset, she had proceeded with the IPRC. As the School Board had 17 specialists there, obviously those in attendance did not share her view that Tommy should attend a regular school such a stacking of the deck at an IPRC is not a subtle tactic to use on parents in order to dissuade them from their preferred choice of education for their special needs child. Such an IPRC becomes a battle ground of wills. Mum had won the first school battle, but what she hadn't counted on was a new principal coming into the school the following September, one who did not share her views about inclusion. As Jennie's parents had found out, the principal does make the difference, in setting the tone of the school and overseeing the child's programme, especially where a special needs child is concerned. The principal holds the ultimate responsibility for all children's programmes in the school and can intervene when events go wrong. Here is what happened, according to Mum.

Tommy entered kindergarten in St. Matthews as planned at the IPRC as a full day student. Exempt from French instruction, he rotated through 4 different kindergarten classes over two week periods and according to Mum coped well. A teacher assistant was provided to help with his toileting, since at this time he still wore pull ups.

Amy.... That's all they focussed on. That was it. That was the whole reason and they said, "We don't have to have him in school if he's wearing pull-ups," and my argument was, " Well what do you do with someone in a wheelchair? They don't belong in school either and they can't get up and go to the bathroom."...They decided this was going to be the reason that they would get him out anyway. Through that first year, we had another IPRC. It was still pretty scary, but we won the right to keep him at school. His progress was noted and unfortunately only focussed on his needs and they said, "Well, come Grade 1 you will not have a TA," even though there were 2 ½ TAs in that school.

D - Did they give you the reason?

A - Oh, the reason was, well the co-op teacher's program was only going to work in Grade 2 this year . The school decides where they place those co-op teachers or co-op student and TAs.They said, "No it's going to be in Grade 2 this year, I am sorry you will not have access to it." ...They did not do any programming or planning from May or June of kindergarten year for September, Grade 1. They didn't pick a teacher. They didn't talk to a teacher. They wouldn't let any teacher view Tommy in the kindergarten setting. Basically, she [the principal] kept fighting it and fighting it, and she wanted it to fail, so she set it

up to fail and it did. It failed miserably, three weeks into September we were having battles with school every day. Student Services was well aware of what was going wrong and they put in a Behavioural Technician to shadow Tommy for 10 days to see where he needs help and what he does with the help when he gets it. The report was wonderful. Tommy is a perfect candidate for full integration with supports. It was about 3 or 4 pages..... It could work very well. He was liked in his class. He was well behaved. He needed support. It didn't matter where you placed him, he would need support. We said, "It doesn't matter where you place him, keep the supports here and let him go through school here. We live in the community. He goes to Beavers at the school. We go to church at the school. His brother is at the school,[all] friends are in the school. You know Tom belongs in St. Matthews." (Excerpt from parent interview 8/02/96)

It is not uncommon for schools to adopt this kind of attitude, one which focused on the things that Tommy could not do, such as the toileting. It is interesting to note here that Mum had picked up on one of the major issues bothering the school kindergarten classes and over the summer months had tackled the toileting issue prior to his entering grade one. According to Mum, he was by then in grade one fully toilet trained but in need of some reminders, which he did not get. The other issue is the fact that IPRC's are set up to discuss the child's needs not their accomplishments. These meetings are set up officially to categorize students according to their needs and provide them with a placement that will meet those needs. School board resources and services are tied to physical locations, rarely to students. As soon as a child is considered to be under the mandate of special education, classroom teachers and school administration often feel their responsibility to the student is no longer theirs to make. Power shifts to an external locus of control, notably the school board central special education services.

Amy...Basically, no one was allowed to go in and help Tommy with his personal needs. As far as washroom behaviour goes, no one was going to direct him down to the bathroom. No one was going to change him. Every time he was going to be wet, the principal came and got him out of the Grade 1 class and told all the other kids that obviously this Grade 1 student is being bad because ... [He] did it every day in front of all the Grade ones. The teacher did not stop her, didn't say anything. She did what she was told - I guess she had to. I don't respect her for it but she had no choice maybe. The other thing was that the teacher said, "Because I have no help in the classroom, Tom can't keep up. He will do his own thing for most of the day." So they abandoned him and they just let him die. Well, we pulled him out and he was really ill. He was so stressed out. He would come home screaming and crying. I mean Tom is a happy little

boy. Not much will push him over the edge like that so he was miserable. [He] ended up in hospital. He was on protozoan for asthma problems for about a month..... Everything happened, everything...His asthma got worse. His migraines got worse. He was completely toilet trained over the summer between kindergarten and Grade 1. We went through CAS and Behaviour Modificationbut with what happened at St Matthews....It killed it [toilet training]. You have got to realize that Tom had no control over anything in his life. He is given medication. He has got adults coming out of his ears. He's got doctors. He's got hospitals. The only thing that child has control over is going to the bathroom. He learned it. He was so happy. They destroyed him at school....We are just starting to get it back now ... Now what a waste and what a price for Tommy to pay.(Excerpt from parent interview 8/02/96)

Here is a Mum who was very discouraged with the way the school authorities were handling her son and his programme. The programme appears to have been set up for failure as key players, such as the principal and teacher, did not believe that they were given the proper special education assistance from the central school board authorities. It begs the question about whether any of the key players really felt Tommy should have the opportunity to be in a regular class. The system is set up in a highly inflexible way, one which often is not to the student's benefit. Mum's explanation of Tommy's way of dealing with his stress has a ring of sense in it, especially given that he this is not a very verbal child. Tommy was the responsibility of the school board special education services, so he ended up in what is called an assessment class in another school outside of his home community. Mum attributes the success of this experience to the principal, Tom Moffett, who arranged for him to be integrated into regular classes some of the time.¹⁷

Unfortunately, as space requirements in local schools change, these types of school board system classes are subject to being moved from school to school. Tommy was moved to his present school, St. Peters, when the location of his class changed. The children who attend these special education classes, as well as the teacher, move with the class. They are not considered to be part of the school population in which they are located, but instead part

of the special education population. It really is up to the skill of the individual school principal to see that integration happens for the children in these classes, as the regular staff often don't view the special education teacher, or the class members as an integral part of their school community. It is very easy to exclude these children from the regular class, with the excuse that they have such special needs, ones with which the regular class teacher could not cope. It is more the norm for a special needs student to be integrated into a regular class, rather than being included. That may seem like an insignificant point, but there are subtle differences in teacher attitude and behaviour which accompany integration and inclusion. Inclusion into a regular class assumes that the regular classroom teacher views the special needs student as part of that class. An integrated special needs student, by contrast, is not considered part of a regular class all the time, but more of a visitor who comes and goes. This attitude was reflected by Tommy's grade one teacher, when she told his Mum that he couldn't keep up to the rest of the class. In making this statement, she clearly displayed the belief, that Tommy was not part of her teaching responsibility. Since Tommy had such special needs, she assumed that the responsibility for even of joint responsibility for programming or revised expectations, a situation which both discouraged and enraged Mum.

When Tommy entered St. Peters as a grade two student, he was still considered part of the special education class. However, it was recognized that expectations for him should be revised, and that a move towards a joint programming responsibility between the grade two teacher and the special education assessment class teacher needed to be undertaken. By grade three, Tommy was spending more time in the regular class than in the assessment

class. When I met him in grade four, Tommy's status within the class was one of inclusion in grade four. Carla Maxwell, his classroom teacher, had the responsibility for his educational programming. She was helped in that programming by Wendy Tamor, his teaching assistant. If and when they required back up, they could get it easily from the assessment class teacher or draw on the school's special education resource teacher.

Tommy's Inclusive Setting

Tommy and Wendy, as his teacher assistant, sat together towards the back and side of the grade four/five classroom. They were part of a group of five children who had their desks pushed together. This kind of grouping was the arrangement in this grade four/five classroom. Tommy's grade four group sat along the side, with a bank of computers lining the wall behind them. He could turn around easily in his seat in order to use the computer during the day. As they were near the classroom door, he and Wendy could without disturbing the rest of the class, readily exit the classroom to go to the printer located in the computer lab next door.

Wendy Tamor's desk, a middle size student desk, was located to the left of Tommy's. It was a bit awkward for Wendy, who is a tall woman with long legs. When Tommy was at the computer behind him, Wendy would often pull up a chair beside him or just stand behind him. The

Tommy's Teacher: Carla's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- be flexible and adapt goals to child
- use trial and error
- keep in contact with home
- adjust expectations
- team with teacher assistant

About Literacy

- read to children a lot at home and in school
- immerse them in literate language
- try to integrate skill teaching into themes
- use authentic (trade books) texts for reading
- recognize that not all students need phonics
- some students need structured programs (direct skill teaching and more teacher direction)
- have students write daily
- language, reading and writing grow together
- comprehension is more important than just skills
- home support for literacy necessary for success

only times she was not beside him were when his teacher, Carla Maxwell, had everyone sitting on the floor up to the front of the classroom to listen to whole group lessons. Wendy did have duties with other special needs children in the school, so she was not considered Tommy's full time teaching assistant. She did spend the core subjects of language arts, mathematics and science with Tommy. During French class every day, she also had a one-on-one time with him. There were usually at least one or two other children in the class at that time as well. It was during these periods that either Wendy or Carla could work individually with students. The actual time varied as the schedule rotated from day to day. In other words, the same subjects were not taught at the same time every day. Carla and Wendy appeared to decide jointly how to adapt individual lesson for Tommy. They agreed upon the expectations for him. Virtually all of Tommy's written and mathematics work was done on the computer. These were printed out and stored in a binder for him.

Carla Maxwell was a seasoned teacher who had had special needs children in her classroom over the years, but none with the special needs of Tommy. She was very comfortable with using computer technology in her teaching. She incorporated the six or seven computers in her classroom into centre activities for the class. A former teacher librarian, she had a wealth of knowledge about children's literature to bring to her curriculum and very definite ideas about how children learn to read.¹⁸ Carla talked about lots of different types of literacy practice and felt children need to feel comfortable reading and writing. Her large class of over thirty children did not restrict the use of centres nor discourage lots of cooperative learning. There was a sense that her class was a learning community, one in which all were expected to help each other. It seemed like a caring,

accepting environment. In the class a balance between large group and centre work was struck. Carla worked with individual children daily. She expressed her uncertainty when she was asked about children like Tommy. Her reply was interesting because it revealed her ability to respond to Tommy's learning style and use appropriate strategies. She relied on her observation skills and, although uncertain about which strategies to choose, she was willing to try different approaches. There was no hint that Tommy did not belong in her classroom.¹⁹ Carla included him in many group lessons. She asked him questions along with the rest of the class. She expected him to answer either with a gesture, or by pointing to the answer. What is more, she was willing to wait that extra time for him to answer. She explained how she had set up his desk to meet her expectations of his communicative ability; he had yes - no cards he could point to.²⁰ Because of her example, and that of Wendy the teacher assistant, the other children in Tommy's class had developed the same expectations of him. They often modelled the adult behaviour they saw, prompting Tommy to answer them. Everyone exhibited a very positive attitude about Tommy from everyone.²¹

Wendy spoke about her experiences with children who were learning to read and write, and related these experiences to Tommy and how she worked with him:

Wendy...Most of my experience with children learning to read and write[suggests that] everyone learns differently. Some learn audio, some learn visual. The average child learns to read, I find, by sounding things out, by looking at the word, breaking it down. With Tommy, I find him learning to do that now. Before it was memory. This is a word. This is what it is. This is the way it is spelt. Now he is learning to break it down syllable by syllable, letter by letter. With writing, I haven't seen a lot of development with writing.

Dean- What is Tommy doing with writing right now ?

W- Tommy has a set outline for his writing. Today is.... and he will find the date. I feel he will look at a picture book and pick out pictures which have matching words. So I am happy....[or] I am tired... [prompts] he [seems to] learn by that. Most of the beginning of the phrases are memorized now, and most of the endings are memorized. He has his favorites, which he uses almost daily and for creativity. It's starting to develop but very, very slowly....Tom likes Read and Write a Rabbit.[computer software] He has a math one [in] which there is some writing, but just the noise and the lights attract him to it and he goes nuts . There is a creative writer one where he can add pictures to words, so he types in the word and then sees what the word means visually and that is the best one for him.....Picture books, anything with a big picture, he can look at and identify what it is and then normally he's got the right identification in the word. If it's not,

then we go through the word and he works a lot with - you tell him the word, he says the word, you spell the word, he spells the word. And then you give him the meaning and half the time he will grasp the meaning but normally he's got the word and the spelling of it down pat.....He has amazing vocabulary. When he is using the computer, he can get tons of words out. Orally, I don't know how his process works. I don't know if he just can't get them out all the way or [if] he chooses not to. It's only in the past two months, since school started, that I have seen him actually come out and try to talk and express "I am hungry," which threw me off one day and threw Mom off one day. She went to the fridge for him and that was the first time she had heard him say this. There was one day he was having a bad day and he said, " I am hungry", so we fed him and he was happy after that..... I think every child learns differently. Some will take a long time to learn. Some learn very quickly.(Excerpt for teacher assistant interview 14/12/95 p.1)

Tommy's Teacher Assistant: Wendy's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- included special needs children have potential to learn
- peers are sensitive to special child's needs
- peers help with learning academic and social
- try different things
- assume the special needs child is trying to communicate
- recognize different pace of learning for some children
- adjust expectations accordingly
- work with the teacher, parent closely

About Literacy

- different children learn in different ways
- most children sound out words
- memorization is ok at the beginning stages
- creating structured patterns and routines helps writing
- computer programs help visual learners

Wendy's observations about how the computer helps Tommy learn to expand his literacy are insightful with respect to this special needs child's learning. Wendy seemed to be saying that Tommy appears to have a lot of receptive vocabulary that he cannot express, because of his language processing difficulties. She assumes that he is trying to make sense of the tasks before him. I did not get this impression from Daniel's teacher assistant but did from Jennie's and David's teacher assistants.

Although Tommy was bussed into this school, he was included as part of this grade four/five class by both the staff and the children. Why did this happen? Perhaps the answer lies with the fact that this school had a very small, closely knit school population. A real sense of a learning community prevailed in this separate school.

So far Jennie, David and Tommy's parents have said that the principal does make the difference in shaping the school's environment and attitude towards special needs children. Anne Parker did too. Through her former position of classroom teacher and special education resource teacher, she brings to her role as principal a firm knowledge base of special education children. Her experience with Tommy has changed some of her ideas about special needs children:

Anne-...I feel too, because we have the assessment class here, most of the children return to their home schools and so we don't have that little group of children with us for very long and I think some of the kids have figured that out, so they don't become as responsible for some of the children. Whereas with Tommy, I think they see now he is going to be part of our school and there's more [a sense] of he's part of us now....For me, Tommy is one of the biggest question marks that I have ever dealt with in terms of dealing with children because he does not follow the expected norm and yet, he's forever surprising us in terms of what he has caught onto - I don't think the standard methods work with him, and yet somehow some of the standard methods have(Excerpt from principal interview 15/12/95)

Anne's articulate views about literacy start to come through in this next quote, as she recounts her impression of many of the teaching practices used in the last 30 years by classroom and special education teachers.

Anne....In terms of my experience of how children learn how to read and write:.. Number one, they learn both from good literature.[if] children are read to on a regular basis and, I believe, [if] it is started pre-school. They also learn to read by watching significant people in their lives, seeing the value of reading and writing, and because children like adults want to learn. They see reading and writing as a powerful tool in getting ideas from other people and getting ideas that they want to express...[it] has been kind of a developmental process that I've gone through. When I first started teaching about 30 years ago - I was very much into the phonetic approach...But, over the years, I have seen first of all the experience approach... of taking children's language and putting it in writing for them and then being able to read it back to them. Giving children some tools to put their ideas down. I've seen the value of whole language being developed and, again it works from the basis of good literature rather than working from the basis of children giving their ideas and seeing that their ideas can be put into print. Also, this Board is heavy

into McCracken and that not only works with a good literature base, but it does have a whole language phonetic approach.....(Excerpt from principal interview 15/12/95 p.1)

When she began working with special education children as a resource teacher, Anne somehow lost her first view of literacy learning. The idea of such children needing structure is translated into materials rather than structured teaching practices. She abandoned everything she believed in about how children learn to read and write when it came to teaching special education children. What I found fascinating was her reason for this abandonment. It seems that special needs is considered a pathological condition (Sktric, 1991). This idea is so strong within the special education culture that it presupposes progress can only be achieved by using teaching practices radically different from the classroom. Structure always seems to be equated with phonics and programmed instruction. As St. Peters was her first principalship, her experiences have an immediacy and reflect the current thinking in her Board about how special education children learn literacy.

The same attitude that prevailed in Daniel's class, in another Board, is deeply held and wide spread across boards:

Anne-....I've always believed in my heart that children could learn to read and write using their experiential approach or using whole language, but my experience working with developmentally delayed children has been to use a more structured approach.....In my heart, I really, really believed that was the best method for these children - I know they need more structure than some of other children who pick up language a lot easier.... I am seeing the Bridge and the Distar [Reading Mastery],

Tommy's Principal: Anne's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- maybe there is a place for special needs children in the regular classroom
- the teacher is key to creating climate of acceptance
- special needs child influence regular in positive way
- keeping an open mind important for curriculum tools like computer
- adjusting goals and expectations ok
- learn from and take lead from the children

About Literacy

- being read to regularly from good literature early important home steps to literacy
- language experience and whole language philosophy help children learn
- special needs children requiring more structure now in question to its meaning
- maybe all children can pick up language through good models
- computer can be some children's entrance to literacy

you know working quite effectively..... Watching Tommy though, I've started to shift more to the idea that Tommy has picked up language in the way that some other children pick [it] up, through good models. Obviously he has been read to and he has decided that reading does have a structure to it. He has picked up reading in some of the ways that other children have picked up reading and writing.

.....Tommy does not like to be taught in a very structured way so that when you force the structure on him, he appears to move away from it. Then a few days later, [he] will show that he really has picked it up and, in fact, he has taken it even to a further step. ... Now, I don't see Tommy as on par with some of the other Grade 4, children but I see that Tommy is developing his own milestones in terms of what language is. This is only my second year with Tommy, but last year I could see that the computer was a major tool for the way he will learn to read and the way he will learn to write. I think he showed us that the computer is a very powerful tool for him but also that he has got a tremendous memory for sight vocabulary, not only the ability to read it but the ability to spell. He works well with pattern sentences once you give him the pattern. He is off to the races with it. So Tommy to me is going to be a really exciting person to try and figure out what the tools are that he has picked up himself. Now,... about oral language learning:...I think it's by hearing the language for most kids. They figure out how to use words and how to use words appropriately....by age 6,...For Tommy, though, I mean what's amazing is he does not use oral language as powerfully as he uses written language. So he is almost coming at it in a more reverse key. He is more excited about seeing the printed word than hearing the printed word....Receptively, he has taken in all this information and he has not been able to give it out verbally. I think there is lots in there and yet, when you give him the written word, he's got a tremendous memory for the use of it.(Excerpt from principal interview 15/12/95 p.1)

Her experiences with Tommy appeared to have shifted Anne back to believing that language experience, adopting a holistic philosophy of literacy learning, using good literature, immersing the children in language, are methods applicable for all children. Anne was the first principal I had met so far who questioned the whole paradigm about how special education children learned literacy. I asked Anne to go on with her observations about Tommy because she was in a position of influence in her school environment:

Anne- For Tommy, he appears not to need a class, but at the same time I think the class has had a tremendous affect on him and he a tremendous affect on the classroom as well. I think, there has been some really key teachers in his life, but I also think there are some key children in his life - children that have been with him over at least 3 years and they are very comfortable with him. I wouldn't say that any of them would say that he is a good friend of theirs, yet...they are very comfortable with Tommy being with them and I think very accepting, a lot more so than some of the adults that have dealt with him. So, in terms of classroom environment, I mean the teacher is always key in terms of comfort level, and children read that. I think sometimes the children teach us especially, because the children move with Tommy, the teachers don't move with Tommy and so I think this year I am finding that the classroom teacher, you know has said herself that the children are a lot more accepting of some of Tommy's behaviours than she sometimes is.....

D-As you have remarked, he's always been there - he's just Tommy. That's the way he is.

A- It's interesting, I find last year some of the children babied him. They were going to take care of getting his dressing and his yard behaviour. They wanted to take care of Tommy. That has changed this year. Now, it might [be] part of the age group, but they are a lot more independent and therefore they have allowed Tommy to become more independent. (Excerpt from principal interview 15/12/95 p.2)

Notice how she gave credit to Tommy's peers for being, as much as the adults, significant teachers in his life. I saw the acceptance she observed with respect to Tommy among Jennie's and David's peers as well. Her remark about adult acceptance not being as easy was another common refrain. Adults want to hang onto their version of the status quo. They find it harder than children, who have not yet bought into the status quo, to accept change.

Megan: The Early Years

Veronica and Jim were fortunate to have a very sensitive doctor attending Megan after her birth. He contributed to setting the tone for Veronica's and Jim's parenting of their new daughter. Veronica's family background also played a large part in forming her attitudes and beliefs. Veronica explains:

Veronica-...Actually, I was one of the more fortunate ones. I had a doctor who came in [and] he explained that Megan had Down Syndrome. He said, "Don't that let that put you off," he said, "There's a lot out there.".. and I basically felt, "Okay she's got Down Syndrome. It's going to take her a little longer.".. But I had been brought up, that is to say, my mother was a special needs teacher and so you work on this, you work on that. You separate skills.....And if [you] think about it, you have to break skills up. So it was just basically breaking up skills and that's not that difficult a job to do (Excerpt from #2 parent interview 7/02/96 p.7,8)

So Veronica and Jim took their new baby daughter home. It was discovered when Megan was 2 or 3 weeks old that she had a bulge in her heart. Megan was monitored for this condition but she outgrew the problem and never required surgery. She did have an eye operation at age 3 to correct a weak muscle. It was successful. She currently wears

glasses and has her eyes checked once a year. Mum did report that she did have 6 or 7 operations for tubes in her ears. These have been taken out and she now has a hearing aid to combat the hearing loss. She has no restrictions on any physical activities in school.

Mum said that she put Megan in a segregated pre-school at a very young age because she was concerned about her oral language development. Megan was making attempts to speak but was unintelligible. Veronica recalled how the preschool taught sign language to Megan, which the family used as a bridge to oral language. At the same time, through this program other therapists were also available to help Megan.²² Megan stayed in this segregated setting for approximately one and a half years.

It was during this time that Veronica had something of an epiphany, it changed her thinking about how she wanted Megan to

be schooled in the future. She met a young man, a graduate from Jewel School, who was just learning how to read. Jewel School only has severely special needs students in its student population, drawn from the four local Boards who share the services.

Megan was about 2 years old²³ and it was after this encounter that Veronica decided that Megan would go to a regular school, just like her brother and the other kids in her community. By March of her second

Megan's Mother: Veronica's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- special needs children require language models
- they are part of the community school population
- stand up for parental rights, network with other parents
- educate yourself re resources in community
- be proactive in school and part of team
- question experts who don't know child
- make certain there are academic goals in child's programme
- take your child everywhere; exposure to public educates public

About Literacy

- exposure to lots of language - taped books
- use environment to teach print awareness
- model language patterns
- provide lots of writing and reading materials at home
- read to your child
- adjust expectations to be realistic, but have them
- link everything you can at home and at school to literacy

year, while she was attending the segregated preschool, Mum felt her daughter's language was coming along so well that she needed to be around other children from whom she could model language. She was on a waiting list for an integrated community co-op nursery school and got a place in April of that year. Mum had taken the Hanen infant language stimulation speech program to supplement her knowledge of strategies to use with Megan to stimulate her speech development at home. While in the segregated setting, Megan received speech therapy as part of the program.²⁴ Veronica recognized that speech therapy, at that time, was very necessary for Megan but it was not part of the integrated preschool program, except for the teacher on a consultation basis. She made certain that Megan's speech therapy continued by gaining Megan a position in a pilot project. Her parents continued to demand speech therapy services right through to the end of her kindergarten.

Once Megan was into an integrated preschool, Mum started to look ahead to school, and to explore the availability of resources within the community. To her amazement, she found very little that was useful to parents. As she tells it:

Veronica....Even just any information. [was difficult to obtain] When Megan was 3, I became sort of the senior parent of the pro-school and one of the things I had found with parents was they didn't know what was out there and I just made a list of what things I knew. The first list was half a page and the second, was even longer. When I finally finished the last one....I thought, this is it, I quit: it was 25 pages long. ... I knew I was in trouble when I got a phone call, both from the Ministry of Education and a phone call from Community Services, asking if they could get a copy [of the list] because I had a list of what was in Ottawa and they didn't. That was sort of scary. (Excerpt from #2 parent interview 7/02/96 p.6)

Veronica shared her list with other parents and community services and it eventually became the basis for a resource handbook for parents and others. Meanwhile, as she explored formal schooling options, she kept Megan in the preschool until she was about to turn six. Others in the community, as well as the school board officials with whom

Veronica talked about future schooling for her daughter, recommended that she visit Jewel School to see it for herself.²⁵ It was the same school at which Jennie's current principal had been the vice-principal. Veronica did make the visit and rejected this type of segregated education for her daughter. Here was a parent who was knowledgeable about community resources, but also a parent who had developed a different philosophy from the school authorities about how best to educate her daughter. Veronica was not going to be persuaded to follow a different course. If it came down to it, she was willing to fight. Employing the same tactic as the other mothers (Jennie's and Tommy's), she made certain that Megan was visible to the community at large, as well as to the school community. Veronica approached the school principal and negotiated a place for her daughter to start in the four year old kindergarten, when she was six.²⁶ At home, Veronica had started very early to introduce her daughter to literacy, providing her with reading and writing materials from birth. Consequently, she felt Megan could proceed to senior kindergarten the next year, when she would be seven. The school had arranged during these two kindergarten years to have an extra person in the classroom to assist the teacher, either a coop high school or college student. All seemed to go well, just as it had for Daniel. The spring that Megan was to proceed to grade one the school called a case conference to discuss her grade one placement. Although St. Barts had agreed to have Megan in their kindergarten programmes, there was a lot of reluctance to have her continue into a regular grade one classroom. Not unlike the situation that Daniel's mother encountered, Megan too was offered a segregated setting. It case conference with school officials, was something of a marathon.

VeronicaWe had the infamous case conference that they scheduled for 2:30 in the afternoon and, at 3 o'clock, we told them to pull John and Megan out of school and hold them at the front. ...We got out of there at 5:30They were all there - the consultant for the St. Barts family of schools. ... There was every one of the consultants that had seen her - the speech, OT, physio [they] were all there.

Dean- These are all board consultants?

V- No, these were the Home Care people. ...[one] consultant, she was [from the Board and two school teachers] My husband was there and they kept saying about St. Matthews [the segregated setting] and they said, "Well we have an assessment kindergarten [at St. Matthews]," and I said, "You have had her for 2 years, if you haven't assessed her now, you are never going to." That was one of my comments..... It [the meeting] lasted and it lasted and it finally got to the point - every time I'd come up with why - a reason why they would then go and say, "We can do this and this and this at St. Matthews," and finally, I got up and started to put my coat on and said, "We are out of here "....And at the point the school gave in...They said, "What do you want?" ..and I said, "What I have been telling you for the past 3 hours. I want Megan in Grade 1. I want her with the same students [her kindergarten group]. I want an academic program. - That's what I want.".. and they said, "Fine."

.... so then they said, "Have an IPRC "....and my next question was, "why?..... what does an IPRC [do]... it doesn't tell you anything new "....Personally, I don't think, ..the IPRCs aren't worth the price of the paper they are printed on..... So, what does it do and that's when the school said, " Well, you have to have an IPRC and [the Board consultant] said, "If she doesn't want an IPRC, she doesn't have to have an IPRC."Megan is probably the only student they have that has never had an IPRC.(Excerpt from #2 parent interview 7/02/96)

Megan proceed to grade one and had some teacher assistant support from Ava Jones, who was already in the school assisting a physically disabled student. This support was increased in grade two and shared by the two students. By the time Megan was going into grade three, Tom Moffett became the new principal at St. Barts, the same Tom Moffett who had been Tommy's principal while he was in the assessment class. Because he already was committed to inclusion, he provided the creative solution for supports for Megan in the regular classroom. He reassigned Ava Jones to the resource room to work with all special needs students under the resource teacher's direction. There Ava taught not only Megan, but also a group of other special needs grade three students as well.

Megan's Inclusive Setting

Such was the situation when I first met Megan. Ava Jones was Megan's teacher assistant while her grade four teacher was Patricia Townsend at St. Bartholomew school (St.

Barts). Patricia had been a music teacher in this school and for this board before taking on duties as a grade four classroom teacher. Her extensive background in music was put to excellent use. She supervised and ran the school's choir. Megan was a choir member, but she also had lots of music incorporated into her classroom programme due to Patricia's influence.

Ava taught a group of 7 or 8 students, including Megan, an extra language arts lesson four days out of five, usually during the mornings. The students came to the resource room from a variety of classrooms. Using this setup, in addition to the group work, Ava was also able to set aside at least one 30 minute period a day for one on one with Megan. Addressing concerns raised by Patricia, Ava used the time with Megan to teach her directly, to review subjects with her or to help her catch up on assignments. Ava was given a lot of autonomy as she was a certified teacher from another province but had chosen not to pursue a teaching position in her current province. Unlike the other teacher assistants, Ava was in every sense of the word a fully qualified teacher. The school principal recognized her background and took full advantage of it. It is usual in this school for children in need of extra assistance to be grouped and taught in the resource room classroom for periods during the day. Megan spent the entire afternoon in her regular grade four classroom. At the beginning of the afternoon, Ava would literally slip into the classroom for five to ten minutes to make certain that Megan knew what she was to do in mathematics, a subject which often occurred during this time. She would try to get back at the end of the afternoon to assist Megan with packing up her homework. In this manner, Ava could touch base with Patricia to discuss areas with which Megan had difficulty during

the afternoon and would need to be retaught to her the following day in the resource room.

Both kept tabs on her homework and kept in touch with Mum through a communication book. This collaborative teaming was worked out over the course of the first few weeks of school. Both women were secure in their roles and respected each others abilities:

Patricia....A lot of work [comes] from Ava who goes beyond the role of TA ,in that she is a qualified teacher and she teaches . She's not just sort of there assisting or cutting out paper for me or anything. She's a real teacher which I think is quite...

Dean- To Megan's benefit and yours.

P- Yes.

D- It's wonderful.

P-You don't always get that. Tt's pretty special.(Excerpt from teacher interview 13/12/95 p. 6)

As Ava was seen working with lots of other children, the students in Megan's class didn't view her as Megan's teacher assistant, the way Jennie's or Tommy's teacher assistants were viewed. She was just another teacher in the school, one who had a teacher's desk in the resource room rather than in this grade four classroom. Megan's desk was situated in the middle aisles and towards the back of the classroom. In this very crowded classroom of over thirty children, the middle rows were pushed together to form two rows of desks side by side. Patricia's desk was at the back, left-hand side. This positioning is significant because the location of Megan's desk was not unusual. It was exactly the same as all the other children. The expectations for her behaviour were no different from the other children and these grade fours instinctively knew this. The children also knew that when you saw someone needing help, you gave it without being asked. This attitude reflected the learning community of this class, and it was one fostered by their teacher:

Patricia.....One of the things that I do in the classroom environment is that I try and make sure that I am in tune with the positive things that children are doing. If I am trying to turn a child's behaviour around, I try and find a time when they have done something really well and to point that out to them so that they feel that's being fostered and that's not just sort of working on their deficits and criticism. So I think that

feeling [good] about themselves and feeling good about their work and knowing that I do expect their best, but when they do their best that I am also there to notice that they have done it. It's important. (Excerpt from teacher interview 13/12/95 p.5)

Most of these children had known Megan since kindergarten so they were accustomed to including her in everything and often spontaneously assisted Megan during the course of the day, perhaps because the teacher's expectations had been communicated to them. It was not a big deal. Nobody told them to do this or that for Megan. It just happened as the need arose. For example, one time while observing in the classroom, I saw Megan's deskmate reach over silently, turn a few pages of Megan's song book and point out the correct line. Another time, I watched a boy across the aisle from Megan reach down and help tie one of her gym shoes, as the class was getting ready to go and Megan was not yet ready. What is interesting about these incidents is that they were all non verbal. Megan smiled acknowledgment, which could be interpreted as a thank you. In the first case, the class had started singing and in the second, everyone in the class was reasonably quiet as the teacher was trying to hurry them to line up to go to the gym. Talking was not necessary and silence filled a teacher expectation. Patricia ran a quiet classroom, which she freely admitted was the result of her own learning style. But such a class was to Megan's benefit, as Patricia indicates through her recounting of a particular incident:

Patricia... I like to have the structure and I like to have a quiet working environment, unless we are doing an activity. But I find it's perhaps a personal prejudice in that I can not work when it's noisy and there are other people talking, [or] when there are people milling around the room. So I feel very strongly that if I can't do it as an adult that it must be very hard for, you know a fairly large number of children. Some can tune out everything, but I think that many, many can't...Ava Jones told me that last year sometimes Megan would get quite upset with the noise. She was in an open classroom where there were two Grade threes, which would have been about 62 or 63 children.....And she would get quite scared apparently in gym. ...This has happened once in my gym class with just 30, so last year with 64 in the gym it would have been even louder. So she gets quite scared and we have to go over and turn the hearing aid down so that she's not covering her ears. (Excerpt from teacher interview 13/12/95 p.4)

Patricia was a seasoned teacher and she recognized that different children had different learning needs as well as styles. Steve, Susan and Carla all had this flexible attitude, which I feel helps to contribute to successful inclusion for children with special needs. Patricia and Ava set up Megan and others for success. It also reflects their working relationship and her implicit acceptance of Megan's inclusion.²⁷ Patricia, like Jennie's, David's and Tommy's teachers, felt secure enough to develop her own reading/writing programme, taking the best from commercial programmes and combining these curriculum materials in light of her own teaching experiences. In her comments, she illustrates her knowledge about literacy learning and explains how she used this knowledge in her observations of Megan:

Patricia... I think that there are many different components in how children readso I think they need to be combined. It's not just a matter of learning phonetics, for example, or doing the whole language approach, which immerses them in real literature.....There is also memory - what a child remembers of the spoken language. Sometimes a child will mistakenly read a word because they are expecting to see a certain word at the end of the sentence and they put what they expect to see, rather than what they actually read. They also read and grasp things in terms of their own experience and meanings, that they attach to certain words.....I think that children need to learn how to read by using their reading in different situations. For example, we all notice that a child who is beginning to read will start picking out signs in a grocery store, or traffic signs when they are driving with their parents. They also need, of course, the picture books. So it is a variety of things that a child would need to be exposed to in order to see the value of reading. In this, I am quite amazed at how Megan is able to read. She sounds out the words and she is able to read. Whereas..... she has quite a bit of difficulty putting her own thoughts on paper.....Children learn to write, I think ..it's a lot of modelling as to what they read; they then model in how they write. I am a firm believer in lots of practice and drill

**Megan's Teacher: Patricia's Beliefs & Values
About Inclusion**

- adjust academic goals to special needs child
- recognize accomplishments
- encourage risk taking
- set up fail safe situations for child
- recognize slower pacing
- team with teacher assistant
- expect personal best and acknowledge it
- keep close contact with home
- be accepting and flexible

About Literacy

- use good literature
- immerse in language
- pick the best from each method
- give lots of practice in structure from the beginning (grammar, phonics if needed, spelling)
- provide many opportunities to speak
- accommodate different learning styles
- use activity based learning sparingly

because I think that gives the children a solid foundation that they can have all of the rules and patterns at their fingertips. Then it can be incorporated into their writing. I don't believe in just letting them write and spell and do grammatically whatever they feel like... doing it for 3 or 4 years and then all of a sudden having to clamp down on them in Grade 4..... That...doesn't work. I think the patterns need to be emphasized right from when they begin in Grade 1.... to learn to use words that they can spell properly. They can put sentences and capitals and so on, in an appropriate way..... I think the patterns of using the written language are already in place and if you haven't given them that structure in the beginning, then for many children it seems to be too late....

I think with Megan she has a great deal of difficulty with...abstract thought,....so where she can copy sentences she has a great difficulty even with writing her own sentence, even if it's gone over verbally In terms of with her speech, she can't speak in sentences so, of course, she can't write in sentences because it's just that one leads to the other.....I don't believe in jumping on educational bandwagons. I get very upset when I see situations where people do. My experience as a music teacher is the same thing. I have never have taken one approach. I always like to incorporate....Take the best from each program and put those into practice. I think that whole language has some fantastic ideas, but I think phonics has to be there, the drill, the practice, word patterns for children to expect a certain grammatical pattern to a sentence. Those kinds of things have to be there, as well as the enrichment from what we would call real literature..... Any instructional program has to be eclectic. ... It has to pick up the different learning styles of children....If you focus too much on one, then it is to the detriment of the children who are not strong in that particular area. (Excerpt from teacher interview 13/12/95 p.1)

Patricia used the knowledge she gained as a music teacher to draw parallels to children's language learning. She valued oral speech in her classroom, even though she liked a quiet classroom environment. That gave her insights into how to assist children who like Megan have difficulties with oral language expression.²⁸ Risk taking was encouraged in Patricia's class. Despite her emphasis on grammar and its correct use, she encouraged the children to experiment in their first writings. But she did insist that they correct all their writing, as for her such revision was part of the practice. The majority of her students were beyond the approximation stages of writing. Therefore she felt they now needed to write and to spell accurately. I wondered if this could not have been a bit daunting for children like Megan, who were still comfortable at the approximation phase.

Ava reflected ideas about literacy that were similar to Patricia. She adjusted her expectations and teaching the needs of the children she taught:

Ava.....Well, children learn to read by being exposed to books at a very young age. I think the process begins long before they come to school, with parents helping by reading to them daily. And once they come to school, I think we teach them either using the whole language approach or the phonetic approach.

Dean- Now is this the same for children like Megan ?

A- We would do the same. It would be important for children that are developmentally disabled to be comfortable using books, even though they can't read them. I think being read to certainly is one process that we can start, and I would use the same thing as the other children are using, modify it, and go at a very slower rate, ... like not the same rate.

D- What about children learning to write?.

A- Okay. I think reading and writing is so closely related that you can expose them to the alphabet, to word charts, experience charts, and once they get all that, like a bank of those words, maybe then they can start the writing process a lot easier. We can't just tell children, "I want you to write a paragraph on this". We have to get them going and make charts on the board and then they will get on..... Experience charts, using words from the readers or, if they have seen words, even at home. That's what I do with the reading group [Megan is part of this group] I have. If we are writing a story on Halloween, we will brainstorm on ideas . Okay, Halloween words. We do that and then we do story starters with first, second and third, beginning sentences and the end sentence.

D- Now would that help somebody like Megan?

A- I think maybe the word bank would, but with her you would use more again,... sentence strips, but she needs a lot of help. If, lets say, I am using the Dolch word Lists with her and "make" is one of her words, then we develop that. "Okay, 'make'. What did you make?" ...and she will give me a few sentences. I'll write them down and then she will read them back to me. Very basic....What I have been using with Megan: that would be the Grammar to Go. We had that. We did the Ready Steps when she was in Grade 1 and then we had the Grammar to Go, Story Telling to Go, sequencing - all from the student services. And it really helped her with those programmes. Bridge reading was a big one. I started her with that but she didn't have to be on that for very long. She went through that quickly. (Excerpt from teacher assistant 7/12/95 p.1)

Notice that the beginning materials that Ava

used with Megan were all based upon a traditional linear approach to literacy. The belief that Megan could write using approximations was absent.

Materials used by Ava were very skills oriented.

Even though she was using some writing strategies

with the reading group, accuracy was stressed. I

found it odd that Ava and Patricia both felt that

whole language and phonics were methods.

Perhaps this belief reflected the publishers' pushing

Megan's Teacher Assistant: Ava's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- language modelling from others an important benefit
- expectations re social behaviour the same
- adaptation of activities to slower pace or for child success
- encourage self help
- exposes special needs child to lots of literacy activities

About Literacy

- reading daily to children using stories
- lots of books at home for parent to read to child
- delay writing until sight words, alphabet in place - traditional linear approach to literacy
- use child's own language for first writing, adult writes, child copies
- provide multi-media literacy activities
- use structured materials like grammar rule, phonics, word lists (Dolch)

of commercial materials. Megan's reading materials in class were based upon readers, although she did get to read trade books as texts. I noted that the beginning materials which student services had recommended were all highly structured programme materials. Ava was puzzled as to why Megan and the others in the group had not learned to compose on their own using these materials for writing, and shared this with me. That puzzlement did not reflect solely a lack of knowledge on Ava's part of how children learned to write, but indicates the influence of the established special education instructional practices in which Ava had been counselled.

Ava felt that the modelling to which Megan was exposed in the regular classroom was very important for her language. She made some distinction between Megan and the other children, but pointed out that even for

her the process is the same. It is the adaptations to the activities which are important. I noted the complete, implicit acceptance of Megan's inclusion. There was no hint that maybe she shouldn't be a participant just like the other children.²⁹ This same theme was expressed by Tom Moffett,

Megan's principal:

Tom -....I think the modelling. I think that's a lot of how Megan is learning how, to behave and how to read and how to write. She is with the children who are technical and it's the modelling. Children, they are kind to her - they give her little cues and they understand she has a disability.

Megan' Principal: Tom's Beliefs About Inclusion

- regular class from the start
 - modelling from the other children very important
 - educate the community, teachers & children about disabilities
 - bring material resources, expertise & finances to the special needs child
 - use outside support agencies e.g. Integration Action
 - recognize teacher anxiety & provide support
 - encourage structured friendships through e.g. Circle of Friends
 - develop consistent goals from year to year
 - provide an extra adult e.g. teacher assistant as support to the teacher, not just the child
- About Literacy**
- children learn in a variety of ways
 - special needs children learn in much the same way as regular children
 - learning pace is different for special needs children
 - use the children's own language at first
 - model and demonstrate literacy a lot

In fact, they had an in-service, if you will, on Down

Syndrome - what it is and how one has it and what they can do about it and the importance of peers. I think that's a lot,[of the reasons for her progress] plus she has had the same TA. (Excerpt from principal interview 13/12/95 p.2)

Tom raised another aspect which accounts for a successful inclusive setting for Megan: being attentive to informing the rest of the student population through in-servicing. Drawing in the children to support Megan, both formally and informally, is one of the hallmarks of a successful inclusion program (Lipsky and Gartner, 1996; Thousand & Villa, 1989). These last two authors developed strategies for inclusion of special needs children. Tom saw inclusion as a process rather than simply as a case of good integration in this classroom. He put a lot of emphasis on the teacher assistant resources and the need for materials.³⁰ The team approach to Megan's classroom programme was evident in his statements. Educators at different levels had come together consistently over the years to give input into her programming, he said. Her progress did not randomly happen just because she was in a regular classroom. Engineering for success took place. But the fact that Megan was in a regular class from the start, as he pointed out, was a key factor. No one seemed to take the attitude that she should not be there, as was the case in Tommy's first inclusive setting. Note though that Tom's beliefs about inclusion do not go beyond Megan's classroom.

Tom's beliefs about literacy did not differ much from the other principals except that he felt special needs children learned in much the same ways that all children did.³¹ There were no special education classes in his school but he made certain that needed resources for this child, drawn either from the Board or located elsewhere in the school were brought

into her classroom (Villa et al., 1993). Tom was able to do this because he was a senior principal close to retirement. He was willing to go out of his way to obtain what was needed for the special needs children in his school. He was also willing to go against the status quo of segregated classes, as long as the necessary supports could be brought into his school. He had seen very positive results in Megan, and earlier with Tommy.

Kristy: The Early Years

Kristy's early years were not unlike the other children's. She was born in Newfoundland two months prematurely and required hospitalization as any premature baby does. In fact, within 24 hours of her birth, she was air lifted to a children's hospital. Subsequently Mary did not see her little girl for a while because she was quite ill following the birth. The family was not told that there was anything different about their beautiful baby girl until she was two weeks old. Mary recounts the reaction the news evoked in her:

Mary.....I think it was because of the pre-maturity. They couldn't tell [for sure] but we weren't told that they even suspected that there was anything wrong until the age of 2 weeks...I hadn't seen Kristy because she had been air lifted away and I was really ill and receiving blood transfusions and we were separated so I hadn't seen her on a daily basis. So the first time I had seen her again after that she was about 2 weeks old but I remember my husband phoned like 3 times a day and I'd say, "Did you phone today? Well, that was at lunch time, well phone again. Find out if she's okay." And they had first told him when she was about 2 weeks old that they suspected that it may have been Down Syndrome, but they weren't sure and I guess it was confirmed after we had some blood work and some genetic testing done. It was confirmed - I think she was maybe about 6 weeks old after the genetic and they had said to my husband on the phone, we think it might be Down Syndrome.....They gave us the worst possible scenario. Like at the hospital, it was like, " Oh, she is born pre-mature. She is so weak and, even if she does pull through, she won't walk, she won't talk" It was ... Oh, very harsh. At one time, before we even brought her home, we [were] told to consider whether if we even wanted to bring her home or we would like to send her to an institution. I hesitate to say that. It brings tears to my eyes.....And that was doctors that were saying that to us. It's your choice like take her...Once I got better, I would go and hold her and rock her, and my husband had to get a sitter for a month for our 2 year old at the time and I took an apartment in town so I could see Kristy... I would go ...morning till night and rock her, and play with her, and just stroke her, like move the sand bags around so she wouldn't fall out of bed. And I would have nurses say things to me like, "Do you know what is wrong with your baby ?-Have the doctors told you what's wrong?" and I would say," Yes ,but I don't really care." Like you know it's my child. I love her, but we had doctors, nurses - lot of professional people at the hospital would say, - even when we brought her home, it was like, "Don't feel that you have to do this, and

if it's too much, there are homes for children like this." And I would just, ... I don't know [feel that] this isn't really doctors, but even when we got her home in the community that we were living in, social services had contacted us and said, "If you don't," [decide] and it was done so cruelly because they had said to us, "If you don't want to take your child down town to get groceries or whatever, we can supply a sitter for her. Like we can send in a sitter, if you don't feel comfortable taking her too. But your 2 year old, you will have to take her with you." This is just because she has got Down Syndrome. "We [social services] can afford - we can have somebody come in." And I remember just being irate. I won't even think not to take her down town. But, yeah, it [discrimination in] was hospitals, it was social service. It was only about 12 years ago. (Excerpt from parent #2 interview 10/04/96 p.10)

Mary got mad and chose to be proactive! What is interesting here is that this experience occurred in a different province and city from their present residence. It leads to speculation that perhaps the attitudes and beliefs about children with Down Syndrome are outdated in some hospitals. The reaction of the nursing staff and social services was nearly identical to that recollected by another mother, Kate (Jennie's Mum). Such recountings, show the systemic nature of the deficit myths concerning these children when they come in contact with the medical and social services authorities. These attitudes perpetuate outdated practices and expectations for these children, both in the hospital setting and, later, in the community and school as well.

Mary and Tom moved to a small Nova Scotia town when Kristy was 13 months old. Here Mary encountered the "good intentions" of neighbours to which Chelsea's mum will also allude. Mary and Tom turned these around to their benefit, as she tells it:

Mary.....Even when I did bring her home, ... I remember one girl. We were practically together all the time with our first children. Even she, like friends would say to us, oh, it will destroy your marriage.... It will be.... and like it hasn't. If anything it's made it richer and stronger and, I don't know, we have had a lot of negative things. I think we were given the worst case scenario and each time she has done something, I just think like huh, like phooey on you. We've reached another milestone, you know, and I just think - I don't think about it anymore, but when she was littler, I would often think, can you imagine had we left this beautiful child in a home somewhere. To me, she's just gorgeous.....It was funny, like I think, we were shocked because it [discrimination] was coming from the professionals. It wasn't just like the neighbour next door. Tom and I, we couldn't believe it....(Excerpt from #2 parent interview 10/04/96)

Medically, from the time of her birth there was a concern, that Kristy might have hearing difficulties. She was followed by an ENT (ear, nose and throat) clinic in Nova Scotia. As with many children, Kristy was subject to ear infections and had fluid in her ears, as well as other infections. At 3, Mary said she had to have a tracheotomy and tubes were placed in her ears. All these were removed by age 7. In fact, the tracheotomy was removed during the summer after kindergarten when she was 6. Mary reported that her daughter still had perforations in her ears. They have been there since birth, but they will be patched, probably at age 15. For this conductive hearing loss, she has been wearing a hearing aid in one ear since age nine. As a result of all this, Mary and Kristy have been involved with speech and language therapy from the age of 2. Kristy was developing language on her own, reported mum, from the age of about one and a half. She did a lot of pointing and word approximations. Mary did not take any formal courses, but attended the twice weekly speech therapy sessions so she could do follow up at home. Signing was part of this early therapy. Mary's comments about this experience reflected similar feelings to Jennie's, Chelsea's and Megan's mothers. That is, they saw signing as a temporary means of communication and as a bridge to oral communication. Mary acknowledged the ongoing importance role of parents in developing their children's oral language.³² It appears that Kristy was fortunate to have had a great deal of speech therapy in her early years, as it helped her develop lots of receptive language before entering an integrated pre-school at 3. But Mary worried about the community pre-judging Kristy.³³ She assumed that Kristy would go to the local school kindergarten, along with her pre-school friends, as just "another kid". Mary went to the parent information night at the school and ran into

assumptions about Kristy and her needs before the staff even had an opportunity to meet her:

Mary.... She had 3 months of primary in Nova Scotia. I remember just going to the information night where all mothers of new children at the kindergarten go....They happened to have someone from special education there and I approached him, and they welcomed her with open arms, but they had offered, at that time, she had a tracheotomy and they were saying to me that she needed a nurse, "Don't you need somebody to feed her?" And it was like, "We don't need any of that. Let her have the opportunity to go. " In Nova Scotia at that time, and I don't know if they still do it, the May prior to starting school all the new students go for 2 weeks and they have university students come in. It's followed by a teacher, but they have university students come in and they do a 2 week program with them in May and, although she was welcome, they knew well before being integrated into the regular classroom, I remember getting lots of comments. Like I would come to pick her up, there would be teachers and whatever staff, peeking in the windows and stuff, and saying, "There she is!" They would be sort of singling her out. It was like, "Oh, wow somebody has really worked with her!" They didn't really want to give her the credit for what she had accomplished. It was like, "Oh, somebody has really worked with her. Somebody has put the hours in on her." And I would be there listening and hearing it and thinking: we work with her, but she is doing this on her own. Like give her credit for what she can do. But I think the thing is, she was always expected to be different, until people could see for themselves, that oh, yeah, maybe she is a bit different, but she does so many things, just like everybody else. I think if I could change things, one thing that I would change, is have people count the things the special needs kids can do. Count the things, they do that are the same. Don't look at the negative. Don't say, "Well, she can't do this, this and this". Look at all the things that she does do that are the same.....(Excerpt from #2 parent interview 28/03/96 p.13)

This view of Kristy as a very high needs child emerged when the family moved to Ontario.³⁴ In fact, it was after what Mary said were many, many meetings that they agreed to have Kristy go to a segregated classroom. I could hear in her voice the intense emotional turmoil this decision had caused her at the time. What happened to this family and this child was quite different from their expectations. Mary tells her story in her own words, dramatically illustrating the rigidity of a system that blindly adhered to traditional special education services.

Mary....She still has her tracheotomy at this point and we were strongly suggested [for her] to be at this segregated schoolSo after many, many meetings, we decided that the next September, yes, she would go to a segregated classroom and, over the summer of kindergarten to Grade 1, when she left the Lanceville home school,.....the tracheotomy came out.... So when she went to the segregated classroom, she didn't have the tracheotomy any more and she stayed there for 2 years. At the time I always wanted it to work, because I didn't want to go against authorities. I didn't want the hassle all the time and I thought: they are the professionals. They must know. Although deep in my heart, I thought, this isn't working, this isn't right! There would be times that I would stop in announced and sometimes unannounced. Sometimes I would go to [do] volunteer work. There were days when I thought, oh, gee, it's really turned cold. I only

had a light jacket on her this morning. I would drive a heavy jacket into [the school] and I would get there and she would be sitting, like just sitting, on the cold ground, playing with nobody. I thought: is this what you do every lunch hour, just sit here? She was really unhappy. We had to peel her fingers from the dining room table and we would then have to peel her fingers from the railing. She left crying. Although I had all this time, I couldn't do anything.

D - So she left crying everyday and never stopped?

M - It was to the point, that at one point the bus driver brought her back home because she was crying so bad in the car. She says, "She is so unhappy." She just turned the bus around and brought her home. So she cried a lot. She was very unhappy.

D - What was the school saying about her at this time - she is obviously a very unhappy little girl going to school - what were they saying to you?

M - They still insisted that was the best thing. I remember the first year them saying to me, "Oh, it's a language based class so, therefore, she is getting speech language therapy." So this was a positive. But she was receiving this speech language therapy at Lanceville the year prior too. So it wasn't any more often, so I thought this doesn't make sense. She was getting that service before but because she is here it's going to be better and I couldn't understand it because most of the children in there, a lot of them had language problems. She didn't have any role models to learn new words, so she didn't have anybody to practice with or get conversations. So, I thought, at least in the regular classroom she had all kinds of communication and language and noises around her all the time, which she really wasn't getting. I was told that if Kristy was unhappy, it was because she was tied to Mommy's apron strings and she was spoiled. Mommy had her spoiled and she was tied to my apron strings. If she had problems, it was my fault, you know, because I was too pampering or too catering. I didn't think I was. I was concerned. But if you raised questions, the ball always came back in your court. "Well, you are doing this wrong". Like I would do volunteer work and they would say - imitate everything they told me to do - they would say to me: "The days you come to volunteer, don't let her drive in the car with you. Put her on the bus and follow behind the bus"....I would do everything that they asked me to do, she still wasn't happy! ... It was sad. It was a really sad time for her. So she spent 2 years there. We kept going for the IPRC meetings and it was a set up. While she was there... a lady, Madame Benoit, she taught French to the primary classes, she was [the] first who said, "Oh, I think Kristy should come into the Grade 1 regular setting at times." It was her who initiated it....(she) could see there was potential there, and she would have her come in, and maybe sit around playing on the floor and read with some kids. If they had special activities going on, she would go in. That was when it first started that she was integrated back a little bit. It was this one teacher that had a really positive effect, and she sort of took it upon herself to do it....After 2 years, we went for IPRC and it was suggested that Kristy go into a [integration] pilot project at the time. It wouldn't be back at home school.... If she was accepted,.... She would go there because it was a pilot projectto see whether integration did or didn't work and I thought, this was crazy! ... I was so delighted that they could finally say, "Oh yeah, it's like she is capable of learning. She is

Kristy's Mother: Mary's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- have the same expectations re behavior
- look for all the areas that are the same not different
- regular school is much more than academics
- special education authorities not always right about your child
- community acceptance of differences comes through exposure at school
- using structured strategies eg. Circle of Friends does carry over after school
- keep close daily contacts with school
- children seem more accepting than adults
- have academic expectations but throw away timetables

About Literacy

- language and reading go together, modeling important for both
- constant exposure to books at home important
- read to and with your child daily
- encourage writing at home
- children learn single words at first then put them together
- constant exposure to print and lots of repetition very important for literacy

capable. I was thrilled, but I thought this means a new school, another change, still a long bus ride that she hated and I thought, no, I don't like this idea. So my husband and I came home after the IPRC meeting. The next day he went in [to the Lanceville P.S. principal], we want her back in home school.....If you are saying that, yes, she can be integrated but it has to be at this pilot project. we want her back at home school. After that, maybe because we had a united front and they knew these parents have really made up their mind, whereas maybe before it was like well you [school authorities] know best....From that day on it was like they really worked positively to get her back to Lanceville. The following September, she came back and she has been here for the last 4 years and she is in a regular classroom setting..... Grade 2, 3, 4, and 5(Excerpt from #2 parent interview 10/04/96 p.13)

Kristy's story of misguided special education student placement is illustrative of school professionals not looking at the needs of the child and her family. It also is typical of how assumptions about special needs children become entrenched. It was assumed that there was something pathologically wrong with Kristy because she was a child with Down Syndrome, one who must therefore, be dealt with by the educational system in a segregated setting. How could anyone ignore such an unhappy child for two years? To blame the parents and the child for the situation seems very unfair. It is an example of what Cousin and Duncan (1997) discuss as the unchallenged assumption that:

"...when students don't learn, there is something wrong with them." This statement refers to our tendency in schools to blame learners or their parents if the schooling experience is not going well p.3

The other interesting aspect of this story is that, due to the positive efforts of one teacher, the situation, in fact, the system, began to be questioned. This was enough to empower Mary and Tom to take on the system and refuse anything but a return to Kristy's home school. Finally, the principal of Lanceville P.S. listened to Mary and Tom's concerns and acted on them.

Mary and Tom always had expectations for their daughter, both academically and behaviourally, just like the other parents.

Mary..... I just think that Kristy,... she needs to be accepted and I think for that she needs lots of exposure. I think academically she learns through repetition and just having the opportunity to do it. Both of us know that Kristy will progress at her own level and we don't worry about schedules and we do have guidelines - we haven't thrown the guidelines out the window, so we do have caring guidelines. As far as discipline and stuff go, we have high expectations of her, but as far as academics go, we don't worry that it doesn't happen in that golden set of rules.....I think that's really important that people realize that every child will do something different, that they will do it, but they will do it at a different stage, and to not sort of box them in with those. And I just have to say, that she has been so happy back in her home school and there's no comparison, there really isn't. And I think we are happier as a family as a whole because we know she is happy. We send her to school in the morning knowing that the phone isn't going to ring [to say] that she's crying or it's just there is no comparison. It's been wonderful. And I would like to say that when people think of school, they think of reading, writing and arithmetic, but school is so much more. It is like gymnastics and it's socializing and it's friends and it's field trips. School encompasses a whole lot of things, so let's not get too restrictive and let's everybody have the opportunity to be there to share the experience....(Excerpt from #2 parent interview p.21).

Kristy's Inclusive Setting

Mary felt that the success of the transition back to Lanceville was largely due to Gareth Scott, the principal. His attitude changed towards having special needs children in his school, so much so that Mary tells how she was very moved to hear him acknowledge it to her:

Mary.....He was actually quite emotional and, you know, like probably a year ago him saying to me at an IPRC, I think it was. I remember him saying to me: "The biggest and the saddest thing I have ever done is turn that child away from her school." He said, "Before I leave, the one thing I want to have done," he goes on, " You guys, as a family, deserve an apology letter." he said. He was insistent, like there would be tears in his eyes. He had done such a turn around so it has changed the attitude within her own school.(Excerpt from #2 parent interview 10/04/96 p.16)

The change in attitude towards inclusion in the whole school seems to rely upon the skill of this principal. Gareth echoed this when he told me that his attitude had indeed changed. But so had the academic growth in the special needs children who were in his school:

Gareth....I've done a 360 over the years and mainly due to Kristy, and others. I don't think I would have ever predicated the success that I've seen with these kids. I guess, through having observed what comes out of the small segregated spec ed. classes and what I perceived to be a very limited benefit in those

settings. I think this [inclusion] is the model to follow, as long as the support is there. (Excerpt from principal interview 21/03/96 p.9)

Gareth was a senior principal close to retirement like Tom Moffet. When making the decision to send Kristy away from his school was made, he truly believed he was doing the right thing. His change of attitude and belief had far reaching effects beyond his own school. As chair of the principals' association professional development committee, he brought in motivational educators to talk about the practical benefits of inclusion as well as the "how to's" aspects. He went on to elaborate on his change of philosophy and really captured the attitude and beliefs towards special needs children operating in this school board at the time Kristy was turned away from her community school:

Gareth....I think that was a feature of our system at that time. The whole attitude to set up an adversarial process [towards the parents] that certainly was interpreted as an adversarial approach on the part of some of our senior staff. It was simply that resources weren't going to be provided and take it or leave it and so on and so forth. I mean it wasn't just the parents that were fighting this battle. Even the schools were fighting it too, and trying to get resources for the kids.I think, after seeing this in action and having seen the development of this staff over the years, I think it's been a tremendous boom to the building of the community.

Dean- Yes, so there are spin off effects not for only children then, I am hearing you say, but also for staff as well. Because you had been in another position where you had a self contained special education class, can you compare the situations at all in staff in the way they relate to a child like Kristy?

G- Yes. What I can say is that it has evolved from a philosophy of, here is a kid who is different and needy. Therefore, take that child and put him or her into a small group somewhere and don't bother me. I mean, that was the philosophy. That was the approach. Now it's at the point I don't think anyone looks at it that way. We have gone over the past 3 years to a totally integrated model with all of our special ed students. It's primarily, I think, due to the success we have had with Kristy and [a] couple of other

Kristy's Principal: Gareth's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- total school support needed as a team effort - teacher, teacher assistant, resource teacher, parents, staff, therapists
- limited benefits from segregated settings
- engineer strategies for social acceptance like Circle of Friends
- monitor situation for success & problems
- special needs child has positive value effect on peers
- inclusion is more than a place in the classroom
- be persistent - it pays off in the end

About Literacy

- immerse children in language following a holistic philosophy
- never lose site of context
- read to children a lot at home & at school
- give many opportunities to express language
- share language and books

very special needs kids. So our whole approach here is one of trying to maintain them and support them in the regular class setting as much as we possibly can. It's only a very small part of their day that we do any kind of withdrawal one on one in that way, and I think the staff would admit - back to the early stage when Kristy first arrived here, they were scrambling to get away from her grade level, because they saw what was about to happen to them. And now, I mean there's a bonus, see, who comes with the kid.....It's been terrific that way. There's no hesitation on anyone's part to take these kids. In fact, if anything now, it becomes, from time to time, more of a struggle as to who has control over this special kid. Some of the regular classroom teachers are trying to take a lot more ownership than they have in the past. If anything, I have had to referee on occasion when the specialist "thinks that they should have something else that interferes with the classroom program". I think it is great.

D- Who wins or do you come to a mutual consensus?

G - The child.....Oh yes. But again, it's which teacher is in control, sort of thing. If you go to a fully integrated [inclusive] setting and the resource person becomes more of a supportive resource in that sense, then which one of them has the right to determine the needs and to apply the programmes. On occasion, it can be a source of friction.....Well, at least they are not fighting over letting her in...I have said from the beginning that these kids, if they are going to be in an integrated setting, need a level of teacher assistant support in order to allow them to function in a regular classroom and not become the teacher assistant and the kid in the corner seat, you know, which is what we have seen in the past. (Excerpt from principal interview 21/02/96 p.7)

Carol, the resource teacher, said Gareth was an enabling administrator who had a vision and supported her efforts to help the staff to change their perceptions about integration and begin to view it as inclusion. She met weekly with the junior staff to sort out curriculum and individual student program issues. In this way she could make certain that her resource support was linked to the classroom. Carol was the only resource teacher who worked directly and indirectly with all the special needs children, like Kristy, in the school. She articulated the whole process of inclusion as a growth process.³⁵ Due to Gareth's and Carol's vision and leadership, the issues that surround difference and inclusion were dealt with directly. One of the inclusion strategies that Carol talked about, that no other teacher shared with me in such detail, was a strategy called a Circle of Friends. Here is how she explained it:

Carol.. [What] we have really made a school focus is to work on this idea of Circle of Friends, and to not just hope that it will develop by itself but consciously institute things. Students are put in positions to practice friendship-making skills, to practice being a friend for children who are more able, so that they understand disabilities. They understand individual differences and they understand that each student in this school has a profile of strengths and weaknesses and that if they see a weakness where they can contribute a strength, then that is their responsibility as a citizen of this school. And [to help] we have tried

to gear choices... [for example] of choir songs. I direct choir and so we have found things like "Toy Story" and "Friendship Company", anything that we can bring to bear on the wider student population. To say this is important to us as adults that everybody is treated fairly and everybody is respected. We expect you to act this way and it has been a growth process for everybody. It's not something that descends automatically from the clouds. It's something that has to be worked on.....It has to be engineered...You have to set up those opportunities and you have to make sure that when things aren't going well that you are there to grease the wheels and to smooth out the bumpy spots because the bumpy spots will be there and you have kids who are so completely misreading situations that they are yelling and screaming at each other and they are hurting each other and they need adult intervention to help them through that and it happens with adults too... And you have to be there as the smoother of the bumps then too. (Excerpt from resource teacher interview 24/04/96 p.5)

Here is a total school focus on changing beliefs and values that puts curriculum strategies into line with their beliefs (Roach, 1995). Carol thought about literacy teaching very differently than the other teachers interviewed. She implemented strategies within her resource room groups in keeping with her philosophy, despite the fact that her students were all experiencing some problems within their classroom. So she mirrored much of the current research on literacy and inclusion (Goodman, 1991; Lispky & Gartner, 1996; Skrtic & Sailor, 1993). She said³⁶ that she had embraced the theories and ideas researched by Donald Graves (1985) about how children learn to write and she wanted to effect that writing process with special needs children. She basically embraced the philosophy that teaching composing to these children was no different and could be enhanced through the computer. She ran a technology group that included Kristy and others from the junior classrooms. This is where Kristy was reinforced in her writing. This same process was carried on in the classroom as well. Carol had moved away from controlled reading materials and all the traditional remedial materials I had seen in the other resource rooms, which the teacher assistants had borrowed for use. She described adaptations of curriculum for children like Kristy, who are not yet able to read the classroom materials, then added

what she had noticed about children's self correction abilities and how teachers unwittingly hinder the growth of this important strategy:

Carol...With reading, what I have tried to do is look again at what the whole language people have said about exposure to print as being something that they [children] will go for..... the things that are important for them to read and so most of my selection for reading material is free choice by the student. I do present lots of resources that are related to themes that are going on in the classroom at that time. ...In assisted reading, very often it's a matter of there is a job to be done, they need material that comes in print form, and we see how we can adapt that print form to their understanding so they can get maximum information from it....

.... One of the things that has really intrigued me is how children who have problems, if they reflect on what they are reading, very often can self-correct. They don't need the teacher to do the correcting. So the knowledge base is there, but it's in a remedial setting. What is happening very often is that the correction has come in too quickly in the cycle and children start relying on the teacher making the correction instead of going back and monitoring their own reading and picking up what they can from their own resources and we've called it the - I can't remember what the official title was last time, but it's the wait strategy. And when one of their partners makes an error, I train them to count to 5 silently by physically counting it out on their fingers on the table and, within that time, seeing what happens with the person who is reading and I then am trained to do that myself with them - to wait till 5 to see if they come up with a self-correction and that has paid dividends for us in the reading process. So what we are trying to do now is we have very few reading groups within the resource room that are straight reading groups. It is mostly supportive of what's happening in the classroom - making sure that resources are available to support the novel study that is going on or the research that is going on in the classroom.... I am thinking of before Christmas: the Grade 5s were doing the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, so it was my job to go out and get the taped version ...to have it available here and for kids to take home at night if they had difficulty with the decoding part of the story, to make sure that they could have oral input as well as the visual input in reading. They were still expected to get the main ideas out of the story, along with their classmates, as they went along. (Excerpt from resource teacher interview 26/03/96 p.2)

Kristy's Resource Teacher: Carol's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- means profound changes in special education practices at school levels.
 - use resources differently - more collaboration
 - had total vision for school, not just for one child
 - growth process - go slow
 - engineer strategies to support i.e. Circle of Friends
 - must have enabling administrator
 - need comfort levels of staff
 - works on consensus building to change values and attitudes
 - home-school close connections essential
- #### **About Literacy**
- writing & literacy an evolving process
 - social-constructivist view of literacy
 - develop inner control
 - expose children to a wide variety of materials
 - use computer as teaching/writing tool
 - provide lots of opportunities to engage in talk
 - place skill learning in meaningful contexts

Carol saw Kristy and others in the group daily. The children did a lot of writing, working on projects from their classroom assignments. This provided Kristy with the

assisted curriculum she required, yet kept her part of the classroom group. The group had gifted as well as slower moving children in it. Carol also included Kristy in her daily afternoon "talk" group. These group learning experiences, Carol felt, were essential for Kristy to learn language in a social setting. Carol came from a background of working in a segregated special education context. She was able to note the changes in the progress of the children she was working with currently. More attention now was being paid to the whole process of literacy and language learning, she said. I felt she was implementing in her language and literacy group the perspective of what Vygotsky (1978) called the zone of proximal development (ZPD). This is the area somewhere between a child's actual level of independent problem solving and potential area of problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. She was very conscious of children developing inner control in their reading (Clay, 1991). As a result, the emphasis in her teaching was on process rather than skill items, such as lists of sight words and phonic rules. She had rethought how she worked in a special education delivery system. She claimed it was very different from serving special needs children in segregated settings. Here was the first acknowledgment I had heard from a special education teacher that an inclusive setting was different, that it was more than just good integration.³⁷ It involved major reorientation of long held practices and assumptions about educating special needs children.

Matt Caldwell, Kristy's teacher, was a seasoned classroom teacher from much the same background as Steve, Jennie's grade 4/5 teacher. He described his class as very structured, yet there were lots of cooperative learning groups to balance whole group lessons. Assignments appeared to be geared to the individual student levels, so individual

achievement goals were flexible. He used a theme approach to teach literacy.

Consequently, skills were automatically integrated into a meaningful context. He regularly read to the children, relating his literature choice to the class theme which is why the class had just completed a novel study of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. It had been part of the medieval theme. The class had just started a science unit and were using the video and book the Voyage of the Mimi.

Oddly enough, Jennie's class had been doing that same unit when I visited her class. Matt enjoyed having Kristy in his class. He worked individually with her whenever the opportunity arose, the same way he would with the other students in his class. He appreciated the presence of the teacher assistant, but took complete ownership of Kristy's classroom programme. I observed him taking class time to sit down beside her for a few minutes and assist her, usually when there was no teacher assistant in the room.³⁸ It is clear that Matt was comfortable with working in collaboration with other professionals. He had an equally good sense of what types of goals to set for Kristy. Matt had a willingness to accommodate different learners, letting the children choose under his guidance the group they could learn best in.³⁹ Matt was the first teacher to speak about the need for children like Kristy to have subtle challenges in their learning. Walking down the

Kristy's Teacher: Matt's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- develops sensitivity to children with differences
- support important when needed
- flexibility necessary in curriculum
- learn more as a teacher
- collaboration part of process
- home and school contact frequent
- community focus - school
- attitudes change over time

About Literacy

- integrate skills into meaningful contexts through themes
- use literature
- have lots of oral, silent and group reading with discussions
- lots of writing - following writing process
- accommodate different skill levels with variety of materials
- provide caring structured learning class environment - clear expectations
- special needs child requires same strategies but more support and repetition

hall with him after his interview, he told me two significant things that I jotted down in my field notes:

Matt objected to giving her materials where she always got one hundred percent. He said in his team meetings that [this] is not real nor fair to the child. He felt strongly that all children, even Kristy, needed the subtle challenge. This reminded me of what Carol had said and [I] wondered if Matt too was referring to the ZPD. He felt she had contributed tremendously to the classroom learning environment. He said something to the effect, "... that if you had told me 5 years ago that I was going to have this child in my class, I would have said, No way!" He then recounted how his wife, who was also a teacher, had a kindergarten special needs child "dumped" into her class and it was a terrible experience. "You know, I can't say that it's been a terrible experience for me because I have had the support when I needed it. I have learned so much from this child, as a teacher. She has helped to create a very caring environment for the whole class. These children without being counselled or being told directly, go out of their way to be caring towards this child even the slowest kid in the class is sensitive to this child." He says it's quite incredible. He thinks this is the plus for a class to have a Kristy because we want our children to become sensitive to all others. (Excerpt from field notes 3/04/96 - in the hall)

Here was a classroom teacher paralleling the findings of the National Study of Inclusive Education (1995). This study had found teachers who participated in inclusion programs stated positive professional outcomes for themselves. They developed new instructional techniques and a renewed sense of collegiality and experienced more teaching enjoyment. Matt's statement also supported the Kishi and Meyer (1994) study. This longitudinal study found that more positive attitudes, more social contact and more support for community participation are the results of early inclusion.

In Kristy's inclusive setting, her desk was at the front, in the middle row of this class of 28. Sylvia Hyman, Kristy's teacher assistant, came and went from the room. It depended upon whether Matt felt Kristy required the support. Sometimes Sylvia would take a chair and sit beside Kristy throughout the lesson. At other times, she would simply approach Kristy's desk to make certain that she knew what she was supposed to be doing and then get up and leave. Sylvia did reinforcing of skills and kept Kristy on track in

class, but the teaching was done by Matt or Carol. Here we have a unique situation among the cases studied. The teacher assistant is really assisting both teachers who have taken ownership of the student. No other focus child had this type of situation. I wondered if this was because Kristy was much more accomplished than the other children or if she became more accomplished because of this situation. There was a wonderful blending at Lanceville P.S. of the macro skills from the classroom teacher and the micro skills from the special education resource teacher.

Sylvia, Kristy's teacher assistant, was able to share some of the insights she had gained over the years. This delightful woman, who described herself as sort of the "grand motherly type" had a wonderful sense of humour. Laughing as she answered, she said she did not feel that her nursing background allowed her to talk about how children learn to read. However, the retrospective view of Kristy she gave shed light on how this youngster learned:

Sylvia.... I found that she learned mainly through repetition - over and over again. And she never got bored over the repetition and the repetition can be in different forms..... She is quite visual. She would remember better than strictly auditorally.....She has a bit of a hearing impairment and so the vowels....were lost and she couldn't really hear the a's and e's and the u's.....Her vocabulary was very, very limited and so, in order to help her in that way, we introduced her tocomputer programmes where she would see the word, hear it and had to make a choice - 3 senses - auditory, visual and tactile. She had to make a choice to push the right button. If she was right, this encouraged her again, if she was wrong, she tried to remember and after many, many repetitions, we really did see a progress.... Then, of course, tried to make her use the words. Having also a speech impediment is really a negative....because she may know what the word is but what comes up is often quite garbled..... Over the years in the classroom...she was beginning to start to write and remember the words. Often if she started to communicate with you and you didn't understandshe would at least give you the first letter of the word. She would remember that word so she would give you that first letter and then you would fill in the rest.....So we really encouraged that - write me the word... After that we had a little book, which she doesn't use any more, but she did for a couple of years, in which we told her - first of all what you have to do is slow down, stretch out the words so that you are emphasizing the first letter and maybe the last one so we said - GUESS, if that fails, try to write. if you know the first letter - mime - act it out, point, show us.....We never encouraged her to sign ...[but] we encouraged her to communicate ... She would talk more to her peers like in Grade 2 when she first started here. She was very quiet, friendly. She never hesitated to stand up at show and tell... She would stand up and say a few words ,which we hardly ever understoodOften mother would send a note

saying what it is that she is talking about and after she did her little presentation, I would read it so that the children could understand what it is that she was saying to them and they would be feeling a part of it....

....We did the same strategy with writing - bringing notes from home, making her paste it, cut it up and put it together again and then reading it and maybe adding another sentence of her own at the bottom or the words that she really liked..... When we were in Grade 4, we were mostly grouped and so it wasn't always the same group, but there was always one friend that she knew better than others and this gave her a chance to interact with all the classroom pupils,.... We noticed that she began to initiate conversation and what really surprised me was.... that most of the time the kids understood what she was saying. I often didn't understand what she was saying, but they would answer her

....We noticed that she then started being even invited occasionally to her friend's home, which I think helped her socially very much. But all throughout the school year, it was very much of a cooperation between home and school.....Mum would do anything we would suggest in helping her with things at home by not doing them necessarily for her, but trying to get her to do it..... I feel that she is doing quite well in Math for her level. She seems to have a good mind for that. She enjoys Math. She likes Math. She derives a lot of satisfaction in doing it..... The other thing she really is keen on is spelling and she truly memorizes the list. We are up to 50 words now but I don't think the long recall is all that good, but this also helps her because the words are always associated with what we are talking [about]. If we are doing "space", a lot of these words were pertaining to "space" or to geography when we were talking about Canada and so on.....(Excerpt from teacher assistant interview 26/03/96 p.1)

Notice that Kristy's poor oral speech did not hold her receptive language development back. Once she knew how to write even the first letter of a word, she used this literacy knowledge to communicate. Here was literacy contributing to her communication skills and both were reinforcing each other. Many of the accommodations that Sylvia talked about were tailoring the learning situation to maximize Kristy's learning, rather than trying to tailor Kristy to the situation. These kinds of accommodations were very different from what educators

Kristy's Teacher Assistant: Sylvia's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- doesn't create outcasts
 - changes attitudes and perceptions of potential
 - heightens children's sensitivity to differences
 - different learning rates are alright
 - helps language development and social skills
 - natural friendships occur
 - ownership for child's learning collaborative
 - close ties between home and school essential
- About Literacy**
- children learn in many ways
 - Kristy needs lots of repetition
 - multi-sensory methods
 - literacy aids language
 - early computer use aids language, later helps writing & spelling
 - reading to children helps
 - reading is empowering
 - accept approximations
 - develop strategies for participation through creative curriculum adaptations
 - give lots of prompts and cues
 - remember goal: independent literacy

described in the other school situations, which seemed to emphasize bringing in resources for the special needs child to develop a parallel curriculum. Sylvia had emphasized the repetition necessary for Kristy to learn and the sense of empowerment that she saw developing in Kristy as she became a more accomplished reader, writer, and speaker. This was something she said she never saw develop in segregated classes. Those children were seen by the school population as "outcasts," she told me. Sylvia elaborated on Kristy's emerging literacy.⁴⁰ Sylvia said she had only hospital experience with children like Kristy and had no idea of their true potential, so she, like the staff, had changed her ideas about special needs children. It was a question of finding the right adjustment to the learning situation, she said. She clearly saw this as the school's and teachers' responsibility, and only partly hers as the teacher assistant. This was a clear difference from Jennie's, David's, Daniel's, Tommy's and Megan's situation, where I had the impression that the teacher assistants were thrust into more of a teaching responsibility than Sylvia. It made me think that Kristy's school setting was based on very different assumptions. Mary certainly noticed the difference when she said:

Mary.....It's just been heaven to come back here. Like I know that because I worked in the school a lot with my older daughter. I was volunteering a lot with her as well and I know that the attitude was like, "Oh, no she can't possibly come back - we don't have the support." ...Like, "If she is going to come back there is no way she is going to come back until we get proper support." I remember writing a note to [the resource teacher]... after she had been here for about a year. We went from peeling her fingers off the rungs to her...wanting to go to school. Even on the weekends she wanted to go to school and it was like a hop, skip and a jump down the path and she was there...I just can't think - it was just like black and white - I can't describe [it].

D - What did you notice academically? What happened to her, you know, when you compare it to what she was given academically in the segregated setting?

M - Oh, leaps and bounds,... at the segregated setting, there was a lot of colouring and a lot of tracing letters, that type of thing. She did a few field trips. I don't recall a whole lot of academics there. It was almost like they focused more on behavioural management. I don't think academics were pushed at all. I think it was more behaviour and stuff like that, so when she came back here....even in Grade 2, whatever the rest of the kids did, [she did]...If they did Math, she did Math. So she did just whatever the rest of them did. (Excerpt from #2 parent interview 10/04/96 p.15)

Mary was aware that the school staff at Lanceville were not looking forward to getting Kristy back into their school. However, the change in Kristy was very dramatic. Mary's comments about the low expectations of academics and concentration on behaviour in the segregated class were concerns similar to those that Megan's mother had, and were echoed by Sylvia. They felt that assumptions being made about the potential of these children were not valid. The research in this area is ongoing but seems to be positive in addressing classroom practices (Hahn, 1994; Lipsky & Gartner, 1996). This inclusive setting was different by design. Everyone overwhelmingly put their trust in Kristy's ability to learn, and believing it was just a matter of time. Their attitudes and values were very different. I felt I was observing the best teaching practices that researchers wrote about (Ferguson 1995; Lipsky & Gartner 1996). These included visionary leadership, collaboration, supports for staff and students, curricula adaptation, effective instructional practices, effective parental involvement and, overall, really seeing inclusion as a process. This community school viewed inclusion as a total school process. It was no longer a placement. The school was structured around student diversity. There was a view that they were providing the students with supports, rather than services. Diversity and difference were valued.

Chelsea: The Early Years

Chelsea is the eldest of Ruth's and Jacob's three children. Ruth and Jacob were thrilled to have their new baby girl, but their reaction was not matched by the medical

authorities. Chelsea was medically very fragile due to massive heart problems and Ruth was vulnerable after a difficult delivery, a situation that was handled without sensitivity:

Dean -.....What were you told at first and how was it handled?...

Ruth- "You have a mongoloid, are you keeping it?".....We had a really, really bad time initially. They didn't know what to say. They said all the wrong things.

D - Was she born here?

R- She was born at the General . She was born in [here]. It was a surprise. I was 24 when I had her, with no reason to suspect anything was wrong. She had such massive heart problems that she was in distress right away. Now, they knew that right away. We learned that first day - a very nice pediatrician. It was a nursing staff and all the extra staff...

D - And did they know you had a nursing background?

R - At that point I delivered my brain with that baby! I had nothing. I was completely vulnerable and open to their stupidity, but once I got the catheter and I.V. out and got on my feet, and I had to go over to [another hospital] ...Chelsea was transferred to Children's Hospital initially. I got a little more support over there.

D - Would they let you have contact with her?

R - Initially, no, they didn't. They posted a guard at the door because my husband took off at the delivery room with her to show my sister, who was waiting. "Look what we've got - a little girl!" And they posted two guards for one night so that Frank wouldn't take her out. I don't know what the reasoning was behind that one because I asked are there any embassy kids in here? It was mine! I had asked to see her because I didn't get to see her when she was born. We were both in a lot of health problems so I said, on the way up from recovery, "I want to see her." And she was at the far wall of the nursery. I was at the far wall of the other end. They pointed at the blanket, " There's your kid!" I do a lot of teaching now in hospitals and I tell doctors, nurses, med students, whatever, do not discuss a diagnosis or any other problem until they have held the baby in their arms and bonded with it...Or tell them the first time they are holding the baby, whatever, but don't give them all this misconceived ideas before they have even met the child. It was just horrible because my one biggest fear was: what if I don't like her? what if I don't like her? I had all these preconceived notions in my head [about] what she was going to look like - what she was going to behave like..

D - Do you think that was intentional because the authorities felt you should probably not take this child home or it was unintentional - totally unintentional and insensitive?

R - I think it was half. I think half the people we dealt with just didn't know what to say, so they were saying very thoughtless things, and the other half intentionally wanted her to die, so they didn't want any medical intervention. I had a physician and haematologist ask me when she was 2 weeks old. After I had been there 22 hours a day - I am dying myself. I am there with my baby trying to do everything: "Well, she's been fed with a tube - What kind of quality of life is that?" That's when I got my back up, kept it up and it's been there ever since.... Of course, when she was 4 weeks old, we had our big interview with the pediatrician, whereby they described communication is going to be her largest area of delay, gross motor movements are going to be delayed, fine motor maybe, maybe not. They will come. She's probably going to have toddler leukemia. If it doesn't get her now, it will get her at puberty. She could have cataracts in her teens. Alzheimer by the time she is 30... By then, I was tough enough and I had my back up, I said: "Do you discuss drug abuse with normal kids when they are newborn? Why are you telling me all this stuff?"... "Oh well, I just feel you have the right to know". I said, "And did you tell the guy next door that his kid is going to be pimping herself on the market probably when she is 14. You didn't tell her that did you? Don't tell me about cataracts till she is 20, she is 4 weeks old!" So there was a lot of negative.

(Excerpt from #2 parent interview 25/04/96 p.8)

With this kind of local support from the medical authorities, Ruth and Jacob could have been deterred from bringing their newborn home. But of course, they weren't. They brought their new little girl home. But knowing that Chelsea would require extensive heart repairs, the family opted to have all her surgeries done in Toronto. ⁴¹ Old attitudes and beliefs die hard, even among the best of medical experts, Ruth implied. What is interesting here is that this occurred in a different province and city to the one where Kristy was born. The reaction of the nursing staff and social services was nearly identical to the experiences recollected by Mary after Kristy's birth. Here was a parent who, rather than being defeated by the health system, opted to be proactive in a constructive way in order to pave the way for others. Ruth used her medical expertise and personal experiences to change attitudes and beliefs within her community health system.

Ruth was so anxious to have pre-schooling for her little girl that she told me, laughing, that she phoned the local town nursery school when Chelsea was only 6 weeks old! She was assured that she could be included when the time came. Ruth knew that living in small town Canada she had a lot of work on her hands, to gain acceptance for her daughter. Indeed, Chelsea did attend the nursery school. She recounts an incident that first made her very sad, then fighting mad, and which led her to start the re-education of her community⁴² of Petersville:

Ruth -..... The first time she was in nursery school, I always arrived early just to check on what she was doing. I was one of the mothers to be there and I remember all the cubbies had envelopes, except Chelsea's.... Being nosy, I opened them and everybody was invited to Sammy's birthday except Chelsea. I thought, oh no, this is what it is going to be like. I cried. I was so hurt. I thought, this is what is in store for her. I hurt this much at 3-4, how much is she going to hurt when she's 8, 9 and 10 and my heart was just broken. I don't think fast on my feet. My husband said, "Well, why didn't you take them all and throw them in the garbage?"..... I figure in small town Canada it was either you accept it or that's the end of it so everywhere I went I took her with me and it was either get used to her or get over it! (Excerpt from #2 parent interview 25/04/96 p.11)

Mum had hired a programme assistant through the nursery school, one who received training from the James Morris Agency, a local association which specializes in assisting children with disabilities. They sent personnel to the nursery school to work through the assistant, the nursery school teachers and parents. Chelsea spent several wonderful years in the nursery until she was five, said Ruth. When it came time to make the transition to the local board school, she ran into a stone wall of passive resistance from the Hillside P.S. staff:

Ruth - ...Then with the transition from nursery school to [local school] Board we did everything right. We had the James Morris. We had the coordinator of the nursery school. We had her trainer at school go to the school but, okay, let's see what your circle [Chelsea's] is all about and they spent the morning at school. [They] came back, got a whole bunch of information together and said okay. Let's go to the school: here is what Chelsea is doing. Here is what she is capable of. Here is where your goals should be and they didn't listen. So then I thought, okay fine, so I brought in the psychologist. I brought in the parent who is a school teacher, who is [also] a parent of a child with Down Syndrome who is in the medical field. I brought in videos. I bought in books. I brought in literature. I brought in everything I could to the school for the first day of school. It was a P.D. day. All the teachers were there. They were all getting this information because they had never seen a child with Down Syndrome in the school setting. So I thought, okay let's help them, they are scared. I know I was. So they must be too. So I gave them all this information to arm themselves so they would have to be a little more educated in the area and nobody gave a shit! They let it go in one ear, out that one. She is just a parent, doesn't know what she is talking about. Like no, I didn't know. I sent the psychologist, I sent a teacher. They didn't listen. So I did everything right. They were too ignorant to listen....

The administrator..... He was willing to listen. There was never a question of her not going there. He was very open to having her there and, "Sure anything we can do". It was the teacher - (Excerpt from #2 parent interview 25/04/96 p.13)

Chelsea started her formal schooling in kindergarten at Hillside when she was five.

Chelsea's Mother: Ruth's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- people have to see the child not the disability
- these children can succeed - potential there
- attitudes of acceptance formed in school
- society will change through inclusion
- staffs require ongoing support
- large human rights issue - right to education for all
- be realistic in expectations & goals
- be pro-active in school & community
- rich stimulating environment needed, not sterile one

- classroom must be supportive
- goal is independence not dependence

About Literacy

- recognize children learn in a variety of ways - visual, auditory, tactile
- linear phonics approach doesn't always work
- lots of stimulation necessary at early stages
- encourage reading/writing at home -provide books, media tapes
- children model language from peers -appropriate & inappropriate

However, according to her mother, Chelsea spent too much time outside the classroom going for timeouts. There was little to no teaming for her programming and tremendous resistance from the classroom teacher. This kind of occurrence is not uncommon in school situations where little attention is given to realistic goals for the child or ongoing professional development for the teacher. Parents are often caught in a very frustrating situation, as they are pleased the local school has agreed to take their child and don't want to "rock the boat" for fear that the school will use behaviour issues to remove the child from the setting, as happened with Tommy. Ruth remained silent, as Jennie's Mum did, because of what she perceived as a possible threat to jeopardizing her child's situation. Ruth's insights in hindsight reveal this:

Ruth....The teacher didn't want her. She wasn't going to let it work and she didn't. It did not work. Chelsea's first year in the Board was a nightmare for Chelsea, for teachers, for students.....It caused a big problem for Chelsea. It stayed with her and we are still working to try and get away from it. It wasn't necessary so I don't know how to do it other than to look at the teacher and say, "You are a dinosaur. You don't belong here, get out". Which I did the next year. And she's out, but I should have done it initially. But I was so damn grateful that they took her at all.....See Chelsea's programme at school was to go in and if she looks sideways at anybody and she was ordered out of the classroom, take your teacher's aide and get out. Go wash dishes or something. So it made Chelsea very separate from the children. (Excerpt from #2 parent interview 15/04/96)

Undeterred, Ruth insisted that six year old Chelsea be included and spend the next year in school all day. She did an all-day senior kindergarten and junior kindergarten split to prepare her to enter grade one. She had two teachers that year who included her more, but it wasn't until she got into grade one at age seven that she had a teacher who really made an effort to include her. Ruth made certain that she would continue into grade two the next year, despite the IPRC advice she was given.⁴³ Ruth was probably the feistiest of the parents, but like the other mothers, she had reasonable expectations for her daughter, ones based upon a realistic knowledge of her capabilities.

Ruth felt that literacy starts at home and had tried to use a phonics approach with Chelsea, but found this to be unproductive.⁴⁴ She has had to change some of her thinking about how children learn to read and write. She recognized early on that phonics, which depend upon a good auditory sense, were not going to work with Chelsea.

Chelsea's Inclusive Setting

Diana Cooper's grade two classroom was a dynamic place for seven year olds to work. The class was set up with tables and chairs, with four or five children grouped at a table. Whole class lessons took place on the carpet area at the front of the class, with the blackboard or chart board being used to focus the children. The children sat on the carpet in a circle. There were activity centres around the room, but the children did the bulk of their work at their tables. Because I came into the class in the Spring, routines were well established. Chelsea sat at the table nearest the door, which was where Lisa Lincoln's large desk was located, and against the wall right next to the door as you entered the room. Diana's desk was at the other side of the room, near the carpeted area. Diana tended to move around the room while the children were working on their own so the children could call on her for assistance. Lisa tended to stick close to Chelsea during language arts period. She would swing her desk chair around to be beside Chelsea's table. Chelsea, while she followed the class themes did do individual work one on one with Lisa everyday at her table. It was recognized that her goals and academic expectations were different and, since individuality was stressed in this class, the other children accepted this situation for everybody. Diana always made a point of calling on each of the children in the circle time

and tried always to check on them individually while they were doing their seat work, including Chelsea.

Lisa was an experienced teacher assistant with a background in early childhood education. Lisa was not with Chelsea exclusively every minute of the day, as she had other duties in other classrooms. She became committed to inclusion. In stating her reasons for supporting inclusion and explaining how her thinking evolved she draws on concrete examples to illustrate her points:

Lisa....I think the inclusive classroom environment that Chelsea has been in or is in, is probably the most positive experience for her, and it has given her the support that she needs because she can use all the information that she learns within the classroom - the instructional lesson implemented right there and, through the modelling of the other children, she understands how the regular classroom works, the social interaction and being in a primary class. These classrooms are set up specifically for young children and just by sitting at her desk and looking around, she can take the words or the concepts that she is learning in the classroom and follow them through. Actually, just before we left the classroom, she took me to the front of the classroom and noticed up at the top of the chalk board, the classroom rules and the word "thank you" was up there and she noticed it today for the first time. Seeing the word "thank you" that she has read so often in Mr. Mug's books and using the words, now she can see that it is part and parcel of the programme....Six months ago I wasn't sure. Today I really do believe that she is in the right programme. She is advanced by years having had the experience to be in a regular classroom experiences. She is distractable on occasion, but not any more distractable than some of the other children in the classroom. Another example of that would be when we had a student led conferencing, which Chelsea participated in and did extremely well in it. We had another class who came in to do some role playing with our class. When 21 other students came into the class or essentially infiltrated the class, Chelsea was quite taken aback initially by all the commotion. But there were other students in the class who are normally in the class who are not in an "inclusive situation", are part of the regular classroom and they too had difficulty with it! When the class mover around and worked together as a team, she did just as well as the student sitting next to her or the other 20 students in the classroom. She has learned to cope. She knows through the modelling of

Chelsea's Teacher Assistant: Lisa's Beliefs about Inclusion

- clear expectations
 - learned more academically
 - language models of the other children have assisted language growth
 - educating the rest of the school by being in regular class
 - models other children's behaviour the good & bad
 - has learned independent learning skills, to cope with distractions
 - better transfer of skills learned to different contexts
 - fewer boundaries around learning potential
 - consistency between home & school necessary - parents part of team
 - modify expectations to child's capabilities
 - normal school program benefits child
- #### **About Literacy**
- development of language important basis for early literacy
 - learning letters, sounds important emphasis in beginning reading/writing then move to words
 - lots of repetition of skills
 - context of learning important for transfer of skills

the other children. She can participate in any of the other events in the school that are within the normal routine...(Excerpt from teaching assistant interview 9/04/96 p.3,4)

It is interesting that the illustrations that Lisa used, distractability, large numbers, changes in routines, are often areas where critics of inclusion predict that children like Chelsea will have problems, and which provide reason enough not to try inclusion (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995). I shared this finding with Lisa, who said that inclusion was just common sense. Yet, she admitted that at first, she was not convinced of the "common sense" of inclusion. I asked her to comment on whether she thought Chelsea was "higher functioning" than other similar special needs children. She did not think so, saying each child needed to be viewed as an individual case. Because she had worked in this school with other special education children, she was able to draw on this perspective. Some of the children she worked with were in segregated classes.⁴⁵ Lisa was willing to try inclusion for others as well as Chelsea. She recognized that Chelsea had changed her thinking, and was hoping a change of attitude would occur for others on staff as well. Lisa in effect was echoing Ruth, arguing that in "small town Canada" the staff had not had the opportunity actually to work with a child like Chelsea, as up until then they had never been seen in Hillside P.S. Most of the staff held preconceived ideas about children with Down Syndrome. In fact, many staff members told me in the staff room that they thought it was ridiculous to have a "child like that" in this school. "Those children belong in their own class with their own kind," was the view indicated to me. They told me it was a waste to devote so many resources just to one child who, in their mind, shouldn't have been there in the first place. Lisa lived in this community, as did most of the teaching staff, so she was alluding to them not only as

teaching colleagues, but also as friends and neighbours who needed to change their attitudes towards individuals with differences.⁴⁶

Lisa, like Kristy's teacher assistant, Sylvia, was reluctant to discuss how children learn literacy, but she had noticed that Chelsea seemed to be learning to read through sight word acquisition, rather than through phonetics. She viewed this circumstance as a problem since she was not aware of any other way to help her problem solve new words she encountered.⁴⁷ Lisa had taken her direction from the former teacher assistant who had started Chelsea on a basal reader, Mr. Mugs. It is an old, out of print Ginn reader that uses very stilted language. Remembering that the teacher assistants are not teachers, and sometimes are left to choose curriculum materials, Lisa intuitively felt that Chelsea needed to move on to other books in this series. She obviously didn't buy into the notion that special needs children are not allowed to move on until one hundred percent mastery is achieved, as Daniel's programme insisted upon. Lisa asked me many questions about why I thought Chelsea was able to read and not know any phonics. This clearly puzzled her. She was concerned because she realized that she did not have the background in "language arts," as she put it, to teach Chelsea, which was the role she felt she had been entrusted with.⁴⁸

Diana, Chelsea's teacher, stated a commitment to integration in this comment about this inclusion setting:

Diana....I certainly whole heartedly support the integration model that we have in place right now at Hillside with Chelsea 100%. I know it is perhaps the teaching assistant support will be a question in the future, as may be her placement, but I believe that with the teaching assistant support and the regular classroom placement with her peer group, with acceptance and care, that Chelsea will continue to make great successes in school. (Excerpt from teacher interview 15/04/96 p.7)

She felt it was working because of the additional supports being there, but her comments clearly imply that this was a 'placement' in her view. She was willing not to place boundaries around Chelsea, but recognize what she could do and how to include her in literacy activities with other children.⁴⁹

Although Diana told me about her beliefs about how children learn to read, I found she viewed Chelsea as being at the readiness level, which meant to me that she felt it was okay to restrict her to controlled vocabulary readers. I felt that she still held a linear view of reading, even though she was prepared to let go of this notion of writing and speaking. I formed this opinion from the interview I had with Diana, in which she talked about how children learn to read,⁵⁰ and through observations in her classroom. There was a lot of talking and writing in this class, and text reading that went with the writing. She said Chelsea's language development was reflected in her reading, but her enriched background experiences came through as well. She recognized that Chelsea was reading due to her sight word vocabulary recognition, but she felt that Chelsea was not really comprehending much. By implication, there was a reluctance to recognize that this child was taking beginning steps towards literacy, since her oral speech was delayed and often incomprehensible; therefore, she was apparently not comprehending text.⁵¹ She admitted that Chelsea really was following a parallel program rather than an adapted curriculum, bearing out my contention that she viewed Chelsea's being in her class as very good integration:

Di -.....Extra classroom support is paramount in getting the instructional programme into place..... We are using a rather old series right now that has a phonetically based vocabulary which is a Mr. Mug's reader with a workbook, and we have the Dolch [sight] word list also...But that's not to say that everything is done in isolation with, this child, because ultimately what you do want to develop are independent work skills

which are modelled by the other students in the class. We are always aiming at the proper behaviours, the proper working habits, the proper movement in the classroom, that the normal children have already acquired, so everything in the instructional program looks like what the other children are doing. It is very similar, except for things out in the hallway with balls, and some other gross motor type things and fine motor things. Computer work is very important so we do a lot of computer work. We have the reading programme. We have the spelling programme. We have a writing programme,.....

D - But she is basically parallel with what the other children are doing?

Di -....That's what I mean. She is working at all times when we are working, but her programme, of course, is different. I would also say that it is different than another Grade 1 child's programme, even though she is in many ways functioning like a normal Grade 1 student now. She has a sight vocabulary. She is reading and she is printing so there are modifications because of the on-task behaviors are not as developed yet, because the fine motor skills are not as developed, because her attention wanders very easily - she is very distractable so all those things have to be supported by a teacher's aide but if you had to say what are we doing differently, well I think we are doing all of it differently, but you'll walk into the classroom and basically see her working through with paper and pencil, with books, with word cards as you would with any other student. (Excerpt from teacher interview 15/04/96 p.1)

Diana seemed concerned about all the skill areas Chelsea was missing. Like David's primary teacher, Susan, she was unwilling to leave the basal readers behind completely for fear that some aspect of learning to read would be lost.

Marlene Walmsley was new to the school, so she had only known Chelsea since the September of her grade two year. It was now spring and she recounted how much progress she had seen Chelsea make during grade two:

Marlene...I think what I have observed in Chelsea, and children similar to her, there is a great deal more mimicry and a need for constant repetition in order for someone to retain something. It requires adult intensive support and there is less logic used by the child. It seems to be very much at a low at this point in time. I've watched Chelsea in the classroom at the board showing how well she can read and some of the words she says are not based on context or appearance or even the initial letter. It seems to be more random sometimes, but she is learning to read and she is recognizing words and I'm really impressed with the growth she has made this year. She seems to be on a growth spurt..... I didn't know Chelsea before this year and I have not had experience with a Down's child in a school before. I think her memory creates

Chelsea's Teacher: Diana's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- accepting of differences
- support of teacher assistant important
- special needs children can learn in supportive environment
- models from peers assist language & literacy learning
- social behaviours learned from peers
- motives sensitivity from other children
- slower pacing important
- provide clear routines as structure
- lots more potential in special needs children if willing to work with them

About Literacy

- accepts approximations
- holds to readiness notion of early literacy development
- recognizes importance of language experiences in literacy development
- exposing children to literature important
- readers more important instructional tool than trade books
- develop themes to enhance vocabulary & skills
- some skills teaching in isolation alright
- writing follows a continuum

a problem - that she may learn a word one day and it's gone the next. There seems to be some patterning. She seems to thrive on praise and joy and appreciation and I think that increases her learning patterns. She gets a lot of support from the class when she is successful at something and that increases her motivation as well. It must be very frustrating, though, to be Chelsea sometimes and to lose things as fast as she does. (Excerpt from principal interview 26/04/96 p.1 & 2)

I found that even though Marlene acknowledged that Chelsea was learning to read, she seemed to focus on her difficulties and her label. That is, wondering what is wrong with her "memory," rather than focusing on her accomplishments, and she assumed this must be frustrating for Chelsea. This contrasts with the teacher and the teacher assistant, who pointed out Chelsea's accomplishments. Even Chelsea's mother reports that this year Chelsea loved to go to school and that she saw much less frustration on Chelsea's part.

Chelsea's Principal: Marlene's Beliefs & Values About Inclusion

- inclusion a type of placement
 - adult support essential
 - special needs cause learning difficulties valuable
 - concerned about curriculum as child moves through system
 - Board pressure to segregate
 - difficult to develop inclusion in high needs school - equality issue
 - inclusion a social issue
 - suspicious of parental advocacy for inclusion - politics of special education around placement
- About Literacy**
- language is learned through approximations
 - literacy acquired in different ways
 - home environment support & stimulates literacy learning
 - literacy learning rests on strong language base

Marlene did support in her next statement what she called "the integration model", but felt she was not getting the School Board support that would allow her to implement the programme as she would have like to in her school. She viewed the integration model from the perspective of a placement, rather than as what Cousins and Duncan (1997) call "a safety net of supports based on students needs." It was assumed that there was something wrong with these children, and the onus was on the children to learn, even if it was difficult

and resources to assist the children need to come from outside the school rather than from a reorientation from within the school:

Marlene.....I support the integration model for all children who have learning needs, that being with children who can do it. Yes it's hard on them, but it is a modelling and it creates a desire as long as the person doesn't get too frustrated with the gaps. It helps the children in the class to show tolerance and support and to see the worth of someone and what they can bring to the classroom. To me, it's a social issue and, by the positive environment created by a caring teacher, then the learning must be a good curve. It is much more emotive, but so many children I see in special education have emotional reasons why it is hard for them to learn....I wish that I wasn't under so much pressure. The pressure comes from special services to reduce the [teaching assistant] time. The global view of what other Downs children are like and how they can cope with less [teaching assistant] and yet concern [comes] from Chelsea's mother and from the teachers that Chelsea needs the maximum [teaching assistant] support. (Excerpt from principal interview 26/04/96 p.3)

The concern was focused on the need for a teacher assistant for Chelsea, rather than on looking at her total environment and considering how it was also supporting her learning. It was assumed that this child could not possibly be in the classroom unless another adult was with her constantly. Yet during this year, Chelsea's teacher assistant did not accompany her to gym or music and everybody was able to cope very well. No one seemed to be looking for other areas where she was able to cope very well without constant adult supervision. Yet both her teacher and teacher assistant acknowledged that Chelsea had learned school routines very well during the year. She could come into the classroom and get herself ready for the day or go out to recess and lunch time by herself. She knew how to go to circle time without adult assistance, taking her cues from the other children. This over dependence on the availability of resource supports in the form of an extra person detracts from the issue of what inclusion really means. I felt that, although these educators talked about integration, they were talking about a place, a time, structures, and sets of activities rather than a set of values reflected in practices. It shifted attention away from looking for creative ways to maximize Chelsea's learning and perhaps, provided a

convenient excuse to exclude her. The responsibility for her learning was not viewed from a collaborative perspective; it was not seen as a joint responsibility of everybody in the school and her classroom. It led me to think that it was a case of a school struggling with inclusion, but clinging to the traditional frameworks of supporting a student. The school was finding it increasingly difficult to cope and felt pressure and anxiety to do the right thing for Chelsea. At the same time, the school felt it had to follow the "rules" or "directives" from the system at large, the School Board's central special education services. This dilemma seemed to cause discomfort for the principal, since she was being asked to view Chelsea as a "Down's child". This objectification, as Courts (1991) describes it, created a conflict for the principal, who knew Chelsea as a student with unique learning needs. I was seeing what Foucault (1980) refers to as the projection of power into the hands of others, in this case the school board's central special education services. I felt that the principal was struggling with this issue when she commented about her situation and expressed that things were different:

Marlene.....It is unfortunate for Chelsea.... And that might be significant to your study. [It] is working against Chelsea that she is in a school that has high special education needs anyway. If she was in a school which had very few special education needs, I might be able to provide a better service in the future. (Excerpt from principal interview 26/04/97 p.5)

I felt she really did want to make the right decision for all concerned — Chelsea, her parents and the other children in her school. Here she comments on the politics of inclusion:

Marlene.....They certainly know they don't want the child in special education but then, on the other hand, so do many other parents whose children are placed special education. What makes the difference is the political clout that this group of parents have.....I have to think of things that work for that child, but I also have other very needy children that I don't want to deprive. That's the political dilemma. (Excerpt from principal interview 26/04/97)

Summary of Beliefs/Values: About Inclusion, About Literacy and its Indicators

It seems appropriate to bring to a close Chapter Four's theme, Beliefs/Values: About Inclusion, About Literacy, with Marlene's comments about being a "political dilemma." I looked for indicators for these themes. Adults making value statements about inclusion, or the process of inclusion, were highlighted in

the text boxes. All the parents wanted an inclusive education for their children and had to fight to obtain it. None of them set out to be crusaders when their children were born, but most of them ended up becoming politically active for the sake of their children's education. They were prepared to do battle with the medical authorities and,

later, the school board authorities. All

spoke of insensitivities inflicted by those in authority, sometimes they recalled outright prejudice, and at other times, passive resistance. All of these parents responded by

becoming proactive, with a view to educating the school authorities by sharing their

knowledge. It was a refrain I heard over and over again from these parents. Their fight was

not only to make changes for their children, but also to pave the way for future children. I

thought this sense of the greater purpose was instrumental in keeping them going, especially

when faced with outright prejudices and outdated beliefs from the "experts". I felt they all

could see a larger social issue, a civil rights issue, a circumstance which helped to sustain

Theme indicators: Beliefs/Values:

About Inclusion

- adult makes value statement about inclusion
- adult discusses inclusion as a process
- adult makes observations about effects of inclusion on peers
- adult shares beliefs about effect of inclusion on special needs child

About Literacy

- adult make value statement about importance of literacy
- adult makes statement about learning & instruction for special needs child
- adult shares beliefs about language learning
- adult shares beliefs about writing development in children
- adult makes observation statement about special needs child's literacy

them in their efforts. It also made them learn the politics of education and special education. All of these parents became active in their childrens' schools to a greater or lesser degree. These early experiences seemed to shape their beliefs about how their children should be schooled.

Out of all the focused interviews, there was only one individual (Daniel's teacher assistant) who was forthright in saying the focus child should not be included in the regular classroom. However, in all the schools except Kristy's, it was common to see inclusion viewed as a placement, instead of a process. For this child, inclusion was thought of as a collaborative process that went beyond the classroom, a situation notably different to those of Jennie, David, Tommy, Megan, and Chelsea. It did not happen in the wider context of these other schools because the schools were not seen in the same way as learning communities. Kristy's principal was unusual for having set up a formal process in which inclusion could take place. In the other schools, the children were viewed as having been excellently integrated.

Mary's plea about looking for the positive things that her daughter Kristy could do, rather than the negative, was something all the parents wanted during the early years. It seemed that the parents, and some of the early childhood educators, were willing to look at what the children could do. However, the medical deficit model seemed to prevail in the schools, much to the frustration of the parents. To all these parents these children were "another kid" in their families, something, unfortunately, that others could not see. Their families place few boundaries on their learning. They had assumed that their children-would be welcomed into their communities and schools. None of these parents really anticipated

having "to take on the system" when they first set out to enroll their children in the local school. Often the parents' concerns were not listened to nor were they empowered through collaboration when decisions were being made about their child. The IPRC is supposed to do this but, as Mary, Kristy's Mum, said, "It was a set up"! Decisions were made before the parents arrived, not in consultation with them.

I felt all the parents did what special educators in these cases were not willing to do: they threw away structured developmental timetables and instead expected their children to do things in their own time. Appropriate academics were high on the list of expectations, as well as acceptable behaviour and manners. Too often special education programmes undervalue the academic potential of children like these. None of the parents were going to let this happen to their children.

The role of the principal surfaced repeatedly during the interviews with parents. The parents. The parents all thought the attitude and beliefs of the school principal played a large role in the type of inclusion the school implemented. Can only a maverick principal go against the official Board policy of meeting special needs in segregated classrooms? Based on this study, it would seem so. Kristy's principal, Gareth Scott, was very active in bringing about changes for all the special needs children in his school. He was retiring the year I was in his school, as was Megan's principal, Tom Moffet. Megan's, Tommy's and Jennie's principals all worked towards making their inclusion at the classroom level a reality, but did not go beyond to a school level. I felt that David's and Daniel's principal was more comfortable with the status quo. Emily Grafton had inherited David's situation but implemented Daniel's, while Chelsea's principal wanted to continue inclusion for

Chelsea, seeing the benefits for this special needs child. Marlene Walmsly had segregated special education classes in her school, so she was uncertain about how to proceed with Chelsea. It would have been very easy to deal administratively with Chelsea, like Daniel's principal had. She could have been removed from the mainstream population and placed in a special education class perhaps out of sight, and out of mind most of the time, as Daniel's class. The current Board policies would be upheld, teachers' attitudes and beliefs about the "place" of special needs children would not be challenged, and the status quo would be maintained.

All the teachers made explicit or implicit comments on the effects inclusion had on the other children's sensitivity towards the special needs child and, in turn, adults shared incidents where peers initiated inclusion of the special needs child. All the teachers and teachers' assistants, except Daniel's, had changed their initial beliefs about children with special needs. I thought most had come to value these children more as individuals and learners. An orientation towards the special needs child as a meaning maker seemed to be an attitude I was seeing from the parents. I felt this was important for literacy learning and perhaps helped the inclusion to be successful.

As far as literacy was concerned, all the parents valued literacy and assumed their children would go to school and learn how to read, just as their siblings had done, though admittedly slower. The teachers likewise valued literacy. That is, reading, writing, and language. Some were very articulate in expressing how they viewed literacy learning. The majority of them held the view that literacy learning was a process. Skills had to be learned along the way, but when they talked about literacy teaching and learning for the special

needs child, it seemed that linear skills learning was the most important aspect. This appeared true for all except Kristy's teachers. The adults seemed to lose the idea of literacy as a total process when they started to discuss the special needs child. Some felt inadequate, while others just carried on thinking they should be doing more for the special needs child. Only Kristy's teachers seemed totally comfortable with her programme. I was anxious to explore the adults statements further through the focus literacy tasks with the children, to observe for myself whether some of the adults' statements about the children were indeed valid. This would serve to cross check and validate the data I had obtained from the adults.

Megan was the first child I met who had, through Ava, extensive and ongoing teaching input from the school's special education resource. I had noted that Jennie worked in the resource room with Christine, her teacher assistant, but was not part of any regular resource room group. Nor were any of the other children except Kristy. They were excluded from instruction by the special education resource teacher, a service which regular children with any learning difficulties received. I thought this was odd. This seemed to ignore a valuable school resource. The children spent their one on one tutorial time with teacher assistants who were neither trained special educators nor teachers. All the classroom teachers had expressed some reservations and anxiety about teaching special needs children in their classrooms. I now had a better understanding of this anxiety as, with the exception of Patricia and Matt, they were not receiving the educational support from the special education resource person in their schools. Yes, the others all had a near-to-full-time teacher assistant, but that surely was not enough. The focus for Jennie, David, Daniel,

Chelsea and Tommy had been on placement, with little attention paid to coordinating their educational programmes. Their teachers were all experienced, however, so they sought out their own resources via the children's parents and located by themselves suitable readings. This situation seemed to bear out some of the negative aspects of inclusion noted by researchers (Villa et al., 1993: Roach, 1995).

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS: LITERACY AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL

Many of the instances of the children's experiences with, and participation in, literacy and characteristic uses of literacy were gleaned from their mothers' retrospective of their early years. In addition, I was able, through classroom observations, to add more information about the children's current characteristic uses of literacy and language at school. In this chapter I will view these themes, drawing on data sources to support my findings, including transcripts from conversations, field notes, and artifacts from the children's schools and from the focused literacy activities. I define explicit indicators, which are displayed in text boxes, to support these themes. The nature of this type of research is such that it continuously generates within the researcher interpretation and speculation. I included many of these occurrences as they became part of the investigation process, and assisted in the formulation of the theme indicators.

Theme 2: Experiences with and Participation in Literacy at Home

The home has long been recognized as significant to young children's success with literacy (Almy, 1949; Heath, 1983; Snow & Ninio, 1986; Wells, 1986; Taylor, 1993). It is the numerous daily momentary literacy events that occur in a family that support the child's understandings of literacy, says Williams (1991). Taylor's (1993) study pointed out the ways pre-school children's early experiences with literacy were influenced by parents and siblings.

Of all the children introduced and described in Chapter Four, Chelsea is the only child who is a first born. All the other children David, Daniel, Tommy, Megan, and

Kristy, are second born children. This meant that their mothers had an older sibling for comparison purposes. The children, on the other hand, had a model to follow. All the mothers introduced these children to literacy activities, just like their older siblings had been. Here I want to compare some of the research findings on young children's family literacy experiences, ones which indicate that interactions with literate others in the home have an impact upon these young children when they begin school (Taylor, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). McGill-Franzen & Landford's (1994) and Deford's (1984) work has demonstrated the differences between children's preschool experiences and the implications that these differences have for later literacy learning. I wanted to show that the experiences of the children in this study were not all that different from children coming from similar socio-economic backgrounds. These children came with rich literacy experiences and this knowledge needs to interface with the curriculum they encounter in school and not be ignored. The challenge I faced with some of these children was their limited verbal skills. This meant I had to get clues from what their parents and teachers told me, and what I was able to observe in the home and at school.

All these parents read at home on a regular basis, either magazines, the newspaper or novels. There was clear evidence of reading materials in each home during my home visits. So like the parents in Taylor's (1983) study, reading materials were visible on tables and chairs in the kitchen or family room. There was not a home that I visited that did not have an abundance of reading materials available to both children and adults. Megan's home, for example, had an abundance of reading materials overflowing bookshelves,-

baskets and side tables in her living room. Reading and writing materials were literally everywhere you looked. I couldn't help but ask Megan's mum about this situation:

Dean -..... Is reading quite a big part of your life?

Veronica - Yes, it's something that I grew up in the country. Like we got black and white TV in 1958, so I was 13 when we got a coloured TV. So there isn't very much else to do, so we read books. There were always books at my house. Some of them were teachers manuals. Some of them were books that my mother had bought when she went to teachers' college. Some of them were ones that my grandmother got when she went to teachers' college in 1895. There was a book that was the Statutes of the Province of Canada I mean these were just things that were there to read, so you read. And my husband was about the same way. They read - his family read a lot and it has always been books - different books - [magazines] Equinox, National Geographic - all sorts of different books.....And her brother is the same. Like he was in Grade 3 when somebody said, what was the first big book he read. We said, well when he was in Grade 3, he read the Hunt for Red October, Tom Clancy's book and that was because he had heard us commenting that the movie wasn't as good as the book, and when he forgot to do some assignments in Grade 8, he got to read Homer's Illiad as a punishment, but he enjoyed it, that was the funny part.

D - Well, it is a good story - it really is. Did you ever take her to the library or is the library part of her routine?

V - It's part of the routine. She has her own library card and that started.... like I took her brother to story time and then when she was born, then she would come and listen, because he was there listening to story time...Actually, I did a [local library] story time..... I also discovered the [city] library. They had one for younger children and I took her to it because they had a lot of games and music, so she got to two story times a week. Any time there was anything on - If I took one child, I took the other. (Excerpt from #2 parent interview 7/02/96)

Veronica's story illustrates how much reading is embedded into everyday family life.

Megan saw not only her parents reading, but also her older brother. From a very early age

Megan had the opportunity to see her family engaged in literacy as well as others outside

her family in the community library. Megan's mother, for example, always had books in

her life and passed this on to both her children. Going to the library was part of this

family's routine.

I heard similar stories from Kristy's mum about the importance of the library in their everyday lives. I wondered if this grew out of Kristy's dad's library experiences, which she saw regularly. Could she be modelling the other children in her class as well? I was interested to hear that she did read the books she took from the library, so it was not just a social activity. Mum and Dad capitalize on this literacy activity to expand Kristy's

language and reading by reading with her.⁵² They also made up vocabulary games using the books as props to do this. They felt that this type of literacy activity significantly increased Kristy's oral vocabulary and her language structures.

A particular game they had originally started with their older daughter is described by Mary. The game was played during Kristy's reading time before bedtime. This was, and continues to be, a rich source of pleasure for them. They were consciously teaching Kristy language but, at the same time, they were unconsciously supporting her literacy as well. This was similar to Taylor's (1983) study.

Mary -Kristy and her Dad do their game. He has the nature book that they use and it's pictures and words, and it's a turn taking thing and her Dad might say, you find me the _____. It's different birds and animals but he will ask her and we would know that she has not been exposed to those before. So she has to be able to look at the word and at least phonetically be able to pick out the sounds of it, and then he asks her to find one and she will do it and she gets to ask her Dad to find one. I think that has to be her favourite game.....They take turns locating them and we just think it exposes Kristy to new words and just to new sounds in general and she finds it fun.

D - Who made it up?

M - Actually her Dad had done it like years ago with our 15 year old daughter and the book just got tucked away and then one day we were going through boxes and he goes: "You remember when I used [this] with Alice?" She finds it just as much fun as Alice did, so now, we are, sort of years later we are doing the same thing. But it was funny the book got tucked away and the game just sort of got forgotten about and not played any more and now they [Kristy and Dad] do it. (Excerpt from Kristy's mum's interview 10/04/96 p.1)

Daniel's mother remembers going to the library storytime when she had her young boys at home, indicating that she used the community resources to support literacy for Daniel. He saw others reading outside his immediate family.⁵³ The same was true for David's parents, who both said they were avid readers, usually with two or three books on the go; they provided adult models of readers which he has seen from a very early age. David saw his older sister reading, according to his parents. They too encouraged library visits and, even though they were working parents, they supported David's special needs

worker to take him to the library storytime when he was four. Tommy's mother clearly recalls that they read to both their children:

Amy -.....We always read to both boys from the day we brought them home from the hospital and it could be anything and everything. I know his brother's favourite thing was a computer bookHe never understood a word but he liked the sound of my voice or Joe's voice. He would sit there for hours as an infant and he'd listen. The same thing for Tommy....He had to have more touchy, feelie books, you know the rabbit and the tail and all that stuff but he loved to listen to reading. He would sit for hours and this is a child that people would say, "He has got no attention span." (Excerpt from Tommy's mum's interview 18/12/95 p.1)

The interesting aspect here is that the parents seemed unconcerned as to whether their children understood what was being read to them. That was not the point of the activity. They were naturally making the link to language, as well as developing a warm relationship with their boys through a literacy activity which was second nature to them. What had worked with their older child they did with their second child. This type of modelling was echoed by Daniel's mother when she recalled how her older son learned to read through the nightly bedtime stories.⁵⁴ Jennie's mum started reading early to her just like Tommy's parents had, with no concern about whether she understood. This literacy activity at first was to promote language not to promote reading. This she had learned through the Hanen program, her infant language stimulation program.⁵⁵

Chelsea's Mum was the only one who said that her child was not interested in books as a young child, even though she and her husband tried to read to her. Here is what she said:

Ruth- Oh, reading books. We really strongly believe [in] books and reading and all that stuff. Chelsea hated books until kindergarten . Our first trip to the library then, it made it real for her. I had tried our public library but it did not work. Chelsea always hated books. You could not corral her. You could not tease her into reading the book with you as a baby or as a toddler. She was just too busy doing other things.....Her attention span was such that she just wouldn't sit for the story and Chelsea's favourite books at that time were picture books. Like anything with a picture that I could say, where is the ---point and she would say the word. I have a few books on sign language and she would like that because they are

attractive. A word, a sign, she'd do it - I win - she was excited about that.....Like I said, the first interest she had in books other than the picture books was the trips to the library at school when she was in school. All the other kids were doing it. She said,[I think to herself] "Oh boy I'd better like the books too." And she did.....She was 4 and she started [the interest in books] in junior kindergarten. It was more I'll get the book because everybody else is getting [one] and I'll rip the little pink tag out of the back of it. That was the big thing, but she went. She expressed an interest. She would come home and show me the books and we could bring home half of them at that time. (Excerpt from Chelsea's mum's interview 25/04/96 p.2)

I found this very interesting since Chelsea did not have an older sibling to model literacy behaviour from. It perhaps was just a coincidence that as soon as she started junior kindergarten and saw other kindergarten children going to the library, she became more involved with books. This supports the idea that these children will and do model behaviour of their peers and argues for the importance of their inclusion even at this early age. Ruth went on to say that during this kindergarten time Chelsea was non-verbal, in the sense that she had great difficulty with articulation, so some limited signing was being used at home and at school to assist her communication. Mum used books to promote her language and her involvement with literacy once she showed an interest. Here was another example of an adult using literacy to support a child's language. Another interesting finding about Chelsea's situation was when her younger sibling was born. Chelsea doted on "the baby," Ruth said, until she began to talk. That is when sibling rivalry came into full force.⁵⁶ As Chelsea's younger sister started to become interested in books through her kindergarten experiences, so too, Chelsea started to model her behaviour at home as well.

Reading and encouraging story book reading was obviously an important part of these families' every day lives. I noticed while conducting the interviews with these mums that the fridge in each of the family kitchens served as the family bulletin board, displaying notes, messages, calendars, school work, children's work or pictures and so on. It was

clear that these families were literate and participated in literacy daily. The children then all had opportunities to see the significant adults in their lives reading and writing. It would have been difficult for these adults to conceive of excluding their children from books when their own lives were so enriched by books, circumstances mirroring Taylor's (1983) findings.

In an effort to find out more about these children's early participation in literacy, I asked their parents to recall if they had a favourite book, either when they were younger or even now. My own 30 years experience of working with parents and teachers had led me to observe that parents who read regularly to their children have no difficulty remembering a favourite book. In some cases, the parents were able even to remember the title of the book and groan about having to read it so many times to their child. The child had pestered the parent to read it over and over, until the parent had committed the text to memory. It seemed logical that if they were read to on a regular basis these children would do the same. To my delight, I got some very interesting answers from asking this type of question. The answers from the mothers offered another glimpse, not only into the children's early experiences with literacy, but also into their participation in literacy .

Tommy's mum remembers not only reading to both her boys from a very early age but also using books for language stimulation. This pleasurable activity often turned reading into a game. Like Megan's and Kristy's mums, Amy remembers the kinds of books Tommy liked, noting the rhyming books were his favourite. He developed very definite tastes in book topics. His favourite was the Christmas theme. I wondered if his great preference for the Christmas theme was due to the strong visual and auditory

emotional impact that surrounds this topic.⁵⁷ Daniel's mum had no difficulty remembering his favourite books either, and she was able to recall titles. Books were part of his bed routine and books went along on car trips too. Both Daniel and Tommy preferred books which were interactive or "touchy-feelie" in some way. Was this because both these children had difficulties acquiring oral language, I wondered.⁵⁸ It had been natural for Jennie's mum to start to read to her daughter at a very early age but her experiences with the Hanen early language stimulation reinforced the idea.⁵⁹ David's Mum, with the help of his older sister Violet, who was listening to this discussion at the time, remembers reading Richard Scarey books to David at a very early age. Joan described how David's special needs worker read to him then and continues to read to him even now. David, like the other children, developed preferences for dictionary type books which are still some of his favourites today.⁶⁰ The recurring theme of using story reading as a natural way to stimulate language was used with David, as it had been with Jennie, Megan, Chelsea, Kristy, Tommy, and Daniel.

Summary of Theme 2 Indicators

Much has been written about children who are read to, suggesting that they learn to recognize the written form of language from the very beginning. They learn that language can be elaborated to explain things that are often not in the context of the speech. They learn, in other words, the decontextualized language used in reading and writing (Olsen, 1984; Stern, 1977; Cazden, 1972; Rosenblatt, 1985; Taylor, 1988). They learn the interpretation of language in terms of particular texts, and social contexts, in which it is

used. This is one type of school language all children need to be familiar with. The picture that emerged for me from these families was one where all the parents were actively involved in their child's oral language learning by directing and structuring their speech in accordance with suggestions from speech language pathologists. All parents tend to direct a form of language towards their children that is easier for them to learn from, but these parents probably did it more. Written language in the form of stories and the structures used in those stories was one of the powerful tools they used to help their children create understandings of the story worlds. In this participatory process, literacy learning began right from the very beginning of these children's experiences. This provided a scaffolding which was significant for them and for all children who acquire written language as well as speech. This theme's indicators are in the text box above.

Theme 3: Characteristic Uses of Literacy: At Home

When it came to finding examples of the children's first and continuing uses of literacy, there were so many examples, it was frankly hard to choose from the multiple data pool. I wanted to gain some understanding to the lead-up to their present literacy at school, so this meant talking to the mothers about the children's early uses of literacy at home, then choosing representative samples from the children's written artifacts to illustrate the variety of written products these children produced over the years.

The Children's Early Uses of Literacy at Home

Chelsea's Mum had tried to read to her daughter during her pre-school years but couldn't catch her attention. She did not give up. She surrounded Chelsea with Sesame Street tapes and children's music. She recognized early that Chelsea needed very colourful, interactive types of books to match her 'busy,' exploratory personality. Chelsea may not have been very interested in being read to as a toddler, but she was very keen on participating in writing. She would write on walls if mum did not provide paper, as well as supervision. Ruth describes Chelsea's first use of print, which was very concrete, her name and her pre-school friends' names:

Ruth - ...Chelsea has always wanted to write - just like Mummy and Daddy. Right from the time she could even hold a pencil, she would try. I guess about nursery school age. She was 3.....[and] always modelling the other children. If they like it, she likes it too.[The] first recognition of her name, that was nursery school. Chelsea would go through the list of the kids in her class and tell me all their names. She has a very good sight memory. She is very visual. (Excerpt from Chelsea's mum interview 25/04/96 p.3)

So here was a child who was noticing her name and the names of others, not unlike the children in Taylor's (1983) and William's (1991) studies. Recognizing their names and trying to copy it or to reproduce it in some fashion was common for Kristy, Tommy, Daniel, Megan, David, and Jennie. Here is what the mothers said about their children learning to recognize and learn their names. These were the children's early writing attempts to use literacy:

Kate - ...Kristy loves books. I would have to say that, probably from the age of 2, Kristy has enjoyed books and even at that age she would initiate it, crawling up in our lap or bringing a book to us or even just passing it to us. But even before the age of 2, from birth onward, Kristy, she would always be with us and we would be reading to her older sister so she has always..... She probably didn't initiate it until about age 2 but [she] was always a part of that reading time..... Her first attempts to draw: - she scribbled for a long time. I remember like even in the doctor's office or in waiting rooms or something, give her a scrap of paper and it would usually just be lines or scribbles for a long time and I think the first thing that she started to draw and she still loves it [it] is [drawing] rainbows. Like rainbows had to be one of the first things she started and I think she has progressed nicely..... I would say I'm not really sure about the recognition of

her name, but I am guessing probably maybe at the age of 4, when she first went to nursery school. And I say that because I remember the nursery school teacher saying to me she had, like place names for all the children and she was just amazed - one of the things that floored her when Kristy first started was she was just fascinated by the fact that Kristy could take all the name place cards and she not only recognized her own, but other peoples. And she would have them set out at the proper tables. I think Kristy has a good memory. I think she has a good memory capacity and I think that's why she is able to recognize sight words and stuff quite easily. She has a fantastic memory..... It might have even been before, but I would say age 4 definitely, when she was at nursery school (Excerpts from Kristy's mum's interview 10/04/96 p.4)

Tommy's mum recalls him learning his name with great delight. She describes how she saw him using literacy:

Amy -As far as reading himself, he would read little bits and it was from memory. I don't think it was from sight recognition of the word itself but it was just he knew the story and he knew if you skipped a word. He would look at you. He wouldn't tell you. He would look at you until you put the right word in. I think it sort of happened around 4 or 5. We read to him every night. In the beginning, we would read to him, I don't know 5 times a day. It didn't matter - breakfast, lunch, dinner, whatever. He'd pull out books. He would put them all on the carpet. He used to like placing things end to end and it didn't matter. They could be books. They could be hockey sticks. They could be spoons from my kitchen drawer. But he had a real thing for this and we'd just work our way. Whatever Tom did, we would try use what he was doing, I guess, in an educational way, but we always read to him and we even had Tyler read to him, and he enjoyed that. We would read on the tape recorder and then he'd play it in his room and he would practice. We could hear him practising.

Dean - Following along with the book?

A.- Yes, sometimes following along with the book. But practising the sounds of the words.He would not do this in front of us, but this was his thing. He had to do this in his room, privately, and he did this every night. The first word he ever learned to write was his name and he wrote that at nursery school. He couldn't write anything else and Tom actually can't write using his hands. He has to use a computer because of a muscle problem.

D - So what did he use then?

A - Well, he would write with a big fat marker or a big piece of chalk..... But writing for Tommy was very difficult, but writing his name was a nice experience so he wrote it everywhere, sometimes on the floor, sometimes on the wall, on the table, on the drapes. But he really liked to do that and I think that all happened around the age of 4 more or less....Reading habits: Now he likes to read on the computer. We have the Living Books Series. We have Tortoise and the Hare, Teacher's Trouble, Arthur's Birthday, stuff like that, and Grandma and Me and he loves those books..And I think it's because they are musical. They are musical languages. They follow a real rhyme of some sort - rhythm..... Going to the library: Tom is not all that keen on it. We did it weekly when he went to nursery school and we'd just say, let's go to the library. After that he just was not interested. I don't know if it was cold or just overwhelming or what.

D - Did you go to any storytimes or anything like that?

A - We did all the pre-school storytimes but Tom has been in nursery school since he was 2 and he went all week. (Excerpt from Tommy's mum's interview 8/02/96 p.2)

It has been noted by other researchers (Clay, 1991, Sulzby ,1985) that children often start to recognize the letters in their names first. These same letters, because of the emotional significance they carry, often become the first letters to appear in children's early writing. Daniel's mother recalls what he was doing while learning to recognize and print the first letter of his name:

Barbara -.....I would have to say he probably started printing with more focus in nursery school, where children had artwork.....He would maybe put a D for his name on his painting...(Excerpt from Daniel's mum's interview 22/03/96 p.1)

Megan's mother, Veronica, said her daughter could recognize her own name and the names of the others in her nursery school, just like the other children. She goes on to describe how her daughter used her literacy at home. It seems she spontaneously gave herself drill and practice sessions to supplement what she was learning in school:

Veronica -...Well, she just started magic markers, pencils and crayons at a very early age and she would just always, doodle I guess was the word, and she would start - they would give her work at school and she would start doing [it] at home because Megan always liked to practice things until she was perfect and she didn't like displaying the skill until she knew she could do it. She has got a lot better now. She has got more confidence, but at the beginning she would practice a lot of things at home and then she would show them that she could do it at school.....That was mainly it because I know at nursery school she would come home and she would practice things and when she drew a person it would just be a blob and now she'll do pictures but still, when she starts doodling, she just does numbers and letters a lot of times and just reams of it.....Well, now she [is] starting to copy book covers so you have complete words that she is starting rather than just doing letters. So Saturday morning she was sitting at the table with the Bear Scouts - copying it.....I would say it was probably when she was about 5. She started doodling. Now we didn't put her in school then. We kept her in nursery school until she was 6 but she would start doodling then because they would do things at the nursery school. She was in an integrated nursery school and they would do stuff and she would try and copy it and then she would try more [of] the different activities that they had in kindergarten with Miss S. and when she got to Grade 1 and 2, we tried different ones. We tried a dot to dot a lot of times..... So she was about 5 then when she would have started sort of doodling [on] her own..... Grade 1 where she was picking out letters and stuff.

Dean - When did she first learn to recognize her name?

V - She knew her name in nursery school.

D- She could recognize it in print?

V - In print. Because [of] what they did when she went to the segregated pre-school. They each had their own hook and her name was above the hook. Now, she knew where her hook was but then I remember when she was at one of the parties and she said Megan and she pointed at her name and we tried different ones getting her to write it. We could get different letters but we could never get the letters in the right order and it wasn't till Grade 1 that she learned to write her name.

Dean -What about composing? Have you seen her want to write a letter or note to you or anything like that?

Veronica - ..She'll bring me cards that she has written like Happy Birthday or Merry Christmas and she'll tell me what they are. It will be a jumble of letters. You will recognize some of the letters. She's trying to put a Merry Christmas together.(Excerpts from Megan's mum's interviews 7/12/96 p. 1 & 2 and 12/12/95 p.2)

Veronica recognized and accepted Megan's first composing efforts, thus verifying for her daughter that she could use literacy to communicate a thought and her feelings. This was a very powerful message about literacy use to share with her daughter.

Roy, David's dad, remembered David being able to recite the alphabet at a very early age. He did not realize that I suspected that these children would show an interest in literacy at very early ages, especially if they had been exposed to literate environments. Here's what he said about David's early literacy. Joan, David's mother, goes on to describe David's first writing. Their comments only confirmed for me what the other families had already recalled about their children's literacy use. All these children had early experiences with literacy. This meant that they all began to participate and use literacy early as well. Indeed, their literacy activities were not unlike:

Roy -....I think David completely throws your theories. By his second birthday, he knew the whole alphabet....[He could] tell us what the letter was before he was 2 and he could recite the alphabet with just 2 or 3 mistakes by his 2nd birthday.....

Dean - Did he do any scribble writing? Did he try to write out his name at all after he recognized it?

Joan - Yes, he writes a lot of names now. He is still fascinated with names.

R- He always used to write the names of all the kids in his class.

D - He was pulling them out of his head?

J - Names always. To get David to write more he will copy, type or copy things from places. In some ways, I think his spoken and his written language seem to go together. When he speaks, he leaves out a lot of little words. When he reads, he leaves out a lot of little words, I think. (Excerpt from David's parents interview 8/02/96 p.1)

I found this observation of Joan's very interesting. She was noticing how closely linked David's first written products were to his oral language and raising the question of the links between the two. It seemed all these parents implicitly assumed there are strong links, since they used literacy activities to stimulate oral language. Joan was the only parent who explicitly mentioned this link through her observation. To be fair, she was the only parent who was a practising teacher of young children, which might account for her explicit observation. Jennie's mum, Kate, was equally adept at observing and describing what her daughter did with literacy as well. She recalled Jennie recognizing her names and her early

writing attempts. Her uses of literacy are not unlike Megan's. In the following passage,

Kate brings this up to date by describing what Jennie does at home now:

Dean - What about writing? When did she first pick up crayons or markers or anything like that?

Kate - Well, I wouldn't say she did that on her own. I'd say because of infant stym.... Infant stimulation... she would have to... They would suggest we do this.. give her crayons and I'm sure that sort of thing started with them.....It's more on a schedule.

D - Yes ,and how old would she have been then?

K - It was zero up to three years then when we...

D - So you would have been giving her crayons or markers or something ?

K - Sure, paint...She loved to paint.... Not markers, too much.

D - When did Jennie first try to write? Even her name or a letter or Mum.... anything like that?

K - Oh...when she was two and half to three, when she first went to nursery school probably.

D - Now was she doing any scribbling at that point..which is a form of writing?

K - Yeah, yes because they used to have at the nursery school the big sheets of paper and every day they would do that...

D - So she was around three when she was starting to ...?

K - Two and a half when she went...two and a half.

D- And she was doing it then?

K - I'm sure she was because everyone else in the class was doing [it]...that was the part of their daily activity... They would have a circle time and so on ..

D - Yes. When did she start to try to read on her own, really on her own? Can you remember at all?

K - Mmmm, I'm not sure. Ahhh..grade one maybe?

D - But she was doing pretend reading up to this time?

K - Not a lot.

D - Some?

K - I don't know.

D - When did Jennie first begin to try to write her name? You know to really write a "J" or an "e" or anything?

K - Oh, that would have been in school, nursery school. They had to do it...The regular kids had to do it ...so she would have been three...I remember the resource teacher having me, well, having me help her make "j's" and what not ...early!

D - Does Jennie ever ask you questions about print?

K - How do you spell something, do you mean?

D - Yes, that's a question about print. Sure. Or what does this say? Does she ever ask that?

K - A word that's already written?

D - Yes, either a sign or anything?

K - Oh, she'll see a package.. and she'll say what: "Does this say?"

D - What types of reading and writing activities does Jennie now do at home?

K - Her homework, and we are lucky if we get that done!....Oh...she likes to make...cards for people...especially if she has done something bad...and she'll go and write "and I'm sorry"

D - That's great. She can communicate a message with print?

K - Oh sure, she likes to write her own birthday cards, that sort of thing. (Excerpt from Jennie's Mum interview 19/04/95 p.3)

Jennie will engage in pretend reading to her dolls, according to her Mum. Using this imitation of reading was a favourite activity for her. Even though she was capable of

reading simple stories, she chose to do this instead. ⁶¹ I wondered if using pretend reading allowed her to explore language more and be creative with her oral language as she experimented with its uses. Jennie had the expressive language abilities to do this, so Jennie engaged in this less mature literacy activity. This was a feature of her literacy learning. As I was to find in later examples in this chapter from Megan and Kristy, the complexity of literacy learning appeared to be stretched out more for them with many examples of returning to earlier immature activities before moving forward to more mature ones. This appeared to be a sort of "revise, consolidate system" before embracing new literacy knowledge.

Tommy's expressive verbal language, on the other hand, would not allow him to use this type of oral imitation of literacy. However, Amy, Tommy's mother, said that he responded to reading by an adult, but in a different way than Jennie. He used his memory of the story to respond to the text:

Amy -...While he's got no attention span for topics that didn't interest him, but if you sat with Disney books, he would sit and listen and it was basically Tommy's memory that helped him a lot, even though he didn't have language. He knew if you made a mistake or if you skipped a line, he would wait and not let you turn the page. (Excerpt from Tommy's mum's interview 18/12/95 p.1)

Although Amy said Tommy does not have language, what she was really commenting on here was his lack of oral response but he was able to indicate to her that he understood text. Here we have a minimally verbal child responding to reading by an adult at home, engaging in a literacy activity that seemed to be his way to use literacy.

Some Types of Written Products from Home

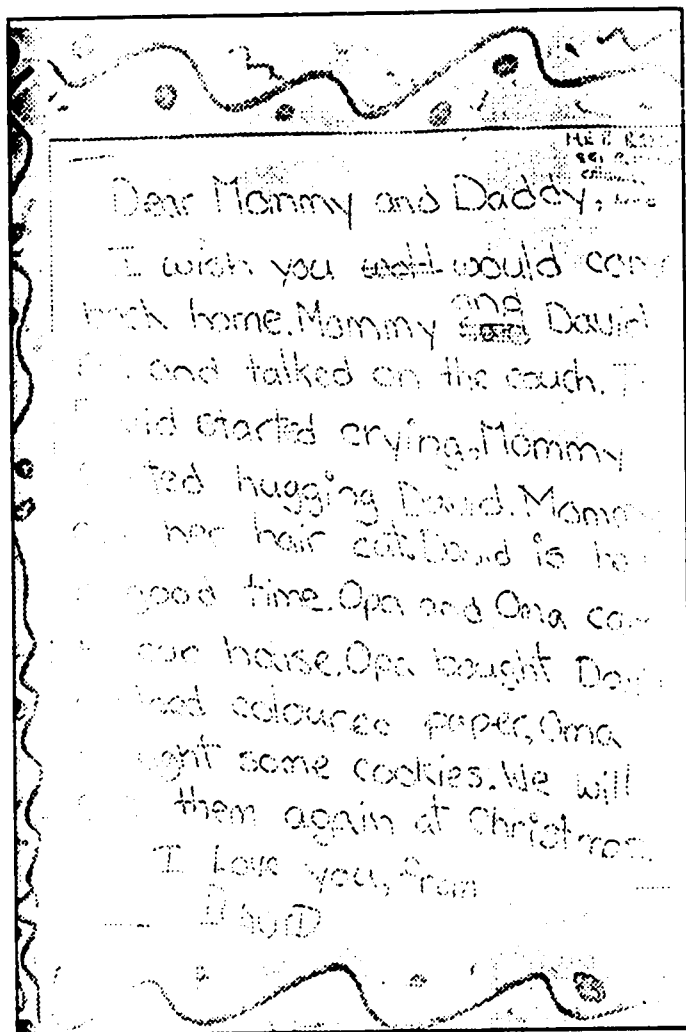


Figure 5-1 David's letter to his parents scribed by his sister at home.

All of the parents were quite thrilled to share and discuss the circumstances of their children's written products as it confirmed for them that their children did indeed have some competencies. Here was the evidence. I ended up with literally boxes of artifacts from the parents. They gave me samples of everything from letters, cards, drawings with scribble writing, their first writing attempts, if they still had them, and samples from their communication books in which care givers and teachers had entered their observations of the children's literacy

uses. There was so much material that I decided to pick representative samples from this pool of data to illustrate the types of written products the children had produced over the years. The children used literacy for various purposes, and in doing so, they demonstrated different components in the writing process for message formulation, encoding, mechanical

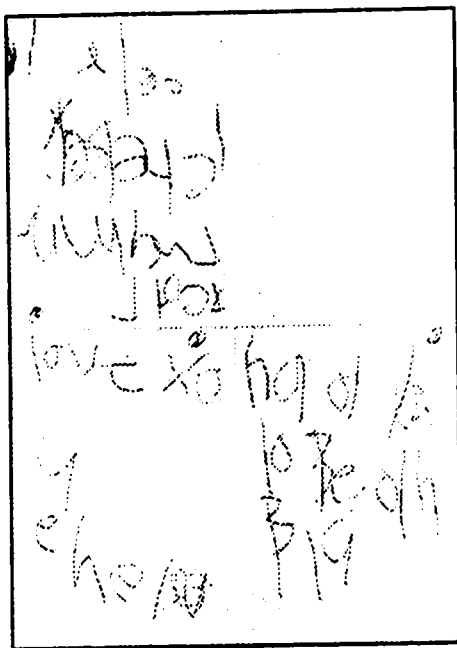


Figure 5-2 Chelsea's fold out card to her mother.

formation, and decoding (Dyson, 1981). Some of the artifacts originated at home while others had come from school situations.

Cards, Notes, Letters, Envelopes

David showed he understood the power of print when his mother handed me a one word note with the word 'sad' on it. He had apparently given this to her when she went out, illustrating that he could produce a note or card on his own to express

his emotions. He had produced this product on construction paper addressed to Mommy.

The paper was folded and inside he had written

'sad' in black marker, then signed his name.

Unfortunately, the card was written on dark blue construction paper and did not reproduce well.

David's sister helped him to "compose" a letter to his parents which he signed. (See Figure 5-1) He knew that he could keep in touch with them while they were away. You can 'hear' David's voice in the letter and see how his sister scaffolded the language for him.

Figure 5-2 is the folded out copy of a card

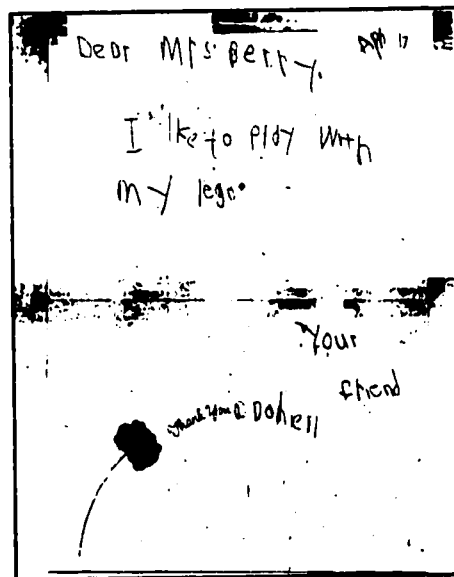


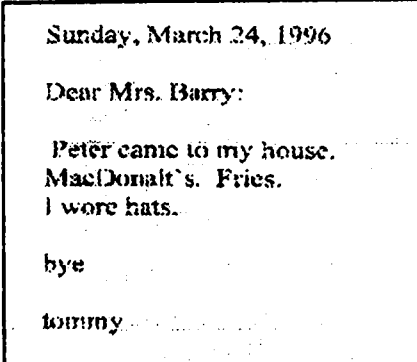
Figure 5-3 Daniel's card to me answering my letter written at home.

Chelsea wrote and which Mum had saved. Chelsea had written it herself. It has some mingling of words and letters and very purposeful writing, with a clearly visible ending in the lower left hand part of her page 3. Notice "...love xo..u Chelsea," indicating that she was familiar with how to end a letter with an appropriately affectionate ending. She too used literacy to express her emotions.

Answering a letter I wrote to the children was an optional activity, one which Daniel did with his mother's help. His answer to my letter is in Figure 5-3 in the form of a thank you card. Here is yet another example of not only an experience with literacy, but also of participating in its use. Daniel's letter arrived by post, so he had the experience of mailing the letter as well.

Computer Written Products

Tommy answered my letter to him by using the computer. He wrote two versions of the same letter to me (see Figure 5-4 and 5-5). I wondered which was the first draft. Clearly he was experimenting. Notice how he dressed up his letter in Figure 5-5 with icons and used inverted spellings. He chose to send his letters via



Sunday, March 24, 1996
 Dear Mrs. Barry:
 Peter came to my house.
 MacDonalt's. Fries.
 I wore hats.
 bye
 tommy

Figure 5-4 Tommy's first draft letter no icons experiments.

his school so I picked them up when I returned to his class. He hand addressed the envelope in Figure 5-6, which I thought was a personal touch. Or did he want to show me he could write with paper and pen, but it took longer? When I inquired about the circumstances around this letter writing, I was told that he wrote his letters with the help of

his homecare tutor, who was asked to help him scaffold the language. Tommy was very good at eliciting this help by stopping and staring at the screen or engaging in low level self-styme, such as gentle body swaying or finger movement at face level. If you then asked him if he wanted help, yes or no, he would give you an answer. He appeared not to be able to ask this type of question himself, but required the verbal prompt for him to respond to.

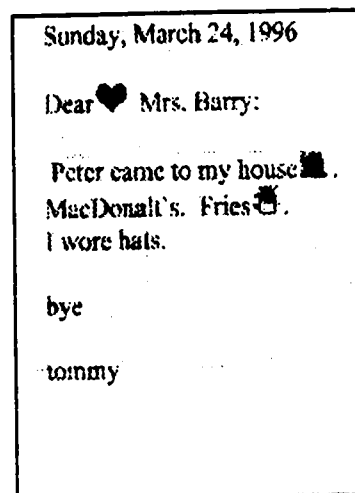


Figure 5-5 Tommy's letter to me using computer icons, his way to draw.

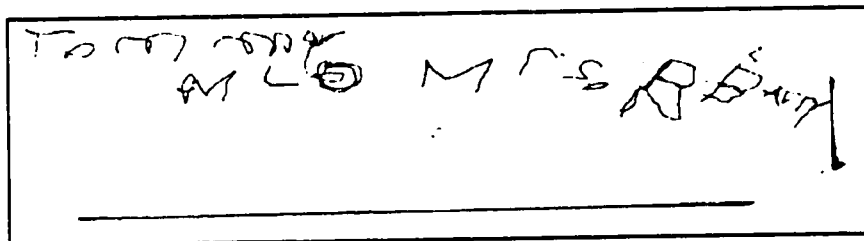


Figure 5-6 Tommy's handwritten envelope that he hand delivered to me at school.

Messages

Jennie, Veronica and Kristy wrote notes to friends often. Here Jennie wrote notes to her friends in pretend cursive script, with graphic symbols for 'I love' in Figure 5-7(a).

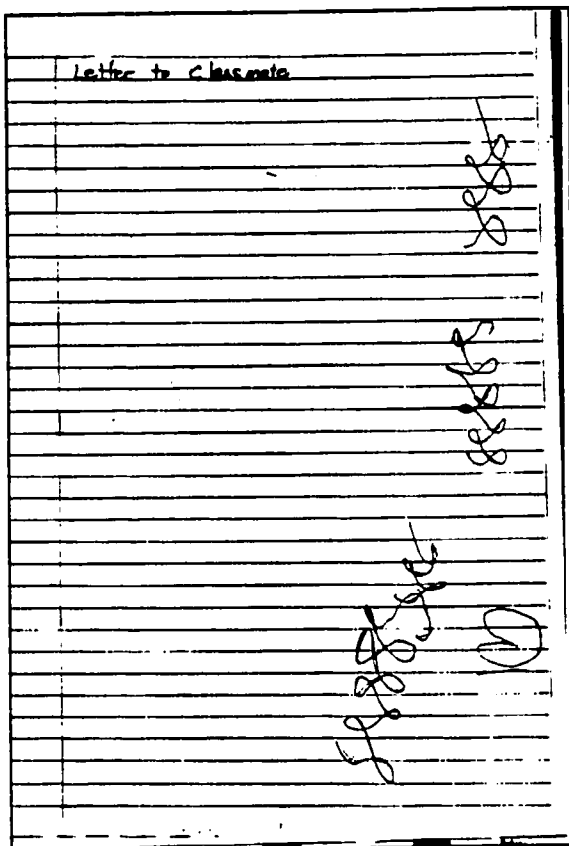


Figure 5-7(a) Jennie's graphic note to her classmate.

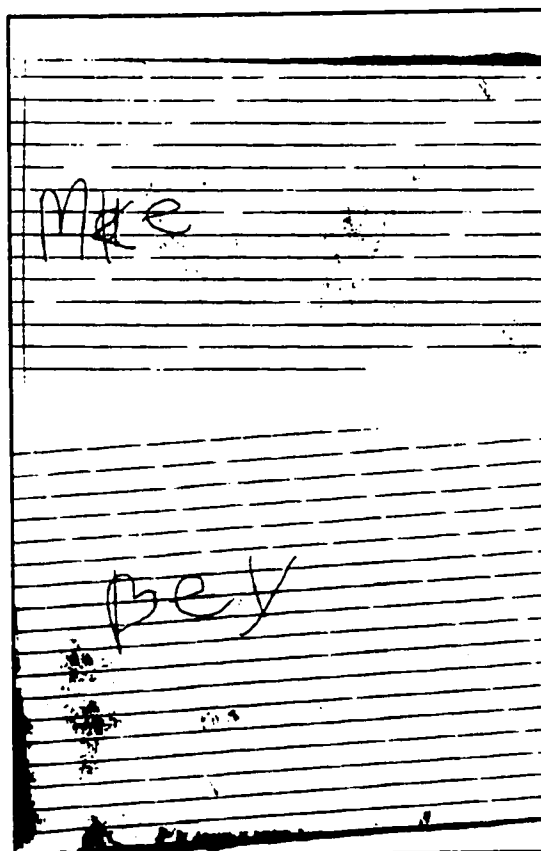


Figure 5-7(b) Jennie's hand made envelopes for letters to her monkey and baby doll

She also wrote messages to her monkey and baby doll (see Figure 5-7(b) using lined paper, which she had folded over, sealing it with scotch tape to make a kind of envelope. She had learned to use literacy to express her emotions as well as to send a message. These showed how she had practised this skill at home, then used it in school. Veronica, Megan's mother, was not sure what Figure 5-8 was about. She knew that this was a telephone message that Megan took while they were out. Unfortunately, Megan could not remember what the message was about. She was drawing and ripped out her page to take down the

message. Notice how she attempted to write down the time the message came in and what it was about. She knew this type of information was important in message taking.

Lists

Megan practised writing a lot at home according to her mother, Veronica, who always had paper and pencils available for her daughter. Mum said, that

Megan loved to practice writing and

drawing all the time. She filled volumes of pads with scribbling as a young child and now appeared to be working on letters and words. Figure 5-9 is an example of Megan intermingling letters. Or are they attempted words to describe her drawing? Her mother was not certain. Figure 5-10 is an example of Megan practising her spelling words. There were literally pages and pages of these types of writing in her home.

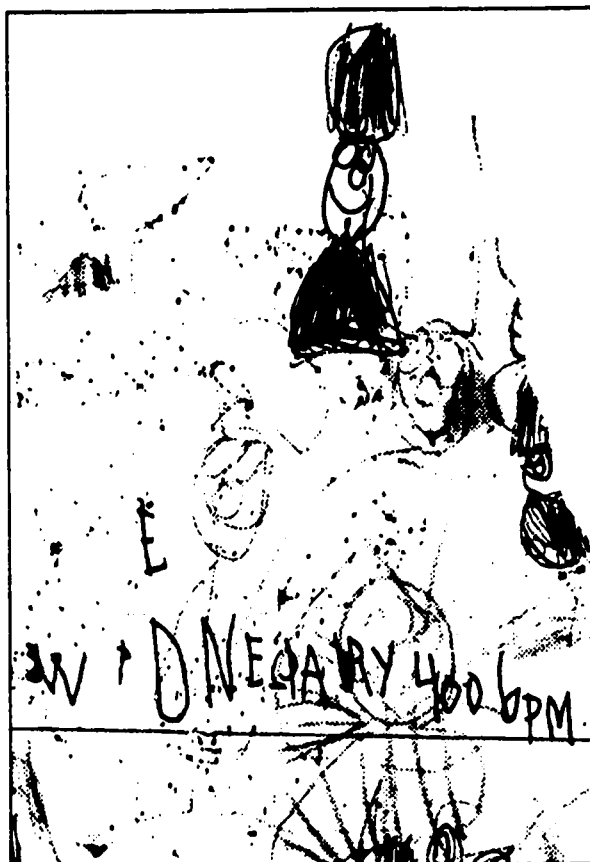


Figure 5-8 Megan's attempt to take a phone message.

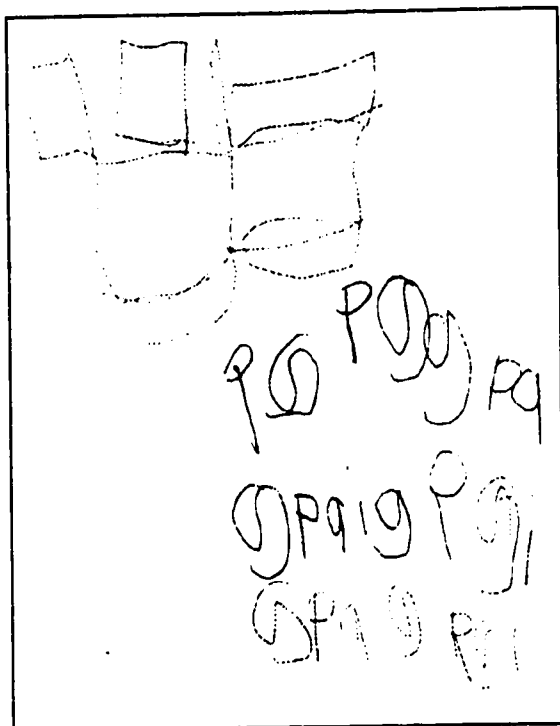


Figure 5-9 Megan exploring the alphabet letter formation, and invented words to go with her drawing at home.

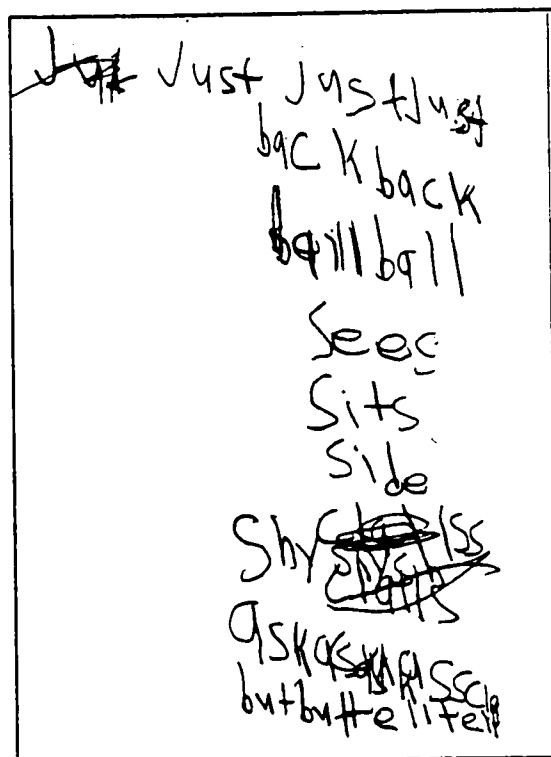


Figure 5-10 Megan practicing her spelling words by making lists.

Scribble

Daniel's mom sent me Figure 5-11 when I asked her for samples of Daniel's attempts to 'write' at home. She had not thought to keep these early attempts at writing until I asked for some. She remembered him doing scribble writing as a young child. She asked him to write for her while I was working with Daniel. Figure 5-11 was the result. Notice how his scribble writing resembles cursive writing: it fills the page but makes little attempt to stay on the lines except correctly to follow the direction. The children in Daniel's class were learning cursive writing at the time, so this was good imitation. All the other mothers remembered their children doing scribble writing but did not think to save

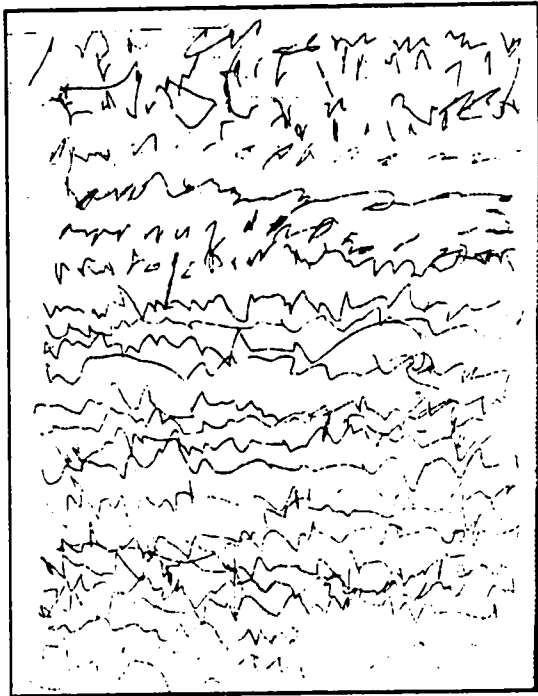


Figure 5-11 Daniel's pretend cursive writing done at home, illustrating his advanced scribbling - he wrote a letter.

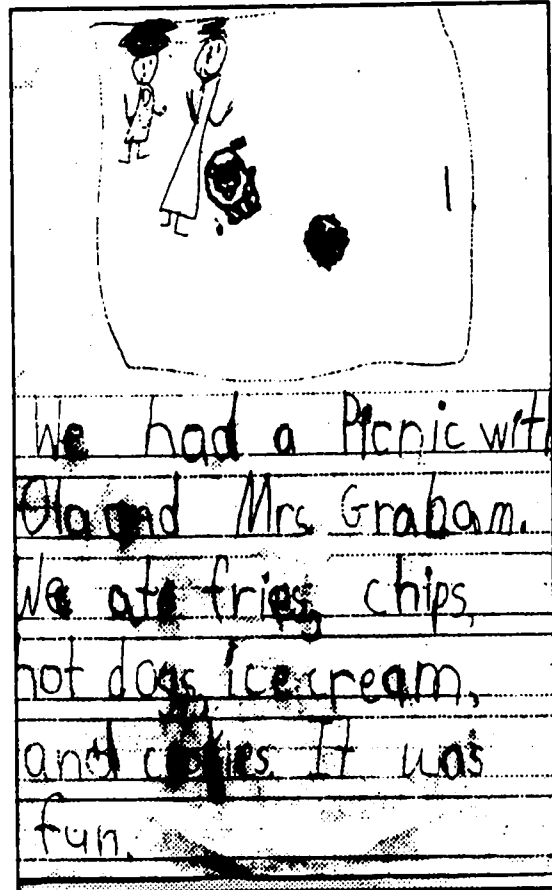


Figure 5-12 Kristy's story about an important event, written at home during grade 3. Note effect of rehearsal and eraser marks.

any. Chelsea's mother did show me her first scribbles on the living room wall, which she offered to take a picture of before they painted over her "writing". These were all examples of literacy experiences.

Writing and Drawing

Kristy's mother shared the piece in Figure 5-12 from grade 3, which Kristy wrote at home when she was nine. The piece was about a picnic she had with a new schoolmate. It was a homework assignment. Here she recorded a memorable experience. She and Mum had orally rehearsed this piece before she wrote. This was her final draft. She illustrated

the piece, but the text is the more important component of this piece. She used the expressive mode to inventory what was eaten and with whom (Britton, 1970). She gives us a glimpse about how she felt with her ending, "...it was fun," a simple but effective ending to this composition. She had begun to see language as a way to express her inner self. (Temple et al., 1993).

Multi-page books

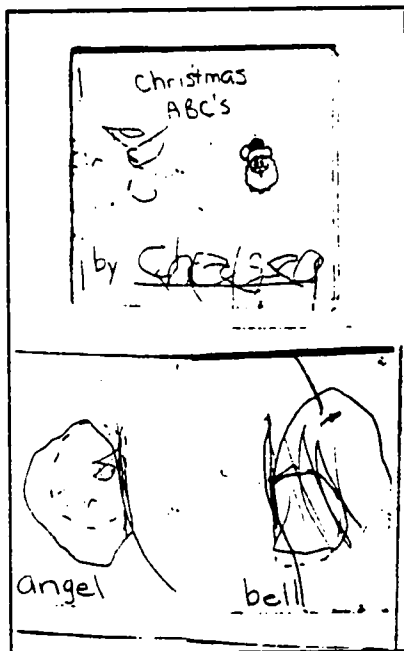


Figure 5-13 Chelsea's multi-page book, done in grade 1. Note the overwriting in the pages below. Her name is her own composing.

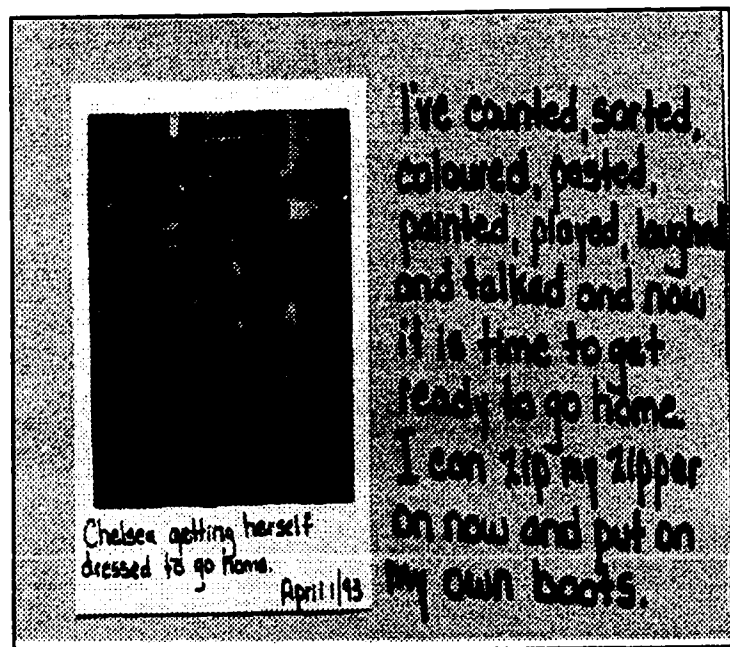


Figure 5-14 Excerpt from "Chelsea's First Year of School Book," a language experience multi-page book.

I chose from Chelsea's writing two pieces her mother had saved from her kindergarten and grade one classes. Both these pieces, Figures 5-13 and 5-14, illustrated Chelsea's experiences with multi-page products, which are made to resemble books. Figure

5-13 is an alphabet book, "Christmas ABC's". In this sample, Chelsea was guided to do overwriting of the letters while the teacher wrote appropriate words to accompany the letters, like a traditional ABC book, that mirrored the kinds I had seen in Chelsea's house. The second example, Figure 5-14, was totally written by the teacher assistant for Chelsea and was illustrated with photos as a language experience story. Only the first page is reproduced here, but the book is ten pages long and bound with a spiral binding. Even now, Ruth says Chelsea enjoys looking at the pictures, remembering and talking about her recorded experiences in these books.

Summary of Theme 3 Indicators at Home

These graphics showed, Daniel's and Chelsea's explorations with paper and pencil, learning the distinctive features of the alphabet, getting to recognize the letters in their name, sorting out the relationship of words. David, Megan, Jennie, Tommy, and Kristy had earlier done this, but they had moved on and begun to explore the way words sound and their representation in text. All these illustrations demonstrate the necessary prerequisites to becoming a writer. These simple constructions represent the beginning of composition (Temple et al., 1993). All these parents seemed to know instinctively that there is a continuity between their children's speech development and writing. They encouraged their children to compose even before they could write in the conventional sense. I was struck by the commonality among the artifacts these mothers shared with me. These artifacts had been generated either at home or at school. All the children were in different school settings. To my knowledge, there had been no shared information about the children

between any of the schools, nor had there been any common instructional programme used. What became clear to me reviewing these artifacts was that these children were all active constructors of meaning and had been for a long time. They were at various points in the composing process but they were composing nonetheless and needed to be recognized as emergent writers.

All the children were actively experiencing, participating and using literacy activities at home. This had been occurring from an early age. I was not surprised to find this happening, in their homes but I was surprised at the extent. These were parents who valued literacy and encouraged it in all their children. What was surprising was the similarities I found in the early literacy behaviour amongst all the children in the study. There were many more similarities than differences. For example, I found all these children began to participate in literacy activities during their pre-school years, mimicking their older siblings or parents. Even Chelsea, who initially was not very interested in books, became interested when she saw her sister's interest in books. Chelsea's classmates at pre-school further stimulated and fostered her interest in books. All the parents read in the presence of their children. All the children saw their parents writing in their home/school communication books. The children daily carried their communication books back and forth between home and school with the awareness that their teacher and parent wrote "important things" in them. The children saw their parents' writing materials near the telephone to take notes down during telephone conversations, so the idea of note sending and taking was familiar. All the parents displayed their children's work prominently in the home. It was valued. Often the kitchen fridge assumed the role of a home bulletin board with children's work

posted there, along with school newsletters, the calendar, and other notes. These types of literacy practices were not unlike the practices of the families described in the Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines' (1988) book Growing Up Literate. The authors compared literate practices between diverse groups and arrived at the conclusion that despite the differences in the families' education and socio-economic levels,

Indicators for Characteristic Uses of Literacy at Home

- child initiates reading/writing
- child is prompted by another to use reading and writing
- child uses writing for a variety of purposes:
- produces or has produced scribble
- demonstrates drawing and writing intermingled to present a graphic and/or part of a graphic
- has experiences with or demonstrates writing a label and/or caption for a drawing
- demonstrated a single word arranged vertically to resemble list
- produces a product to resemble a card or note
- produces a message
- produces parts of and/or all of the alphabet
- produces a product which resembles an addressed envelope
- demonstrates a product resembling a letter
- has had experiences with or demonstrates multi-page written book like products
- produces computer generated written products to represent any of the above

the types and uses of literacy were similar. I found this to be true with these children and their families, regardless of the individual child's special needs. Despite the variability in their verbal language development, the family literacy practices were very similar. As Williams (1991) found in her case studies of profoundly deaf children, the differences in the interactions around the books were related to the children's ability to communicate with their parents, not in the actual family literacy practices. All these parents assumed their children would learn to read and provided a rich literate environment to facilitate the development of that skill.

Having talked to these parents and observed some of their literacy practices at home, it was surprising therefore, that nobody mentioned going through a regular kindergarten intake interview with the teacher. These are interviews conducted by the kindergarten

teacher and the parent. They usually address some of the literacy skills that the child has acquired at home. Remember that Megan, Chelsea, and David all started kindergarten at their community schools and continued in the same schools. Jennie, Kristy, Tommy, and Daniel stayed for only a year in their community during their first school years. These children were considered to have special needs and therefore required different procedures, such as an IPRC, to even enter the regular the school system. The school authorities were not interested in what the children could do in literacy. There seemed to be an implicit assumption that these special needs children came into the school environment as blank slates with no experiences with, participation in or accomplishment of literacy usage. This was certainly the conclusion I came to, after reviewing each child's early years with the parents. While this was a not uncommon attitude years ago with all young children entering kindergarten, work on emergent literacy has become much more known (Read, 1971; Clay, 1975). I would have thought that contemporary kindergarten teachers now days, would assume that all their kindergartners come into school with some literacy experiences from home. Apparently this assumption did not extend to these special needs children.

I found it quite remarkable that not one parent mentioned a kindergarten or grade one teacher asking them about early literacy experiences at home. The fact that no one mentioned an intake interview in which the child's early literacy was discussed might have been partly my omission, because I did not think to ask this question directly. I think there may have been other reasons operating here. They all told me about the resistance they had faced. They all told me about nursery school and childcare workers acting as advocates for them in IPRCs or case conferences. Even most of the advocacy, according to the official

minutes I reviewed, seemed to surround the individual child's ability to fit into a group socially. Such items as staying on task, self help skills, being quiet and compliant, or self-toileting abilities were put forth as positives to inclusion. The mention of pre-literacy, or even numeracy skills, were largely absent. Yet every one of these children had some level of literacy skills. It was as if the first primary teachers they encountered did not share this belief. Most of their present teachers appeared to believe these children were capable of learning how to read and write, but only with very structured programs. Kristy's teachers did not believe this was necessary. I think perhaps this is a learning process that the teachers must go through during the inclusion process. It would be interesting to research whether the kindergarten intake processes changed for special needs children in any of these particular schools. It would be interesting to see if the legacy of these children is to serve as a reference point for future special needs pupils. Unfortunately, this was beyond the scope of this study.

Theme 3: Characteristic Uses of Literacy: At School

Under this theme I looked for evidence of characteristic strategies use by the children for over many different kinds of activities. Before children can actually read a printed page, they learn much about print. The focused literacy tasks at school were chosen to elicit the extent to which the children knew about specific strategies. I was particularly curious to see whether any of the features described in the literature from non-special needs emergent readers and writers would be recognizable in the written products and oral

reading of these children (Clay 1975, 1978, 1985, 1991; Teale & Sulzby 1986; Ferreiro & Teberosky 1982; Dyson 1985; Gentry & Gillet, 1993).

I wanted to observe the children engaged in tasks that were as close to the types of activities they met every day in their classroom. I was curious to see if the children were learning to do school type literacy activities (Dyson, 1984). I believed that cognitive learning, over time, is the result of this type of engagement in school tasks. The specific skills the children displayed as they played the four Tic Tac Toe games gave some hints with respect to their letter identification, letter/sound identification, letter/initial word, and sight words. But written language is a complex system. The children's abilities could not be inferred from success or failure in these specific skills. By analyzing their vocabulary writing, the dictation and samples of their other writings, their handling of specific tasks about concepts about print, and their continuous text reading, I obtained a small window into their knowledge of written language and the functions of print. Children do not demonstrate their knowledge of literacy in neat, sequential ways. It is often disjointed and messy, as some of the examples to follow clearly illustrate. To describe Theme 3, the tasks were grouped into those that dealt with **Strategies for Specific Skills with Letters, Letter Sounds and Words** (tasks 6, 7, and 9), **Strategies for Form and Structure of Written Language** (tasks 10, 3, 2, and 5) and **Strategies for the Form and Function of Reading Printed Text** (tasks 8 and 4). More detailed individual results for each of the children's tasks appear in the children's profiles.

Strategies for Specific Skills with Letters, Letter Sounds and Words

Tasks 6: Letter Identification, Letter Sound Identification and Word for Initial Letter

All the children worked with peers at some time during the day, so it was easy to have them play the Tic Tac Toe Games as part of their daily routine. Jennie's class was the only one that had a set schedule for

peers to work with Jennie. In the other classrooms it was a more informal, ad hoc arrangement. I never observed any peer refuse to or even give any indication that they did not want to come to play a game with the focus child. It was during these sessions that peers spontaneously helped the special needs children with some aspect of their

literacy. I was surprised at the sensitivity and patience of the children's peers. It was not unusual, for example, for a peer to set up the Tic Tac Toe game to let the child win. I mentioned this observation to the teacher assistants and each said the classroom children liked to help. It was sort of a break in the peers' routine. They said this had never been a problem, even during group work in the classroom. The special needs child was always welcomed. I wondered if this was not an opportunity for the peers to consolidate their own literacy learning in the act of helping another child.

Tic Tac Toe & Other Games

Games 1, 2, 3 & 4

The game's rules were based upon the normal Tic Tac Toe game done with X's and O's. A set of red or blue cards with typed letters was substituted for the X's and O's. The children used a laminated grid. If the child did not know how to play the regular game the teacher assistant taught them how to play before I started these games. There are 54 items presented in games 1, 2 and 3 because both upper case and lowercase letters are presented to the players. Different type face is used for some letters such as 'a & a, g & g'. Game 4 had 60 sight words.

The 10 Minute Race Game:

It was based on how many words the child could write in 10 minutes, with prompts if necessary.

Table 5.1 gives an overview of the specific skills the games elicited and provides in percentages a record of achievement for each child.

Table 5.1: Percentage Achievement Results for all the Children For Tasks 6,7, & 9

Task Numbers	Jennie	David	Daniel	Tommy	Megan	Kristy	Chelsea
6 (a) Game 1: Tic Tac Toe - Letter Identification (upper & lower case)	53/54 =98%	54/54 =100%	52/54 = 96%	54/54 =100%	54/54 =100%	54/54 =100%	43/54 =80%
6 (b) Game 2: Tic Tac Toe - Sound Identification	38/54 =70%	9/54 =17%	30/54 = 56%	0/54 =0%	38/54 =70%	54/54 =100%	12/54 =22%
6 (c) Game 3: Tic Tac Toe - Word from Initial Letter	48/54 =89%	48/54 =89%	27/54 = 50%	46/54 =85% 40/54 =74%	44/54 =81%	54/54 =100%	47/54 =87%
7. Game 4: Tic Tac Toe - Sight Word Identification	32/60 =53%	43/60 =72%	15/60 = 25%	47/60 =78%	40/60 =67%	60/60 =100%	15/60 =25%
9. 10 Minute Race Game - Writing Vocabulary	14:21 =67%	23:57 =40%	13:15 = 80%	29:30 =97%	13:33 =39%	25:33 =78%	3:13 =23%

Task 6 (a) Game 1: Tic Tac Toe Letter Identification

Looking at task 6 (a) in table 5.1, the first game played, notice that four of the children, David, Tommy, Kristy, and Megan, could identify all the letters. For additional details about the letters the other children knew, see their profiles.

Task 6 (b) Game 2: Tic Tac Toe Letter Sound Identification

The second Tic Tac Toe game results shown in Table 5.1 as task 6 (b) required the children to identify the sound of the letter. As the results clearly show, this was much more difficult for all the children, except Kristy. Megan, like Jennie, employed the strategy of using the long vowel letter-name sounds. Megan knew more long vowel sounds, even

though they achieved the same score of 70%. This was a phonemic strategy I saw surface again. Megan did not have the orientation letter confusion difficulties I saw in Jennie. Megan did, however, seem to be bothered by the type face differences in the **g** and **a**. She was not able to identify these letter sounds when they were in this font style. Chelsea's achievement was 22% overall in letter sounds, much less than these two girls but she too was beginning to use the letter name strategy for two vowels and some consonants. This type of identification task, even in a game format was very difficult for David and Tommy, as it required a direct response, which both boys found hard to do. Like the girls David was able to demonstrate 17% knowledge of the sound symbol relationships using the letter name strategy for the vowels he did know. Tommy did not demonstrate any sound symbol relationship in this game, but I did not think this meant he did not know any sound symbol relationships. I was going to look for evidence through other tasks to cross check this. Daniel was in a program that really stressed letter sounds over letter names, so I was curious to see what he would achieve. He achieved 56% in sound identification, knowing more letter sounds than both David, Tommy and Chelsea. What was significant here, was that Daniel used the letter name strategy for some of the long vowels too. Based on the evidence gathered here, I was interested in cross checking this data through other tasks to see if Jennie, Megan, Chelsea, David, and Daniel would employ the letter name strategy in other areas such, as their writing. Additional specific details can be found in the children's profiles.

Task 6 (c) Game 3: Tic Tac Toe Word from Initial Letter

In task 6 (c) in Table 5.1 the children were asked to provide a word that started with the letter they turned up during the game. Kristy was the only player who got 100%. Notice how well Jennie, David, Tommy, and Chelsea did, however, with over 85% achievement. Megan was still achieving in the eighty percent range with 81%. Daniel was able to achieve only 50% in this game. It was acceptable to give the same word for an upper or lowercase letter but Megan did not always do this, neither did Chelsea nor David. The interesting aspect in David's responses was that he often used names of classmates when presented with uppercase letters. The other children only occasionally did this. I still was not certain that David was aware of names requiring a capital letter, or whether this phenomenon was just a reflection of his fascination with names. When the other children did this, they offered names of their siblings or Mum and Dad, which could indicate that they had some awareness of capitalization for names.

I was interested in observing whether the words the other children were able to give corresponded to the sounds they knew as well. Only Kristy was able to do this task with complete success. David, Tommy, Chelsea, and Daniel seemed to know many more initial letter sounds when asked to give a word beginning with a specific letter. I think this was due to the many hours of reading alphabet books at home, so a letter cued a verbal response rather than a sound response. Tommy required verbal prompts to respond to this task so the first score 85% reflects this, as opposed to the 74% he achieved without prompts.

I found that Jennie, Megan, David, Daniel, Chelsea, and Tommy all had some phonemic awareness. It was a matter of degree. I noticed that the appearance of the letters

in uppercase or lowercase was a factor for some of children. This is not an unusual phenomenon for emergent readers (Clay, 1991). In all cases they used the strategy of letter names as phonemes. Only Kristy had passed this phase and was able to use various phonemes for the same letters, such as in long and short vowels. All of them were able to show that they had some awareness of phonemic segmentation. This was exciting, but to cross check what I was seeing in these specific skill tasks, I would have to see evidence of phonemic segmentation in other literacy tasks.

Task 7 Game 4: Tic Tac Toe Sight Word Identification

In this task (see Table 5.1) Kristy demonstrated 100% mastery, indicating that she had surpassed the sight word vocabulary based upon the Ohio Words List (Clay, 1993), the one which I used as the basis of this 4th Tic Tac Toe game. Tommy and David had the next highest percentages of sight words, scoring 78% and 72% respectively, followed by Megan with 67%, Jennie with 53%, Daniel with 25%, and Chelsea with 25%. I was looking for strategies used by the children, evidence of which were often visible in their miscues or miscalling of the sight word. (See the children's profiles for specific details.) Tommy indicated, much to my surprise, that he was willing to sound out a sight word on three occasions, cross checking that he could indeed use phonemic segmentation in this situation.

Tommy, David, Jennie, Megan, Daniel, and Chelsea all used the initial letter strategy again, adding word shape to unlock sight words. Megan achieved a higher score than Jennie, but the strategies of the two girls paralleled David. However, Megan did not self correct, neither did Daniel nor Chelsea.

Jennie and Megan added guessing to this strategy of initial letter strategy and Chelsea added spelling. Only two children, David and Jennie, self corrected. Megan even used some semantic cues. I saw a similar strategy used by these children during these tasks. This was very encouraging as it cross checked with the strategies they had already shown me in the other games. Moreover, they were very similar to specific skills demonstrated by non-special needs children in other research (Clay, 1991, 1993; Gentry & Gillet, 1993).

Task 9: 10 Minute Race Game -Writing Vocabulary

Table 5.1 summarizes the achievement results for all of the children in Task 9. This task was the beginning of observing the children's orthographic concepts or invented spelling strategies. This would provide valuable insight into their knowledge of words and written language. This knowledge is crucial for teachers of emergent readers, because it can point to setting realistic outcomes and instruction. As children enter the different phases of invented spelling they think differently about words and written language. Recognizing where children are can assist the teacher to take the children where they are and coax them to higher levels. The strategies for emphasis then will be different for each

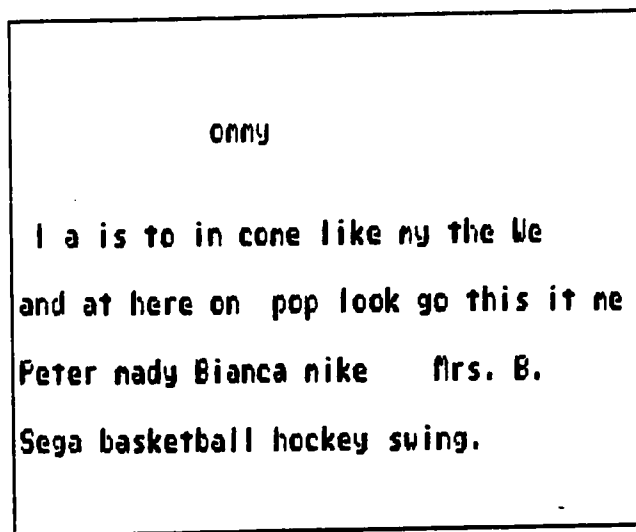


Figure 5-15 Tommy's vocabulary writing using the computer for Task 9.

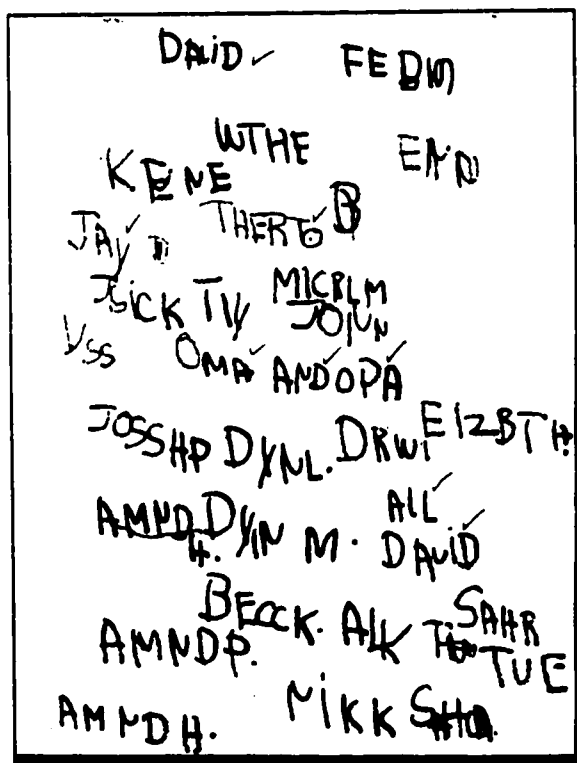
child, making individual educational plans (IEP) for these children's literacy more meaningful. Based upon the evidence obtained in the games, I assumed here that these children would follow recognizable invented spelling strategies similar to non special needs children who came from literate backgrounds. I was looking for evidence among these children to indicate that some of them were using pre-communicative or pre-phonemic, semi-phonetic or early phonemic, phonetics or letter names, or even some transitional invented spelling strategies (Gentry & Gillet, 1993).

The first numbers in Table 5.1 are the actual ratios of words correctly spelled to attempts in a ten minutes period. The percentages reflect the accuracy rate out of the number of words attempted. Notice in table 5.1 that Tommy had the highest achievement score since he was very accurate in his vocabulary writing, spelling 29 out of 30 words correctly. Because of this, I was not able to observe the strategies he was using to spell. He appeared here to be a transitional speller. He had learned the concept of a word when using the computer, since there was spacing between the words and because proper nouns are capitalized.

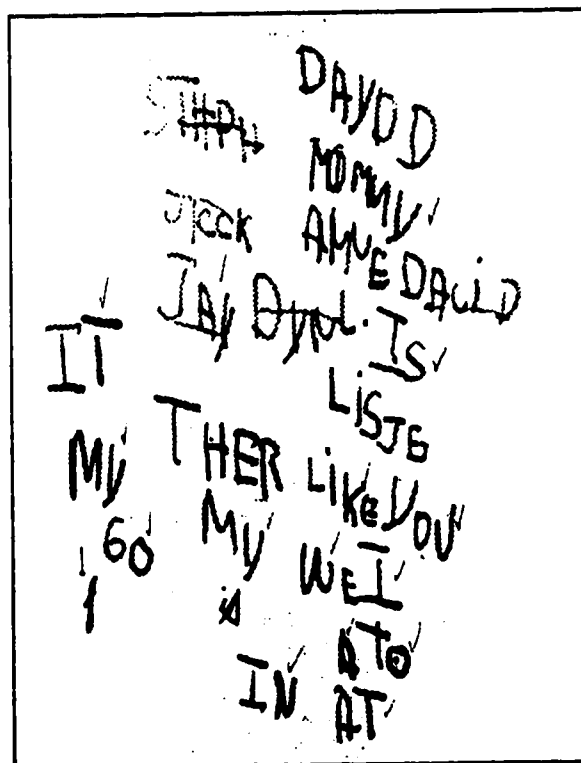
Spelling words	
1.	thernoneter
2.	survive
3.	consuners
4.	services
5.	window
6.	noise
7.	fight
8.	cold
9.	thousand
10.	hurt
11.	doctor
12.	again
13.	always
14.	its
15.	while
16.	later

Figure 5-16 Tommy's spelling words, dictated by teacher assistant.

I was very intrigued by Tommy's literacy abilities because I suspected he learned whole words. I had observed him trying to decode words during his Tic Tac Toe Game 3, but not here. If he 'knew' the word, he wrote it out. His sight word vocabulary appeared to be enormous. For example, shortly after this task, in awe I watched him write his spelling list on the computer as Wendy dictated the words to him (Figure 5-16). His strategy with words here was the result of straight memorization, or he had so internalized the decoding processes that it had become automatic. I really could not tell. The other child most like Tommy was David, who had a lower accuracy percentage of 40% (see Table 5.1). David feverishly wrote the names of his friends and family on one side using the



Figures 5-17(a) David's first page of vocabulary writing. Note the number of names.



Figures 5-17(b) David's second vocabulary writing page where he was prompted.

correct directionality, then turned his paper over to continue writing on the other side in figures 5-17 (a) and (b). He sub-vocalized to himself, getting very close to his paper, unlike Tommy who had been silent. He seemed to run out of names when he crossed out four names and wrote a period half way down the page and looked up. I wondered if he felt he was finished even though the time was not up. Noreen, his teacher assistant, encouraged him with verbal prompts to write more. Here are a few hints that David was using semi-phonemic strategies just as he had during Tic Tac Toe Game 3. He wrote 23 words correctly out of 57 attempts, the most attempts of all the children. By dividing words into phonemes, he demonstrated that he has some beginning ideas about phonemic segmentation, but he was not as adept at this as Tommy or Kristy.

A feature of David's and Tommy's special needs is the tendency to fixate on items,

in David's case this was names. None of the other children had this type of fixation. David loved to write names. Noreen and his parents had both told me this fascination with names was long standing and he always wrote in uppercase. David may

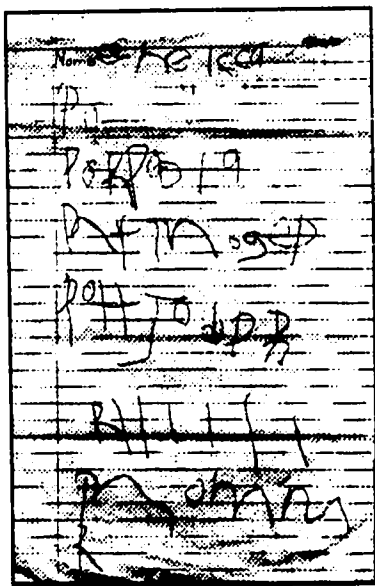


Figure 5-18(a) Chelsea's first page of vocabulary writing where she employs the inventory principle.

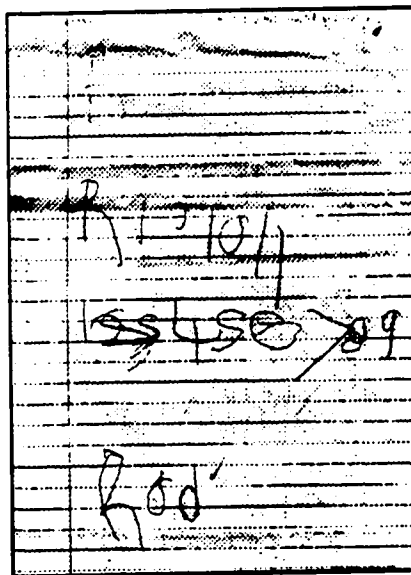


Figure 5-18(b) Chelsea's second page of vocabulary writing - note the numbers as part of her inventory.

have started this writing task with names because of the time of year. It was February and the children were already gearing up for Valentine card writing. David already had done some Valentine card writing at home with his Mum. He wrote the names of his classmates on his valentine cards without prompting but required a lot of oral rehearsal to write anything else. Names were a concrete thing onto which he could latch, and the representations of which he would have seen in his classroom.

On the other hand, I could be seeing what Clay (1991) talks about, the inventory

principle. That is, the tendency of beginning

writers to make ordered lists of things they know.

Often their names are one of the first items

children learn to write. They make lists of the

letters in their names - the alphabetic principle

(Clay, 1991) - or just write their name over and

over again when asked to write words. Later,

early writers will make lists of all the words they

know. None of the children had trouble writing

his/her own names. However, David did not have

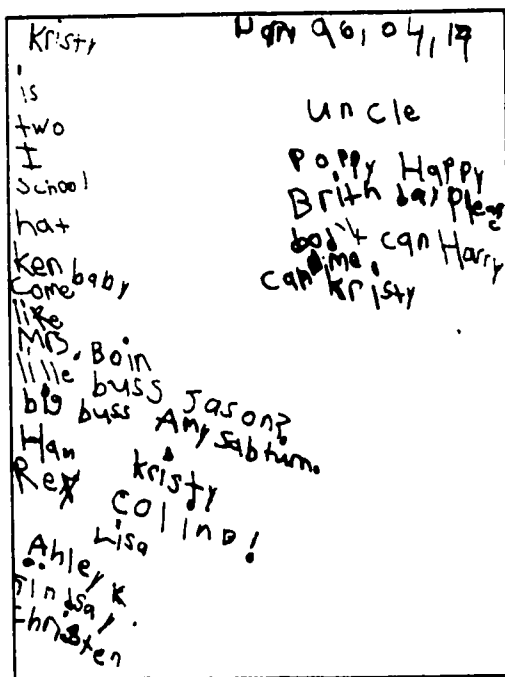


Figure 5-19 Kristy's vocabulary writing - note the inventory effect.

the repertoire as yet to write many words beyond names like Tommy. It was quite natural for him to demonstrate the inventory principle by writing lists of names he knew. Chelsea, who had the lowest percent accuracy at 23%, clearly employed the alphabetic and inventory principle in Figures 5-18 (a) and (b). Clearly her concept of word was not too stable as yet, as she was using letters to write pseudo lists of words, but this was good evidence of a pre-communicative or pre-phonemic invented spelling strategy, something which contrasted to Kristy (Figure 5-19). Now contrast both of these, to Megan's (Figure 5-20) and Jennie's (Figure 5-21) lists, who had accuracies of 67% and 39% respectively but both of whom demonstrated that they were accomplished phonetic or letter-name strategy users. The spellings were close enough to make out some of the words they attempted. They even remembered to space some of the words. Despite her lower score, Megan in fact, appeared to be the more accomplished of the two, as she tried to use a vowel in many more of her 33

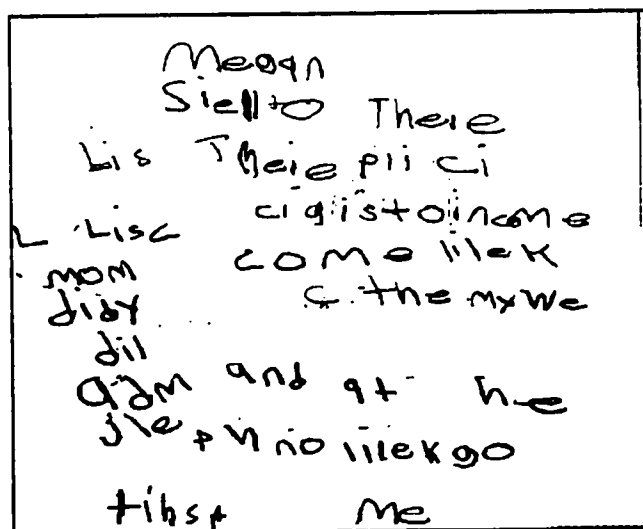


Figure 5-20 Megan illustrating her letter name or phonemic use.

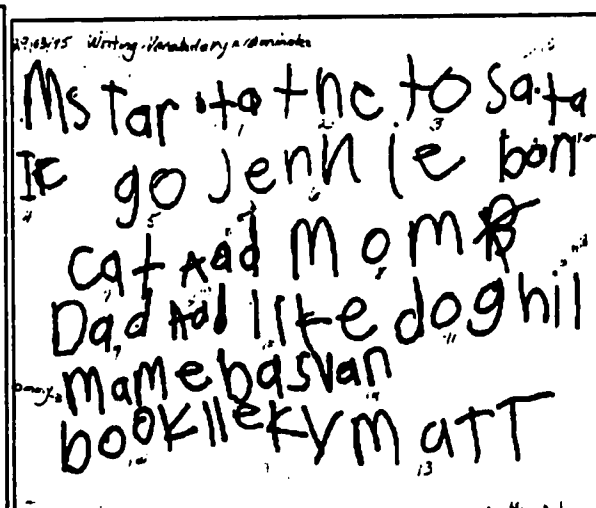


Figure 5-21 Jennie illustrating her ability as a letter name or phonemic user.

attempts. Kristy's accuracy was 78% in the 33 attempts, but she had a stable concept of a word (Figure 5-19). Notice how she too made a list. She used a combination of strategies ranging from phonetic to transitional and correct spellings. Daniel had the second highest accuracy percentage with 80%, but he only attempted two more words (15) than Chelsea (13). Remembering that he was in a programme that stressed accuracy, I suspected that he only wrote words that he knew he could spell

correctly, and was not willing to take any risks (Figure 5-22). I could not really tell what spelling strategies he was using any more than I could with Tommy. When he finished, he did something very interesting. He showed me how the words were connected by drawing lines to them. He showed me, because he could not tell me, how in his mind these words went together semantically. This was a deliberate attempt to write a message, indicating that despite Daniel's language articulation, he knew that words made up a story, that words carry a message. Words 'literally strung together'

made a graphic story for him. He demonstrated to me the flexibility feature in a unique way, with words instead of just letters (Clay, 1991).

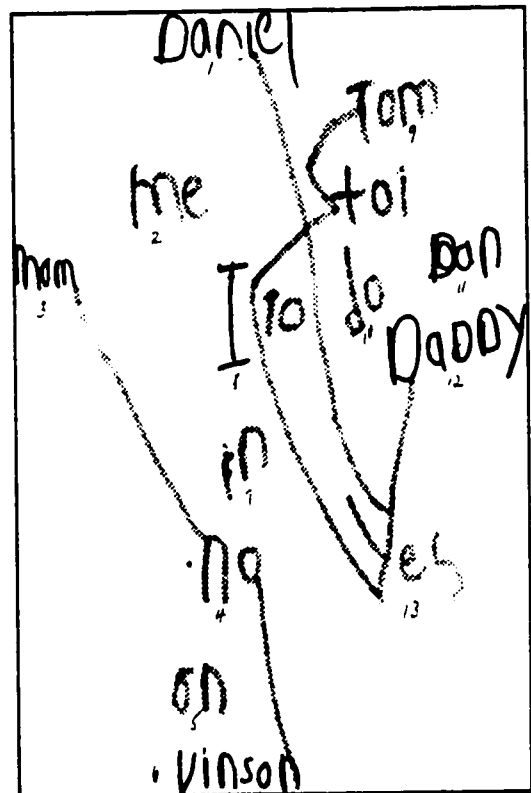


Figure 5-22 Daniel's vocabulary writing illustrating a flexibility feature with words strung together.

During Task 9 the following invented spelling features common to emergent readers were observed: evidence of the inventory principle from all of the children; evidence of the alphabetic principle from Chelsea; evidence that words carry meaning from all the children; evidence of the flexibility feature with words from Daniel; a willingness to explore invented spellings in all except Daniel and Tommy; a variety of strategy use from semi-phonemic with Chelsea, through early letter naming from David and perhaps, Daniel, and phonemic or letter naming from Megan and Jennie, to transitional with some phonemic from Kristy, and perhaps transitional from Tommy.

Strategies for Form and Structure of Written Language

I was particularly interested in the children's knowledge of the form and structure of written language. This meant examining their written products for evidence of graphic principles (recurrence, flexibility, generativity, directionality). These are common in emergent writings and usually surface before the child can produce the letters of the alphabet. They are so basic that many teachers assume that children know these principles and do not teach them directly. In the recurring concept, children's early attempts at imitation writing have characteristic repetition of loops and squiggles or circles or sticks repeated over and over. The generative principle is indicated by a child's use of a limited number of signs in various combinations for writing. The sign concept is the idea that print stands for something besides itself. The flexibility principle refers to the idea that there is a limited number of written signs and a limit to the number of ways to make them. The page-arrangement principles refers to that is the way print is arranged on a page. All the

children had been read to extensively at home, so I was curious to see whether they had managed to figure out these principles on their own. All of them had to some extent. Among the samples produced by individual children, I was often able to find examples that ranged from very primitive displays to more sophisticated examples of many of these features. This was very interesting to see in these emergent writers.

I obtained more solid evidence of the alphabetic concepts (mechanical formation), orthographic concepts (message encoding, decoding and message formation) and concepts about print by drawing upon the products and observations from focused literacy tasks 10, 2,3, and 5. With the exception of Task 10 (dictation), these tasks were much less directive and I hoped they would illustrate the children's knowledge of their concepts about writing (Clay, 1991; Teale & Sulzby 1986; Ferreiro & Teberosky 1982; Dyson 1985; Harste et al., 1984; Gentry & Gillet, 1993).

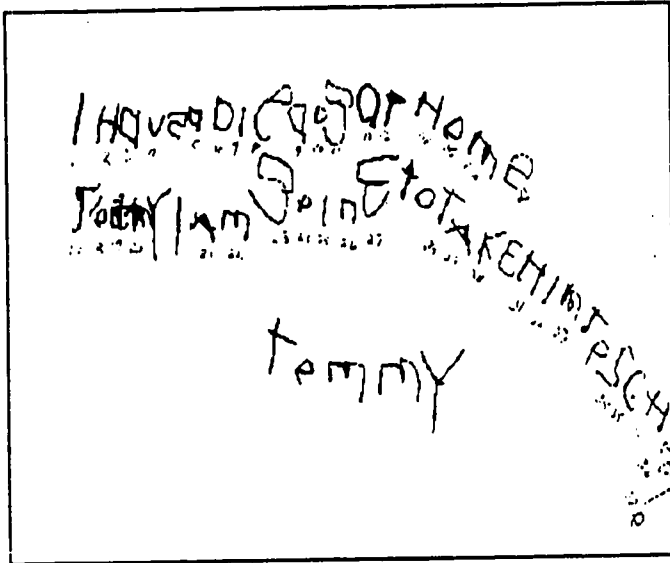
Task 10: Dictation

This task, taken directly from Clay (1993), provided evidence of orthographic concepts, but also other aspects of form and structure of written language. The results are in Table 5.2 and indicate the actual scores and percentages of correctly spelled words on the forms chosen by the children.

Table 5.2: Results from All the Children on Task 10 Dictation

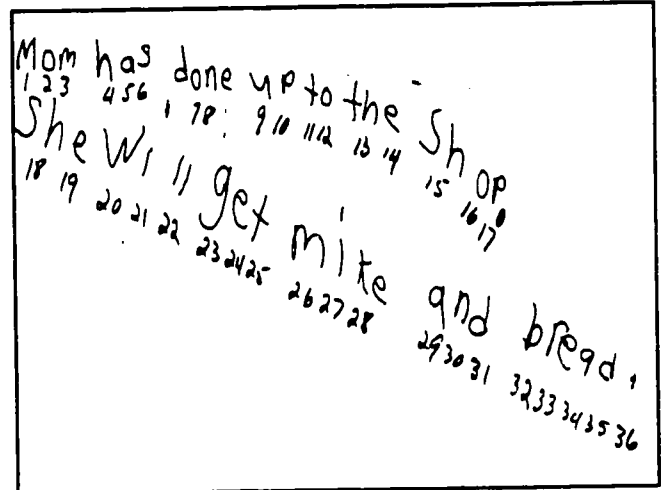
Task 10: Dictation	Jennie	David	Daniel	Tommy	Megan	Kristy	Chelsea
Form	D	A	D	A	D	B	A
Actual score	29/37	26/37	17/37	37/37	26/37	35/73	16/37
Percent	78%	70%	46%	100%	70%	95%	43%

Tommy (Figure 5-23) and Kristy (Figure 5-24) achieved 100% and 95% respectively on this task. They both demonstrated lots of transitional spelling and some excellent phonemic



I have a big dog at home. Today I am going to take him to school.

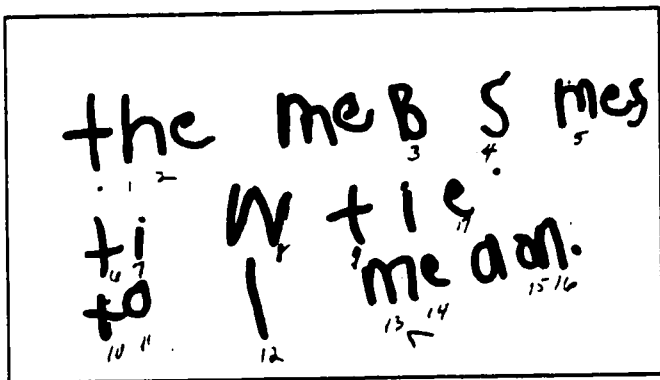
Figure 5-23 Tommy's dictation illustrating his transitional spelling.



Mom has gone up to the shop. She will get milk and bread.

Figure 5-24 Kristy's dictation illustrating her excellent phonemic abilities as a transitional speller.

strategies. Jennie (Figure 5-26), David (Figure 5-28), and Megan (Figure 5-27) all achieved in the 70% range. They demonstrated phonemic or letter-name strategies simply by the amount of vowel and consonant phonemes substitutions they used. Daniel (Figure 5-25) achieved 46%. He was at the cusp of being an early phonetic user. Chelsea's 43% achievement here was as a semi-phonemic user (Figure 5-29 a & b). The children's figures illustrate the range of knowledge seen among emergent writers. What I found quite fascinating was that these children did what Read (1971, 1975) had seen done by so many non-special needs children. They do not randomly substitute. There were recognizable patterns. I found in their efforts examples of the 'a' for the short 'e', the 'o' for the short

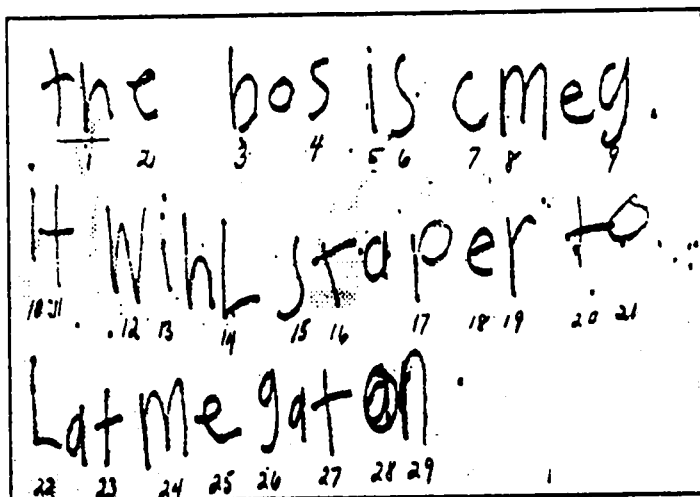


The bus is coming. It will stop here to let me get on.
Figure 5-25 Daniel's dictation illustrating his beginning phonemic strategy use & syntactic miscue addition.

'u', the 'i' for the short 'o', and the 'e' for the short 'i' in their samples.

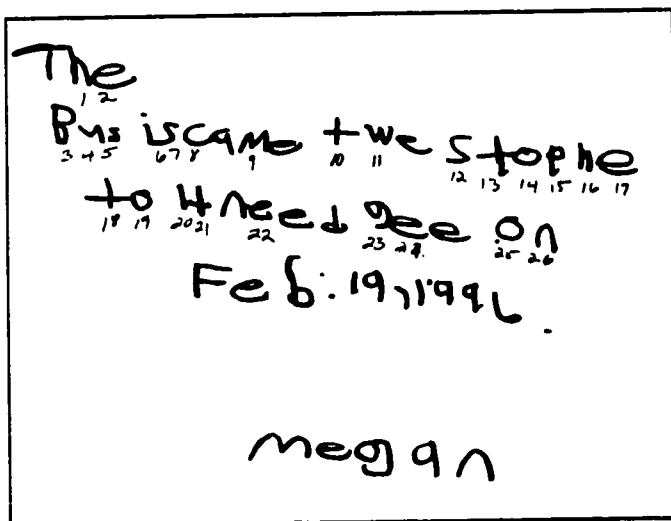
Jennie, Megan, David, Daniel, Chelsea, and Kristy substituted the desired vowel sound with the long vowel sound that is similarly produced in the mouth and then spelled by means of a letter-name

match. Daniel and David even illustrated that they were using semantic and syntactic strategies, unexpected, but exciting features to find in these emergent readers and writers. For additional details about each of the children's dictation samples, see the children's profiles. The remaining descriptions are only highlights to illustrate the range in the children's knowledge.



The bus is coming. It will stop here to let me get on.
Figure 5-26 Jennie's illustrating her letter name strategy use.

Much to my astonishment Tommy (Figure 5-23) chose to do this writing by hand, using a marker and paper, rather than by using the computer. Notice that his letters are shaky but entirely recognizable. Kristy's product (Figure 5-24) is clearer and better spaced. Tommy's attention to spacing and proper use of upper and lower case letters was not as developed as it was when he wrote with the computer. He put in periods which look like small 'o's' in the appropriate places, but there were some upper case letters in this text in the middle of words, a characteristic usage of emergent writers. Kristy was the more accomplished writer of the two, but she too demonstrated emergent transitional writing



The bus is coming. It will stop here to let me get on.

Figure 5-27 Megan illustrating her phonemic strategy use like Jennie.

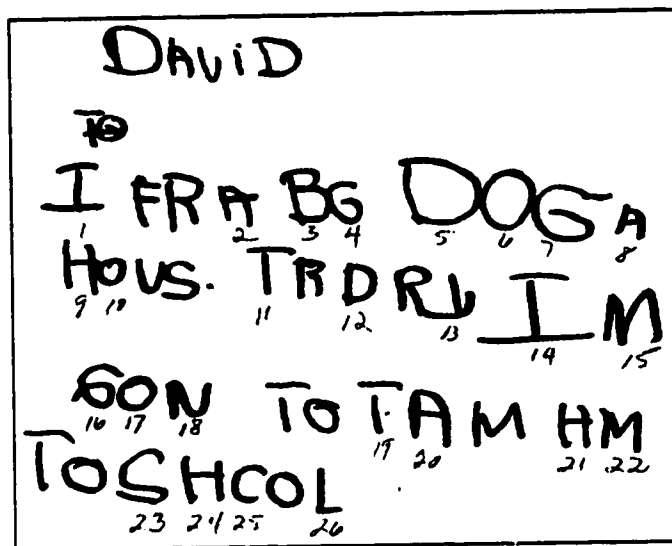
characteristics. This contrasted sharply with Daniel's effort (Figure 5-25). It appeared that he was trying to personalize the sentence by inserting the word 'me' before the word 'bus'. I had heard him use the word 'me' for 'my' often, so I wondered if he was trying to say "my bus comes." If so, this could be taken as a

syntactic or semantic miscue, since it did appear to make sense. It was also an example of his own language patterns being utilized during his writing. Jennie (Figure 5-26) used the initial and final consonant for words much better than Daniel. Notice how she substituted a vowel in many more words than Daniel. She also did other things that letter-name spellers

tend to display. For example, with words that end in unstressed syllables, she omitted the vowels in those syllables. She wrote what she heard. She used the silent letter marker 'e' and the 'g' of the 'ing' ending. This same pattern reappeared in Megan's dictation (Figure 5-27). Megan did not start a new line of text like Tommy or Kristy, but continued on like David (Figure 5-28), which seemed to indicate she understood how continuous print works.

The period is at the end, as far as she is concerned, which is after the date.

In Figure 5-28, David did something interesting, which only Daniel came close to echoing during this task. He substituted the word 'HOUS,' clearly the word 'house,' for the dictated word 'home.' This type of miscue usually indicates that the child processed the message semantically by



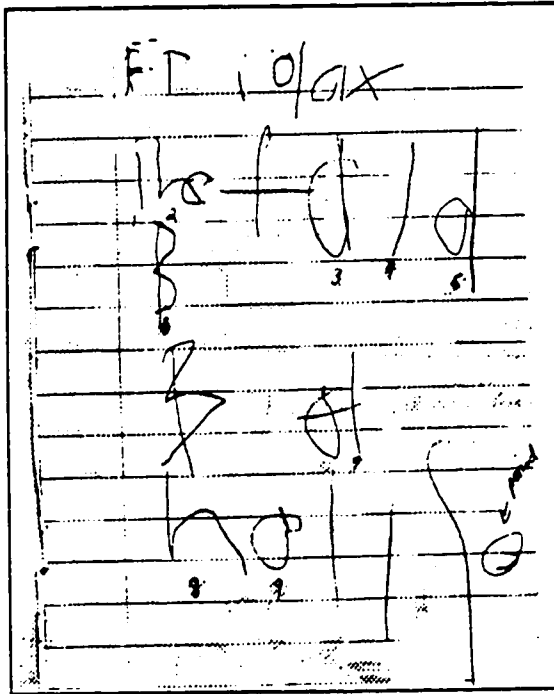
I have a big dog at home. Today I am going to take him to school.

Figure 5-28 David illustrating two strategies, a semantic miscue and phonemic use.

substituting another appropriate word. Notice how he maintained the sense of the sentence, as well as the syntax.

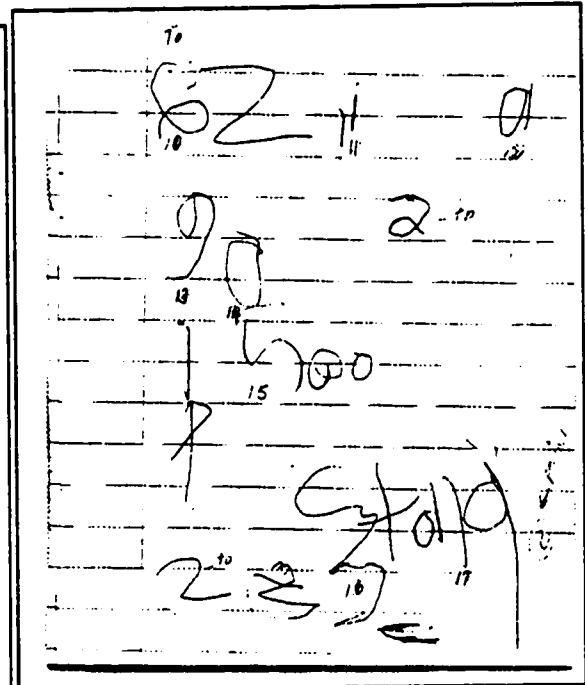
Chelsea's products (Figure 5-29 (a) and (b)) were wonderful examples of an early phonemic user (Read, 1975 and Gentry & Gillet, 1993). She wrote what she heard. She knew that words have phonemes and can be matched indicating the alphabetic concept, but

her unstable concept of a word interfered here. Notice how she used numerals as letters. She had done the same thing on Task 9 in her vocabulary writing. She did not have all the letter formations, illustrating and confirming that her knowledge of the graphic principles was still forming. She wrote the sentences over two pages, but had the direction mostly



I have a big dog at home.

Figure 5-29(a) Chelsea's first page illustrating her beginning or semi phonemic strategy use.



Today I am going to take him to school.

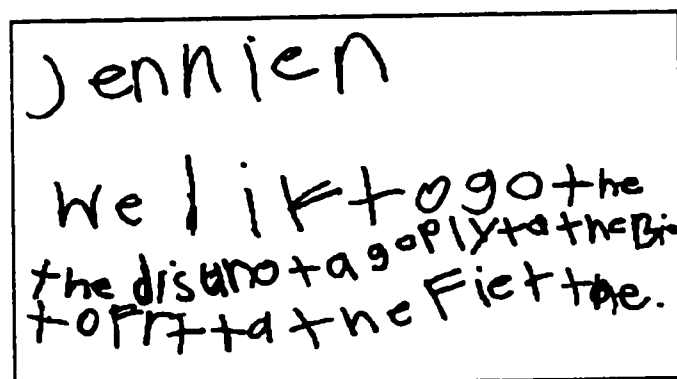
Figure 5-29(b) Chelsea illustrating her semi-phonemic strategy use and unstable concept of word.

intact like the others, because she knew the direction of print but was still not certain of the direction of the actual letters. She was trying to write the word 'to' here instead of 'at' and got the letters reversed. Remembering that she was still working out the direction and order of the letters in words, this could explain what I saw. In effect, she was still experimenting

with flexibility of symbols. The evidence found here seemed to show a range of knowledge, not unlike emergent writing found among non-special needs children.

Task 3: Uninterrupted Writing and Drawing

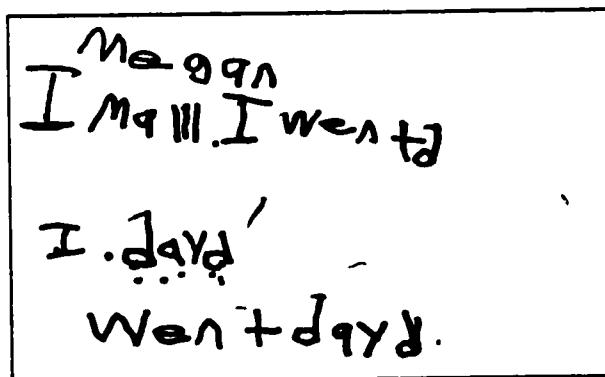
Focused Literacy Task 3 was much less directive and served to cross check the information already obtained about the children's writing in Task 10. Task 3 was often one of the first focused literacy tasks used with the children in Phase 1, as it proved to be a non-threatening ice breaker



Jennien
We like to go to the the distro to a go pily to the Bi to off to the Fict the.

We like to go the the base ball game at to the park. To fish at the fishing the.

Figure 5-30 Jennie's Task 3 story confirming her phonemic strategy use - note word order interference.



Megan
I mall I went I daddy went daddy.

I mall. I went. I daddy went daddy.

Figure 5-31(a) Megan's task 3 story reflecting her word order & confirming her phonemic use.

with the children. They all liked the novelty of using markers to draw and write. Jennie sub-vocalized as she wrote her story (Figure 5-30), which she had difficulty rereading to me. It is in sharp contrast to her dictation (Figure 5-26).

She demonstrated that she knew that

writing has a purpose and conveys a message, but here she used early phonemic strategies features, such as strings of letters, with little attention to spacing. In Figure 5-31(a),

Megan pulled the words out of her head and wrote rather quickly, with no sub-vocalizing. She demonstrated clearly her phonetic abilities in her encoding and decoding, but like Jennie the process broke down for her around word order. Both Megan and Jennie would sometimes sort of blurt out words in any order when telling you something. The listener would not understand what they said unless they repeated and reordered their words. Ava had Megan read the sentences back for me. Unlike Jennie, Megan could word call each of the words she had written. However, she was clearly puzzled by what she read. Her facial expression appeared to indicate that she suspected something was wrong. Ava then used what Dyson (1981) refers to as oral rehearsal to help Megan scaffold what she wanted to say.

...Ava asked Megan to slow down and orally rehearsed her as to what she wanted to write. She got her to say each word in the sentence slowly and deliberately, which she did. Then, Ava told Megan to write the sentences again but this time Ava said each word for her slowly as Megan wrote them. When she had finished, Megan reread the two sentences word perfectly and smiled. (Excerpt from field notes 1/02/96)

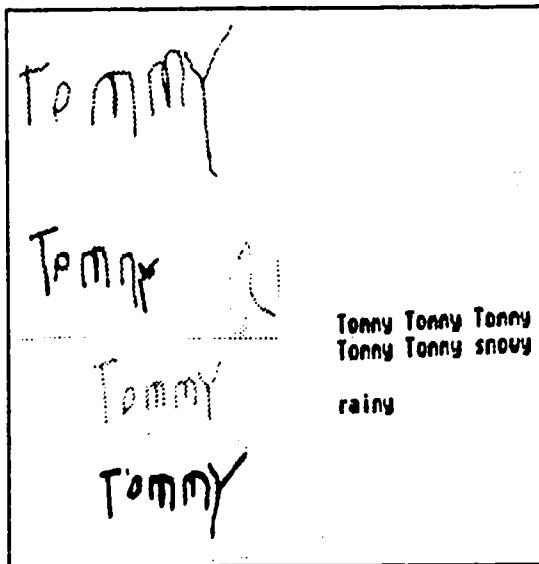
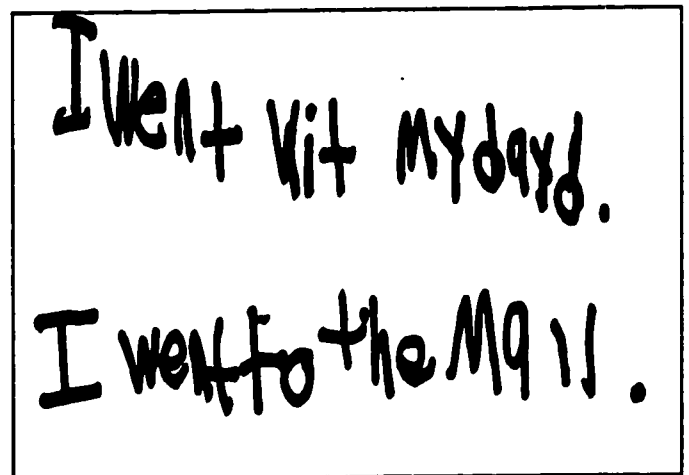


Figure 5-32 Tommy's first effort at writing for Task 3 without prompting.



I went with my daddy. I went to the mall.

Figure 5-31(b) Megan's writing after oral scaffolding.

To produce a product like Figure 5-31(b), Megan required this kind of oral scaffolding to maintain her word order. Jennie's teacher assistant took oral scaffolding in a different direction. Jennie wrote first, then Christine wrote each word from Jennie's sentence on a word card. They then practised manipulating the cards until both were satisfied that the sentence made sense. Jennie then wrote out her correctly ordered sentence. Ava rarely invited Megan to write a sentence first as I had, or had her physically manipulate word cards like Christine did with Jennie. Much like David's, Chelsea's, and Daniel's teacher assistants, Ava did the oral rehearsal, but then she wrote out the sentence or words for Megan, who would then copy the sentences. Ava was not satisfied with this since she could see that Megan was not making the transition to being able to do this for herself. Ava complained to me that Megan would not initiate writing but always waited for the adult to help. I heard this complaint from the other teacher assistants who followed this same procedure. This was in sharp contrast to their homes where the children would initiate writing and explore print. This was not happening at school I suspected, because Megan, David, Daniel, and Chelsea were not like Jennie and Kristy invited to write first after their oral rehearsal.

One of the features of David's and Tommy's special needs was their minimal eye contact and one or two word answers, which I seemed to be observing in their writing if no prompting was initiated. My field notes best describe what happened with Tommy during Task 3.

...He spent two full minutes examining the marker and muttering to himself before he started even to write his name (Figure 5-32). When the teaching assistant gave him a new sheet of paper and asked him to draw a picture of himself to go with his name, he wrote his name again using different coloured markers. He seemed confused around the request to draw and repeated writing his name again. We moved to the

computer. He wrote his name as requested but did not write anything beyond this. He wrote Tommy five times on the computer then stopped. Wendy asked, "What's it like outside?" He then got up to go to look out the window. He came back and wrote, "rainy". His teaching assistant asked him to draw a picture of himself using the computer's draw programme which he did (Figure 5-33). She then got him to write by giving him verbal the prompts, "Today is...?, It is...?, Go ahead?" until he produced a piece with his ritualized ending (Figure 5-34). (Excerpt from field notes 20/02/96)

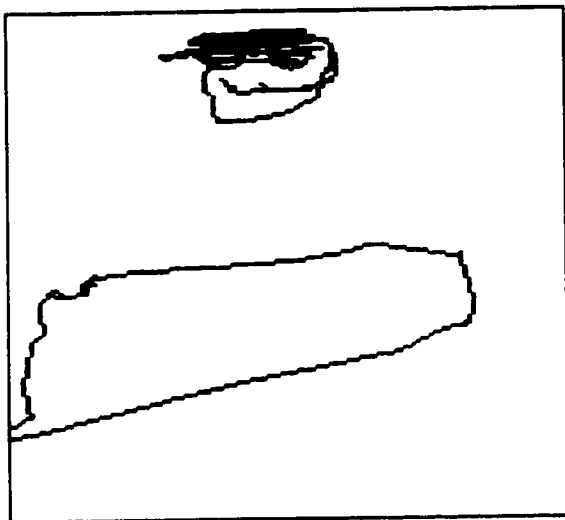


Figure 5-33 Tommy's computer drawing for Task 3.

It was obvious to me that Tommy was much more comfortable with using the computer to write and draw. His mother had told me that he made few attempts to draw until very recently, when he discovered he could use computer drawing programmes. He usually only drew unsophisticated heads for figures, much like a young non special needs child first starting out to draw. His pieces showed he was a lot like very beginning writers, but with a difference, because he was able to use correct spelling. I suspected that he did not make up new stories like the other children, perhaps because he was always encouraged to write with the same verbal prompts and he knew only real words were acceptable text.

Today is Tuesday, February 20, 1996.
It is snowy and cold.
I feel happy and dizzy.
I like to play with my Grandma.
 Today I played Mrs. Cunning.
 I saw Sonic.
 Ever Saw It See you later alligator.
 After a while crocodile.

Figure 5-34 Tommy's writing from Task 3 - note patterning and ritualized ending.

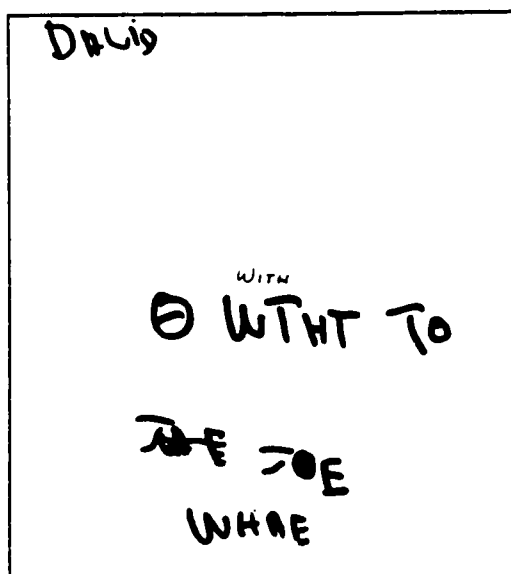


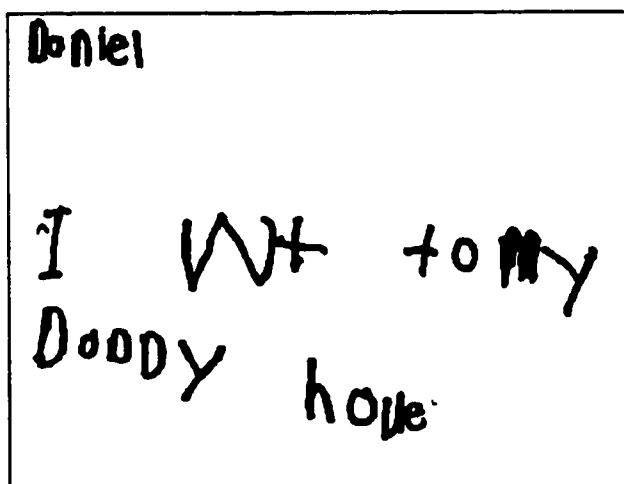
Figure 5-35 David's unprompted writing from Task 3.

David was asked to read what he had written (Figure 5-35) but he could not without prompting. His product seemed to confirm that he was somewhere on the cusp between using early phonemic strategies in unstructured writing and phonemic in more structured writing. He had a tenuous concept of a word here. David's idiosyncratic writing always reflected pieces with capital letters. Although he could read lower case

letters, he never used them. Even when David was asked to copy from lower case letters, he always transposed them to upper case. I had observed Noreen, and sometimes Susan,

reinforcing this idiosyncrasy to

uppercase letters by writing for him in only uppercase letters.



I went to my Daddy house.

Figure 5-36 (a) Daniel's Task 3 story, a remembered piece from his class?

Task 3 was arduous for Daniel. Cathy, his teacher, and Evelyn, his teacher assistant, told me he could not write on his own and could not read. Only with a lot of coaxing would he

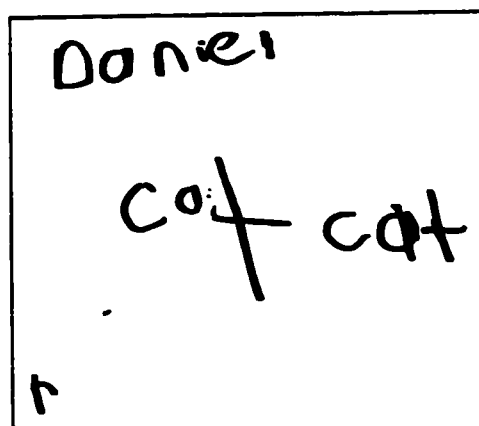
show me what he knew about print. He already had a lot of traits of learned helplessness, waiting until the adult initiated the learning process for him. He was not going to put marker to paper unless he really had to!



Figure 5-36(b) Daniel's final self portrait, his best- note the lack of details like Tommy's & David's.

.... He would not start until we played a tic tac toe game, which is in the top corner of his drawing. He hesitated to write, saying, "Can't." When he did start, he immediately asked, "Spell went?" When I told him to write down the letters you hear. He was not convinced I really meant it and would not start writing, but I kept saying, "I know you can write, Daniel." He stopped after he wrote 'l', but with encouragement he wrote 'wt'. He asked if that was right. I said, "It was very good go on". He looked dubious but carried on with the rest of the sentence until he came to the last word. He asked, "Spell house?" My reply was the same as before to him, to write the sounds that he could hear. When he finished he wanted to draw another picture of himself. "His best," he told me. (Excerpt from field notes 9/02/96)

Daniel clearly told me that he knew he could not write (Figure 5-36 a). I was the one who knew how to spell, his manners suggested, so why wasn't I telling him how to spell the words. In his class, his teachers would tell or write the words out for him to copy. Here I was violating this and not helping him to write. He was not happy about this. He clearly reread this sentence to me and I suspect this was a sentence he had written before in class. He expected me to



I drank coke at my dad's house.

Figure 5-37 Daniel's Task 3 story without prompting.

correct the two words he had asked about and seemed puzzled when I didn't. Instead I thanked him for writing for me.

A few days later, Daniel wrote me another piece (Figure 5-37) and told me what he wrote after some oral scaffolding, much like that which was used with Jennie. Like Jennie, Megan, and Chelsea, the mixed up word order was very indicative of Daniel's special needs, so I was not surprised that he could not reread his sentence unassisted. Daniel's articulation production was sometimes so difficult to understand that I often suspected he knew a lot more than he was able to tell me or anyone. In contrast, Jennie's, Megan's, Chelsea's, and David's language was clear, and their word order was not as skewed, if you slowed them down to counter disfluency. I suspected that the language difference between David and Daniel was a big factor in Daniel having been placed in his special class.

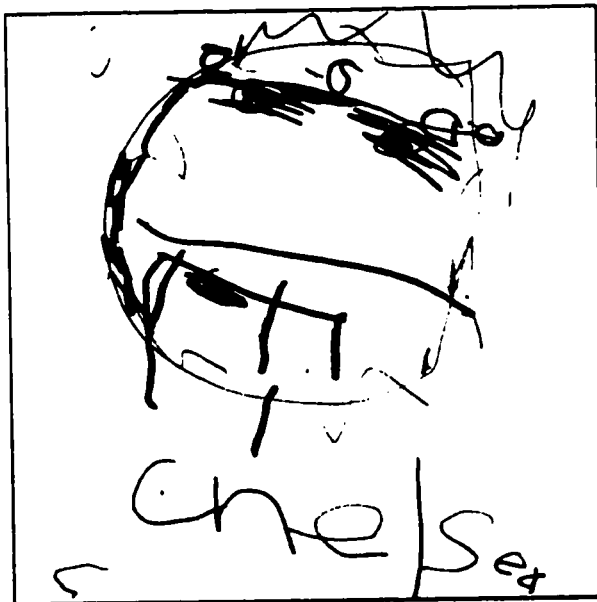


Figure 5-38(a) Chelsea's self drawing and writing mixed.

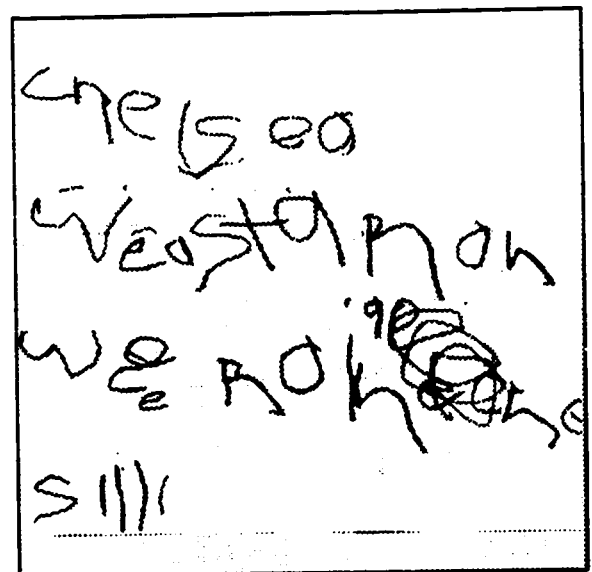


Figure 5-38(b) Chelsea's task 3 story illustrating her purposeful writing and pre-phonemic strategies

Chelsea (Figure 5-38 a) showed a mixture of writing and drawing. The story Chelsea wrote in Figure 5-38(b) has her name there plus the words 'we' twice 'a', and 'on, as well as 12 letters, 6 from her name. She was not able to tell me what she had written. She certainly appeared to recognize the sign potential of print, understanding that writing uses graphic displays to stand for something (Clay, 1976) . She intended her few words and letters to stand for something. The same way Kristy did in Figure 5-38(c) when she was writing to her mother. Even though Kristy was a more accomplished writer, the purpose for writing was there for both these girls and all the other children.

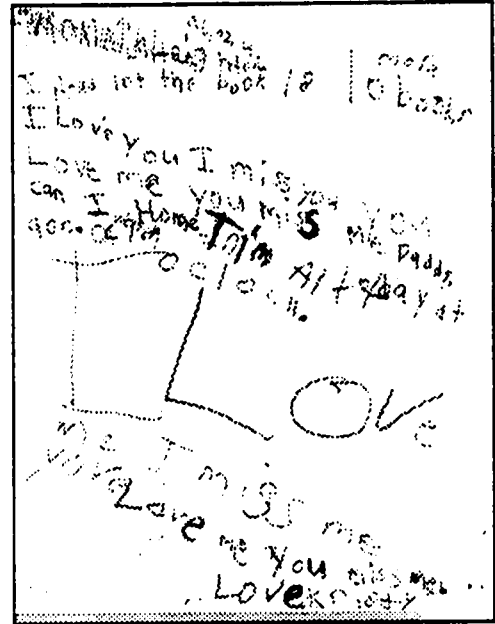


Figure 5-38 (c) Kristy's Task 3 illustrating her more accomplished ability to compose.

When left to their own devices and asked to write, Jennie, David, Megan, Daniel, Chelsea, Tommy, and Kristy illustrated that they knew a lot about writing. They all understood that writing used letters to convey a message. They understood how print was arranged on a page and that print was generated in a limited number of ways. They seemed to require oral scaffolding or verbal prompts to maximize and guide what they knew. The competencies they demonstrated on this task appeared to cross check with other pieces of data in other tasks.

Task 2: A Language Experience Story

I wanted to embed Task 2 in the children's daily work as much as possible to obtain a more accurate picture of what they did on a day to day basis to contrast what I had obtained from them during Task 3 and Task 10.

Almost daily, Jennie, David, and Tommy did a journal activity, so I requested that one of these activities become Task 2. Kristy did write daily, so I drew upon some of her writing samples to illustrate the scope of her composing for different purposes. Daniel, Megan, and Chelsea did not have a regular journal type activity, so Task 2 was initiated and embedded into writing activities through their teacher assistants. It was during these class observations that I observed the instructional practices used with the children.

In her journal writing (Figure 5-39), Jennie exhibited an interesting example of emergent writing, and one I had not seen before from her. She "re-read" the journal piece the next day to me. She knew which page to turn to in her journal to "read" the story she had written the day before. Her story was something about the TV show, "The Simpsons." She then pointed out the characters in her drawing. This is imitation cursive writing, which I think she had done to impress me. Most of the kids in her class were being encouraged to

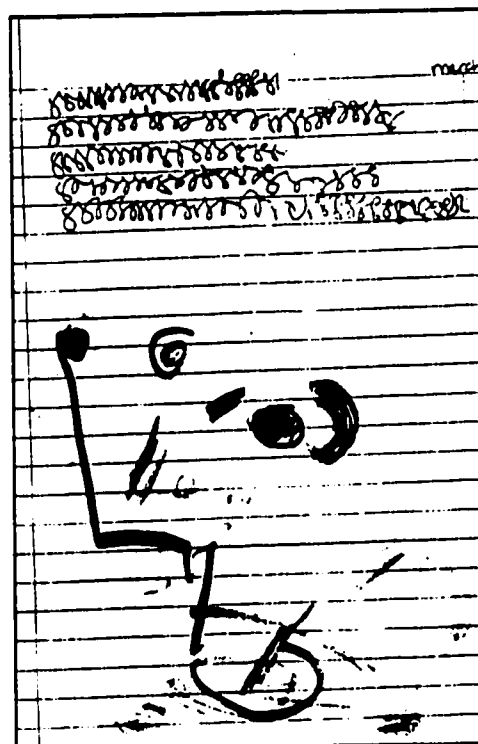


Figure 5-39 Jennie illustrating pre phonemic cursive writing strategies in her journal for Task 2.

use cursive writing at the time. What is curious here is that Jennie exhibited the pre-communicative strategies typical of children who have not yet learned the alphabetic principle that governs writing. A collection of other journal samples had printed letters in them such as Figure 5-40 (a) & (b), an excerpt covering two pages titled Jennie's Christmas Holiday. This story illustrates her teacher's classroom observations.

Steve - ...with Jennie, her writing is amazing because she wants to write stories like the other children and she'll come up to me and it's hilarious because there will be a page and half or two pages of foolscap of all these letters. That's all they are. It could be the same letters a thousand times but it's - and she said, "I want to read you my story okay?" and away she goes. She is making it up as she goes, but that's fine because she's at least thinking. Now the one thing that she doesn't do is, she can't take that story and

read it to you and then take that same story and read it to me and have it come out the same. There will be elements of it that are similar but there will be elements of it that are just totally hers. Figure 5-40 (b) (Excerpt from Jennie's teacher interview 28/03/95 p.2)

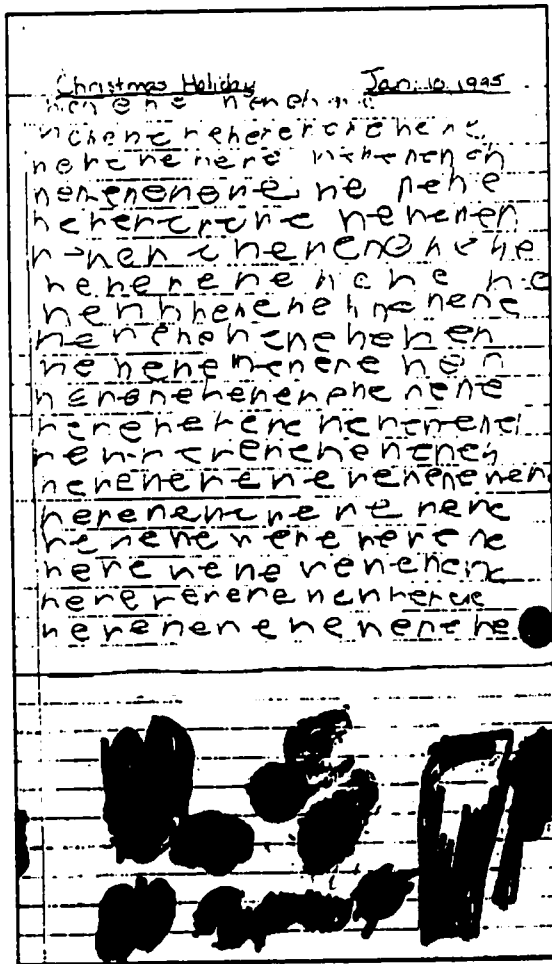


Figure 5-40(a) Jennie's long Christmas story - note pre-phonemic strategies using letters.

Jennie knew that a story had to be long and she saw the other children in her grade 4 class reading to her teacher. Naturally she wanted to do the same in order to gain his approval. Her teacher accepted this imitation of writing. In so doing, he was instinctively fostering literacy use in Jennie through her

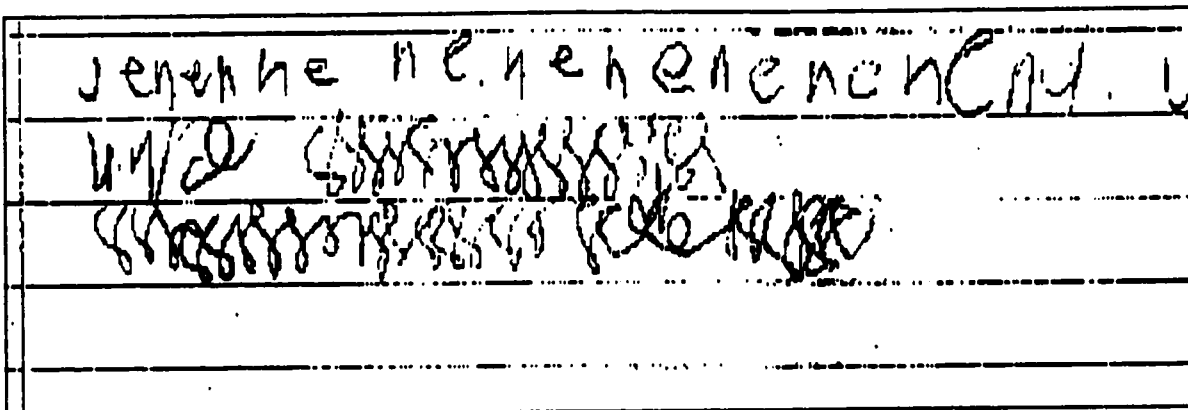


Figure 5-40(b) Jennie's last page of her Christmas story - note words added to letters and cursive script illustrating pre-communicative & beginning phonemic strategies.

pretend story writing. Steve, like her mother at home, was allowing her to experiment, as

younger primary children typically do all the time.

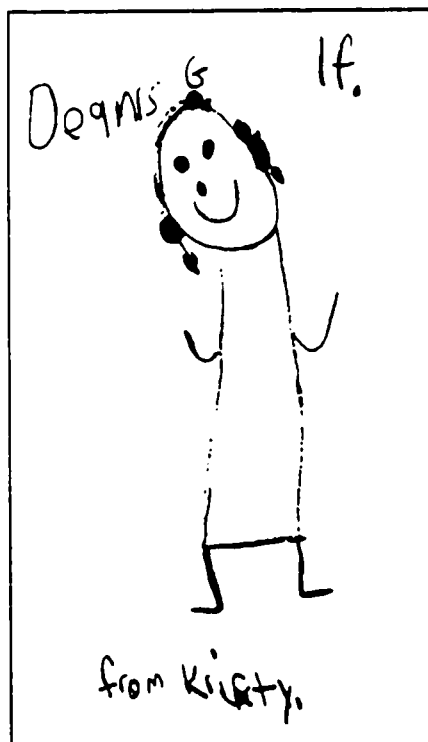


Figure 5-41 Kristy's note to a classmate she likes with a self portrait- using print to communicate.

Jennie was showing Steve what she really knew about story writing. Jennie understood what Clay (1991) calls graphic principles of recurrence, flexibility, generativity and directionality, common in emergent writings and usually occurring before the child can produce the letters of the alphabet. But I already had evidence that Jennie knew the alphabet from Task 3. Why did she not illustrate that here? Notice the selection of letters she chose to use on her first page, 'n' and 'e'. These are very important letters as they occur in her name. It is not until half way down the second page that she throws in other letters, such as the occasional 'a', 'o' and 'l'.

The letter 'J' and the word 'end' are clear on her last page, just before she decided to turn

to imitation cursive writing. Chelsea had used the letters in her name in Task 3 (Figure 5-38 (b)) but she was younger, and a less experienced writer who was at the pre-communicative stage. This was puzzling. Jennie went back to her earlier experimental writing with imitation cursive script for Task 2 (Figure 5-39), I think, perhaps because when the graphics changed from print to cursive, she had to review with the pre-communicative writing and then work forward again. I saw this same evidence in products by Megan and Kristy and occasionally, David.

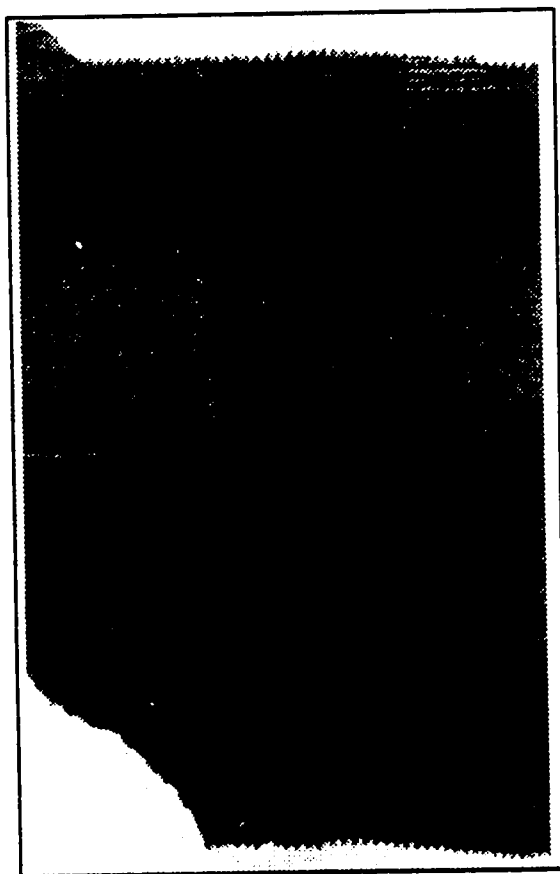


Figure 5-42 Kristy's note telling about her new hearing aid mould shared by resource teacher- notes can be disposable.

Kristy perhaps best illustrated that she had

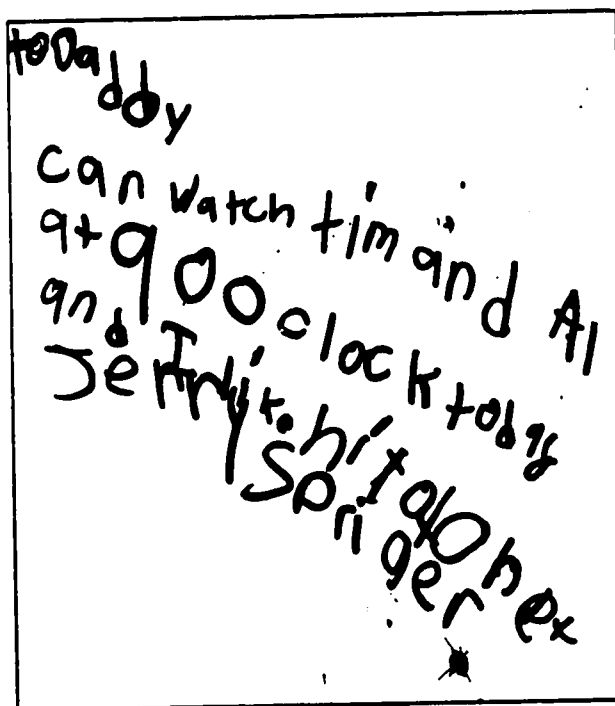


Figure 5-43 Kristy's request to her Dad to watch a TV programme past her bedtime -it illustrates the flexibility in her composing.

internalized the writing process. She was able to use both the computer or paper/pencil to write a piece with little prompting. I often observed her in class write 'draft' at the top of her paper or computer screen. She then proceeded to compose as best she could. She would then take her piece to her teacher for help with revisions. Kristy was encouraged to write notes to friends and could express her feelings on paper. Figures 5-41 and 5-42 are

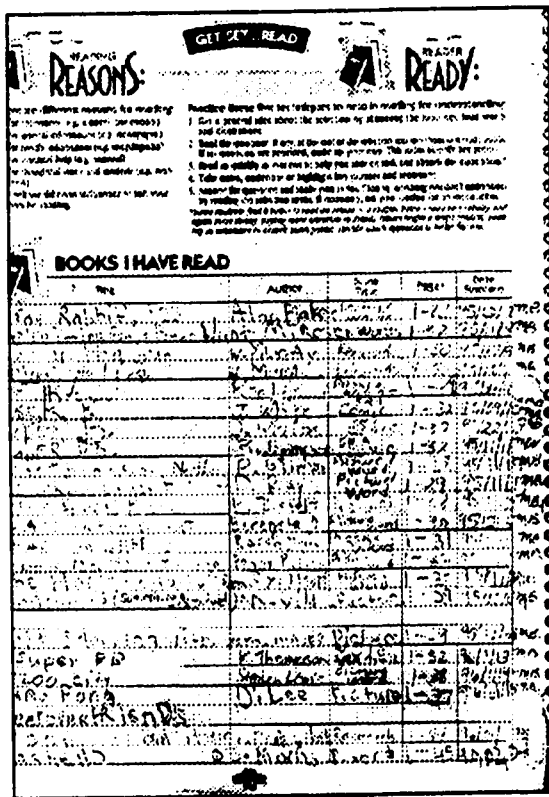


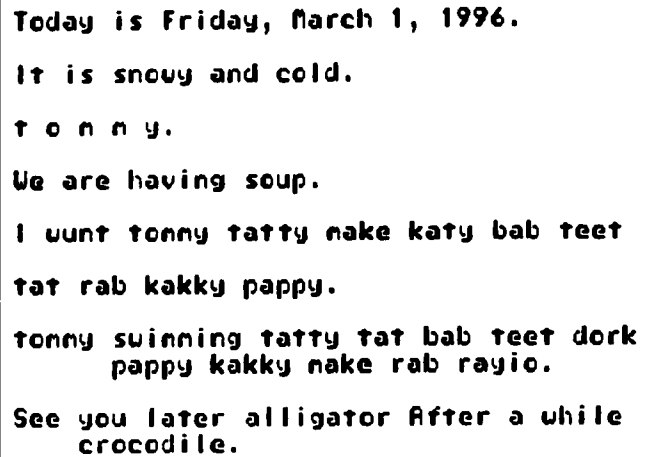
Figure 5-44 Kristy illustrating her ability to keep records of her books read.

examples of notes her resource teacher shared with me. The first was to her friend, a boy. It was much neater and on a full sheet of paper, while the second was a note to her resource teacher telling her she had a new mould in her hearing aid. It was written most appropriately on a brown paper towel. She knew that notes are often thrown away so they don't always have to be super neat or on nice paper, unless you are trying to make an impression, as in Figure 5-41. Kristy used writing to make requests (Figure 5-43) as she did in this

request to her father. She wrote about liking the actors but it is clearly a request to stay up past her normal T.V. time at home. Figure 5-44 was her list of books she had read, which she kept track of in her student agenda. Here she demonstrated her ability to use her literacy to keep records of her activities. She managed this activity on her own not only

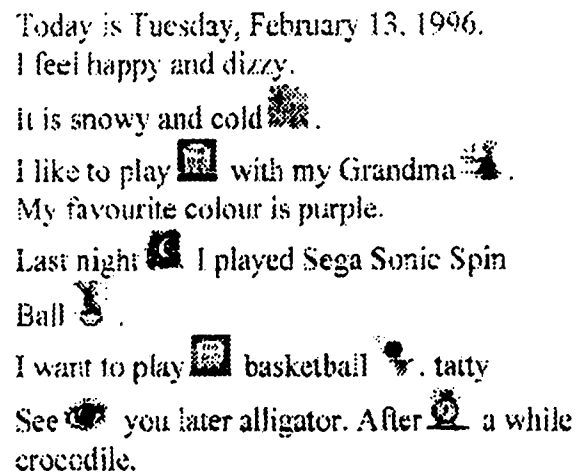
because she wanted to get the book prizes offered but also because she wanted to be part of the rest of the group who do this. Lots of her choices are still picture books, with the occasional non fiction thrown in. This was Kristy's recreational reading list. She was the only child to keep this kind of record. Through this type of literacy activity she was able to practice her literacy skills and exercise the power of print. Some of the other children, like David, Jennie, and Megan, were able to express their feelings in print, as I had seen in their home writings, but not with this degree of sophistication. I did not see these types of writing activities encouraged in the other children at school.

Tommy did not imitate writing in a manner similar to the other children. They all would write if you asked them. Tommy was different in that respect, so I was not certain that he would be able to write without lots of verbal prompting. Being the most non-verbal of all the children in this project, he had at least a ninety second delay to



Today is Friday, March 1, 1996.
 It is snowy and cold.
 r o n n y.
 We are having soup.
 I uunt tonny tatty nake katy bab teet
 tat rab kakky pappy.
 tonny swinning tatty tat bab teet dork
 pappy kakky nake rab rayio.
 See you later alligator After a while
 crocodile.

Figure 5-45 Tommy's inventive spellings? Using the computer to explore print.



Today is Tuesday, February 13, 1996.
 I feel happy and dizzy.
 It is snowy and cold.
 I like to play with my Grandma.
 My favourite colour is purple.
 Last night I played Sega Sonic Spin
 Ball.
 I want to play basketball. tatty
 See you later alligator. After a while
 crocodile.

Figure 5-46 Tommy's writing from his journal.

process all his language. This meant that Tommy appeared to ignore you when you engaged him in conversation. He would look away from you, avoiding eye contact as he processed his language. This is a common action of children who are described as autistic, but I often wondered if this was his way to concentrate on processing his language. If you were willing to wait, he would eventually answer you with one or two words. I observed that Tommy was able to respond to computer prompts set up in cloze exercises. He read the sentence, sub-vocalizing sometimes, looked away from the screen, then typed in his answer. Dealing with written language was, in a way, much easier for him since he did not have another speaker waiting for him to respond. The computer was always willing to wait.

While at the computer, Tommy received no verbal prompting on my request for this task, as I wanted to see what he would do completely on his own. He generated many pseudo English words (Figure 5-45), so he had orthographic awareness of phoneme patterns. These seemed to be his inventive spellings. Notice the regularity in the spelling patterns here. They looked like examples from a phonemic or letter name strategy user. Usually he would delete these sections of invented spelling words in response to his teacher assistant, Wendy's, request to read them, which he could not do. This appeared to be the actions of a very beginning writer who was exploring the graphic principles. He liked to end his pieces with ritualized writing, which he would type in fluently from memory. This was entirely in keeping with autistic individuals. Notice how he began a new line for each simple sentence, cross checking with what he demonstrated in his dictation (Figure 5-23). An interesting difference here was that he never used an upper case letter in the middle of a

word while writing on the computer. His purposeful composing on the computer was much like the beginning writings/explorations of younger children who want to demonstrate, through imitation, how much they know, illustrating the inventory principle (Clay, 1991). I wondered if the differences I observed were due to lack of practice writing by hand or, perhaps more likely, because he was not able to carry the same skills from one medium of writing to another. I often saw a change in context disturb these children, who liked the same familiar routines all the time. Jennie, Megan and Kristy all returned to earlier forms of writing before moving forward.

Normally for his journal writing, Tommy used his binder of Mayer-Johnson picture word symbols, rather like a visual prompting method to assist him to generate pieces like Figure 5-46. I saw him stop to look for a word picture to type into his sentence. So, unlike the other children, he knew where to look for the spelling of words. He could reread the pieces while Wendy finger pointed to the words, but he never spontaneously finger pointed. Wendy said he did not vary much from the pattern in Figure 5-46. There was not much cohesion in the writing. It was a sort of stream of consciousness, another inventory, spelled and punctuated correctly, and in sentence form. He just wrote down everything he could think of to fill the page. His favourite invented word, "tatty," is also there. He was able to vary the pieces by using different fonts and picture icons, some of which matched the words such as the eye after 'see,' moon after 'night,' or the ball and hoop after 'basketball.' The sentences each had their own topic, but sometimes he was able to carry the same topic into the next sentence. This piece he could reread the next day. I wondered if he would explore more with invented words if he were left on his own to write before being assisted by

Wendy. The same question surfaced for David, Megan, Daniel, and Chelsea, who were not encouraged to explore print much on their own.

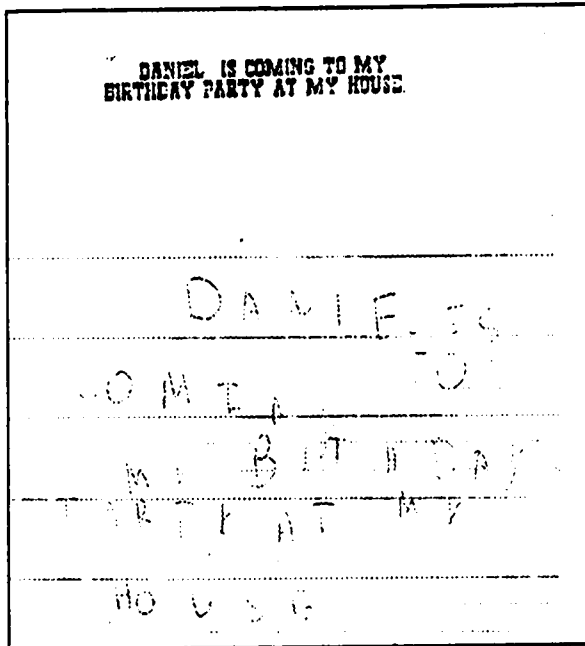


Figure 5-47 David's journal writing using the computer after oral scaffolding then copying.

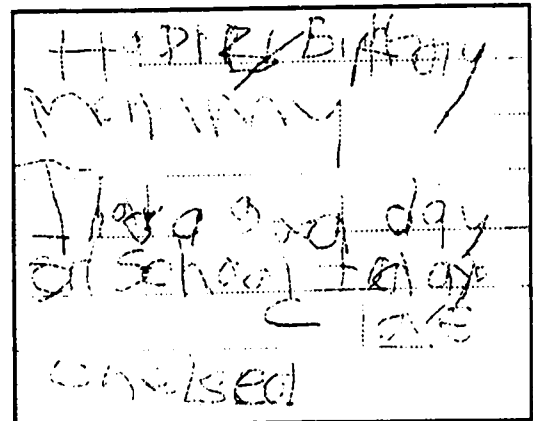


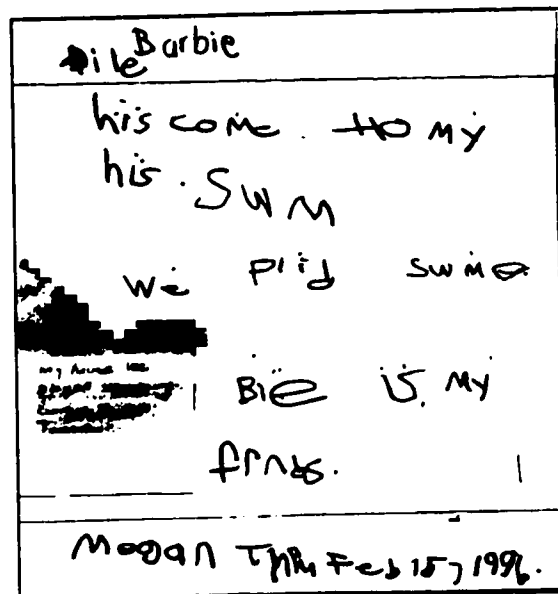
Figure 5-48 Chelsea's copied birthday card to her Mum.

David's journal activity involved Noreen, his teacher assistant, doing an oral scaffolding of his words (Dyson, 1981)

into sentences, then writing them in uppercase letters for him to copy on the computer (Figure 5-47). He then cut out the whole sentence and pasted it into his notebook. He was then encouraged to copy the sentence underneath. The same basic procedure was used for

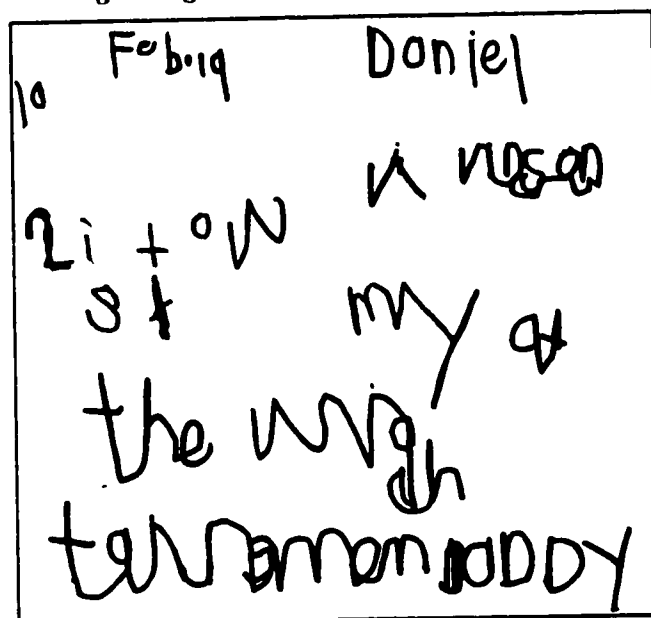
Megan, Daniel, and Chelsea, but without the computer typing aspect.

Only Jennie and Kristy were regularly invited to compose, before copying the sentence the teacher assistant had printed out. Accuracy had become more important than fostering composing. As a result these children found it very hard to compose as they had little practice and encouragement to do so in school. I wondered if Megan, Tommy, David, Daniel, and Chelsea had not been asked to compose because their teachers and teacher assistants felt that the writing process somehow did not apply to them. All the teacher assistants felt they were 'helping' the student 'to write' by scribing for them and insisting upon accurate spelling. There was an unstated expectation that they should always be exposed only to accurate text yet ironically, all around them, their peers were encouraged to use invented spellings. Daniel's class was the exception; he was



Play Barbie his come house my his swim. We play ed swimming. Barbie is my friends. Megan This Feb 15, 1996..

Figure 5-49 Megan's writing on her own after oral rehearsal - note word order at beginning.



Today I went in Vinson class my at the with time mine Daddy.

Figure 5-50 Daniel's writing after oral rehearsal - note word order difficulties & attempts to use cursive writing.

not encouraged to write anything but accurate copy, since he was a special needs child in a special class where accuracy was paramount. I saw this same expectation unconsciously applied to Megan, Tommy, David, and Chelsea in their inclusive settings, which I think, was done simply because they were special needs children. The culture surrounding special needs children is notorious for fostering low expectations for those children who are having the greatest difficulties (Allington & Walmsley, 1995). It is easy to see how misconceptions about a particular child's ability to learn can occur. There appeared to be an implicit expectation operating here that these children needed the maximum 'help,' but in the process the children's learning was not maximized. The continued offers of support from the teachers and teaching assistants weren't leading the children to develop strategic problem solving as applied to writing (Clay, 1991). Experimenting and exploring with print happened for these children at home, however, as their parents provided them with paper and pencils and encouraged them to "write," and then had their children tell them what they had written.

Once I shared this finding with their teacher assistants at school, some of them started to ask the children to compose on their own as Megan's teacher assistant did. A sample of Megan's composition appears in Figure 5-49. Also observe what Daniel was able to compose in Figure 5-50 with some oral scaffolding. Daniel was very proud of this story. Both Megan and Daniel were able to re-read their piece if I finger pointed to the words they had written. They would appear puzzled since it did not sound right. This seemed to me to indicate that although they were aware of what appropriate syntactically structured sentences

should sound like, they were not able to produce them as yet for themselves, but they could compose if invited to do so.

Task 5: Phase 1- Receiving & Reading a Letter; Phase 2- Writing & Reading a Letter

Written language is part of a larger system. It is not an independent entity, but rather subject to the demands of a context as the intention of the writer comes into play

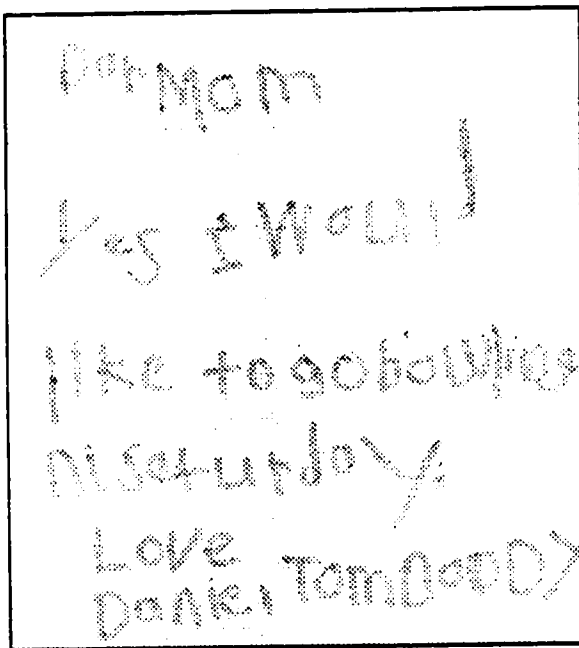


Figure 5-51 Daniel's reply to his mother's letter after oral rehearsal from me.

(Dyson, 1985). Written language has a graphic component, but also syntactic, semantic and discourse rules making up its linguistic dimension. I saw some of this in the children's letters. All the mothers wrote to their children at school and I delivered the letters. I had asked the mothers to keep their letters short and to ask at least one question that they felt their child would respond to. Some, like Daniel's and Tommy's mothers, asked

about where they could go for an outing while Chelsea's and Megan's mothers chose a birthday theme. Not all of the children wrote replies.

As I expected, their efforts did not indicate anything really new about their composing, but they did give some indication as to the experiences they all had with letter writing. Kristy had no difficulties with the concept of writing a letter. It was a composing format that she had used many times before. She was able to read the letter her mother wrote to her with little help. The other children were

all delighted to receive their mothers' letters but had to have the letters read to them.

Composing a reply became an oral rehearsal and copying task. In fact, all the children required lots of oral rehearsal to write text.

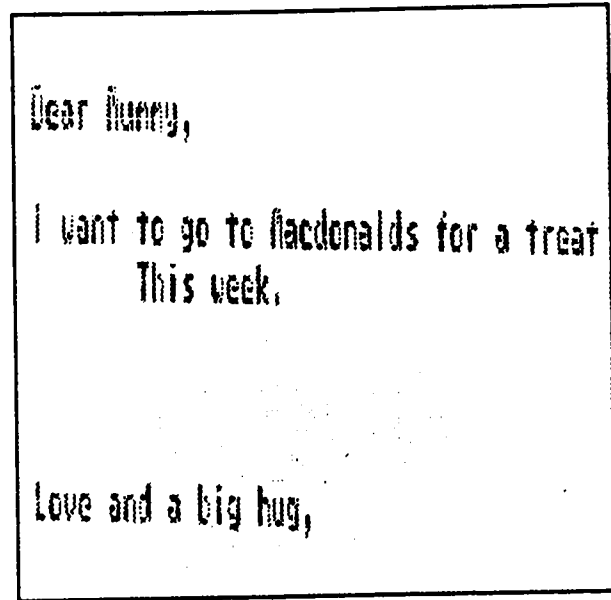
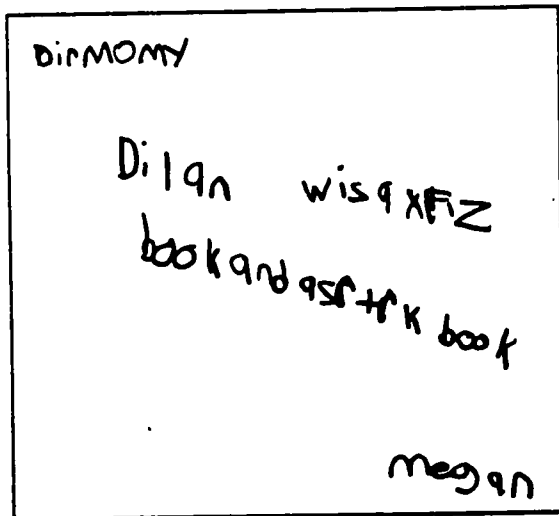


Figure 5-52 Tommy's replies to his mother's letter.



Dear Mommy, (initial of brother's name) wants a Star Trek book and an X-Files book.

Figure 5-53 Megan's reply to her mother's letter.

It was clear from this task that Daniel (Figure 5-51) had experience with letter writing but Chelsea had little experience with letter writing. Her teacher assistant suggested that she write her mum a birthday card in reply to her mum's letter, since she did understand card making and writing from her classroom experiences. The other children understood that the letter was a message and

required a response, which their letters reflect for an example of this see Megan's (figure 5-53) and Tommy's (figure 5-52) replies.

Figure 5-54 was the response Kristy wrote to her mother's letter. What I particularly noticed was her ability to respond to the text. I had not seen any of the other children do it to such an extent. Of all the children, she was the only one who had lots of writing experiences. She was also the most mature. I found it odd to see this type of

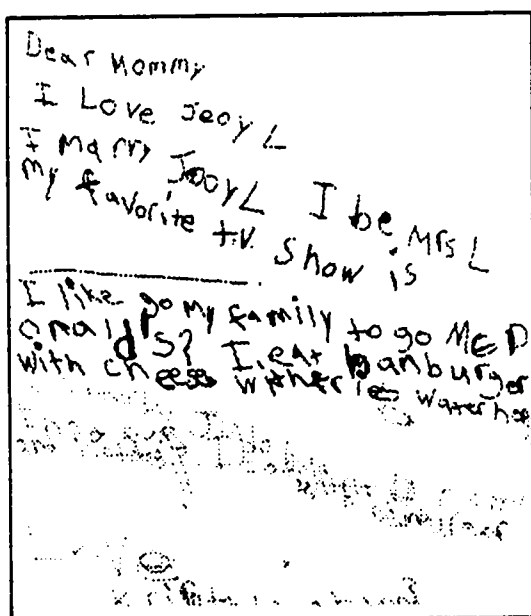


Figure 5-54 Kristy's reply to her mother's letter.

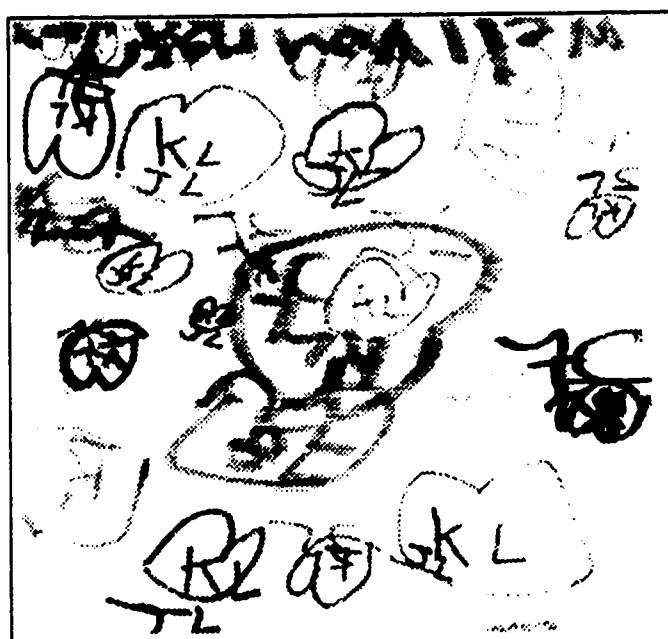


Figure 5-55 Kristy's graphic symbolization.

writing (Figure 5-54) next to the piece in Figure 5-55. Here she was demonstrating the use of graphic symbolization, but with a twist. Notice that at the top of the page, and superimposed over the graphics, the real message is written. She appeared to be returning to an earlier form of composing. I did not expect to see this kind of writing from Kristy, perhaps because she was the most accomplished in her literacy. However, here she

appeared to follow the same pattern I has seen in the others. After observing this feature in Kristy's writing, I suspected that somehow this was related to the way these children learn. They had to return to familiar patterns of composing before moving on.

Strategies for the Form and Function of Reading Printed Text

Task 8: Concepts About Print

As Task 8 I gave each of the children the informal tasks developed by Clay (1993) to elicit their specific knowledge about concepts about print (CAP). I was unaware of any current research in which Clay's (1993) research had been applied to children with such special needs as Jennie, David, Daniel, Tommy, Megan, Kristy, and Chelsea. Whether the child can read in the conventional sense is not important when doing this task. The teacher asks the child to choose one of the books and then asks the child for help reading the story. Clay's research (1989, 1991) has shown that this task reflects five areas of pre-literacy which all successful readers must grasp: book handling, directional behaviour, visual scanning, analysis and following behaviours, specific concepts about printed language and hierarchical concepts. Chelsea and Daniel had the book read to them while Jennie, David, Tommy, Megan, and Kristy were able to read the text with the teacher assistant or myself stopping to ask them questions about the specific concepts. A summary of the children's results is in Table 5.3. For specific details from this task see Appendix 3. Bookhandling and directional indicators are the areas of strongest achievement for most of the children. The remaining areas of visual scanning, analysis and following, specific concepts about printed language, and hierarchical concepts all illustrated gaps in their knowledge base. As a

participant observer, I continually shared the findings the children were demonstrating. All of the teacher assistants and teachers were amazed at some of the abilities and gaps in the children's concepts about print. I suspected that their language abilities might have interfered with their ability to do the CAP so I encouraged the teacher to watch the child doing the focused activity or to watch the video tape and give me feedback. None of the school personnel had really looked systematically at the children's knowledge in these areas, assuming that they had picked up the required knowledge by now. My observations here contradicted this premise and resulted in the teacher assistants and teachers being more sensitive with the instructional language they were using with the children and even undertaking some direct teaching in the weaker concept areas.

Table 5. 3: Results from the CAP for All the children

Indicators & Children	Jennie	David	Daniel	Tommy	Megan	Kristy	Chelsea
Book Handling							
front of book							
print contains message							
bottom of picture							
lines reversed							
left page before right page							
Directional Indicators							
where to start							
which way to go							
return to the left							
first and last concept							
line order altered							
Visual Scanning, Analysis & Following							
one change in word order							
one change in letter order							
one change in letter order							
reversible words (was, no)							
Specific Concepts About Printed Language							
meaning of ?							
meaning of period							
meaning of comma							
meaning of quotation marks							
location of Tt, Bb or Mm, Hh							
capital letter							
Hierarchical Concepts							
word by word matching							
one letter: two letters							
one word: two letters							
first & last letter of word							

Task 4: Running Records

It was important to observe what the children were doing when presented with familiar texts. Clay (1991,1993) suggests that very young children through running records (RR) can provide this information. Clay's (1993) technique is superb at capturing what children do as they try to puzzle out text. It reveals something about how children are monitoring and correcting their own performance. What they do when they come to something new and novel and what they learn from this encounter. I adapted Clay's (1993) procedure to use with these children. I decided to use the term "miscue" instead of her term "error" for two reasons. First, 'miscue' is the term used by Goodman (1965) to describe any deviations from the text the child does during oral reading. The assumption is that miscues are not considered random errors, but attempts by the child to make sense of the text. Miscues thus can provide a valuable source of information into the child's language use and literacy development. Second, 'error' is a negative term, implying an absolute mistake and does not embrace the notion that approximations can be productive. I was interested in the strategic patterns of miscues. It would be misleading and would mask this information about the miscues if I concentrated on reporting only the numerical values each of the children achieved. As Clay (1993) suggests, these are the percentage rates of accuracy (proportion of correct to misread words), and the error rate (proportion of running words to misread words). While this numerical information is interesting, alone it would not help in the important matter of the analysis of the miscues.

To offset this, I also looked at the children's miscues from the stand point of whether the children were using meaning or semantics, structure or syntax, visual or grapho-phonetic miscues and self correction. It is possible to make inferences from the kinds of miscues and self corrections that children make and from them obtain some sense of their strategic patterns. All the information in Table 5.4 is in percentages, except for the numbers in brackets which are the actual number of miscues. I will also describe the representative findings from Table 5.4 by selecting miscues from some of the children to represent the strategies I observed them using. In many cases I felt I had enough running records to pick representative miscue examples from the children. The information I gleaned from the running record plus the observations I made during this text reading are described to illustrate how the children demonstrated their knowledge that text carries a message. The strategies the children were employing on text, words, and letters showed how they were orchestrating their knowledge and, because of that, are of particular interest. I looked for places where the children used miscues from the structure or syntax of the sentence, miscues from the meaning or semantics of the passage, and miscues from the letters, letter order or the grapho-phonetics of the language. I wanted to know if these children employed self-correction as a strategy of

Key to Table 5.4

- **TEXT** is the title of book or excerpt read
- **RW** is the number of words in the text read
- **MR** is miscue ratio and () actual number of miscues
- **%AC** is the percent of accuracy of text read
- **%USE OF MISCUES** is the percent of miscues according to cuing system used
- **M** is percent of meaning or semantic cues
- **S** is percent of structure or syntactic cues
- **V** is percent of visual/phonetic cues
- **SCR** is self correction ratio and () actual number of self corrections
- **%USE OF SC MISCUES** is percent of self corrected miscues according to cuing system used

self monitor. I tried to obtain an easy, instructional and difficult running record from each of the children. This was not always possible as the children were self-selecting from familiar text they had available to them in their classrooms. In Tommy's case, I was only able to obtain two running records. For all the other children, I was able to obtain at least three representative samples of running records for Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Summary of the Children's Running Records (see key in text box)

Texts	RW	% AC	MR	% USE OF MISCUES			SCR	% USE OF SC MISCUES		
				M	S	V		M	S	V
Jennie										
Our Dog Sam (Literacy 2000)	59	97	1:30 (2)	100 (2/2)	100 (2/2)	50 (1/2)	1:60 (1)	100 (1/1)	100 (1/1)	0 (0/1)
The Teeny Tiny Woman (Step into reading, step 1 basal book)	149	96	1:25 (6)	50 (3/6)	67 (4/6)	33 (2/6)	1:20 (6)	83 (5/6)	100 (6/6)	67 (4/6)
Spot Goes to School (trade book)	64	86	1:6 (10)	10 (1/10)	70 (7/10)	40 (4/10)	1:11 (1)	100 (1/1)	100 (1/1)	0 (0/1)
David										
The Merry Go Round (Story Box book)	64	97	1:32 (2)	100 (2/2)	100 (2/2)	0 (0/2)	0 (0)	0	0	0
Who Will Be My Pet (basal reader)	95	92	1:12(8)	75 (6/8)	88 (7/8)	63 (5/8)	1:4 (3)	67 (2/3)	100 (3/3)	67 (2/3)
Books (Story Box book)	30	87	1:8 (4)	75 (3/4)	100 (4/4)	0 (0/4)	0 (0)	0	0	0
Daniel										
Feet (Story box book)	20	75	1:4 (5)	60 (3/5)	100 (5/5)	0 (0/5)	0 (0)	0	0	0

Fishing (basal reader)	64	64	1:3 (23)	9 (2/23)	48 (11/23)	65 (15/23)	0 (0)	0	0	0
Bicycle (Story box book))	29	59	1:2 (12)	42 (5/12)	83 (10/12)	42 (5/12)	0 (0)	0	0	0
Tommy										
My Mom Made Me Go to School (excerpt from trade book)	94	87	1:8 (12)	0 (0/12)	17 (2/12)	25 (3/12)	1:5 (3)	100 (3/3)	0 (0/3)	100 (3/3)
Arthur's Teacher Trouble (excerpt from trade book)	88	80	1:5 (18)	17 (3/18)	13 (2/18)	17 (3/18)	1:2 (1)	50 (½)	50 (½)	50 (½)
Megan										
The Three Billy Goats Gruff (basal reader)	264	97	1:33 (8)	88 (7/8)	88 (7/8)	63 (5/8)	1:5 (2)	40 (2/5)	20 (1/5)	40 (2/5)
Chicken Forgets (basal reader)	310	94	1:17 (18)	11 (2/18)	22 (4/18)	33 (6/18)	1:19 (1)	0 (0/1)	100 (1/1)	100(1/1)
See How They Grow (excerpt from trade book)	91	88	1:8 (11)	18 (2/11)	22 (4/11)	55 (6/11)	0 (0)	0	0	0
Kristy										
Boys and Girls (excerpt from Ladybird trade book)	149	99	1:74 (2)	100 (2/2)	100 (2/2)	100 (2/2)	1:3 (1)	100 (1/1)	100 (1/1)	100 (1/1)
Toy Story (excerpt from trade book)	152	97	1:30 (5)	20 (1/5)	80 (4/5)	20 (1/5)	0 (0)	0	0	0
How the Spider Saved Halloween (excerpt from trade book)	87	89	1:9 (10)	60 (6/10)	80 (8/10)	60 (6/10)	1:6 (2)	100 (2/2)	100 (2/2)	50 (½)
Chelsea										
The Raccoon (basal reader, Mr Mugs)	36	90	1:9 (4)	75 (3/4)	100 (4/4)	25 (1/4)	0 (0)	0	0	0

Play Ball! Part 1 & 2 (basal reader, Mr. Mugs)	140	89	1:23 (16)	38 (6/16)	100 (16/16)	19 (3/16)	1:5 (4)	100 (4/4)	100 (4/4)	100 (4/4)
Grandma, Grandpa (basal reader, Mr. Mugs)	77	86	1:7 (11)	46 5/11	91 10/11	46 5/11	0 (0)	0	0	0

In column one, I list the **TEXT** the children read and give some indication where the text is from. A basal reader indicates it is an excerpt from a basal reader with controlled vocabulary. The story box books are individual small books with levelled, rather than strictly controlled, vocabulary. A trade book is a picture book with no controlled vocabulary. The the actual number of running words (**RW**) read by the child is listed in column two.

In scoring the running records, Clay (1993) recommends calculating the percent of accuracy (**%AC**) the children obtained while reading continuous text. This number is defined in the box and entered in column three. It reflects only the percentage of correct word calling achieved by the children were.

$$\begin{aligned}
 MIS &= \text{Number of Miscues} \\
 RW &= \text{Number of Running Words} \\
 \%AC &= \text{Percent Accuracy} \\
 \%AC &= 100 - 100 \frac{MIS}{RW}
 \end{aligned}$$

The next step is to examine what Clay (1993) calls the error rate, which I renamed the miscue ratio (**MR**) (see column four). This is the ratio of the actual number of miscues to the total number of running words (**MIS : RW**). The number in brackets below the MR ratio is the actual number of miscues (**MIS**). I felt the numbers **%AC** and **MR**, while

interesting, did not reflect enough of a picture of what these children were doing with the text in front of them. As I was interested in the miscue usage of the children, I expanded the usual recommended procedures for scoring the running records. I do not believe the cuing systems operate totally independently from one another but in conjunction with one another. It is the orchestration of these that is a more valuable measure of success than proficiency in use of any one cuing system. I was looking for evidence that the children were making semantic intent, that is, indicating through their choices that the text had some personal meaning (Haste et al., 1984). I added to Clay's procedures in light of my concerns.

In columns five, six, and seven the percent use of miscues (**% USE OF MISCUES**) indicates in percentages how often the children used a specific cuing systems for their miscues. I was looking for the number of times the children used the meaning or semantic cues, the structure or syntactic cues, and the visual/phonetic cues. I gave the children credit for using the cues even if it was an approximation. In other words, I was interested in knowing if these children were aware of these three cuing systems, not just what their accuracy of word calling was. Because these children were emergent readers with delayed language, the strategies they used to gain meaning from the text, in my mind, were equally important. I felt it would be an indication that they were developing literacy proficiency, that they had begun to grasp important concepts about how to orchestrate their reading of continuous text. Therefore I calculated for each of their miscues, the percentage for the number of times they actually used the three cuing systems. In order to do this I had to analyse each of the miscues in relation to each other, not just in isolation.

Next, in column eight, I calculated the self-correction rate (**SCR**) by taking the number of self-correction miscues and dividing this amount by the combined number of miscues and self-correction miscues. This is the ratio found in column 8. Under this ratio I indicate the actual number of self-corrections the children made, which is the number in the brackets in this column. Finally, in columns nine, ten, and eleven, I calculated the percentage of self correction (**%USE OF SELF-CORRECTION**) for each of the self correction miscues to see if there were any patterns of usage in the children's cuing systems while they employed the self-correction strategy.

Discussion of Running Records

What I found for all the children was that they indeed were using the three cuing systems, but their percent of use varied from child to child as well as from text to text. Notice first that only Tommy and Kristy used trade books exclusively for their running records, which means the vocabulary of those texts was not controlled at all. Those passages, although familiar, were far more complex than the passages from the basal type materials. The other children to read from trade books were Jennie, who brought an old favourite from home, the book Spot Goes to School and, Megan, who read from her library book Chicken Forgets. The Story Box books which David and Daniel read, while a self contained stories, are levelled and do have some degree of controlled vocabulary. Where I have indicated a story from a basal reader, as I did for Megan, Chelsea and one of David's passages, these excerpts have highly controlled vocabulary and this can affect the

predictability of the text. By only examining the %AC and MR, the complexity of the passage's semantics, syntax and vocabulary is lost.

Tommy's and Kristy's classroom and individual literacy programme did not appear to include any basal type reading materials. Rather it was a literacy program incorporating diverse plans, media, and approaches for the provision of a range of individual differences. Megan's, David's, Jennie's and Chelsea's classroom literacy programmes were also like this, but their individual literacy was based upon a mixture of basal type reading materials and worksheets, as well as levelled small books such as the Story Box books. Daniel's classroom and individual literacy program was linear programmed instruction. It comprised a series of small planned learning steps through which he had to move one at a time. Accurate responses were rewarded, not approximations. Daniel was working at the letter, sound symbol stage in class and rarely had the opportunity to read continuous text in class. The running records he did for me were on familiar small books I had introduced to him since there were none I could draw upon from his classroom.

When looking at Table 5.4 it is important to remember the actual numbers of RW the children were reading and the actual number of miscues or self-corrections each child was making on that particular text, otherwise the percentages can be misleading. All the children were aware of the three cuing systems, even though they did not use all the cuing systems well by cross checking one against the other. There seemed to be a pattern among the children to use the structural or syntactic cue the most, followed by the visual or visual/phonetic. The meaning or semantic cue was used least. I wondered if the predominance of the structural or syntactic cues was due to the children's language, which

in all cases was in various processes of evolution. This seemed to be the case for Daniel. There was also a huge emphasis in Daniel's current programme on using the visual/phonetic cues. I wondered if this contributed to Daniel not indicating any self-corrections since he had so little experience practising this skill.

This did not explain Tommy's miscue use. I thought perhaps that his miscue pattern was the influence of his individual language processing. Notice that he used visual/phonetics miscues slightly more. This pattern of miscues could also be due to the text difficulty. Perhaps he was asked to read texts which were far too difficult for him, so he could not use the semantic and syntactic cues effectively. He could self-correct, so he must have been doing some self-monitoring. I regret that, due to time constraints, I was unable to get an easy text sample from Tommy and observe what he could do. Notice that Jennie, David, Megan, and Kristy, on their easy texts (99 to 95% AC), used the cuing systems to cross check themselves. In fact, Chelsea seemed to favour slightly semantic and syntactic cues over visual/phonetic cues on her instructional texts (94 to 90% AC). I never managed to get a sample from her on an easy text. Notice that as all the texts got more difficult, the pattern of their strategies changed and semantic cues decreased, and there was less cross checking of information.

The most striking aspect of Table 5.4 was that there appeared to be evidence that all the children were trying to orchestrate the cuing systems, regardless of what level of text they were reading. It appeared they all had some semantic intent. They all appeared to understand that text carried a message. By looking only at their accuracy rates, much of this would have been missed. To illustrate this argument, I selected representative samples of

specific miscues from each of the children to examine in more detail. More of these can be found in Appendix 2.

The following examples illustrate that the children were using their visual/phonetic, semantic and syntactic knowledge even though they miscued. The text box shows the marking codes used in the examples.

Marking Codes Used in RR examples

✓	indicates the text correctly read
bold	word is miscue for text also bolded
-	under a bold word is an inserted miscue
R	repetition
SC	self corrected miscue
T	teacher assisted word
TAA	try that again direction from teacher
A	child's appeal for a word

Jennie, Chelsea, Megan, and Kristy all had difficulties with tenses in their oral speech all the time. Here Jennie used a form of

Jennie: ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ going ✓
Text: Our dog Sam likes to go shopping.
(from Our Dog Sam)

the verb which she uses in her oral speech. It makes perfect sense in the context of her language.

David was very positive about his reading and had just told me: "I can read". He too was brought a language pattern from his own speech to this text. A feature of David's

David: ✓ can read ✓ ✓
Text: I read about ghosts.
(from Books)

and Tommy's language was perseveration, which could also explain this type of miscue. If semantic intent is considered, which I am assuming the children were using during these miscues, then all these examples thus far make sense. The children used a grammatical structure incorrectly but, in doing so, they displayed that they do have a notion of syntax. It needed refining. Their visual/phonetic cues were there as well, but they also needed

some refining. There was no need to self-correct as their text made sense to them even more so if their oral language patterns were taken into consideration as well. I witnessed their oral language being put to use in their readings of these texts.

In the next set of examples, the children sometimes used an entirely different word but maintained the sense of the text. I had not expected this type of miscue from the children. It confirmed the research findings of Buckley & Bird (1993), however, who found similar patterns in their children. The miscue often had no visual similarity to the text word but it did have a similar meaning.

Jennie knew that Sam was meeting a person, not a thing, and correctly substituted another suitable word "letter carrier". She had cross checked the information against the picture, which clearly showed a letter carrier approaching the house. Chelsea did

Jennie: ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ **postman.**
 Text: Our dog Sam likes to meet the **mailman.**
 (from Our Dog Sam)

a similar thing. She was cued by the picture in the text, which clearly showed the picture of the father, or papa, getting into the car with Jan and

Chelsea: ✓ ✓ ✓ **Papa.**
 Test: In you go. **Jan.**
 (from Grandma, Grandpa)

Curt. Since the adult was the more prominent of the three figures in the picture, she assumes the text must refer to the adult, a logical cross checking of information with the picture.

The other striking aspect of the Table 5.4 was that all the children except Daniel used self-

Example 1:
 Tommy: **Here SC** ✓ **aid SC** ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
 Text: **How** to **add** and how to spell

Example 2:
 Tommy: ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ **cl...clothes as, sh..., so, SC** ✓
 Text: "You need brand need clothes she said."

correction as a strategy when reading. That signalled for me that all the children except Daniel, were indicating some degree of self-monitoring while they were reading. This was an interesting sign even if the self-correction were inefficient when the actual number of self-corrections are taken into account for each child. The fact that I was able to find any was encouraging evidence. Both Daniel and Tommy appealed a lot to the teacher for help with unknown words, making few attempt to try words on their own. This could have been the adult help was always readily available and it was just easier to wait for the teacher to give the word, rather than to try to problem solve. Notice in Table 5.4 that Tommy did not use his semantic knowledge at all in his first running record, yet his accuracy was higher. In all 12 of his miscues he stopped and appealed to the teacher for help, making no attempt to problem solve. The only area he indicated he was problem solving was in his self-corrections. Two of the three were in the same sentence. In the last one, Example 2, he indicated that he did indeed have some problem solving ability. Notice how he was taking a run at the word 'clothes' and got it. He tried out a different word for 'she' at first, then tried the sound 'sh' using the visual grapho-phonetic cues until he got it.

Kristy illustrated her self-correcting, which she did in this example, as soon as she realized the text was about Halloween. Here she miscued the word 'eve,' using her visual/phonetics cues only, then repeated the whole phrase when she realized what she had done to get the rhythm of the text back. Chelsea did the

Kristy: ✓ ✓ ✓ even ✓ R SC
Text: It was Halloween eve and,

Chelsea: ! ✓ it at ✓ R SC
Text: Look at it go?

same thing for this self-correction as well, repeating the whole sentence when she realized she had reversed the words 'at and it' and the question did not make sense.

The other general observation I was able to make was to notice that all the children exhibited directional movement controls and one to one correspondence when they read continuous text. They could finger point to the words as they read them, although this was not a normal activity for any of them except Jennie and Kristy. They demonstrated to me where to start reading and in which direction to proceed as they had on the CAP. At the hard level of text, none of children really took control of the book language and their orchestration of strategies broke down. This happens to all children in the process of learning to read (Clay, 1991). To find the right balance of text, which is not too difficult but does allow for some challenges, is very important at the emergent stages. There was a tendency with all these children, except Daniel, to have them reading text which was too difficult for them. I excluded Daniel because he really was not encouraged to read any continuous text. I found that all the children, even Daniel, were able to memorize and repeat phrases from books. I suspected that all the children, except Kristy, would still be more comfortable with predictable text. This is typical of young children's reading, according to which Dyson (1989), Harste et al. (1984), Clay (1993) and others.

Summary of Theme 3 Indicators at School

Reflecting on Theme 3: Characteristic Uses of Literacy at School, it was found that all the children were using strategies characteristic of emergent literacy research found in non special needs children. In fact, the children seem to use many remarkably similar strategies, despite their individual special needs. There were indications that the children could, and did, initiate writing and reading with and without prompting by a supportive adult. Some of the children, like Kristy, could use writing for many different purposes, such as letter writing or expressing their feelings. All showed a beginning awareness of this aspect of writing. All the children certainly exhibited various degrees of knowledge of specific letter names, letter sounds and sight words. Different components of orthographic concepts were evident in their writing and various degrees of knowledge about printed text surfaced. The children were all using some cuing systems while reading continuous text. All of these indicators of emergent literacy are well documented in the research.

Theme 3 Indicators: Characteristic Use of Literacy at School

- child initiates reading and writing with or without a prompt from an adult
- child uses orthographic concepts (semi-phonemic, phonemic, transitional) encoding and decoding
- child uses, or has used, writing for different purposes
- child exhibits ability to formulate a message
- child exhibits mechanical formation of letters
- child exhibits specific knowledge of concepts about print (book handling, directional movement, visual scanning, analysis, punctuation, letters, word/sentences)
- child demonstrates that text carries a message
- child demonstrates ability to orchestrate all his/her specific skills with continuous text

Theme 4: Uses of Literacy and Language

The recurring question about the link between children's language and their literacy kept inserting itself into my observations. I observed their language operating while they were doing the focused literacy tasks as the instructions all involved the interpretation and processing of language for specific purposes. This seemed to be the case when the children did the concepts about print (CAP). The children's oral word order difficulties surfaced in their writing, for example. This meant that the children's language could not be separated from their literacy. In most special education settings language instruction and literacy instruction are approached as separate instructional processes. Focused Literacy Task I, on environmental print, carried out with the children highlighted the close relationship between their language and literacy. It gave the best small window into how their use of language supported their literacy and vice versa. These were children who regularly accompanied their parents on errands and shopping trips within their communities. These were children who were regularly exposed to a very literate environment in their homes through books and television. These children lived in a print laden society, one in which print is a distinctive feature on products and store signs and is associated with recognizable logos or graphics. The distinctive Macdonald golden arches are recognized by many young children, even though they may not be able to 'read' the word 'Macdonalds.' I believe that in this cultural milieu, a part of the literacy process begins when the child starts to use print within the environment. The child starts to read when they make decisions about, or respond to, a print setting that they would not have made if the graphic display was not present. The child's familiarity with, differential use of, and knowledge of all the complex cues that give

meaning to print signs is the beginning of the orchestrating of cues to make meaning. A similar and necessary task is brought to conventional texts (Harste et al., 1984). I saw the beginnings of some orchestration from these children in their running records. I wanted to observe whether these children were picking up literacy through environmental contacts and, in turn were bringing that knowledge to text, where they then utilized the language/literacy decisions learned through their environments.

Dyson (1981) researched the strategies young children used to support their literacy. She found that very young children use different language functions in literacy situations such as representational, directive, heuristic, personal, and interactional language. I wondered if these children would do the same during the games. The speech and language reports I was able to read addressed the children's syntactic structures, pronunciation difficulties and vocabulary deficits, rather than the use of language, which was what I was interested in observing. Would the environmental print games give any indications of their use of these language functions? Some of the children, like Tommy, Daniel and David, were considered to have major communication difficulties. Jennie was the easiest child to understand, but all the children had pronunciation difficulties that distracted the listener from their language use. Megan and Kristy had some early hearing loss and this had affected their pronunciation, but they were now amplified for their loss. Chelsea was actively working on enunciation with her speech language pathologist. In general, their language sounded like the language of a very young child with incomplete sentences and many one word answers. For the unfamiliar listener, a young child's language is often difficult to understand but as listener familiarity grows, their language becomes more

comprehensible. I found this to be the case with these children. The teacher assistants and in particular, the children's peers, were of great assistance in this area. The children's peers always knew what any of the children were saying and often provided translation for the teacher assistant and myself when all we heard was garble. It therefore was important to include them in this focus activity as participating informants.

Task 1: Environmental Print Games

Harste et al. (1984) have done extensive work with very young children in their search for an understanding of literacy growth and process. Their research pointed to the orchestration of the cuing systems as a more viable measure of success than the individual control of the cuing systems themselves. I developed games that drew on their work. In their study they chose familiar objects from the children's environment and asked the children questions about them. All the objects had a print component to them.

I elicited from each of the mothers a list of environmental print objects that they felt their child would recognize. The object had to have a print component. For example, a crest toothpaste tube or box, a favourite cereal box, a band aid box, a favourite soup can. In addition to these objects, I asked the parents to tell with me some of the familiar places they frequented with their child. For example I asked them where they shopped in their community for groceries, clothes, and other household items. From all this information, I compiled a list of 20 environmental objects which were common to all the children and adapted these into a cooperative game for two children.⁶² In the first game, the question "What do you think this says?", asks the children to make a selection from many semantic

features and come up with its specific name, such as 'Crest', its function, or a categorical description. The second question was to elicit from the children how they knew it said 'Crest'. I hoped that the children would indicate they were using some form of visual graphic information on the object, such as the letters, or the logo, if there was one. Even the colours on the item could cue the youngsters to the product, as many stores use specific colours on their signs and packages. The third question was designed to elicit any information from the children any information they had about the object.

In the second game the children had the opportunity to demonstrate whether they could recognize the object, even when it was decontextualized in a more abstract form. By quoting what they had said previously, I cued them to the object and gave them an opportunity to add to their

Key to Table 5.5

Responses for Condition 1

(f) functional

(c) categorical

(g) graphic

(s) specific

Responses for Condition 3

✓

Total number of responses = number of types of responses in each category

response. In the third game I was interested to know which of the children were able to "read" or identify the text with no contextual cues present to assist them with the graphics. As it turned out, the second game did not really yield any interesting results. The children who had identified the actual object were still able to identify the object in photographic form. This form of decontextualizing did not seem to affect them. Most of them did not want to add any more to what they had already said. It was only when the print was completely decontextualized and presented as a word on a blank page that a difference did occur. The real test of these children's environmental print reading was not the final task of

reading only the words. Rather it occurred in the first condition, the one in which they demonstrates how they were orchestrating a complex set of cues and indicated how they used their language to support their literacy knowledge. So I decided only to report on the first condition in Table 5.5. I added the last condition as a way to contrast the child's level of conventional literacy growth. Condition 3 does not recognize the complexity of the cuing system, because the cues were eliminated for this task. The task was really not 'real reading' any more than the tic tac toe games adapted from Clay's (1993) could be considered real reading. However, these were tasks that these children were asked to complete in school settings, so I retained them. For descriptions and examples of the types of responses in each category see Appendix 2.

Table 5.5: Summary of the Children's Results from the Environmental Print Games 1 & 3

Product Names and Description	Children's Responses Condition 1 and 3 ✓						
	Jennie	David	Daniel	Tommy	Megan	Kristy	Chelsea
hold indicates condition 3							
1. Newspaper: Front section of Ottawa Citizen newspaper	f c g	s g ✓	f c g s ✓	s g ✓	f c s g	f c g s ✓	f g
2. Band aids box: full Johnson's Band aids Sesame Street box	f c g s	f c s g ✓	c s g	g	c s g ✓	f c g s ✓	f c s g
3. Pasta Box: oblong plastic window Spaghetti box	n/a	f c g	f c s g	s g	f c s g	f c g s ✓	f s g ✓
4. TV Guide: Saturday TV Times insert	n/a	f s g ✓	f g s ✓	s g	f c s g ✓	f c g s ✓	c f s g ✓
5. Grocery Bag: Brown paper Loblaws bag with Logo	c g	f c g	c f g	s g ✓	f c s g ✓	f c g s ✓	f c
6. Detergent box: 4 L empty Tide Box with handle	f g ✓	f g s	c f g	s g c ✓	f c s g ✓	f c g s ✓	f c g
7. Cereal Box: Empty Honey Nut Cheerios box	f c g s ✓	f s g ✓	f g s ✓	f s g	f c s g ✓	f c g s ✓	f c s g
8. Snack food Bag: Full medium sized Hostess salt & vinegar bag	f c s g ✓	f c g	f s g ✓	c s g	f c s g	f c g s ✓	f c g

9. Juice box: small Allan's Apple juice box with straw	n/a	f c g ✓	f c g	c g s	f s g	f c g s ✓	f c g s ✓
10. Store Bag: Zellers logo plastic shopping bag	f c g s ✓	f c s g ✓	f g	c g	f c s g	f c g s ✓	f c g
11. Candy box: Full Smarties box	f c g s ✓	f c g ✓	f g	c s g	f c s g ✓	f c g s ✓	f g
12. Fries box: large size Macdonald's French fries box	f c g s ✓	c g ✓	c g s ✓	c s g ✓	f c s g ✓	f c g s ✓	f c s g
13. Store bag: Eaton's plastic bag with logo	n/a	f g ✓	f g	s g	f c s g ✓	f c g s ✓	c f g
14. Toothpaste box: Crest toothpaste box with tube inside	f c g s	f c g	c g	s g	c f g ✓	f c g s ✓	f c g
15. Pop can: full Diet Coke can	f c g s ✓	f c g	c f g	f s g	f s g ✓	f c g s ✓	f c s g
16. Gum package: green full Trident gum package	n/a	f c g	f c g	s g	f c g	f c g s ✓	f c g
17. Soup can: full Campbell's Chicken Noodle Soup can	f c g s ✓	f c g s ✓	f c g	c s g ✓	c f s g ✓	f c g s ✓	f c s g ✓
18. Shopping bag: Canadian Tire plastic bag & logo	n/a	f s g	c g	s g ✓	c g	f c g s ✓	f g
19. Ketchup bottle: medium size plastic Heinz tomato ketchup	n/a	f c g	f g	c g ✓	f s g ✓	f c g s ✓	f c g s
20. Catalogue: Consumers Distributors' Catalogue	n/a	f g	f g	c g	f c g	f c g s ✓	f g
Total number of responses for each response condition 1	f=11 c=11 g=12 s=9	f=18 c=13 g=20 s=8	f=16 c=12 g=20 s=6	f=2 c=9 g=20 s=16	f=18 c=17 g=20 s=16	f=20 c=20 g=20 s=20	f=20 c=15 g=19 s=9
Total number of product names read for condition 3	8	10	5	7	12	20	4

Discussion of Responses

What proved interesting was the children's choice of language in their responses.

Table 5.5 does not show this. To capture this aspect for this theme meant analyzing and reporting on each child's responses on every focused activity. I had to be selective. I chose

to describe examples taken from their answers in Table 5.5 to illustrate the language they were using in their responses in the description of the definitions. Because I was looking for patterns among the children's language, I looked first to see if there was one response used by all these youngsters and it was the graphic cue. Even when the child did not correctly identify the printed text, without exception they all appeared to be aware that the graphic component of the object as carried meaning.

Table 5.5 reflects the multiple aspect of their responses. Some of these inter-relationships were very interesting. For example, Kristy named the Crest box correctly, indicating with her finger where the print said this. She said: "...for brushing teeth," and ran her finger along the print. She went on to demonstrate teeth brushing, incorporating a functional response as well. She knew it was a Crest box, said , "the colour," and pointed to the logo when I asked her how she knew this was Crest. In this one word response she was using the graphics, on the box as well as the print graphics to give me the reason she knew what this said. She could read the word 'crest' in the third game without hesitation. Kristy's answered similarly to all the other items presented to her. In other words, she was able clearly to demonstrate that she could graphically identify the print on the object and relate it to its function. She was orchestrating many cues at the same time. She was also the only child who did this regularly. Kristy was the only child who was successfully able to do all the items and read the text by itself.

On the same item, Jennie used all the responses as Kristy. She pointed to the print immediately and said "crest" (specific response) and then she went on to say : "...you brush teeth" (functional response). When asked to go on and tell me some things she knew

about this she said: " I don't know... toothpaste in the bathroom,...you brush teeth ...yeah...toothpaste (categorical response) ...(uses motions of brushing teeth) ...tooth brush...need a tooth brush and go up and down" (more functional response). Here she is trying, through her descriptive language of the actions, to explain where the actions take place and what is needed to carry out the activity. When Jennie was presented just with the word 'crest,' she immediately said: "cats" cuing into the graphics initial consonants and, perhaps, the word shape.

Megan followed a similar pattern, using representational language to label the item as 'toothpaste,' as she pointed to the printed 'Crest' word, and then demonstrated brushing her teeth, so she was giving a functional response as well, using the logo to cue her action. The graphics were important to her because she next said, " brush teeth," in case I had not understood her action. She never said the word 'Crest,' but pointed to the word and said, "blue" when I asked her to tell me more about the item. But later, when presented with just the print, she was able to identify the print as 'Crest.' Chelsea, on the same item, said the object was "tooth brush....need water." She then went on to demonstrate on her own teeth how to use the object. She was able to point to the print but not able to say the word. She went on to say that "Mum does and Daddy." Chelsea's response was very functional, and she could associate the item to a familiar experience, so she was showing some representational language. She even elaborated on this to tell who used the object. The fact that she pointed to the print indicated that she too knew the graphics carried this message, so she was using graphic information. Once the object was decontextualized with a photograph she was no longer able, or was unwilling, to give any information about the object. It was

as if she was indicating that she needed the concrete product, its shape and context, to identify it. Chelsea used graphic cues on each item as she talked about them, yet she was able only to identify three items when given only the printed text, "TV" from the 'TV Times', "apple juice" from 'Allan's apple juice' and "soup" from 'Campbell's chicken noodle soup.'

On the same item, like Chelsea and Megan, Daniel pointed to the word 'crest' and said, "toothpaste." He told me more about the object saying, "blue, Dad's house too and Mum's house, me buy a big one." His representational language involved a categorical response, a label as well as an association to his home. In the last part of his answer, was he trying to tell me that he buys a larger tube than the one I was showing him? He was using language to try to report an activity he was aware of at home. He never demonstrated what to do with the Crest, but it was clear from his language that he knew what the product was and where he had seen it. His awareness of print did not yet let him read it to me, but he clearly was using print to convey a message.

David pointed to the graphic and ran his fingers along the word 'Crest' and said, "toothpaste...brush your teeth," completing his answer with a functional response. This was clearly representational labeling language with a description of an action. David read 'toothpaste' when he was presented the word 'Crest' in the third game. He was the only one who made this kind of associative response to the written words in the third game. He said, "gum" when presented with the word 'Trident' and "hamburger" when presented with the words 'Heinz tomato ketchup.' The others tended to try the graphic if they knew it, or some form of the print. For example, Chelsea knew the TV part of the 'TV Times' and the word

'soup' in 'Campbell's Chicken Noodle Soup,' while Megan got the 'Tire' part from the 'Canadian Tire.'

On the 'Crest' item Tommy first smelled the object and then said, "Crest," rubbing the graphic to give a response. He gave no other language when asked. In fact, Tommy tended to smell most of the items first before responding to the questions, usually with one word answers. He often had to be prompted by the teaching assistant or peer to read it. The only other child who smelled any of the items was David. Like a lot of the other children, Tommy made associations in his categorical responses but as the total numbers show, his were the least. The most interesting one he did was for the Zellers item. As soon as he saw the shopping bag, he patted the bag and said, "...the lowest price is the law." He did not say the store name even when prompted by "What does this say?" When he was given the word Zellers, in condition 3, he did the same thing and answered, "the lowest price is the law." At some level, he recognized the graphic and the printed text.

Summary of Theme 4 Indicators

Reflecting on theme 4: Use of Literacy and Language brought several features about the children into focus. Perhaps the most outstanding aspect was the fact that all the children's responses used the graphic component in some way. They all knew that the graphics carried a message. This was an important concept about literacy to have grasped and one they could bring to

Theme 4 Indicators: Uses of Literacy and Language

- uses functional verbal or action responses
- uses categorical verbal responses
- uses specific print responses
- uses graphics to support responses
- uses representational language function to support response

their continuous text reading. All the children were cued by the graphics during these tasks. The next most popular response, for all except Tommy, was the functional one, as the children could demonstrate their responses with actions if they chose to do so. Since all of these children had some difficulties with oral language, it is not surprising that they chose this means to communicate their responses. Very young children do this as they engage in communication (Tough, 1977; Halliday, 1973). The others then moved to categorical responses.

Tommy preferred the specific response, saying some aspect of the product name. Notice the difference in his ability to recognize the printed text in condition 3. Tommy, more than the others, required the contextual graphic cues provided by the product to give a specific response. This seemed to mean he needed the print to stimulate his language. This could have been unique to Tommy's special needs. This meant the others seemed to require the print but to a lesser degree to stimulate their language. This small language sample was not enough to make any definitive statements; it only generates more questions. I could observe some of the representational language functions referred to by Dyson (1981), but the samples of language I got were too sparse really to analyze them for multiple heuristic, interactional, and directive language functions. I did get some personal language functions when the children would, like Jennie, say: "My favourite," referring to Macdonald's french fries. Chelsea did use some heuristic language when she asked the peer playing with her, "What dat?" pointing to the Consumers Distributing catalogue. I felt that this was because the children's language was still in a growth process. Their language was just not there yet.

Perhaps in a few years, given the same print tasks, they would exhibit more varied language functions. Only long term research could answer this question.

Summary to Chapters Four and Five: The Children's Profiles

I approached this research as an unfolding journey of discovery as I moved from child to child and school to school. Rather than presenting the complete data on each child as is done in traditional case studies, I compared and contrasted the seven children through the themes as I observed them. The themes that formed the framework for this study emerged as I worked with the children at home and at school. The first theme discussed was **Beliefs and Values: About Inclusion, About literacy**. It formed the basis for Chapter 4. I discussed this theme as I described the children's early years, and their inclusive setting. In doing this, the beliefs and values of the significant adults in the children's lives emerged. The second theme, **Experiences with and Participation in Literacy at Home**, which started Chapter 5 provided the place to describe the children's literacy experiences at home. The third theme, **Characteristic Uses of Literacy at Home and at School**, plus the fourth theme, **Uses of Literacy and Language**, formed the remainder of Chapter 5. To summarize and to draw the multifaceted data together for each child, I have included the children's profiles in a summary, note-like format in individual boxes at the end of this chapter. These contain the highlights and details for each child, drawn from both Chapters 4 and 5.

Jennie's Profile

Demographics	Age 10.9/10.10; grade 4 (split 4/5); 6 yrs. in school; mum left work and opted to stay home after Jennie's birth and dad was a military officer; brother 15 only sibling
Community	semi-rural affluent small town
Early Years	had no significant medical conditions associated with Down Syndrome; wore glasses; mother did much infant stimulation (Hanan); speech therapy carried out by parent in consultation with therapist; first pre-school experiences were positive; first formal school experience were negative (out of province); local school experiences had been positive.
Inclusive Setting	attended local community public school, Riverbend P.S.; had a nearly full time teacher assistant (TA); viewed by significant adults (principal, teacher and TA) as "placement" in regular classroom: one on one teaching all done by teacher assistant; literacy programme fairly balanced between structured programme material (phonics) and other reading/writing activities; was encouraged to read continuous text daily and to compose on her own; adaptation to other subjects done mostly by TA; teacher and TA on own re curriculum support; accepted by peers who realized she was "special student"; beginning to be included in some social activities outside of school e.g. birthday parties
Literacy At Home	read to from birth; literacy was important to all family members; provided with many opportunities to write and read; mother kept portfolio of her present and former school work; mother reviewed homework daily; home provided literacy models: memory aids (notes on refrigerator, calendars, lists, telephone and address books visible); social interactional uses (magazines, cards, newspaper, Jennie's school papers); educational uses (daily communication book, school reports, speech reports, games, taped books.); parents felt with time she would become more literate.

Literacy At School

Strategies for Specific Skills with Letters, Letter Sounds and Words

Task 6 (a) Game 1: Tic Tac Toe Letter Identification

Jennie confused the lowercase 'q' for 'p,' otherwise she knew all the letters at 98%.

Specific Results on Task 6 (b) Game 2: Tic Tac Toe Letter Sound Identification

The vowel letter sounds she knew were: 'Aa' and 'Y' which she could give the long vowel sound for each, but she missed the following vowel sounds: 'Oo,' 'li,' 'Ee,' 'y,' 'Uu'. She knew all the consonant except 'Zz,' 'Xx,' 'Q'; and 'q' became 'p'; 'l' was the letter name not the sound. Notice the vowels were still not fixed but the ones she did know were for long vowels, close to letter names. Only some of consonants sounds were still troublesome for Jennie, who achieved 70%.

Specific Results on Task 6 (c) Game 3: Tic Tac Toe Word from Initial Letter

In Jennie's case, she was able to give words for all the vowels, even though she could not give the sounds in isolation for more than 'Aa,' and 'Y'. She was able to give such examples as 'o' for ox, 'i' for ice, 'e' for egg, 'u' for umbrella'. Notice that in the choice of words for the letters, there were some short vowels present. The letters she could not give words for were the consonants 'Zz,' 'Xx,' 'l,' 'q'. She was able to give a word for the uppercase 'L' and 'Q' but chose not to give the same word for the lowercase. There were really only two consonants that she did not come up with words for, 'Zz' and 'Xx..' She demonstrated phonemic segmentation here with 89% achievement.

Specific Results on Task 7 Game 4: Tic Tac Toe Sight Word Identification

Jennie used self correction a lot, employing the same initial first letter strategy and the word shape matching. For example, with 'the' for 'them' or 'on' for 'one.' Jennie used the initial first letter as a strategy to say the sight word, but she was not sophisticated. Notice in the examples cited that she really used the beginnings of the word shapes, then she preferred to guess based upon the initial letter, so she said, 'play, pop' for 'pretty'; 'fear, her' for 'here'; or 'we, day, ten' for 'they'; 'what' for 'who'. She was trying to cross check two pieces of information but she was not doing this very well as yet, so her achievement was 53% on this basic sight word list.

Specific Details on Task 9: 10 Minute Race Game - Writing Vocabulary

Jennie's achievement here was to correctly write 14 word out of 21 attempts for 67%. She was a letter-name or phonetic strategy user in her invented spellings. She appeared to have some understanding of capitalization for words like 'Mom,' 'Dad' and 'Matt.' Note the letters in many of her words were missing for example, 'ad' for 'and' or 'hil' for 'hill'. Sometimes the letters were in the wrong order. For example, 'lleky' for 'Kelly'. She had attention to spaces between the words and directionality across the page. Use of upper and lower case was mostly understood. Concept of word appeared there. Note many words had some vowel substitutions, indicating that she knew that letters made up words and she heard the vowel, for example 'mstar' for 'mister,' 'ta' for 'to' or 'ame' for 'Amy'. It also meant she had phonetic segmentation (Figure 5-20).

Strategies for Form and Structure of Written Language

Specific Details for Task 10: Dictation

Jennie was able to use (Figure 5-26) the initial and final consonants words to attempt words like 'bos' for 'bus', 'gat' for 'get', 'Lat' for 'let' and 'stap' for 'stop'. She did not leave out the vowel but substituted one in these words. With words that end in unstressed syllables, the vowels in those syllables were usually omitted so 'while' came out as 'whil'. In the word 'here' she did not even hear the 'he' so wrote only what she heard which was the 'er'. The word 'coming' was interesting as she left the vowel out completely and used the silent letter marker 'e' and the 'g' of the 'ing' ending. Notice too that she still used the occasional uppercase letter at the beginning or end of a word 'WihL,' 'Lat', but not at the beginning of the sentences. She was aware of spaces between the words, had proper directionality, and used periods to punctuate the two sentences. She did not start a new line for each sentence so had some ideas about how continuous works. Her achievement here was 78%, which was 29 phonemes out of 37. These were all strategies of a phonemic or letter-name user.

Specific Details for Task 3: Uninterrupted Drawing and Writing

Jennie did not hesitate to draw a picture for me and wrote her name boldly across the bottom in orange marker. She sub-vocalized and wrote a story (Figure 5-30) which she sort of could read back to me as I pointed to the words. Writing had a purpose here and she was trying to convey a message. She used some phonemic or letter name strategies along with semi-phonemic strategies letter strings, a capital at the beginning of her sentence and a period at the end. The words 'we,' 'to,' 'go,' 'the' were clearly visible even though attention to spacing was absent. Words like 'ply' for 'play' or 'lik' showed phonetic awareness. Note she had the 'Fie' of 'field' and the 'Bia' for 'base ball.' Word order was jumbled. She knew that print had a certain direction and understood the orientation of most of the letters - note the reversed 'b' 'd'. Note the lack of cohesion between the two sentences. TA said, she could do better if oral rehearsal was done and she had the chance to manipulate the words on cards.

Specific Details for Task 2: Language Experience Story

Jennie's excerpt was from her daily journal (Figure 5-39). She did imitation cursive writing and a squiggle colourful drawing. She re-read what she had written but it was a garbled story about the TV show, "The Simpsons." The next day she turned to the same page and told me something else

about the piece. It was still about "The Simpsons" and she pointed out the characters of Bart and Homer. She was able to retain the topic of what she had written, but the content had changed, a frequent occurrence according to her teacher and teacher assistant. She was illustrating recurrence, flexibility, generativity and directionality of a pre-phonemic writer. Her other journal samples had recognizable letters but they were still pre-phonemic.

Specific Details for Task 5: Phase 1- Receiving & Reading a Letter, Phase 2- Writing & Reading a Letter

This was an optional activity for the children. Jennie's mother wrote to her and her TA helped her to read the letter which she was thrilled to get. She required a lot of oral scaffolding to write a reply. It was obvious that she was not very familiar and comfortable with letter writing.

**Strategies for
the Form and
Function of
Reading
Printed Text**

Specific Details for Task 8: Concepts About Print (CAP)

During this task recorded in Table 5.3, she was able to do all the book handling tasks except indicating the direction of print when one starts to read. Observation indicated that she definitely knew this concept, but I believed she had not understood the directions here, even when they were rephrased because of her current language use. This seemed to be confirmed in the directional indicators where it was obvious that she had not understood the concepts of 'first line' as it applied to the page yet she was able successfully to indicate the 'last line' and do all the other directional indicators. The visual, scanning, analysis and following Jennie was able to find the words 'was' and 'no' since these were firmly in their sight vocabulary. In the specific concepts about printed language she understood the meaning of the period, capital letters and could locate specific letters within text. She seemed to be stumped when asked about question marks, commas and quotation marks. Jennie was very good at matching the hierarchical concepts of word by word matching and could point out one word and two words. This seemed to indicate she could make the distinction between these two concepts. She still was thrown by the concept of 'first and last' when asked to point these out as letters in a word. The same thing seemed to happen when she was asked to point out one, then two words, but not two letters within a text. These could have been outside her current experience but more likely this was an indication that she was not certain about what a letter was as opposed to a word. This language concept combined within a different context, could have thrown her off.

Specific Details for Task 4: Running Records (RR)

Jennie read three passages for RR in Table 5.4. Two were at the independent level and the last text, Spot Goes to School, brought from home was at the hard level. What is significant here was that the first two texts were small books with a familiar repetitive pattern. The book brought from home was not, even though the vocabulary was mostly within her capability. She preferred to use syntactic and visual cues more, but she self corrected more on text using meaning and syntax although visual cues were used some of the time. The significance of her results was that she was using all the cuing systems. This is an indication that she was processing the text by cross checking information for herself, which was a good strategy use.

Specific Details for Task 1: Environmental Print Games

In this task (Table 5.5), Jennie responded to the graphic in all the items she did. She was aware of the print. Her next preferred response was determining the category of the item, and giving a description of its function. She was able to give 9 out of 12 specific responses, that is, she read correctly the product name. When she only had text in the third condition, she was able to identify only 8 of these. This seemed to indicate that she required the context of the graphics on the packaging to cue her to "read" the print as she cross checked the information with the category and function of the item. This seemed to point to an ability to use multiple cues from environmental print to stimulate her language.

David's Profile

- Demographics** Age 8.6/9.0; grade 2 (split ½); 4 yrs. in same school; parents professionals: mum a working teacher both with university degrees; dad was at home; siblings, a sister 14 and a sister 6
- Community** residential urban neighbourhood of large city
- Early Years** had no significant medical conditions associated with autistic tendencies due to Fragile X Syndrome; medical authorities not very sensitive to parents and special needs child initially; speech therapy carried out by parent in consultation with therapist; first pre-school experiences positive with a special needs worker to assist school and mother; first formal school experience stressful for parents who felt school reluctant to integrate; parents felt they must request continuance of integration every year.
- Inclusive Setting** attended local community public school- Barton P.S.; had a full time teacher assistant (TA); viewed by significant adults (principal, teacher, and TA) as "placement" in regular classroom; it was okay to give him highly structured literacy materials as extra practice; one on one teaching all done by teacher assistant; literacy programme was balanced, eclectic material developed by experienced teacher; not encouraged to compose on his own; adaptation to other subjects done by TA and teacher together; teacher and TA on their own re curriculum support; language teacher came into class for small group work; accepted by peers, who realized he was "special student"; not included in many social activities outside of school; dad walked him and sister to and from school daily.
- Literacy At Home** read to from birth; literacy was very important to all family members; provided with many opportunities to write and read; sibling (older sister) liked to read and write with him; mother kept portfolio of present and former school work done with special needs worker; home provided literacy models: memory aids (notes on refrigerator, calendars, lists, telephone and address books visible); social interactional uses (magazines, cards, newspaper, lots of library books); educational uses (daily communication book, school reports, speech reports); parents felt he would become literate over time.

Literacy At School

- Strategies for Specific Skills with Letters, Letter Sounds and Words** **Task 6 (a) Game 1: Tic Tac Toe Letter Identification**
David knew 100% of the upper and lower case letters presented to him.
- Specific Results on Task 6 (b) Game 2: Tic Tac Toe Letter sound Identification**
He had learned the long vowel sounds for 'Aa,' and 'U' since they are close to the letter names. He had picked up the letter phonemes for the consonants, 'F,' 'J,' 'Q,' 'M,' 'Vv,' and 'g.' He was able to achieve only 17% on this task.
- Specific Results on Task 6 (c) Game 3: Tic Tac Toe Word from Initial Letter**
David had achieved very well on this task at 89% demonstrating that he could give many more initial letter sounds when asked for a word. For example he was able to say 'Ali' for 'A,' 'orange' for 'O' or 'owl' for 'o,' 'yak' for 'Y' or 'yellow' for 'y,' 'Eli' for 'E' or 'elastic' for 'e,' 'umbrella' for 'U' and 'u', but in isolation he was only able to give 'Aa,' and 'U' since they are close to the letter names. Notice that the only two vowels he was missing words for are the 'a,' 'a' 'li'. The type face could be bothersome here, or he could not think of a word for these lower case letters. He had picked up the letter phonemes for the consonants, 'F,' 'J,' 'Q,' 'M,' 'Vv,' and 'g' but the only consonants he could not come up with a word for were 'p' and 'b,' which he in fact reversed saying, 'did' for 'b.' He was demonstrating phonemic segmentation.
- Specific Results on Task 7 Game 4: Tic Tac Toe Sight Word Identification**
David was able to show that he employed the strategy of using the initial letter and word shape to call the word in his miscues. For example, 'his' for 'has'; 'went' for 'where'; 'run' for 'ran'; 'on'

for 'one'; 'Mike' for 'make.' He also self-corrected five times during this game using the same initial letter strategy, but realized the word shape was not a good match. For example some of his self corrections revealed this when he said, 'that' for 'there'; 'get' for 'give'; 'would' for 'what' or 'went' for 'we'. This demonstrated that he was able to cross check two pieces of information by himself against what he already knew, so his achievement here was 72% of the 60 item basic word list.

Specific Details on Task 9: 10 Minute Race Game - Writing Vocabulary

He was able to produce clearly the following 'IS,' 'IT,' 'LIKE,' 'YOU,' 'MY,' twice for good measure, 'WE,' 'I,' 'GO,' 'TO,' 'IN,' 'AT.' These could be added to his names 'JAY,' 'OMA. AND OPA,' 'DAVID,' 'MOMMY.' His 'Oma and Opa' were the terms that David used for his grandmother and grandfather and he wrote them as a phrase here as these words carried an emotional message for him. Some of the other names of classmates are close but missing vowels or substituting a vowel sound for a letter such as 'EIZBTH,' 'KENNE,' 'BECCK.' In 'JOSSHP', he missed out the vowel, but also, had the letters in the wrong order such as 'SAHR' for 'Shara' or 'DAYDD' for 'daddy', but he did know that letters made up words. At this point he wrote all words in uppercase. His achievement here was limited to 40% or 23 correctly spelled words out of the 57 words he attempted. He demonstrated the inventory principle, and semi-phonetic invented spelling strategies (Figure 5-17 (a) & 5-17 (b)).

Strategies for Form and Structure of Written Language

Specific Details for Task 10: Dictation

David started (Figure 5-28) with 'TO' then crossed it out, and correctly wrote 'I' the first word in the sentence. Notice the same vowel and consonant patterns as the other phonemic or letter name users. For examples of this look at 'BG' for 'big', 'M' for 'am', 'HM' for 'him', and 'TRDAY' for 'today.' Where he did use a vowel it is a long vowel, such as in 'TA' for 'take' or 'GON' for 'going' or 'A' for 'at'. He was credited for his attempt at the word 'school' which he wrote 'SHCOL,' reversing the 'ch.' He used all uppercase letters, but he did use a period at the end of his first sentence. He had spaces between his words. Note that he continued writing his second sentence rather than starting a new line, so he had some sense of how continuous text works. His directionality was fine. He used a semantic/syntactic miscue, 'HOUS' for 'home,' excellent strategy use. David achieved 70%, which was 26 phonemes out of 37. There were many phonemic or letter name strategies.

Specific Details for Task 3: Uninterrupted Drawing and Writing

It was only with considerable verbal prompting he correctly said the 'WITH', 'TO' and the name 'JOE' (Figure 5-35). Used initial and final consonants for the word 'with' but no vowel substitutions. David could not remember the last word 'WHAЕ.' David attempted first to write the name 'Joe' as 'JOAE,' and then scratched it out. Seemed to recognize that this spelling was not correct. Note all capital letters in text, directionality was okay, as well as spacing between words. Appeared to have a message to convey, so knows writing has a purpose. His product seemed to confirm that he was somewhere on the cusp between using early phonemic strategies or letter name phonetic strategies, but he had a tenuous concept of a word.

Specific Details for Task 2: Language Experience Story

David wrote nearly daily in his journal. During this activity (Figure 5-47) Noreen 'pulled' a sentence out of him using oral scaffolding. She wrote the sentence on a piece of paper for him. He then went to the computer and copied the sentence labouriously using finger pecking. Noreen, then cut out this printed text, which David pasted into his journal. He then copied it again by hand underneath. Evidence of proper directionality, good uppercase letter formation and spacing of words. No evidence of composing on his own at school without prompting.

Specific Details for Task 5: Phase 1- Receiving & Reading a Letter, Phase 2- Writing & Reading a Letter

David's mother sent him a letter, which he was thrilled to get. He required help to read the letter. After a lot of oral scaffolding to try to write a reply, his teacher assistant wrote a sentence, but David did not want to even copy it. I suspected that he really did not understand what he was doing. It was obvious that this did not seem to be an activity that he did regularly in class. His class did make cards for various individual birthdays and "get well wishes," but not letter writing. Letter writing seemed to be an activity that David had done with his home tutors and his older sister a few times but this was not a truly familiar writing format for him at school.

**Strategies for
the Form and
Function of
Reading
Printed Text**

Specific Details for Task 8: Concepts About Print (CAP)

In Table 5.3 David indicated all the book handling tasks except the last concept, about reading the left page before the right page. He did not answer this type of direct question, perhaps because of his unique special needs. From observational data, David seemed to start reading in the correct place, but his teacher assistant usually was pointing to the place to start. She did not verbalize this concept so this was not a question he had experienced with her. David could point to the place to start and move his finger along from left to right doing the return sweep. David had the specific concept of 'first' and 'last,' perhaps because this was within his oral vocabulary. David did not notice the altered line order at all and could not do any of the visual, scanning, analysis and following concepts. He did find the word 'was,' which he had in his sight vocabulary, but not the word 'no,' which he tended to mix up with 'on' in his writing. In the specific concepts about printed language, he could explain the meaning of question marks, periods and commas. He said the quotation marks were "questions". He found it easy to locate specific letters within a context, yet pointed out a 's' as a capital letter. He knew the hierarchical concepts of word by word matching and easily pointed out one letter and two letters, but he could only point out one word not two words which seemed to confuse him. David pointed to the last letter of a word but did not know where to look for the first letter of a word. He was still not completely certain about the concept meaning of one word and two letters which cross checked with the other information gained from him.

Specific Details for Task 4: Running Records (RR)

David read three passages for RR in table 5.4. One was at the independent level The Merry Go Round, another at the instructional level, Who Will Be My Pet, and the last text, Books was at the hard level. What was significant here was that the first two texts were small books with familiar repetitive patterns. The last book was not, even though the vocabulary was mostly within his capability. He preferred to use more semantic and syntactic cues and some visual cues. He self-corrected more on the instructional text, using meaning, syntax, and visual cues. The significance of his results was that he was using all the cuing systems. This was an indication that he was processing the text by cross checking information for himself, which was a good emergent strategy use.

Specific Details for Task 1: Environmental Print Games

David laughed and giggled all through this game, indicating he was really enjoying himself. His responses clearly favoured using the graphics (20) and functional (18) responses. He would point to the graphics and say, "I don't know," but he would demonstrate what to do with the item or how it works. He demonstrated that he was aware of the print on the item and wanted to show that he knew what the item was even though he only was able to give 8 specific responses. He was able to categorize 13 of his responses, which was hard for David, since it required a direct verbal response. He was able to use representational labelling responses. He used associative responses even when presented with only the print. Print seemed to stimulate his language here.

Daniel's Profile

Demographics	Age 7-11/8.05; grade 2 (multi grades 2-5); 4 yrs. in school but had attended 2 schools; parents professionals, college educated; parents separated but both very involved with children; brother, 10 only sibling
Community	suburban residential in large urban centre
Early Years	had significant medical condition associated with seizures; had severe speech articulation & language problems; mother did much speech therapy in consultation with therapist; first school pre-school experience was negative; first formal pre-school JK, SK and grade 1 experience positive in local community school, then mother felt pushed to accept special class placement; moved to present school for grade 2
Inclusive Setting	bussed out of community to attend public school, Barton P.S.; full time teacher assistant (TA) for the class; viewed by significant adults as in a structured classroom (in school special class); small group teaching done by teacher assistant and teacher; literacy program totally linear sequenced scripted (<u>Reading Mastery</u> - SRA); had little continuous text reading and composing; adaptation to other subjects done mostly by TA and teacher; peers all "special students"; significant adults (principal, teacher and TA) felt special needs students require specialized settings and instruction; curriculum support for teacher and TA from special education services emphasized phonics instruction; had regular volunteer for one on one teaching.
Literacy At Home	read to from birth. literacy important to all family members; provided with many opportunities to write and read; mother kept samples of his present and former school work; mother reviewed homework daily; home provided literacy models: memory aides (notes on refrigerator, calendars, lists, telephone and address books visible); social interactional uses (magazines, cards, newspapers, flyers, personal library books); educational uses (daily communication book, school reports, speech reports, taped books, speech games)

Literacy At School

Strategies for Specific Skills with Letters, Letter Sounds and Words	<p>Task 6 (a) Game 1: Tic Tac Toe Letter Identification Daniel achieved 96%, but missed the 'J' and 'I', calling the '1' the numeral "one". The 'J' he just could not remember at that particular time but knew the 'j'.</p> <p>Specific Results on Task 6 (b): Game 2: Tic Tac Toe Letter sound Identification He achieved 56%. Looking closely at the letter sounds Daniel knew, he used the letter name strategy for the long vowels 'a,' 'u,' 'Oo,' 'li'. Daniel knew the consonant letter sounds for 'Pp,' 'Ww,' 'Z,' 'Bb,' 'Cc,' 'Ll,' 'Mm,' 'Nn,' 's,' 'Gg,' 'g,' 'Rr,' 't'. He had difficulties with 'A,' 'Uu,' 'Ee,' 'Yy,' along with the consonant sounds 'Ff,' 'K,' 'H,' 'Jj,' 'Qq,' 'Dd,' 'S,' 'Xx,' 'Vv,' 'T'.</p> <p>Specific Results on Task 6 (c) Game 3: Tic Tac Toe Word from Initial Letter He knew more sounds in isolation than he knew words that started with that sound, perhaps because he had been drilled in isolated sounds through his instructional program. In fact he did know 'a,' 'u,' 'Oo,' 'li' in isolation, and he could come up with words for 'Aa' is for 'apple,' 'Ee' is for 'egg,' adding to his phonemic knowledge of vowels. He did not have a word for 'Oo' or 'li' which he knew in isolation. I suspected he had memorized sounds not linked to anything. Daniel knew the consonant letter sounds for 'Pp,' 'Ww,' 'Z,' 'Bb,' 'Cc,' 'Ll,' 'Mm,' 'Nn,' 's,' 'Gg,' 'g,' 'Rr,' 't' in isolation, but he knew words for only the following same letters; 'W' was 'window,' 'Zz' was 'zebra,' 'Bb' was 'bunny,' 'Cc' was 'cat,' 'L' was 'lion,' 'Mm' was 'monkey,' 's' was 'sun' so was 'S'. The additional letters he knew words for were 'J' is for 'Jack' or 'j' is for 'Jim,' 'h' is for 'house,' 'Dd' is for 'dog,' 'Vv' is for 'Vincent,' and 'T' is for 'Tiffany.' Notice that the uppercase</p>
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or lowercase letter was bothersome for Daniel, but he does have the beginnings of phonemic segmentation with 50% achievement.

Specific Results on Task 7 Game 4: Tic Tac Toe Sight Word Identification

The strategy of using the initial letter, word shape then guessing was Daniel's mode of operating, even on the few sight words he was willing to attempt, so his achievement was 25%. For example, Daniel said, 'had' for 'has'; 'dad' for 'did'; 'me' for 'may'; 'sun' for 'said'; 'fish' for 'for.' He only attempted words he was sure he knew.

Specific Details on Task 9: 10 Minute Race Game - Writing Vocabulary

Daniel attempted 15 words and successfully wrote 13. He knew names should begin with a capital such as 'Dan,' 'Vinson,' 'Tom,' and 'Daniel'. Appeared to have very beginning vowel substitutions in examples like, 'toi' for 'toy' and 'io' for 'is'. Wrote a list of known sight words strung together, demonstrating flexibility principle. Knew words were made up of letters, but very hesitant to use inventive spelling. The two examples indicated he perhaps used semi-phonetic strategies.

Strategies for Form and Structure of Written Language

Specific Details for Task 10: Dictation

Daniel used letters to represent many of the initial and final consonants, leaving spaces for the missing vowel phonemes in such items as 'b s' for 'bus' (Figure 5-25). He used the initial consonants in words such as 'w' for 'will', 'l' for 'let' and he hears the 't' in 'stop.' He did hear the long 'e' in 'here' and replaced the short 'e' with 'a' in 'get.' He had correct directionality, spaces between his words and used a period at the end of his last sentence. There was evidence of syntactic or semantic miscues with the substitution of 'me' for 'my bus comes' in front of bus, but this could have been the interference of his own language pattern as well. He was being true to form as a beginning letter name user with his achievement of 46% here, which represents 17 phonemes out of 37.

Specific Details for Task 3: Uninterrupted Drawing and Writing

Daniel was reluctant to compose but willing to draw three pictures. Wrote (Figure 5-36 (a)) from remembered class sentence and wanted help with spelling. Note spacing was there, capital at the beginning of the sentence and period at the end. Invented spellings indicated the phonemic strategies of using initial and final consonants 'wt' for 'went,' while 'houe' for 'house' and 'DoDDy' for 'Daddy' indicates the use of vowels and silent 'e' marker. Other words in the sentence basic sight words. Letter formation good. Note the uppercase 'D D' in 'Daddy' indicative of young emergent writers. The sentence has cohesion and the word order was correct. He was able to reread the sentence. Figure 5-37, revealed mixed up word order and demonstrated beginning or semi-phonemic strategies of initial and final consonants with 'cotc' for 'coke', 'r' for 'drank' and the sight word 'at.' Again directionality was okay. He could only reread this sentence with assistance.

Specific Details for Task 2: Language Experience Story

Daniel wrote Figure 5-49 after oral rehearsal but he could not reread this sentence without assistance. Appeared aware that the syntax was not correct. Note combination of printed and cursive letters at the end. Attempted more cohesion here, but word order difficulties apparent. Used numeral 2 for beginning of word 'today,' lowercase 'i' for 'I.' The 'tow' for 'went' seemed to be a reversal attempt of 'went' using consonants and a vowel substitution. The cursive script attempt of the word 'with' looks like 'wigh' is a common consonant substitution 'gh' for 'th.' Note the 'a' for 'i' and 'e' for 'i' vowel substitutions in the cursive script words 'time' and 'mine' attempts. Directionality and spacing attention was maintained. All evidence of phonemic strategy use common to emergent writers.

Specific Details for Task 5: Phase 1- Receiving & Reading a Letter; Phase 2- Writing & Reading a Letter

Daniel's mother wrote him a letter asking him to go bowling. He was thrilled to receive this kind of invitation. He obviously had some experience with receiving letters. He required assistance to read

the letter. After much oral scaffolding, he decided what he would say in reply to his mother's letter and was helped him with spelling for only those words he wanted. Figure 5-53 was his reply. Notice that he has used the letter format appropriately and he has directly responded to her request with his first word "yes." He clearly understood the purpose of his writing. Notice that he left those words such as 'Dar' for 'dear' and 'ni' for 'on' since he was satisfied with his invented spelling. He appeared to be using letter name strategies in doing this confirming other information about his composing.

**Strategies for
the Form and
Function of
Reading
Printed Text**

Specific Details for Task 8: Concepts About Print (CAP)

On the CAP, Daniel was able to handle all the book handling tasks listed in Table 5.3 except pointing out that you read the left page before reading the right. He knew the front of the book, that print contains a message, and turned the picture around to show the bottom of the picture when asked. He even noticed the reversed lines in the text. In the directional indicators, he was able to demonstrate where to start reading, which way to go, and the return sweep. He again noticed the altered lines of text perhaps because he was in a program that stressed noticing discrimination of discrete print items. In this section, he had trouble distinguishing between first and last perhaps because he had such difficulties with expressive language and could not demonstrate this verbally on demand. In class, he appeared to give every indication that he understood the concepts of 'first' and 'last.' Daniel demonstrated little knowledge in the visual scanning, analysis and following. He was able to distinguish between the word 'was' and 'no' as they were firmly established in his sight vocabulary. The other items were to do with letter and word order changes which he was not yet able to demonstrate. He did know the meaning of the '?', period, capital letters at the beginning of a sentence and was able to find specific letters 'Mm,' and 'Hh' within the text. The meaning of the comma and quotations marks threw him. The hierarchical concepts which included identification of letters, letters within words, words within sentences, and first and last letter of a word, Daniel could not do. He lost interest in these tasks and refused to answer. He was aware that he did not understand the task. He was able to demonstrate the word by word matching when the words were read for him.

Specific Details for Task 4: Running Records (RR)

Daniel had such a limited sight vocabulary and so little opportunity in school to read continuous text that finding books for him to try proved a challenge. He never read anything at an independent or instructional level as Table 5.4 indicates. What was noticeable in his RR was the total lack of self corrections. This seemed to indicate that he did not always 'read' for meaning. In fact, he often just 'called' the words. His miscues indicated that he used the visual and syntactic cues the most and the semantic cues the least. He did have the ability to use the semantic cues, which was rewarding to see. Perhaps this limited usage was due to lack of practice and too difficult text. He tended to guess the word based upon its word shape, or first letter, and syntactic use.

Specific Details for Task 1: Environmental Print Games

Daniel enjoyed playing this game with his friend since he indicated that he felt he could be successful here. He responded to the graphics on every item presented, but because of his communication difficulties used functional responses (16) to demonstrated the item. This was a pattern he often used to communicate, a kind of charade. He was able to use (12) categorical responses and say where the item might be found in his house. He was able to give only 6 specific responses on game 1, and 5 specific responses when he saw the print only. What was significant here was his ability to convey his understanding that it was the printed text on the items which were important and this seemed to stimulate his halting language. In other words, the text stimulated him to use language.

Tommy's Profile

Demographics	Age 10.6/11.1; grade 4 (split 4/5); 6 yrs. in school; 2 years in a special class; has attended 3 different schools including present one; had been in present school 3 years; parents both professionals, but mum opted to stay home with Tommy; brother. 12, only sibling
Community	suburban community, small town near large urban centre
Early Years	he had a significant medical condition at 6 months associated with cranial stenosis; had a shunt implanted at base of spine; had many physical delays due to operation; suffers from migraines now; autistic mannerisms; mother did much infant stimulation using music, songs etc; speech therapy carried out by parent and special needs workers in consultation with therapists; music therapy still used; first school pre-school experiences positive; first formal school experience was very negative at local community separate school; placed in assessment class away from community school; moved to present school when special class moved.
Inclusive Setting	bussed to separate school- St. Peters. - had a nearly full time teacher assistant (TA); viewed by significant adults (principal, teacher and TA) as "completely integrated" into regular classroom; one on one teaching all done by teacher assistant; literacy programme structured program material and other reading/writing activities developed by teacher; did all writing on computer; did little self initiated composing; significant adults beginning to question need for structured, sequenced literacy materials; teacher and TA on their own re curriculum support; adaptation to other subjects done by TA and teacher; accepted by peers, who realized he was a "special student"; beginning to be included in some social activities outside of school i.e. has friends to house.
Literacy At Home	read to from birth; literacy important to all family members; provided with many opportunities to write and read; mother kept samples of his present and former school work; mother reviewed communication daily; did many literacy activities with special needs worker who came to house regularly; home provided literacy models: memory aids (notes on refrigerator, calendars, lists, telephone and address books visible); social interactional uses (magazines, cards, newspapers, video games); educational uses (daily communication book, school reports, interactive computer programs e.g. living books)

Literacy At School

Strategies for Specific Skills with Letters, Letter Sounds and Words	<p>Task 6 (a) Game 1: Tic Tac Toe Letter Identification Tommy knew 100% of the upper and lower case letters presented to him.</p> <p>Specific Results on Task 6 (b) Game 2: Tic Tac Toe Letter sound Identification Tommy appeared to know 0% of the letter sounds presented to him.</p> <p>Specific Results on Task 6 (c) Game 3: Tic Tac Toe Word from Initial Letter He knew many more initial letter sounds if he was asked to give a word. Table 5.1 shows two scores for him because he was given credit for the 19 prompts by the teacher assistant so his achievement was 85%; with no prompts his achievement was only 74%. Analysing the prompts indicated 12 of these prompts were simply a repetition such as "Z is for" ... or "w is for" The other 7 prompts were association prompts or semantic prompts which is a kind of oral scaffolding. For example, 'H' was prompted by "I feel.." and Tommy responded with "happy"; 'N' was prompted by "yes.." and Tommy responded with "no"; 'X' was prompted by "your favourite..." and Tommy responded with, "X-files"; 'C' was prompted by "meow..." his response was, "cat"; 'r' was prompted by, "colour..." his response was, "red"; 'U' was prompted by "down...." his response was, "up". This was the type of strategy which was regularly used with Tommy and seems to reflect his semantic use of language. The 74% achievement was probably more reflective of his actual word for an initial letter ability, if left to his own devices. Tommy was able to demonstrate that he used letter name phonemes when he said, 'O' is for 'open' and 'li' is for 'ice cream'. He</p>
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was also able to use short vowel sounds 'o' is for 'octopus'; 'U' is for 'up' and 'u' is for 'umbrella'; 'Y' is for 'yes' and 'y' is for 'yellow'; 'Aa, 'a' is for apple'. He had phonemic segmentation and could demonstrate sound symbol relationships all phonemic strategies.

Specific Results on Task 7 Game 4: Tic Tac Toe Sight Word Identification

Tommy demonstrated three times that he used the initial letter and tried to sound out the word, for example, "pr..pr..tty...pretty"; h..h...has"; a..a..after"; th...them." He either knew the sight word, and said it or passed, giving me no indication other than memory of how he knew the word. He achieved 78% on this basic sight word list.

Specific Details on Task 9: 10 Minute Race Game - Writing Vocabulary

Using the computer (Figure 5-15), Tommy wrote the first two lines before he was prompted to write more by his teacher assistant. She asked him to write some of his friends names, then things he liked. Notice with the exception of 'ommy' for 'Tommy', (I think this was just a typo in his part) all the words are spelled and spaced correctly. Except for 'mike' and 'mady' he even correctly used capitalization for proper nouns. Of the 30 words he wrote he was able to produce 29 correctly for 97%. He demonstrated transitional spelling strategies here, an understanding of the concept of word, and the inventory principle. He was not really willing to use invented spellings.

Strategies for Form and Structure of Written Language

Specific Details for Task 10: Dictation

Tommy wrote a perfect dictation (Figure 5-23) with 37 phonemes represented out of 37 for a score of 100%. He wrote in a shaky, but recognizable hand with minimum attention to spacing. Directionality was there, as well as punctuation in the form of 'O's' for periods. He started a new line for each sentence properly capitalized, so his knowledge of the format of continuous text is suspect. He put uppercase letters in the beginning and middle of words such as 'TodAy,' and 'Am,' and 'TAKE' was all in uppercase perhaps because he used an unfamiliar writing medium - paper and marker, instead of a computer. His strategy use here appeared to be that of a transitional or conventional speller.

Specific Details for Task 3: Uninterrupted Drawing and Writing

Tommy demonstrated that using a marker and being prompted to write confused him. He repeated his name over and over (Figure 5-32). When he moved to the computer, he did the same thing. One word answers were his usual oral replies and this was what he did in writing as well. It was only when the TA began to prompt him with questions that he began to write anything (Figure 5-34). Notice that he used correct spelling, but the text was in response to her verbal prompts, rather than on a single topic. There was spacing between the words and correct punctuation. The ritualized endings was very indicative of his special needs. There does not appear to be any inventive spellings. He reread what he had written but only with verbal prompts (underlined words). This was very mechanical composing.

Specific Details for Task 2: Language Experience Story

Tommy wrote Figure 5-45 with no verbal prompting other than, write something for your journal. Note there was some cohesion in the first, second and third lines, then nonsense words written as sentences correctly punctuated. His ritualized ending sentence completed the piece. He attended to spacing of the words, so he seemed to have a concept of word boundaries. Pretend words were all following English sound symbol patterns so he seemed to be demonstrating phonemic strategy use. This was the first evidence of inventive spelling. He was unable to reread the piece after the third line. A new line started each sentence in this piece a familiar pattern. In Figure 5-46 from his journal binder, he had no nonsense sentences, but here he had used icons to illustrate the text. The writing was sort of a stream of conscious with little cohesion between the sentences. He used his Myer-Johnson binder of word symbols as a dictionary to look up words. He could reread this piece, but note the absence of the nonsense word sentences. He did not appear to be using writing to write down his thoughts in a cohesive order. Writing appeared to be a mechanical activity here.

Specific Details for Task 5: Phase 1- Receiving & Reading a Letter; Phase 2- Writing & Reading a Letter

Tommy was delighted to receive the letter from his mother suggesting an outing to Macdonalds. He knew this letter carried a message. He was not certain how to reply and, only through his TA's oral scaffolding was he able to get a reply into print (Figure 5-54). He did not know how to use the letter format and originally started out with 'Dear Tommy,'. Once she told him the letter had to start 'Dear Mummy,' he was able to write down what she dictated for him. He was able to read back the letter. He then, folded it, and placed it in an envelope to take home. It appeared as if this was a new kind of writing for him.

**Strategies for
the Form and
Function of
Reading
Printed Text**

Specific Details for Task 8: Concepts About Print (CAP)

During this task in Table 5.3, he was able to do all the book handling tasks except to indicate the direction of print when one starts to read. Observation indicated that he definitely knew this concept, but I believe he did not understand the directions here, even when they were rephrased because of his current language use. This seemed to be confirmed in the directional indicators where it was obvious that he did understand the concepts of 'first line' as it applied to the page, but not 'last line.' His poor expressive abilities prevented him explaining these concepts. He could do all the other directional indicators except the altered line order. He thought it was fine. In the visual, scanning, analysis and following, Tommy was not able to respond to the directions. He appeared to just not understand the verbal directions at all. In the specific concepts about printed language, he understood the meaning of the period, question mark and commas. He did not understand the directions about locating specific letters and a capital letter within text. He seemed to be stumped when asked about quotation marks. Tommy was very good at matching the hierarchical concepts of word by word matching, but he lost interest in answering the other directions in this section. These could have been outside his current experience, but more likely this was an indication that he was not certain how to respond verbally to demonstrate that he knew the difference between a letter as opposed to a word. He was clearly confused here. These language concepts combined within a different context could have thrown him off which is common to emergent readers but also to individuals displaying autistic mannerisms.

Specific Details for Task 4: Running Records (RR)

Table 5.4 indicated that Tommy did not read any books at the independent or instructional levels. He chose both trade books to read. Both seemed too difficult for him even though he could 'say' lots of the words. His miscues indicated that he favoured the visual/phonetics cues only slightly more over appealing to the TA for help. The text difficulty could have prevented him from using semantic and syntactic cues. He did self-correct, which meant that he was trying to self monitor as he processed the text. It was in the self-correction miscues that he demonstrated that he indeed was trying to use the semantic cues and syntactic cues, which meant he had some beginnings of good strategy cross checking.

Specific Details for Task 1: Environmental Print Games

Tommy knew in Table 5.5 that the graphics conveyed the message. He was able to point to all 20 graphics and 16 times, he was able to give a specific response. Take the graphics away (the context) and he was able to only recognize 7 or about half, of the printed text. Tommy communication difficulties really interfered here, notice how he was able to only indicate 2 functional responses and only 9 categorical responses. It appeared that the context of the print was critically important to him being able to understand the print. Take this away and he really was lost. This task showed how print within a context helped his understanding and language use.

Megan's Profile

Demographics	Age 11.3/11.7; grade 4; 6 yrs. in same school; parents professionals, dad was officer in military and mum was too, but opted to leave military to stay home with Megan ; brother, 15, only sibling
Community	suburb of large urban centre
Early Years	outgrew bulge in her heart, a medical condition associated with Down Syndrome; had tubes in ears; wears hearing aid and glasses; mother did much infant stimulation (Hanan); speech therapy carried out by parent in consultation with therapist even into formal pre-school; first school pre-school experiences positive but parents had to be very persistent to get her accepted into local community separate school.
Inclusive Setting	attended local community separate school, St. Barts; had a half time teacher assistant (TA); viewed by significant adults (principal, teacher and TA) as totally integrated in regular classroom with supports; one on one teaching all done by teacher assistant in resource room; literacy programme fairly structured program material (phonics) and other commercial reading/writing activities; these were seen as necessary by TA and teacher; not encouraged to compose on her own, but used continuous basal texts and some trade books for reading; adaptation to other subjects done mostly by TA and teacher; significant adults worked at inclusion as process in classroom with peers but not in whole school; mother volunteered a lot in school; accepted by peers, who realized she was "special student"; was beginning to be included in some social activities outside of school e.g. birthday parties and invitations to play at other children's homes.
Literacy At Home	read to from birth; literacy important to all family members; provided with many opportunities and encouragement to write and read; mother kept all of her present former school work; mother reviewed homework daily; home provided lots of literacy models: memory aids (notes on refrigerator, calendars, lists, telephone and address books visible); social interactional uses (magazines, cards, newspapers); educational uses (daily communication book, school reports, speech reports, games, tapes); parents felt, given time, she would become literate as part of life skill to live in community.

Literacy At School

Strategies for Specific Skills with Letters, Letter Sounds and Words	<p>Task 6 (a) Game 1: Tic Tac Toe Letter Identification She knew 100% of the upper and lower case letters presented to her.</p> <p>Specific Results on Task 6 (b) Game 2: Tic Tac Toe Letter sound Identification Megan knew 'Oo,' 'U,' 'Y,' 'Ee,' 'I,' as these are easy letter names. She had difficulty with 'A' 'a,' 'u,' 'i'; 'K,' 'L.' She used the letter names for 'Xx' and 'c,' while 'C,' 'R,' 'l' stumped her, and 'g' became 'j'. She was using the letter names for sounds for some consonants and vowels with her 70% achievement.</p> <p>Specific Results on Task 6 (c) Game 3: Tic Tac Toe Word from Initial Letter Megan was able to give words for all the vowels except 'Aa,' 'li,' 'u'. She was given credit for being able to come up with an uppercase 'U' word which was 'under' and 'a' for 'apple'. I wondered if she was bothered by the type or font changes, as I had noticed before in an earlier game. When her knowledge of vowel sounds in isolation 'Oo,' 'U,' 'a,' 'Y,' 'Ee,' 'I,' was added to her skill with initial words, she was demonstrating a good degree of phonemic segmentation with 81%.</p> <p>Specific Results on Task 7 Game 4: Tic Tac Toe Sight Word Identification Notice in the examples cited for Megan, she really used the word shapes, but she preferred to guess based upon the initial letter with these cases, 'love,' 'leave' for 'live' or 'put' for 'pretty'. She substituted words like 'his' for 'has', 'love' for 'live', 'gave' for 'give'. Notice these are all words with one vowel difference! She did some other interesting things as well. She substituted 'up' for</p>
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'down,' 'over' for 'after,' which are perhaps semantic miscues. She had mastered 67% of this basic sight word list.

Specific Details on Task 9: 10 Minute Race Game - Writing Vocabulary

Megan's achievement here (Figure 5-20) was to correctly write 13 words out of 33 attempts for 39%. She was a letter-name or phonetic strategy user in her invented spellings. Note letters in many of her words were missing for example, 'adm' for 'Adam', 'didy' for 'daddy' or 'pli' for 'play'. Sometimes the letters were in the wrong order, for example, 'lilek' for 'like' or 'tihs' for 'this'. She had attention to spaces between the words. Directionality was across the page. Use of upper and lower case mostly understood. Concept of word appeared there, note nearly all the words had some vowel substitutions indicating that she knew that letters made up words and she heard the vowel, for example 'siell' for 'sell', 'dil' for 'Daniel' or 'om' for 'am' and 'c' for 'sea'. This meant she had phonetic segmentation. She did some reversing of letters in words, such as 'pu' for 'up' or 'no' for 'on'.

Strategies for Form and Structure of Written Language

Specific Details for Task 10: Dictation

Notice (Figure 5-27) that she used the vowel substitutions of 'e' for 'i' in 'will', and doubled the 'e' for 'me' in the miscue 'need', and repeats this pattern in the next word 'gee' for 'get.' Capitalization was at the beginning of her first sentence. She correctly used all but one upper case and lower case letters, but 'The Bus' looked like she got confused and started a new line twice. She knew proper directionality, and how continuous print works since she did not start a new line for the second sentence. She had spaces between the words. She was not certain where the last sentence ended and put the period after the date. She was using phonemic or letter name strategies. She achieved 70%, which represented 26 correct phonemes out of 37. She showed good emergent writer strategy use.

Specific Details for Task 3: Uninterrupted Drawing and Writing

She overgeneralized (Figure 5-31 (a)) the linguistic rule for past tense using 'wentd' for 'went.' The letter order of the word 'daddy' was interesting too, as she wrote 'dayd'. The double 'dd's' were not heard. She was showing her use of phonetics here and some syntax awareness, but her word order difficulties were interfering with her ability to produce a cohesive text. Figure 5-31 (b) illustrated she was able to correct the word order after oral rehearsal. The spacing was still good between the words and so was the punctuation. She continued to use phonemic spelling strategies in such words as 'wit' for 'with'. Note that 'dayd' for 'daddy' still has letter order problems. All these observations common to emergent writers.

Specific Details for Task 2: Language Experience Story

Megan wrote a story about her Barbie doll in Figure 5-49. The same word order difficulties were seen in this piece but her phonemic strategy was also seen. The piece has a title 'Pile Barbie' for 'Playing Barbie'. Note the vowel substitutions here in the word 'Pile' for 'Playing'. Many of her words did have vowels, 'Ho' for 'house,' 'swme' for 'swimming,' 'plid' for 'played,' 'Bie' for 'Barbie' while other words had enough consonants to make out the word such as 'swm' for 'swim' or 'frnds' for 'friends.' Notice the difficulties she was having with tense changes and pronouns, all areas which cause her problems in her oral speech on top of the word order difficulty. Here she had spacing between words and does not start a new line for each sentence. There seemed to be an attempt to write a cohesive text or purposeful text, but syntax problems interfere.

Specific Details for Task 5: Phase 1- Receiving & Reading a Letter; Phase 2- Writing & Reading a Letter

Megan was delighted to receive a letter from her mother asking her advice about what to get her brother for his birthday. She was familiar with the letter format and needed very little help in writing her reply after her TA did some oral scaffolding with her. Figure 5-54 was her letter. Notice the letter naming strategies she used in her invented spellings and how well she responded to her mother's question. She clearly understands that print conveys information.

**Strategies for
the Form and
Function of
Reading
Printed Text**

Specific Details for Task 8: Concepts About Print (CAP)

During this task in Table 5.3, she was able to do all the book handling tasks except to indicate the direction of print when one starts to read. Observation indicated that she definitely knew this concept, but I believe she did not understand the directions here, even when they were rephrased because of her current language use. This seemed to be confirmed in the directional indicators where it was obvious that she did not understand the concepts of 'last line' as it applied to the page, yet she was able to successfully indicate the 'first line' and do all the other directional indicators. In the visual, scanning, analysis and following, Megan was able to find the words 'was' and 'no' since these were firmly in their sight vocabulary. In the specific concepts about printed language she understood the meaning of the period and question mark. She seemed to be stumped when asked about commas, quotation marks, specific capital letters, and the location of specific letters with in text. Megan was very good at matching the hierarchical concepts of word by word matching, but could not point out one word and two letters or one letter and two letters. This seemed to indicate she could not make the distinction between these two concepts. She still was thrown by the concept of first and last when asked to point these out as letters in a word. These could have been outside her current experience, or this was an indication that she was not certain about what a letter was as opposed to a word. This language concept, combined within a different context, could have thrown her off.

Specific Details for Task 4: Running Records (RR)

Megan appeared to have very well developed decoding skills when text was put in front of her to 'read' or more accurately 'say' the words. She was able to do three RR. Notice that the easy one was a predictable story The Three Billy Goats Gruff, where she demonstrated that she could use self correction to monitor herself. She used the semantic and visual/phonetic cues to cross check information during the self corrections but used the semantic and syntactic cues more in her other miscues. This would seem to indicate that on this text she was processing well. Note that when the text got harder in Chicken Forgets, she abandoned this pattern and began to use syntactic and visual/phonetic cues more. This pattern increased as the text got even harder in See How They Grow. On this last text she did not self-correct at all. Megan was the type of reader who could deceive the listener into thinking that she was able to read and understand much more text than she could because of her decoding skill. These excellent skills needed to be cross checked more to semantics.

Specific Details for Task 1: Environmental Print Games

Megan was able to use the graphics in all the 20 items plus the functional (18) and categorical (17) responses. She was then able to give 16 specific responses. She indicated with her responses that she was able to orchestrate many of the cues on the items to help her to give a specific response. It was quite a balanced cross checking. She was able to focus on the print as she got 12 of the print only items in condition 3. She was able to use representative language throughout and made some personal and interactive language comments about items, even though her articulation was not always clear, especially if she got excited about seeing a particular item, like the french fries box from Macdonalds. The print here seemed to stimulate all kinds of language.

Kristy's Profile

Demographics	Age 12.7/12.10; grade 5; 7 yrs. in school; 1 year in community school SK; 2 years in special class away from community school; 4 years in present school; parents professionals, dad in RCMP but mum opted to stay at home with Kristy; sister, 15 ,only sibling
Community	semi-rural bedroom village near large city
Early Years	had no significant medical conditions associated with Down Syndrome but concerns about hearing from birth; had many ear infections; had tubes in ears and tracheotomy up to age 5; wears a hearing aid; medical authorities not very sensitive to parent and special needs child at birth; speech therapy carried out by parent in consultation with therapist from age 2; used signing as bridge to speech; first school pre-school experiences out of province very positive; first formal school (SK) experience at community school but not permitted to stay for grade 1; bussed for 2 years to special class away from community school.
Inclusive Setting	attended local community public school, Lanceville P.S.; had a half time teacher assistant (TA); viewed by significant adults (principal, teacher, TA and resource teacher) as in regular classroom requiring special supports and curriculum adaptations; one on one teaching all done by resource teacher; included in resource teacher's small group for technology (computer) and 'talk' group (speech & language work); TA did classroom focussing and assistance; literacy program balanced reading/writing activities based upon same premise for regular students; encouraged to compose on own and to choose own reading texts; adaptation to other subjects done by junior team (teachers, TA , and resource teacher); significant adults viewed inclusion as a process requiring on going curriculum support and adaptations for the teachers and students; whole school structured around diversity i.e. having a circle of friends viewed as important; included in peers' social activities outside of school e.g. invited to other children's homes
Literacy At Home	read to from birth; literacy important to all family members; provided with many opportunities to write and read; mother had kept samples of her present and early school work; mother reviewed homework daily with her; home provided literacy models: memory aids (notes on refrigerator, calendars, lists, telephone and address books visible); social interactional uses (magazines, cards, newspapers, lots of library books); educational uses (daily communication book, school reports, family word games); parents knew she would become literate on her own time schedule a part of life skill.

Literacy At School

Strategies for Specific Skills with Letters, Letter Sounds and Words	<p>Task 6 (a) Game 1: Tic Tac Toe Letter Identification Kristy knew 100% of the upper and lower case letters presented to her.</p> <p>Specific Results on Task 6 (b): Game 2: Tic Tac Toe Letter sound Identification Kristy knew 100% of the upper and lower case letters presented to her.</p> <p>Specific Results on Task 6 (c) Game 3: Tic Tac Toe Word from Initial Letter Kristy achieved 100% when asked to give a word when presented with an initial letter indicating phonemic segmentation.</p> <p>Specific Results on Task 7 Game 4: Tic Tac Toe Sight Word Identification Kristy achieved 100% on identifying the sight words presented to her, indicating she had mastered a basic sight word vocabulary.</p>
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Specific Details on Task 9: 10 Minute Race Game - Writing Vocabulary

Kristy attempted (Figure 5-24) 33 words and wrote 25 correctly for a score of 78%. She clearly wrote a list of words she knew as directed like an inventory down the page. Many words are basic sight words such as 'is,' 'two,' 'I,' 'like,' 'big,' 'can'. Note the proper use of capitalization for names such as , 'Kristy,' 'Jason,' 'Amy,' or 'Rex'. All the names she wrote have capitals. She required very little prompting other than, " to keep writing." Demonstrates transitional spelling here but also phonetic spelling strategies in words like 'lille' for 'little,' 'buss' for 'bus' or 'dood't' for 'don't.'

Strategies for Form and Structure of Written Language

Specific Details for Task 10: Dictation

Kristy (Figure 5-24) was able to correctly represent 35 phonemes of the 37 for a score of 95%. She appears to be a transitional speller here as she only had difficulties with the word 'gone' which she wrote as 'done', and the word 'milk' which she wrote as 'mike'. Directionality was in tact, as well as, capitalization and punctuation. She started a new line for the second sentence which could mean she was still learning the format for writing continuous text.

Specific Details for Task 3: Uninterrupted Drawing and Writing

Kristy's cohesive piece (Figure 5-38), written in orange marker, was in letter format on the suggestion of her resource teacher. She told her mother about the number of books she had read and made a request to watch a TV program. Notice how she had the letter format and was able to express her feelings, as well as make a request. She had proper spacing, directionality, and was experimenting with graphics to make a point by writing a very large 'I Love' instead of using an exclamation mark. Pronouns 'you' and 'me' were mixed up. Note that she had the correct structure for a question with 'can I watch...' but did not use the question mark. She was able to use many traditional spellings.

Specific Details for Task 2: Language Experience Story

Figure 5-43 was a letter of request Kristy wrote to her Dad even though there is no question mark for punctuation. She had a clear purpose for writing. Note the proper directionality, letter formation. Spacing slides towards the end of the piece so did the word order. Her inventive spelling 'hi' for 'him' and the graphic '+' for 'and' are all meaningful. She was able to express thoughts about a program. She appeared to be using transitional and phonemic strategies here. It was clear from her writing samples in Figures 5-41, 5-42 and 5-44 that she was able to internalize the writing process for her own ends to write messages, keep lists and make requests. She seemed to be an advanced emergent writer.

Specific Details for Task 5: Phase 1- Receiving & Reading a Letter, Phase 2- Writing & Reading a Letter

Letter writing was a form that Kristy was very familiar with as she used this format as a writing activity frequently in school. She was able to read her mother's letter and respond to the content (figure 5-55) with a lot of detail even in her first draft.

Strategies for the Form and Function of Reading Printed Text

Specific Details for Task 8: Concepts About Print (CAP)

Kristy had no difficulties with the book handling and visual scanning, analysis and following tasks listed in Table 5.3. She was able to read the text herself. During the reading she did not notice the altered line order in the directional indicators tasks, but otherwise demonstrated that she knew the direction to read and the return sweep. She even knew the first and last concept. In the specific concepts about printed language she was able to explain the meaning of the period and comma but not the question mark even though she used it sometimes in her writing. She could not explain what quotations marks were for, saying, "...small question marks?..". Finding specific letters and capital letters proved very easy for her. The only tasks she had trouble demonstrating on the hierarchical concepts was to show one letter then two letters.

Here she misunderstood the directions since she did show me one letter, then showed me one letter again and said, "there..two letters!" Even a second try produced the same response. She certainly was able to show one word and two letters, the first and last letter of a word, and do the word by word matching by herself.

Specific Details for Task 4: Running Records (RR)

The 3 RR samples in Table 5.4 were all from trade books she had read. Notice that there were 2 easy texts (Boys and Girls and Toy Story), plus a hard text (How the Spider Saved Halloween). She demonstrated evidence of self monitoring on two of the texts by cross checking the cues using all three cuing systems. In the analysis of her miscues she did the same, but notice the pattern was to use the syntactic cues the most, then the semantic and visual/phonetic cues. Her cross checking was fairly balanced and showed that she was using orchestrating information as she read. Excellent strategy use.

Specific Details for Task 1: Environmental Print Games

Table 5.5 indicated that Kristy could not only read the print on all the items but also use the function, category and graphics to describe the items. She had no trouble recognizing the print in condition 3. She was able to run her finger under the print as she did this. This was a demonstration of excellent orchestration of information using text and language. She seemed to indicate, despite poor articulation, that she knew how to use language for more than just representative purposes and made interactional, personal, heuristic, and a few directive comments. The environment print seemed to stimulate many different kinds of language.

Chelsea's Profile

- Demographics** Age 9.7/9.10; grade 2; 4 yrs. in school JK to present; 4 years in same school; mother a nurse and dad works for county; brother, 14 months & sister, 5
- Community** rural small town
- Early Years** had significant medical conditions associated with Down Syndrome (heart); required many operations; medical authorities not sensitive to parents & special needs child; wears glasses; speech therapy carried out by parent in consultation with speech therapist; used some signing as bridge to speech; first school pre-school experiences positive with a special resource teacher; first formal school (SK) experience negative; second year was better in SK & JK full time; in grade 1 parent felt she was accepted; parent felt she had to fight to have her attend community school each year; parent felt she needs peer models which she will not get in school's special education classes; mother at home but works part time during evenings.
- Inclusive Setting** attended local community public school, Hillside P.S.; had a nearly full time teacher assistant (TA); viewed by significant adults (principal, teacher & TA) as special education student "placement" in regular classroom; one on one teaching all done by teacher assistant; literacy programme structured programme material from basal & phonic sheets; other reading/writing activities developed around themes by the teacher; adaptation to other subjects done mostly by TA, with some teacher help; significant adults felt special students required highly structured sequenced materials different from regular students; teacher & TA on their own re curriculum support; accepted by peers who realized she was a "special student"; beginning to be included in social activities outside of school e.g. birthday parties
- Literacy At Home** read to from birth but showed no interest in books until pre-school models gained from other children; literacy important to this family; provided with many opportunities to write & read; mother kept some samples of her present & former school work; mother reviewed homework daily; home provided literacy models: memory aids (notes on refrigerator, calendars, lists, telephone & address books visible); social interactional uses (magazines, cards, newspaper, library books); educational uses (daily communication book, school reports, games, tapes, videos); parent felt she would become literate given time as part of life skill to live in community.

Literacy At School

- Strategies for Specific Skills with Letters, Letter Sounds and Words** **Task 6 (a) Game 1: Tic Tac Toe Letter Identification**
Chelsea with 80%, was still learning to recognize her letters. She still confused the letters, 'H' was 'J,' 'Y' was 'U,' 'E' was 'C,' 'b' was either 'd' or 'p,' 'j' was 't,' 'q' was 'b,' 'm' was 'a,' 'd' was 'p,' 'e' was 'c' and 'g' was 'u' or 'q'. Notice that the letters she confused were those that depended upon an exact orientation such as 'd,' 'q,' 'b'. The uppercase letters had close graphic features.

Specific Results on Task 6 (b) Game 2: Tic Tac Toe Letter sound Identification

She knew the 12 letter phonemes, the consonants phonemes for, 'F,' 'Kk,' 'P,' 'B,' 'J,' 'M,' 'Nn,' 'R,' and the long vowels 'o' and 'u'. Notice that she used the letter name strategy for the vowels she knew to achieve 22%.

Specific Results on Task 6 (c) Game 3: Tic Tac Toe Word from Initial Letter

She was able to give a word for the vowels except the lowercase 'o' and 'y'. Remembering that in isolation, she had been able to give a letter name sound for only 'o' and 'u'. The words she chose for initial sounds were 'ostrich' for 'o,' 'under' for 'u,' 'elephant' for 'e,' 'apple' for 'a,' indicating she probably had more awareness of initial phonemic segmentation than she could demonstrate in isolation. She knew words for all the consonants, but seemed to be thrown by the upper or lowercase feature in the following letters 'h,' 'q,' 'N,' 'S,' and the font for 'g'. In isolation she knew

only phonemes for 'F,' 'Kk,' 'P,' 'B,' 'J,' 'M,' 'Nn,' 'R'. Notice that the only consonant causing her problems is 'N' in this game. Her achievement here was 87%.

Specific Results on Task 7 Game 4: Tic Tac Toe Sight Word Identification

Chelsea, who achieved 25% used the initial letter and word shape. For example Chelsea said, 'how' for 'has'; 'on' for 'one'; 'run' for 'ran'; but added the strategy of spelling the word too. For example, she said, "h-a-v-e, how" for 'have' or "car, c-o-u-l-d" for 'could.' The order varied. With Chelsea, the spelling did not often lead to a correct sight word. Her basic sight word vocabulary was limited according to this list.

Specific Details on Task 9: 10 Minute Race Game - Writing Vocabulary

Chelsea attempted 13 words (Figure 5-18 (a) & (b)) and correctly spelled 3, for an achievement score of 23%. She employed both the alphabetic and the inventory principle making a list of 'words' using letters as she wrote going down the page. Her concept of word was unstable as she threw in numbers 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 and 9 on the second page. She could not say what words she had written except for the three she knew, 'Chelsea,' 'Mom' and 'Rod'. Note that some of her 'words' had vowels. She really was not using sound symbol associations here, but appeared to recognize on some level that 'o's, e's and a's' should be in her 'words' along with consonants. She appeared to be using pre-communicative or pre-phonemic strategies.

Strategies for Form and Structure of Written Language

Specific Details for Task 10: Dictat: n

She forgot (Figure 5-29 a) the letter 'b' in the word 'big' and first wrote only the upper case 'i' going on to then write 'd' for 'dog'. Realizing she needed to write the 'b' for 'big' but did not have any room on her line, she wrote it on the next line sub-vocalizing to herself. She repeated the 'B' again, but this time I think she meant to write a 'd' for 'dog' but wrote 'B' for 'dog' instead. I deduced this because of the video tape I had of her doing this task while sub-vocalizing 'dog at home'. For additional evidence, I went back to her letter identification tic tac toe games where she mixed up the letters 'd,' 'b,' 'p' and 'q.' In fact at one point in the game she identified the 'q' by turning it around and said 'b' for 'pig', close to 'big.' Another time 'd' was identified as 'p.' Then she turned it upside down and said 'dog'. She uses the long vowel 'o' in 'home' which she would hear but the short vowel 'i' in 'big' might have popped up here because the class was working on short 'i,' or because she had partially learned the word 'big' as a sight word. The lower case 'i' for the word 'I' is there (Figure 5-29 b). The other vowels she used were long vowels or letter names, for example the 'a' found in 'take' and the 'o' in 'going' and 'home.' In both sentences she used an intentional mark for a period so she has some awareness of punctuation. She uses the number '2' at the beginning of 'today' and repeats this twice again for the words 'to' later on in the sentence. She did not have all the letter formations, illustrating and confirming that her knowledge of the graphic principles is still forming. She wrote the sentences over two pages ignoring the lines but had the directional mostly intact, because she knew the direction of print but was still not certain of the direction of the actual letters. She wrote the word 'at' as 'ot' which suggests two things. During the tic tac toe game 4, she did not know the word 'at' in isolation but did know the word 'to.' She was trying to write the word 'to' here instead of 'at' and got the letters reversed. Remembering that she was still working out the direction and order of the letters in words, this could explain what I saw. In effect she was experimenting with the flexibility of symbols as a semi-phonemic user. She achieved 43%, 16 phonemes out of 37 were represented.

Specific Details for Task 3: Uninterrupted Drawing and Writing

This (Figure 5-38 (b)) was very purposeful writing. There was some scribbling but there were more letters revealing that she knew stories were written using letters. She knew that a story takes up a page and she had maintained the direction on the letters. She had even used lowercase letters to write her story! She employed the generative and flexibility principles. She actually used only 12 letters of which 6 were from her name. She particularly liked the letter 'e' using it at least 8 times including in her name. She could not reread this text which was typical pattern of an early writer using the pre-phonemic strategies.

Specific Details for Task 2: Language Experience Story

The writing activity here in Figure 5-48 was really a copying activity since Chelsea did not want to write. Her teacher assistant, Lisa, suggested making a card. She managed to do some oral scaffolding with her and had her copy the piece, which was a birthday card for her mother. Notice that she was able to copy and maintain the direction of the print, and sort of stay on the lines. This kind of activity was typical of the classroom 'writing' she did. It was evidence of copying not composing.

Specific Details for Task 5: Phase 1- Receiving & Reading a Letter; Phase 2- Writing & Reading a Letter

Chelsea could not read her mother's letter. Her teacher assistant read it to her. She was thrilled to get the letter and laughed and giggled in delight as Lisa read it to her. The topic of the letter was about the surprise birthday present Chelsea was going to get her mother. Figure 5-52 was Chelsea's reply. This composing was purposeful and she had the first letter of 'Happy' and 'present' on the next line. She was demonstrating that she can match the initial sound in these two words which she finger pointed to and clearly stated the words. She seemed to understand that she needed letter strings to make words. Just where one word ends and the next starts is unclear. Again the direction was there, and letter formation. The format of a letter was unknown to her here, but the concept of putting down thoughts in writing seemed to be there. Lisa said, they never wrote letters to anyone but they did make cards often in class for classmates like the birthday card she copied for her mother.

**Strategies for
the Form and
Function of
Reading
Printed Text**

Specific Details for Task 8: Concepts About Print (CAP)

During these tasks listed in Table 5.3, Chelsea had the book read to her. She was able to handle all the book handling tasks, such as the finding the front of the book, the bottom of the picture, and the reversed lines, and showed that print contained a message. She did not seem to understand about reading the left page before the right. In the directional indicators, she knew where to start and the direction to read in as well as the return sweep. She did not know the first and last concept or notice the altered line order. In the area of visual scanning, analysis and following, Chelsea was not able to notice the change in word or letter order nor find the words 'was' and 'no.' The specific concepts about printed language she knew were the meaning of the period and the capital letter. The meaning of the question mark, quotations marks and comma were not yet in her grasp. She found it too difficult to find all the specific letters she was asked for. She could do word by word matching, if someone read for her, but her understanding about the concept of word versus letters was still forming.

Specific Details for Task 4: Running Records (RR)

Table 5.4 indicated that Chelsea chose all her RR samples from her basal readers. Notice that she did not have any easy text, only one instructional (The Raccoon) and two hard (Play Ball! And Grandma, Grandpa) level texts. Chelsea indicated that she was just beginning to self monitor which she did on Play Ball! Where she used the three cuing systems to cross check her information. During this reading she indicated that she favoured the syntactic cues the most, and the semantic and visual/phonetic cues were used next. Note this same pattern was there in the other texts read as well.

Specific Details for Task 1: Environmental Print Games

Table 5.5 indicated that Chelsea preferred to use the functional response for 20 items, closely followed by the graphics at 19, and 15 categorical responses. She was able to give 9 specific responses but this dropped to 4 in condition 3. This would seem to indicate at this point that she required the contextual information contained on the items to give the specific responses. The printed text was not her main focus as yet. This did show that she was able to orchestrate various cues on the item to help her to cross check the information. She used mostly representational language, but did use heuristic and personal language a few times despite her poor articulation. Print seemed to stimulate her language here.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

In this last chapter, I return to the research questions posed in Chapter One and discuss the major findings regarding these children, their families and schools. I also address some implications of this investigation through some of the questions raised along the way, highlight the limitations of the study, and give some directions for further research then conclude with a personal epilogue.

Discussion

There have been a limited amount of publications about the literacy learning of special needs children included in regular classrooms. As the inclusion of children with severe special needs becomes a more common practice in

Research Questions from Chapter One

1. What role does literacy (reading and writing) play in the life of special needs children?
 - (a) How is literacy (reading and writing) experienced and used at home?
 - (b) How is literacy (reading and writing) experienced and used within the classroom?
 - (c) What literacy (reading and writing) knowledge do these children demonstrate as they participate within these two worlds?

2. What is the nature of the characteristics of emergent literacy (writing and reading) for these special needs children?
 - (a) Do they demonstrate specific characteristics similar to typical children in their written products and reading development?
 - (b) What types of written products do they demonstrate?
 - (c) What strategies do these children use to write?
 - (d) What strategies do these children demonstrate when they read?

3. As these individual special needs children gain control over the literacy system, how does this affect their total language development?
 - (a) For them are literacy development and language acquisition mutually supportive?

regular classrooms, it becomes increasingly important to enlarge the vision of what is known about the emergent literacy acquisition of these children. The purpose of this study was to investigate the emergent literacy of very special needs children within their homes and classrooms. The literature review and the researcher's experiences of working with special needs children led to the three research questions found in Chapter one and reproduced in the text box.

It became clear as the investigation proceeded that the children's stories carried the research into a whole variety of areas and issues that had not been anticipated when questions were initially being posed. This happens because the search for interpretive meaning seems to move concurrently as data is collected (Dyson, 1981; Merriam, 1988; Mertens & McLaughlin, 1995). More questions than answers seemed to occur. For example, there was no research question about the impact of the adults' beliefs and values about literacy on the children's literacy learning. In hindsight, perhaps there should have been questions posed in these areas. In the course of this research, it emerged that such elements play an important part in the role of literacy in the life of these particular special needs children. As a consequence, unidirectional conclusions are difficult to report. There was the question of individual idiosyncratic styles of the children, their interests, functioning levels, their contexts and so on. There was an intention not to mask the heterogeneity inherent in this group of children. This is a reality whenever dealing with any group of special needs children. Using mean results and intra-group variability tends to mask the individual children, so the analysis steered away from this type of reporting. At the same time, descriptively to interpret the results solely upon the researcher's viewpoints can also obscure realities. The decision to

adapt the researched literacy activities from Clay (1993) and Harste et al. (1981) into my focused literacy activities, and to use data from focus interviews and samples of the children's work, were methods to combat this difficulty.

Summary of Major Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the emergent literacy of very special needs children within their homes and inclusive classrooms. It focused on a description of how the children experienced and participated in literacy, and reported characteristics that demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of literacy. These findings will be related to the research questions in the sections which follow this listing. The major findings which follow are broad perspectives about emergent literacy among **this** particular special needs population.

1. The seven children's literacy settings at home were observed to be highly convergent. Despite the difference in special needs, the children demonstrated similar experiences with, participation in, and uses of literacy at home.
 - 1 (a) The parents' commitment towards inclusion appeared to have evolved out of their negative experiences with medical and/or school authorities.
 - 1 (b) All the parents appeared to develop a belief that literacy for their special needs children would become a reality over time.
2. The seven children's literacy settings at school were observed as divergent.
 - 2 (a) The educators' beliefs/values of inclusion for special needs children were varied as reflected in their actual practices of inclusion at the school and classroom levels.

- 2 (b) The educators' beliefs/values of the types of literacy instruction appropriate for special needs children were strongly influenced by underlying assumptions about the learning capabilities of special needs children.
3. The seven children displayed remarkably similar characteristics in their uses of literacy, knowledge/understanding of literacy concepts, and types of written products because of their own life histories and special needs.
- 3 (a) The extent of each individual child's knowledge/understanding of the literacy process seemed to determine the characteristics he/she could demonstrate.
- 3 (b) There are remarkably similar characteristics between these special needs children's emergent literacy and the emergent literacy of non-special needs children of comparable documented features.
- 3 (c) During continuous text reading and written language production, the seven children appeared to use syntactic and letter/sound correspondences as strategies, as well as some semantic intent in their engagement with literacy.
4. Proficiency in oral language appeared not to be a prerequisite for the seven children to have experiences with, participation in, or use of literacy. Nor did a lack of it prevent them either from demonstrating knowledge/understanding of some literacy concepts or producing different types of written products at home or at school .

The Role Literacy Plays in the life of These Special Needs Children

The findings which address this first research question (see Question 1 in the text box) have been broken down into two areas for discussion. The first is those factors observed in the children's homes and the second is those factors observed in the children's classrooms. Turning to the first of these major findings, the seven children's literacy settings at home

were observed to be highly convergent. Despite the difference in special needs, the children demonstrated similar experiences with, participation in, and uses of literacy at home. All the parents believed that literacy for their special needs children would become a reality over time.

At Home

It became clear that all these children were learning how to read and write in part because parental expectations and actions at home had nurtured their prospects of becoming literate. The parents' views of literacy for all these children seemed to converge in agreement on this issue. These parents not only valued literacy in their own lives, but passed this value on to all their children, providing a multiplicity of literacy experiences for their special needs children to participate in and therefore offering them opportunities to use literacy. When it came to promoting literacy at home, these parents really did not view their special needs youngster as requiring any radically different activities. They all seemed instinctively to sense that they required more of the same literacy activities which had worked with their siblings. All the children were provided with opportunities to listen to stories read to them, both at home and in the community. They all had ready access to books. Writing materials were made readily available to them. They were encouraged by more competent siblings or adults to engage in literacy activities. They saw their parents read and value literacy in the household. They saw their Mum and Dad reading newspapers, books, magazines or interacting with print on the computer at home. Limitations placed upon these children's potential by the medical authorities were listened to by all these parents, but they seemed to

take the predictions from the "authorities" as challenges to address, rather than absolute limits to which they had to resign themselves. These parents were willing to devote time and energy to developing their children's language through literacy, not unlike parents of special needs children who had gone before them. Hunt (1967), Stratford (1989) and Goodwin (1992) provide stories of special needs children who reached various levels of literacy through persistent parental nurturing. They are illustrative of the kinds of potential that special needs children possess, which is often overlooked by the medical and school "authorities".

Literacy remained a focus at home after the children entered school. The children saw their parents regularly communicating through their "communication books" with their pre-school teachers and later their grade school teachers. They saw family members take messages at the telephone. They saw family members look up telephone numbers in white or yellow pages. Computer programmes were introduced to some of the children. Tommy, for example began to use one during pre-school years and was encouraged to do so just like his sibling. The children saw their literacy work displayed at home on the fridge. They also saw their parents value their literacy products by preserving them in a scrapbook as David's parents did, or in boxes or file folders, like Megan's, Daniel's, Kristy's, and Chelsea's mothers. The parents continued to work with the children by reviewing homework nightly or developing informal spelling and vocabulary games. All the while the parents continued to read to them nightly and listen to them read.

These families continued to expand their children's literacy beyond the home, encouraging the reading of environmental print during shopping outings. The children saw family members using calendars with reminder notes on them for up coming events. They

saw parents making shopping lists and using them in the local Loeb or Loblaws grocery stores. They saw Mum or Dad mail letters or write out cheques to pay bills. They accompanied parents to the bank machines and watched them read the instructions in order to get money. These children went to shopping malls with Mum or Dad so they saw signs for stores such as Eaton's, the Bay, Zellers, Canadian Tire or Shopper's Drugmart. They stopped off at McDonald's for snacks during these outings. These children came from very literate households. As Harste et al., (1984), Taylor (1983) and Teale (1986) describe in their research, the literacy practices of these children's families demonstrated that the family is the primary site of the social construction of literacy for children. In fact, Harste et al. (1984) focused on individual learning within the social constructions of home and classroom but the youngsters they observed were not special needs children like those in this study.

The parents achieved results, I believe, because of their commitment to literacy in their own lives and because they remained determined to stimulate literacy in their children at home. All the parents were able to share examples of early writings produced by their children. These early efforts had been preserved as evidence of the value these parents placed upon literacy. In the parents' minds their children would continue learning literacy as they entered their community school. The parents were taken aback by their initial encounters with school authorities who did not share their beliefs about the abilities of their children. Here I was reminded of a study by Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines (1988) which describes very different populations. They identify class, race and ethnicity as factors that have an impact on literacy learning because they play into a misjudgment of certain students' academic potential and their marginalization in school.

Far from dissuading the parents, however, these school experiences seemed to consolidate their expectations and make them even more determined that their children be given the same opportunities to learn as their peers in their community schools in an inclusive setting. The parents' commitment towards inclusion appeared to evolve out of their negative experiences, first with medical authorities and later with school authorities. The parents' day-to-day experiences kept confirming for them that their children could learn in an inclusive settings. During the children's early years, home and community were inclusive settings and the children all thrived. Isolating their children in segregated settings when it came time for formal schooling did not make sense to any of these parents. Too often the potential for literacy is under estimated for these children by the school (Farrell & Elkins, 1995; Colasent & Griffith, 1998). This could be partly due to the issue of these parents viewing literacy learning as fundamentally similar for all, which is not the view of many of the school authorities who deal with special needs children. With the exception of Chelsea, all these children had older siblings who the parents had observed learning literacy. It never occurred to the parents that their special needs child would not become literate in the same environment. All the parents acknowledged that their special needs children appeared to learn at a slower pace than their sibling, but they recognized that they were learning in the same home environment. They assumed that the same learning would happen in school.

The Classroom

The second major set of findings in this special needs group emerged from observations of the children's literacy in their classrooms. The findings address the remaining

parts of Research Question 1 (see Research Question 1(b) and (c) in the text box). The seven children's literacy settings at school were observed as divergent. The educators' beliefs/values about inclusion for special needs children were varied, as reflected in their actual practices of inclusion at the school and classroom levels. The educators' beliefs/values about literacy instruction were strongly influenced by the underlying assumptions they held about the learning capabilities of special needs children.

Many of the classroom teachers had a firm grasp of how to teach literacy to non-special needs children, but were cautious about what they had to offer to the special needs students. They felt insecure about teaching children who did not appear to follow the regular path. Perhaps this is due to the influence of special educators, who have frequently employed structured, individual strategies that are very difficult to use in regular classrooms with large numbers of children. The need for this instructional programme is often held as the justification for segregated settings. As a result, I felt that some of the regular classroom teachers thought that what was necessary to instruct literacy in the other classroom children did not apply to the special needs children in their class. These views about literacy held by these teachers seemed to diverge whenever they began to discuss special needs children. These same teachers viewed special needs children in terms of their points of difference in their learning, rather than from their points of similarity. This was implied rather than stated directly in some of the kinds of instructional programmes that the special needs children were exposed to in the classroom. The assumption that some of the teachers made was that these children were deficient in some way and, therefore, the regular school organization and curriculum which they provided were not set up to meet their needs. Cazden (1970) made the

point years ago in addressing a different issue, namely the Black English difference/deficit debate, but the underlying principle applies here to special needs children. That is, the social situation of the language user determines the form of language they will use. Pellegrini (1991) pointed out that context has been known for a very long time to have tremendous significance in literacy learning.

The teachers who viewed special needs children as deficient really assumed and discounted the classroom context as important. They put the emphasis solely on using the correct instructional programme. Daniel's situation was the most extreme case. One assumption was that because he had such special needs, he required a special programme in a special setting alongside other special need children, who were also set apart from their age peers. The other assumption was that the literacy curriculum used with special needs children must be non-participatory (Au & Kawakami, 1984; Koppenhaver et al., 1992). When this kind of curriculum was used, it tended not to motivate the child. These assumptions seem to fly in the face of what is known about literacy instruction. Shanahan & Neuman (1997) have discussed the 13 most influential literacy studies since 1961. These studies were all strongly driven by theory and extended theory into practice. I was particularly interested to see the work of Bond & Dykstra (1967) on the First-Grade studies, Clay (1979, 1985) on the early detection of reading difficulties, Goodman (1965) on cues and miscues in reading, Read (1971) on children's knowledge of English phonology, and Graves (1981) on the development of children's composing during the writing process. I utilized the theories of these particular researchers in preparing to undertake my study. Consequently, I looked for evidence of practices based upon their work when I was present in the children's classrooms. All of the

teachers incorporated some elements from these various studies into their literacy instructional programme. No one classroom used them all. I agreed with Readance & Barone (1997) who have argued that there are no simple answers as to what constitutes the best method for teaching literacy. These researchers revisited Bond & Dykstra's (1967) original study (commonly known as the First Grade Studies), because "...no study has challenged the basic findings of the First-Grade studies..." (p. 341). In a similar manner to the present study, it did not reveal unilateral evidence to support the superiority of one educational arrangement over another in regard to literacy learning. The evidence seemed to indicate that all the children were learning literacy, regardless of their instructional arrangement. But as in the First-Grade studies, the teachers' beliefs, and the value they placed on their instructional programme were of paramount importance, just as Bond & Dykstra (1967) had concluded: "A teacher who is successful with a given instructional program will probably be successful with that approach for pupils of varying degrees of readiness and capability..." (p. 417). This historic research study remains relevant today because it encourages eclectic instructional programming.

I felt it was the differences in the adults' perceptions of inclusion and their perceptions on the special needs that determined the choice of literacy program used for each child. Looking more closely at each of the classrooms supported this finding. In Kristy's school, for example, it seemed that this group of educators viewed students with special needs not as different in type (label) but in degree. They saw that the learning event needed to be tailored to Kristy and/or the supports that engaged her. The supports were not the amount of teaching assistant time but rather the different roles taken by the classroom teacher, resource teacher,

peers and teacher assistant. There was an ongoing team involvement, one in which Kristy's curriculum was monitored and re-evaluated so that roles were shifted and adjusted to fit particular situations. The classroom teacher or the resource teacher always took the lead in the actual teaching of Kristy, either within the classroom or individually. In fact, of all the children in this study, Kristy was the only child who had continuous one on one teaching from a teacher. In Kristy's case, this was the resource teacher. The role of the teacher assistant or the peers was very clearly defined as one of assisting either the classroom teacher, the resource teacher, or Kristy. It was not to teach or design or adapt curriculum for Kristy, but to implement these as directed by the teachers. Kristy's resource teacher, teacher, and principal did not feel that a more structured individual programme was necessary for her just because she was a child with Down Syndrome. Quite the contrary. Her junior literacy programme was very exploratory and arranged around themes. It was also very participatory and motivational, as Kristy's mother stated.

Jennie's and Chelsea's literacy programmes too were arranged around themes, but the perception of inclusion held by the adults involved was not the same as it was in Kristy's case. Inclusion was viewed as a special education placement due to their types of learning needs, ones which were in turn tied to their labels as children with Down Syndrome. The adults in Jennie's and Chelsea's setting still felt these two girls required special instruction, which translated into a structured programme similar to that advocated by many special educators. The involvement of the resource teachers was administrative in nature, rather than teaching. The resource teachers arranged case conferences and the Individual Program Review Committee (IPRC). Their role involved neither direct teaching nor planning of the

day to day instructional programme. It appeared that Jennie and Chelsea were not perceived by their schools as being entitled to resource assistance in the same way as any other mainstream students. Jennie and Chelsea each were integrated into a regular classroom with a teacher assistant. Therefore active teaching of them by the resource teacher was not a priority. It was left to the teacher assistant to adapt curriculum and teach them through individual tutorials. Inclusion here was not viewed as a process involving a team of players consisting of the classroom teacher, resource teacher, and teacher assistant, as had been the case in Kristy's situation. Their classroom teachers did try to have both these children participate as much as possible in the daily routine of the classroom, but this was left mostly up to them, without the support of a team as in Kristy's situation.

The prevailing perceptions in Megan's, Tommy's, and David's, inclusive settings were not very different from Jennie's and Chelsea's creating environments that operated along much the same premisses. Megan, also a child with Down Syndrome, was fortunate in having a teacher assistant who happened to be a qualified teacher. Her literacy programme was set up to take full advantage of this, as her teacher assistant did all the one on one teaching with Megan and did plan with the classroom teacher. Tommy and David, who were the two children with autism, did not have access to any qualified teacher other than their classroom teacher. Even though they were in regular classrooms they were not seen as being eligible for resource teacher assistance. I wondered if the rationale for this situation was because the school resources were so tied to labels and these children carried the wrong labels or had resisted labelling? On the other hand, could it have been that these children were viewed to have such special needs that resource help was not even considered worthwhile for them?

Under a traditional school set up, they would not even have been there. Similar situations seem to be reflected in Ferguson's (1995) research on inclusion. For all these children, inclusion was what Ferguson (1995) calls, "... 'Pretty Good' Integration.." (p.283). As Ferguson describes, what she and her colleagues found in many classrooms was too often that underlying assumptions about special education were still in operation:

...Too much inclusion as implemented by special education seems to succeed primarily in relocating "special" education to the general classroom along with the special materials, specially trained adults, and special curriculum and teaching techniques. The overriding assumptions remain unchanged and clearly communicated.

- These "inclusion" students are "irregular," even though they are in "regular" classrooms.
- They need "special" stuff that the "regular" teacher is neither competent nor approved to provide.
- The "special" educator is the officially designated provider of these "special" things.

In trying to change everything, inclusion all too often seems to be leaving everything the same . But in a new place.. (Ferguson,1995, p. 284).

The fact that many of the teachers voiced concerns about what they could offer the special needs child seemed to be in line with what Ferguson (1995) is describing here. They all felt that the children required "special stuff" which justified the literacy curriculum used with the children. None of the children, except Kristy, had a special educator working directly with them, so they did not have a "special educator" officially designated as a "provider." Instead, they had a teacher assistant who was supposed to provide the "special things."

The Literacy Programmes

The types of literacy programmes chosen for these children reflected these differences in perception of inclusion. For example, Daniel's situation was extremely structured, sequenced and scripted. Daniel was in a school special education class because of his label of

language disorder and developmental delays. Each lesson was scripted and followed to the letter by the teacher assistant in a group of three. He got the opportunity to interact with others during art, gym, science, and social studies. The difference here was that all the children in Daniel's class had significant learning difficulties, so he was not interacting with competent literate others the way Kristy, Jennie, Tommy, Megan, David, and Chelsea were during most of their school day. This meant that he never was exposed to the more problem-solving or participatory literacy approaches found, for example, in David's or Chelsea's primary classes or in Tommy's, Jennie's, and Megan's junior classes. All of them were included in both small and large group problem-solving and participatory literacy activities at some times during the day. Their individual instruction was structured and highly sequenced but nowhere near the degree of Daniel's scripted program.

For Tommy, Megan, David, Jennie, and Chelsea, a priority of both the teachers and the principals was the amount of teacher assistant time necessary to support literacy and mathematics in the regular classroom. This meant in practice that the learning situations for all these children were not viewed from the perspective of tailoring the curriculum and providing the necessary supports for the student to benefit from all the classroom learning events. Rather, in practice this meant that the focus of their literacy instruction was on finding and using structured materials delivered by the teacher assistants, who relied upon a variety of commercial materials and texts. Their individual instruction was sequenced and structured. This meant that less attention was paid to teaching literacy skills in the context of continuous text or meaningful writing. Some of their individual literacy instruction was directly related to the classroom instruction but often it was not. This also meant that the actual bulk of the

teaching of the child was done solely by the teacher assistant, not the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher often acted as a consultant to the teacher assistant regarding the adaptations necessary for the particular child, but not always. This did not mean that some excellent teaching and learning was not happening for Jennie, Megan, Tommy, David, Chelsea, and Daniel, but it was not done from the same perspective as Kristy experienced in her literacy programme.

Kristy's literacy instruction at school was completely personal, authentic and meaningful, while for others, like Daniel, there was discontinuity between home and school literacy. Daniel's school language arts programme called, Reading Mastery by SRA and Associates was highly structured and sequenced, with little authentic text for him to read. Kristy wrote regularly and read trade books of her own choice while Daniel rarely did any of those things.

Jennie had language arts activities in her class as she followed the same class themes, but the expectations and goals for her were modified to suit her achievement levels. Individual tutorials were designed and implemented by the teacher assistant but they did not relate to the classroom literacy programme. The tutorials were carried out in the resource room.

Tommy stayed in the classroom for all his language arts, which was an individual programme using the computer. It was a parallel curriculum to his class, much like Chelsea's. In other words, they did reading and writing activities at the same time as the rest of the class, but totally different activities. However, Chelsea was part of the large group for oral and written language arts activities, when her teacher modelled writing, reading and oral

language. It was only her seat work that was parallel. She followed a basal text that had a highly structured and sequenced vocabulary. The one on one teaching was designed and implemented by the teacher assistant, with some consultation from the classroom teacher.

Tommy used the computer for his writing and spelling activities, which set him apart to a certain extent. I did not observe him as part of a small language arts group discussion. Neither did I observe him as part of a cooperative learning activity like the other children. He did participate in large group lessons on religion, some social studies and science, where he had the opportunity to interact with more literate others. During those times he did not have the teacher assistant beside him. The one on one teaching was designed and done by the teacher assistant in consultation with the teacher.

David experienced a blend of activities, some in participation with the class and others on his own. He read a variety of text, some from basal readers, others from small books just like the rest of his class. He was part of the large group oral and written activities just like Chelsea. He participated in the activities in which his teacher modelled writing, reading and oral language for the class. During these times no teacher assistant was beside either of these children, but she was present in the room. David's one on one teaching was done by the teacher assistant in the classroom but designed in consultation with the teacher.

Megan did not follow the class at all in her language arts activities. They were all done in the resource programme where she was "part" of a resource group, but she did individual activities unrelated to the resource students beside her. They were also unrelated to the classroom language arts program since she was in the resource room during the classroom language arts period. The instruction was highly skills based, a blend of commercially

produced materials, sequenced and followed to completion. The texts used were usually controlled vocabulary. Of greater concern was the obvious separateness of Megan from the rest of the resource children in the group. Megan was given her work to do then the teacher assistant would work with the other children as a small group. Megan had the additional benefit of one on one teaching nearly every day from the teacher assistant. This occurred for Megan only in the mornings. The remaining afternoon time she was part of the whole class grouping. She had the opportunity to benefit from the whole class language interactions and the cooperative groupings at the learning centres in her room during the afternoons. She had teacher assistant support for a very short five to ten minute period at the beginning and end of the afternoon. The rest of the time she had good peer support.

All of this meant that there were many times during the school day when these children, Tommy, David, Megan, Jennie, and Chelsea, were in the class but not of the class. This was because of what they were doing, with whom, and how. They sometimes had adults velcroed to them while in class, making them easily identifiable. At other times they were in individual tutorials while in the classroom or out of the classroom all together. They followed routines like the other children but used different materials, so the children looked like they were doing what the others in the class were doing.

Characteristics of Literacy in These Special Needs Children

The third set of major findings which address the second research question (see Research Question 2 in the text box) were that all the children displayed remarkably similar characteristics in their uses of literacy, knowledge/understanding of literacy concepts, and

types of written products, even though they had special needs and divergent classroom literacy practices. This would seem to make some sense in light of their milestones for cognitive and linguistic functioning and dispels the assumption that these special needs children followed very different literacy paths in their literacy learning. The focused literacy tasks revealed many areas of letter, word, and sound identification that were similar to those for non-special needs children. The analysis of the children's various writing samples revealed many parallel features to those found in the early writings of non-special needs children as documented by such researchers as Clay (1993), Gentry and Gillet (1993), Ferrero (1985), Dyson (1981), and Harste et al. (1984).

By comparing the literacy accomplishments of the children in this study to those of comparable documented features rather than chronological ages, I encountered in their literacy a richness of accomplishment and understanding. I found many of the observations in the research of Clay (1993) and the work of Harste et al. (1984) on environmental print to be useful when viewing the literacy of the special needs children during the focused literacy tasks. I assumed that these special needs children would be aware of their print environments and would be able to show much about literacy that a standardized test would miss. Read's (1971) work on invented spelling proved tremendously useful when viewing the writings of the special needs children in this study. Henderson & Beers (1980) showed Read's work to be relevant to typical school settings. Their work dispelled the assumption "... that children enter school with little knowledge of the phonological-orthographic features of language, and invented spelling has become a popular instructional activity that allows earlier writing and provides children a venue to explore the orthography of their language" (p. 207). I found

that the special needs children in this study did indeed use phonological-orthographic features of their language, dispelling the assumption that these children came as blank slates to writing and had to be taught every phonological-orthographic feature of the language.

The other study cited by Shanahan & Neuman (1997) relevant to my work is on miscue analysis (Goodman, 1965). I incorporated the notion that these children would use the three cuing systems (semantic, syntactic and phonological cues) when interacting with printed text. I indeed found that these particular special needs children did appear to use the cuing systems and were beginning to use cross checking strategies when reading continuous text (Clay, 1991). They read with a similar semantic intent as non-special needs children (Goodman & Altwerger, 1981). I assumed, like Graves (1981) that, given the opportunity and encouragement, these special needs children would and could try to write and that they had something to say and share. This is rarely or never done for the literacy of special needs children such as those in the present study. The children did indeed produce written products which indicated that they were trying to use semantic intent in their writing. For these children, it appeared that the extent of each child's knowledge and understanding of the literacy process seemed to determine the characteristics he/she could demonstrate. For example, according to the focused tasks, Kristy had the most advanced understanding and knowledge of literacy concepts while Chelsea had the least. Kristy was the eldest child at 12.10 while Daniel was youngest at 8.05. Each seemed to be following a learning sequence that paralleled those found in other children but it proved fruitless to try to link this sequence to ages. Kristy clearly displayed many more characteristics in word knowledge, recognition, sound/symbol correspondences etc. than any of the other children. Kristy's grasp of the

literacy process, when presented with text to read or write provided evidence of that. Her abilities hinged upon more than word/sound recognition, as it was evident that she had learned to orchestrate her literacy strategies to reveal her knowledge. These observations suggest that much more is necessary for competent literacy use. Meanings arise from referential systems, not sentences in isolation. Referential systems are connected both to each other and to the social practices that they describe. Part of what it means to learn literacy is to know the rules by which reading and writing are organized. These children demonstrated the value of knowing more than the phonic rules and sight words to negotiate meanings in texts. Language is connected to the performance of roles and relationships; so too is literacy. Reading and writing are the way these are mediated and played out. My observations suggested that children require some awareness of the rules by which text relationships are regulated not just sound/symbol rules. I saw some of this happen for all the children in this study, but in particular for Kristy. Perhaps this was because she was the eldest, or because her literacy instruction directly addressed these issues. All the other children were at various points of awareness along the literacy spectrum about how literacy works.

The other evidence to support this claim was revealed by analysing the children's miscues. The seven children all appeared to use syntactic and letter/sound correspondences as strategies, as well as some semantic intent, in their engagement with literacy during continuous text reading and written production. However, Kristy used the three cuing systems (semantic, syntactic and phonological) more often and in a more balanced fashion, indicating that at the time of the study she had more strategies to draw upon than the other children. The fact that the other children indicated that they too had the ability to use all three

of the cuing systems, was perhaps, an indication of their beginning attempts to grasp the literacy process, and possibly illustrates their potential capabilities too.

Literacy Learning and Language Acquisition

The fourth major finding that addresses the third research question (see Research Question 3 in the text box) is that proficiency in verbal language appeared not to be a prerequisite to literacy learning for any of the children. They all demonstrated variable knowledge and understanding about form and functions in both reading and writing. Yet all the children had significant difficulties with expressive language. It was difficult for them clearly to orally express their ideas and to use complex syntactic structures when speaking. Their receptive language was often much better. Yet it appeared that they were learning language and literacy simultaneously. Nearly every teacher assistant and mother remarked on how dramatically the children's vocabularies had improved since the children had begun to read and write. All the children participated in and benefited from verbal prompting, oral rehearsal pre-writing, and rereading post writing. These activities appeared to stimulate their oral language as well as their reading and writing. These literacy activities resulted in talk and it is through such guided talk that children learn language (Wells, 1986; Heath, 1983; Halliday, 1975; Dyson, 1981; 1989; Booth, 1994).

All the children participated in other literacy activities, such as those in science, social studies, health, or religion, where guided talk was done in large group settings. The seat work activities were modified to suit the achievement level of the child or substitutes were given. Jennie's, Kristy's, Chelsea's, and David's classes used themes more than the other

classes. This meant that their language arts activities were usually more authentic and meaningful because they were combined with other subject areas such as science, social studies, mathematics, art, and even music. This type of curriculum integration seemed to benefit Jennie, Kristy, Chelsea, and David as they were able to engage in purposeful learning tasks with more competent language users. The language interactions for these children were enhanced because they had lots of opportunities to engage in whole class, cooperative groups as well as in their one on one settings.

This is perhaps the key. These children had lots of opportunities to talk and hear language. The fact that all the children except Daniel were able to get the opportunity in school to participate in less structured, problem-solving and participatory literacy activities, with more competent language users during the day, indicated that this was beneficial to them. Each classroom site, except Daniel's, had a sense of a shared learning community where more literate others were actively encouraged to assist each other. In Daniel's class this occurred spontaneously anyway, but was not actively encouraged as it was in the other classes. In Kristy's class this extended beyond the classroom to the whole school, perhaps because of the regular, ongoing team approach towards inclusion for special needs children that occurred daily.

These children's reading, writing, and talk appeared to be mutually reinforcing of one another. This is much like Williams' (1991) study of profoundly deaf children, but with a difference. These children had some oral language base to draw upon, whereas Williams' (1991) youngsters had none. These children were mediating writing through spoken language as was demonstrated by the dictation tasks, the writing samples collected, and the analysis of

some of their miscues. All the children, even Tommy and David, who displayed many autistic gestures, were not bypassing the sound element in their written language. They were trying to write what they heard. They were responding to language presented in stories, to connected language narratives and storybook pictures. So even though Tommy and David's verbal output was limited, they were benefiting from exposure to the language found in typical classrooms. In fact, this was true for all the other children, even Daniel, Megan, Kristy and Chelsea, despite their enunciation difficulties. This seems contrary to the notion that oral language must be in place before reading and writing are introduced. This did not seem to be the case for these children, who were all learning to read and write.

To carry this notion even further, the environmental print activities appeared to confirm that these children were exploring the written language beyond the classroom. This would be in line with the socio-psycholinguistic findings of Harste et al., (1984) who point out that it is ludicrous to think that young children in a literate society would not be attending to print apart from the rest of their world. Print is part of their world. These children knew there was meaning in symbols, whether it was print or graphics. Their reading, writing, and verbal language appeared to be mutually reinforcing one another outside the classroom as well. It was assumed by the families that the children were aware of environmental print. None of the parents thought it strange that I would ask what print their children could recognize at home and in the community. Most of the teachers were amazed when I found any print other than McDonald's golden arches that the children could recognize. This finding is counter to a prevailing assumption in many special education instructional sequences and commercial packages that ignores environmental print and the whole social context of literacy

learning for young special needs children until they reach adolescence. This type of literacy is then introduced in the context of life skills.

Right from their earliest years these special needs children's experiences with literacy at home had an impact on their language. Their parents used reading to stimulate language. Reading became a vehicle for verbal language development as the adults at home asked the children questions about the pictures in the storybooks or talked about the stories. The children were encouraged to join in and share what they could during those pre-school years. Like all children from literate communities, these children came to school with not only lots of literacy but also lots of receptive language.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitations of this study are as follows:

First, my position towards an inclusive setting as a process for all special needs children no doubt influenced my perceptions of the classroom activities, my interpretation of the focused interviews and my informal conversations with the parents and the educators.

The second limitation to this study could be including 7 students with different special needs and different ages. In addition, all these students were from similar socio-economic backgrounds. This could be interpreted as a limitation, rather than a widening of perspectives as I envisioned, thus offering different interpretations than those I drew. Whether similar results would have occurred if these children had come from lower socio-economic or different cultural backgrounds still remains to be seen.

The third limitation was a methodological choice. There were time gaps during which I made no observations in the schools. This could disconfirm the literacy evidence findings of this research. Personal time constraints and physical distances between schools did not allow continuous contact with all the children every day throughout the academic year. This was sacrificed to include the seven special needs students in the study. By using the data from the participating adults when I was not there, I tried to counter this limitation.

Implications for Further Research

The results of this study are related to particular settings, the schools, specific children, and their teachers and parents. The findings are derived from those contexts in this investigation. This means generalizations can relate only to similar settings and circumstances as outlined in this study. These case studies were classroom based in design, utilizing an ethnographic orientation for data analysis and collection. The individual children were not labelled beyond having special needs. The research was intentionally designed in this way to avoid the deficit perception that seems to always go with the labels of Down Syndrome, autism, Fragile X Syndrome or severe language and developmental delays. Most research with special needs children dwells on the differences in their learning styles to the extent that the similarities in their learning patterns are entirely overlooked. Many teachers and special educators can not get passed the differences to see any similarities in the children's learning patterns. I felt this was critically needed for these children to be ever fully included into the regular classroom. The richness of detail in Chapter Five was designed to provide a descriptive picture of the complexity of their situations and to present a clearer sense of the

children not solely based on their difference. Their differences were described as they affected instructional practices, such as their need for oral scaffolding, repetition, different pacing of some instruction, or their need for specialized communication equipment.

Perhaps the most interesting implication of this research study is the fact that Jennie, David, Daniel, Tommy, Megan, Kristy, and Chelsea appeared to have interests in, participation in and knowledge/understandings of written language similar to non-special needs children at comparable stages who have been documented in previous studies. For these special needs children, it would seem that there is some commonality in the processes of their literacy growth, much like Williams (1991) found in her profoundly deaf children. These children were profiting from inclusion in the regular classroom, indicating the tremendous importance of the social setting for literacy learning. Teachers need to be mindful that, like all children learning literacy, special needs children need to be given many opportunities to connect literacy to their actions, interests and intentions. Literacy instruction must be incorporated into every aspect of their experiences. Their instruction does not have to be divorced from the other children in the class. They appear to gain a tremendous amount from participating with more literate others. They can and will compose if given the opportunities and support to do so. They do not have to wait until all their motor functions are in place or until they have near perfect oral language. They do appear to benefit from daily one on one instruction especially if this instruction explicitly teaches strategies to employ with print, rather than just the teaching of literacy items divorced from the classroom literacy instruction. Would replication of this study yield the same findings with youngsters with different special needs or from different lower socio-economic and cultural backgrounds?

Only further social interaction studies of special needs youngsters in inclusive settings could reveal this.

All the case study children lived in literate environments and connected meaning to written symbols. They were active constructors of knowledge. Like all young children they tended to make meaning of salient features in their lives. Is there a commonality to this way for "making sense"? What would be of particular interest, would be to examine this question with special needs children who do not come from literate environments, but are included in regular classrooms. Only further research with other special needs children could address this question. The implications for teaching such children could be the same or very different from the findings of this study.

A longitudinal study of these seven children would answer the questions of how they will continue to demonstrate their understandings about literacy. What levels of literacy attainment would they achieve? For them, is becoming literate a life long learning process, just as it is for others? Does this have instructional implications for special needs children and adolescents as they move through the school system and into post-secondary education?

Epilogue: Personal Reflections

I had no idea of how influential assumptions about special education instruction make an impact the children's literacy instruction programmes. Again and again I kept coming up against all the assumptions that Skrtic (1991) so eloquently outlined. The children were still viewed as having pathological conditions whose differential diagnosis required special education services via teacher assistant supports and structured, sequenced instructional

practices in order to achieve progress (Lipsky and Gartner, 1996; Skrtic, 1991). Listening to the focused interviews, I was struck by how much the educators' beliefs and values about literacy for special needs children were reflected in their classrooms. Their assumptions and pedagogical practices were obvious in the choices they made for these children's literacy. The teaching of literacy has become politically charged within the school system. Educators seem to be in search of the "right way" to teach literacy in their classrooms. I was disturbed by the idea that the right way to teach special needs children is to reduce the teaching of literacy to bits and pieces, that are then presented in a linear fashion. Each bit had to be mastered before moving on. This type of teaching flies in the face of what is known about literacy learning and teaching. This was embodied in Daniel's programme but to some extent this view of literacy and language was present in Jennie's, Megan's, Tommy's, David's, and Chelsea's literacy programmes as well. The idea of learned technological bits, whether words or sounds, was heralded as progress. This was the essential difference in Kristy's programme which was strategy based. Here the strategies of language and literacy learning were emphasized (Clay, 1991).

I now believe even more firmly that children's literacy occurs first in their homes and the community, then in classrooms, whether the children are special needs or not. All literacy learning can be understood as taking place within social practices in which the relation between the literacy and its meaning is constantly problematic (Walkerdine, 1988). This researcher is "... concerned with 'the social' and its relation to the production in children of language and reasoning..." (p.1). She set out to demonstrate ways to approach the social production of language and thinking using mathematics as examples. I wanted to demonstrate

in this work that the number of words acquired are not indices of children's competence. The amount of vocabulary or phonics recognized are not the primary index of reading development, as it has been assumed for many special needs children. Repeated emphasis on these oppresses children by demanding that they devote themselves to excelling at this in their classrooms. This divorces the context of meaning out of reading. Does reading take place in particular contexts? I think it does. It is intertwined with language learning and it is a continuous process. Even though children differ in the ways they construct speech and what they use speech for, the learning context in which the child lives enters into the structure and style, as well as the actual language and literacy of what, they will learn. In Chapter Four I tried to describe these contexts through the descriptions of the children's homes and schools, then went on to illustrating the literacy I found present in these environments.

In addition, descriptions of literacy learning that are acutely focused on whether, or when, a child has achieved possession of particular linguistic or grammatical structures, fail to attend to the emotional significance of the literacy under consideration. That is why common first writings are those that have emotional significance to the child, such as their name or the letters in their name. In this study in Chapter Four and Five, I saw these special needs children illustrating this. This marks the child's beginning control over the literacy system. All the children in this study indicated emotional significance in their first literacy attempts. Their first writings at home, and those I was able to find from school, illustrate how much they wanted to demonstrate their writing or reading skills on topics that were emotionally significant to them. I remember Jennie's long story using the letters from her name (see figure 5-40 (a)) or Kristy's note (see figure 5-42). Jennie's story and Kristy's note

had tremendous emotional significance for them. The fact that all the parents saved so much of their children's written artifacts illustrates the emotional impact they felt the writing had for them as parents, but think of the emotional impact this must have had for the children to see their parents value their writing. I can only speculate as to the reinforcing influence this had on their children encouraging them to continue to write.

Many of the teachers, principals and staff I spoke with were not in agreement as to what inclusion meant in practice. It was still a special education placement. This was a reminder of how value-laden and politically sensitive the education of special needs children has become in our schools. I had assumed that all those who had included a special needs child did understand that the process was different, that it was not just a placement, that it was not just "good integration." As a result of this study, the meaning of inclusion has been clarified for me. It is about neither the amount of time spent in a given location, nor the amount of resources brought to the particular situation. An inclusive classroom is where every child has the opportunity to learn, and the benefits of a variety of different teaching approaches, locations and supports. The case study of children's "needs" often became an inviolable category that was treated as self-evident, rather than as informed by and reflecting, the socio-political pre-occupations of particular schooling practices. I think that Chelsea's principal, in particular, was struggling with this because she recognized that the identification of Chelsea's needs was more than a matter of resources, rather than flowing from any pathology intrinsic to the child. Kristy's principal certainly saw this and perhaps Megan's principal as well. I would hazard a guess that the other principals and teachers did not see

this. I learned that the whole issue of inclusion is much more complicated than I first thought.

I agree with Ferguson (1995), who came to much the same conclusions:

Neither special nor general education alone had the capacity or the vision to challenge and change the deep-rooted assumptions that separate and track children and youths according to presumptions about ability, achievement, and eventual social contribution. Meaningful change will require nothing less than a joint effort to reinvent schools to be more accommodating to all dimensions of human diversity. It will also require that the purposes and processes of these reinvented schools be organized not so much to make sure that students learn and develop on the basis of their own abilities and talents, but rather to make sure that all children are prepared to participate in the benefits of their communities so that others in that community care enough about what happens to them to value them as members (p.285).

I was confident that the children would have some knowledge and understanding of print, but I had assumed that because their expressive oral language was different, their reading and writing would indicate only minimal characteristics of non-special needs children. I had not expected so many similarities. Why was this? Have educators, like myself, set up a false dichotomy for viewing special needs children? This led me to question the whole premise I used when describing the children as having special needs. The term special needs still implies some type of developmental deficit (Walkerdine, 1993; Ferguson, 1995), something which is not there which requires addressing by the educational establishment at particular times. I realized that the attitudes about special education are deeply structured, and that they are what make mainstream education 'mainstream.' Mainstream education, or regular education, is 'normal' education precisely because it is bounded by those designated as 'abnormal' or, in this case requiring special needs, not merely supplemental schooling. Walkerdine (1993) argues "...that 'development' as an object is not coterminous with the understanding of change, growth, transformation, etc. No new model of development will help us to rethink these underlying issues..." (p.455). Walkerdine (1993) disagrees with

Morss (1992), who feels new terminology can be used to describe developmental changes.

Walkerdine (1993) instead argues:

I am not proposing a shoring up of modernity by tacking difference onto a developmental model. I think that ship is holed below the water-line. It is sinking and cannot be saved. No, the way forward is far more challenging. It is to account for the production of subjectivity within historically and geographically specific practices, with no clear developmental sequence at all... (p.461).

Modern schooling, and its off shoot of special education, is explicitly concerned with the comparison, regulation and control of groups. This socio-historical perspective is closely identified with the tools of mental measurement, classification of abilities, and the establishment of norms. It is the normalization of literacy development that makes the abnormal possible and has provided a lucrative career for me and others for many years. As a former reading clinician, I tested and catalogued children who were considered abnormal readers according to the standardized tests results. My documentation provided the empirical evidence for them to enter special education. I never questioned this state of affairs, accepting fully the consequences of my actions as I thought this was the way to provide the necessary education for children who were considered abnormal or atypical learners.

This study has resulted in dissonance for me, a questioning of assumptions about developmental processes and development as a process. Are these children abnormal learners or just different learners? I descriptively compared the children in this study to non-special needs children with the same documented features and, in doing so, was adhering to a developmental process that views children from a normal to abnormal sequence according to their chronological age. Categorization into age or grade intervals for developmental tasks begs the question: how much do these actually have to do with age? To what extent are these descriptions derived from culturally specific practices? This question kept resurfacing

for me because I was surprised at the extent to which the families had fostered the children's early experiences with literacy at home and how rich a literate environment each family had provided for their child. These parents did not view their children as different the way the educators including myself, had. The parents responded to their children as capable learners, not as different learners. The School Boards responded to the children as different learners with a pathology that would interfere with them becoming capable learners. When you read the history of teaching "special children" dating back to the 1960s (Conners, 1992) you see little change from the idea that these children do not arrive equipped with, or having a predisposition towards, acquiring sophisticated skills. These children are often simplistically treated as incompetent and presumed to know very little. I certainly felt this was what the parents of the children in this study had encountered when they tried to enter their children into the community schools.

In this study I wanted to describe a number of children's literacy learning in particular contexts. The debates about inclusive education and literacy teaching ultimately led to reflection on the dilemma of difference. Lipsky & Gartner (1996), whose definition of inclusion I used in this study, argue that the legislative requirements that ensure supports for children actually promote separateness. These authors view special education as "...a matter of social justice and equity, and see inclusion as a way of both restructuring education and remaking American society" (Lipsky & Gartner, 1996, p.762). As these authors point out the issue goes beyond their own country. Placing the issue within a broader international framework of social policy, they quote from *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for*

Action on Special Needs Education: World Conference on Special Needs Education: Action and Equality, (1994):

Inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights. Within the field of education, this is reflected in the development of strategies that seek to bring about a genuine equalization of opportunity. Experience in many countries demonstrates that the integration of children and youth with special educational needs is best achieved within inclusive schools that serve all children within a community. It is within this context that those with special educational needs can achieve the fullest educational progress and social integration.(p.11).

I have grown critical about the way I have, up to now, understood developmental changes. I tried to highlight the accomplishments and transformations I observed in the children's literacy. My intent was to illustrate the commonalities in their literacy while acknowledging diversity among the children. However, as long as difference is viewed from the perspective of abnormality, children at the margins will be cast in that light regardless of their accomplishments. As I reflect back to the basis of comparison I used for the children, I acknowledge I described them in relation to others who have been documented at comparable stages. These stages are often related to chronological ages of non-special needs children which I avoided using in this study. Now, more than ever, I am uneasy with the notion that mental age underlying the IQ tests is considered analogous to chronological age, that ability can be distributed as quantifiable and at equal intervals on a quasi-physical scale. What is the normal child, the ideal type? Is not the normal child a fantasy ideal type distilled from the comparative scores of countless age-graded populations? There is no real child at its basis but rather a mythical, abstracted child produced through the apparatus of testing. That being the case, neither is there an abnormal child. Burman (1994), like Walkerdine (1988), discusses "fantasies" in developmental research by exploring its origins in relation to the social

movements, explaining how such activities set the terms of developmental inquiry. What struck a cord with me was Burman's reference to standardized testing:

[W]hat is perhaps different about standardized testing is that the moral evaluation that underlies the description is rendered invisible and incontrovertible through the apparent impartiality of statistical norms and administration through the power of the institutions that can enforce statistical description as moral-political prescription. There is a central ambivalence here about the relation between the natural and the nurtured that mirrors the tension between scientific objectivity and social application structuring psychological research: it seems that the natural course of development has to be carefully monitored, supported and even corrected in order to emerge appropriately. That which is designated as natural or spontaneously arising is in fact constructed or even forced. (Burman, 1994, p. 19).

This shed light on why the parents in this study did not want to have their children tested and, perhaps, why they permitted me to work with them. What I tried not to leave out of this research was what Burman (1994) called "the chaos and complexity (including the emotional chaos) of the research process." (P.18). Some of this chaos is reflected in the questions that kept surfacing for me about these children, such as: are these really children at the abnormal margins or has adherence to a developmental framework placed them there? Should the descriptions of the children here be viewed from outside a developmental framework? Can such a view be articulated?

Perhaps I should have asked this far more interesting research question: how did the children in this study come to understand the myriad of literacy symbols which surrounded them, so that they began to have conventional meaning for them? By posing the question in this way I could have avoided dichotomizing cognition and social context as separate phenomena. Would it have been possible to describe their literacy in terms of, and in relation to, a system of signs, which by definition are social? I am challenged now to explore formal and informal ways in which teachers and parents can support and describe any child's

literacy, so that no child's literacy at home or at school is marginalised. This study has led me to agree even more strongly with the view of Traux & Kretschmer (1993) that:

[C]hildren with special needs may vary from their age peers, making connections in their own time and in their own ways; but the steps in the learning process become points to value and study, rather than steps to be ignored.(p.593).

It is unfortunate that, because of their language communication difficulties, I was not able to discuss the results of this study in any meaningful way with the children who were the essence of the research. Throughout the study I was able to discuss the findings with the parents, teachers and administrators. What did the children make of the process, the visits? Did it change anything for them?

Postscript: Where Are They Now?

All the case study children remain in inclusive settings. Jennie graduated from Riverbend P.S. Grade 5 and, like Kristy, who graduated from Lanceville P.S., continued on to junior high for grade 6, with some teacher assistant support. They are just completing grade 7. David is still in his same neighbourhood school, Barton P.S., in a regular grade four in a three/four split grade but he has a new teacher assistant and is following the Reading Mastery Program. This was the same structured literacy programme used in Daniel's class. Daniel has moved to a new school, Sir Smith P.S., where he is in a regular grade four in a three/four split with teacher assistant support. According to his mother, his language arts programme is an adaptation of the regular grade four program. Megan is completing her grade 6 in the same community school, St. Bartholomew, with the same teacher assistant support. She is looking forward to attending grade 7 at her neighbourhood junior high in the

fall of 1998, but there was no word as yet with respect, to her acceptance there. Tommy is still in the same school, St. Peters, but he has a new teacher assistant. Like Megan, Tommy is looking forward to attending a grade 7 junior high in the fall of 1998. His mother is not certain whether he will be permitted to attend his neighbourhood junior high school. Chelsea is in her same community school, Hillside P.S., but at the time of writing, her exact situation is not known. What is known, is that these children's stories continue.....

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APPENDIX 1: TABLES TO ACCOMPANY CHAPTER 3

TABLE A: Clay's (1993) Observation Survey Tasks: Summary of Adaptations

Observation Survey Tasks	Adaptations
Running Records	embedded into classroom routine reading, transcribed, analysed with expanded numerical scores became Task 4
Letter Identification	2 person Tic Tac Toe Game became Tasks 6 (a), 6 (b), & 6 (c).
Word Tests	2 person Tic Tac Toe Game became Task 7
Concepts About Print	audiotape transcribed & analysed descriptively became Task 8
Writing Vocabulary	Race Game became Task 9
Dictation Task	descriptively analysed became Task 10

TABLE B: Harste et al. (1984) Literacy Activities: Summary of Adaptations

Task No	Literacy Tasks: At School	Adaptations
1	Environmental Print Phase 1 product Phase 2 photocopy of product Phase 3 print	2 sets of items prepared three 2-person cooperative games of identification became Task 1
2	Language Experience Story	self-chosen topic embedded in classroom journal writing & reading journal reread next day combined with Task 5: Phase 3 became Task 2
3	Uninterrupted Writing and Drawing	adapted language to directions became Task 3
4	Reading a Book	embedded in classroom routine as story reading occurred, 3-4 stories read, running records used to analyze became Task 4
5	Phase 1: Receiving and Reading a letter	parent writes letter to child and researcher takes to school for child to read, became Task 5

5	Phase 2: Writing and Reading a Letter	child writes a letter to parent in reply to letter received at school, became Task 5
5	Phase 3: Writing and Reading a Story	embedded in classroom journal writing & became Task 2
Task No.	Literacy Tasks: At Home	Adaptations
4	Reading A Book	mother and child or child alone, read a book together and audiotape activity, optional item: became Task 4 (at home)
5	Phase 1 : Receiving and Reading a letter	researcher elicits from parent a letter for the child to read at school, researcher writes and sends home a letter to child for parent and child to read became Task 5 (at home)
5	Phase 2: Writing and Reading a letter	parent and child write a letter to researcher, optional item: became Task 5 (at home)

TABLE C: Summary of Phase One Activities

Phase One	Activity	Participants	Data Source
at school	meet with school personnel to share goals of the study	researcher, principal, classroom teacher, teacher assistant, other significant teaching personnel	field observation notes
at school	send & obtain all consent forms	classroom teacher, teacher assistant, principal, parent/guardians of classroom students, classroom students, case study child, parent/guardians of case study child, other significant teaching personnel ie. resource and/or student teachers, occasional teachers or teaching assistants	completed consent forms & filed note observations
at school	set up focused interview schedule & give each participant topics to preview	classroom teacher, teacher assistant, principal, other significant teaching personnel	field note observations
at school	one week of field observation with videotape monitor set up for sensitizing class to camcorder	classroom students, classroom teacher, teacher assistant, case study child	classroom field note observations & classroom video footage

Phase One	Activity	Participants	Data Source
at school	collaborate with school personnel to begin portfolio of case study child's past & present written products	researcher, classroom teacher, teacher assistant	classroom field notes & photocopies of case study child's written classroom work
at school	review Ontario School Record (OSR) file	researcher	field notes describing OSR files
at school	complete all focused interviews	classroom teacher, teacher assistant, principal, other significant teaching personnel, researcher	audiotapes of interviews transcripts of audiotapes
at school	negotiate future times of videotaping	classroom teacher, teacher assistant	field note observations
at school	videotape Literacy Task 2: Language Experience Story (from journal)& take a Running Record while doing Literacy Task 4: Reading a Book	teaching assistant, case study child, classroom teacher	field note observations videotapes written products from activities running records (RR) of texts audiotape of RR photocopy of text
at school	telephone & set up home visit	researcher, parent	field notes
at home	audiotape first parent focused interview during home visit	researcher, parent	field note observations & audiotape of interview transcript of audiotape
at home	elicit parent's help in choosing items as prep to Literacy Task 1: Environmental Print Games	researcher, parent	field notes of environmental print items from parents
at home	ask parent to begin portfolio of child's past & present writings	researcher, parent	field note observations & writing artifacts of child's work
at home	set up next home visit for second focused interview & give parent topics to preview	researcher, parent	field notes

TABLE D: Summary of Phase Two Activities

Phase Two	Activity	Participant	Data Source
at school	classroom videotaping sessions of Literacy Task 3: Uninterrupted Writing and Drawing	classroom students, classroom teacher, teacher assistant, case study child	field note observations & videotapes
at school	teach teaching assistant how to play Tic Tac Toe Games	teacher assistant, researcher	field note observations
at school	classroom videotaping & audiotape of case study child reading second familiar book for Task 4: Reading a Book and taking a Running Record	case study child, teacher assistant, classroom teacher, classroom students, researcher	field note observations audiotapes RR of text photocopy of text
at school	videotape Task 6: Tic Tac Toe Game 1 -Letter Identification on Letter Recognition (upper & lowercase)	case study child, 1 classroom student, teacher assistant, researcher	field note observations videotape
at school	videotape Task 6: Tic Tac Toe Game 2- Sound Identification, on Identification of Letter; Tic Tac Toe Game 3 - Word for Initial Letter	case study child, 1 classroom student, teacher assistant, researcher	field note observations videotape
at school	collaborate with school personnel on appropriate writing samples to photocopy	researcher, teacher assistant, classroom teacher	field note observations photocopied writing samples
at school	videotape Task 7: Tic Tac Toe Game 4 - Sight Word Identification	case study child, 1 classroom student, teacher assistant, researcher	field note observations videotape written product from activity
at home	audiotape second focused interview with parent	parent, researcher	field notes audiotape & transcript
at home	begin collecting writing samples	parent, researcher	field notes photocopies of writing samples

TABLE E: Summary of Phase Three Activities

Phase Three	Activity	Participants	Data Source
at school	classroom videotaping & audiotape of case study child doing Task 4: Reading a Book for a third Running Record	classroom students, classroom teacher, teacher assistant, case study child, researcher	field note observations videotape audiotape RR of text photocopy of text
at school	videotape Literacy Task 1: Environmental Print Game 1 - products	case study child, 1 classroom student, researcher	field note observations videotape
at school	instruct teacher assistant how to do Task 8: Concepts About Print (CAP) & Task 10: Dictation	researcher, teacher assistant	field note observations
at school	videotape Task 8: Concepts About Print	case study child, teacher assistant	field note observations videotape
at school	videotape Task 10: Dictation	case study child, teacher assistant	field note observations videotape written product from dictation
at school	videotape Task 9: The 10 Minute Race Game - Writing Vocabulary	case study child, 1 classroom student, teacher assistant	field note observations videotape written product from writing game
at school	videotape Literacy Task 1: Environmental Print Game 2 - Photocopy of Products & Game 3- Print	case study child, 1 classroom student, researcher	field note observations videotape
at home	collect writing samples	researcher, parent	field note observations photocopies of written samples
at home	collaborate on letter from parent to child as preparation for Literacy Task 5: Phase 1 - Receiving & Reading a Letter	researcher, parent	field note observations letter from parent
at home	explain Literacy Task 4: Reading a Book at home and leave audiotape	researcher, parent	field note observations audiotape

TABLE F: Summary of Phase Four Activities

Phase Four	Activity	Participants	Data Source
at school	videotape Literacy Task 5: Receiving and Reading a Letter	case study child, researcher, and/or teacher assistant	field note observations videotape parent's letter
at school	videotape Literacy Task 5: Writing and Reading a Letter	case study child, teacher assistant	field note observations videotape child's letter
at school	classroom videotaping & audio tape of case study child doing Task 4 : Reading a Book for a fourth Running Record	classroom students, classroom teacher, teacher assistant, case study child, researcher	field note observations videotape audiotape RR of text photocopy of text
at school	prepare thank you letters for students and parents of participating classrooms and get approval from principal (case study child gets letter as Task 5: Receiving & Reading a Letter at home)	researcher, principal	field notes draft of letters
at school	prepare official thank you letters for all participants (classroom teachers, teaching assistants, principal, significant other teaching personnel, all school office staff) cc. to individuals' supervisors	researcher	letters
at school	personal delivery of all thank you letters to all participants to bring closure	researcher, classroom teachers, teacher assistants, principals, school office staff, significant other teaching personnel	field notes
at home	complete collection of writing samples & arrange time to return	researcher, parent	field note observations photocopies of writing samples
at home	pick up audiotape of Literacy Task 4: Reading a Book - optional item	researcher	audiotape
at home	leave thank you letter to case study child (optional for parent & child to respond as Task 5: Writing & Reading a Letter)	researcher, parent	field notes letter from researcher
at home	leave contact address & phone no. plus time line for completion of study	researcher, parent	field notes

APPENDIX 2: ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Additional Summary Details on Task 8: Concepts About Print

Book handling

Note under Book Handling in Table 5.3 that only Kristy, of all the children, could consistently tell me that when reading one always starts from the left page proceeds to the right. Was this because her language was more mature than the other children? Was this due to the other children's lack of specific experience with this concept? All the children were read to a lot, both at home and at school, so one would think that they would have picked up this concept on their own - but perhaps not. Kristy was the most advanced literacy user of all the children. But watching her resource room teacher during the time she was in this project convinced me that she might have been the cause of Kristy's advanced knowledge. When reading with Kristy or when Kristy read to her, she regularly, as a matter of course, asked her: "Where do we start?" Was this cuing on a regular basis enough to have made Kristy aware of this concept? I did not observe the other teaching assistants, who were the other children's main teachers, doing this consistently.

Directional Indicators

Directional indicators was the next area examined in Table 5.3. All the children could tell me where to start reading by pointing to the top left of the text they had chosen. They could all move their finger along from left to right to indicate which way to go. They could all move their finger indicating the return sweep to the left. This meant that they could move their finger from the right-hand end of the higher line to the left hand end of the next line, or move their finger down the page appropriately. When it came to indicating specifically the concept of first and last, David and Kristy had this concept within their grasp. Megan and Chelsea could tell me the first line of the text, but not the last, while Jennie could tell me the last line only but not the first. Was this result because David and Kristy had developed this concept in their oral language and the others were still working on this concept? Megan, Chelsea and Jennie often mixed up these concepts in class and had to be reminded of them. Tommy gave me every indication that he knew where the first part of a story was as well as the last but, like Daniel had severe expressive language delays compared to any of the other children. Both these boys were able to show me clearly while reading text that these concepts were emerging. They found it very difficult to demonstrate this kind of specific knowledge verbally on demand. I found it fascinating that only Jennie and Daniel were able to indicate that the line order had been altered. This perhaps was because they were really attentive that day. This could be reflective of their receptive language ability combined with their observational skills.

Visual Scanning, Analysis and Following

In the areas of visual scanning, analysis and following indicators in Table 5.3, note that only Kristy was successful at all of these specific tasks. Jennie, Daniel, and Megan were able to point directly to the words 'was' and 'no,' perhaps because these were words firmly in their sight vocabularies. David could find the word 'was' which he too had in his sight vocabulary, but not the word 'no,' which he tended to mix up with 'on' when writing. Chelsea and Tommy could not point out these words at all, but I believe for different reasons. The words were not firmly in Chelsea's sight vocabulary as yet. Tommy used these vocabulary words correctly in other contexts, but could not transfer this knowledge to a new situation. I believe that the lack of success in the other skills are an indication of where the children are as emergent writers. Kristy was clearly way ahead of them all, as her achievement on all the tasks has already indicated. This could be a reflection of the children's oral language as well.

Specific Concepts About Printed Language

The indicators surrounding specific concepts about printed language in Table 5.3 were very interesting as they were often reflected in the children's writing as well. All of them were aware of the period as all of them used it appropriately most of the time in their writing. Daniel, David, Megan and Tommy were able to indicate that the '?' asks a question. Of these three, it was only in Tommy's writing, that I ever saw a question mark used. Daniel, David and Megan all would read a sentence with a question mark using the correct intonation. Daniel

certainly asked questions in his oral speech, as did Megan when asking permission. In fact, Megan's teacher had worked on question asking a lot during the year. Megan took part in class discussions following a student's book report through asking written questions which her teacher and teacher assistant gave her prior to the oral book report presentation. She knew that asking a question was important. This activity modelled what the other grade four children were doing at the same time. Her teachers hoped that eventually she would be able to expand her questioning on her own as her verbal language expressive skills improved.

David rarely used questions in his writing. When he was asked to use a question orally he had to be prompted very much like Tommy. Kristy often used a question mark in her writing but could not, in this context, tell me what it meant. However, she could read the sentence with the correct intonation, so on some level she knew what it meant. She could even ask a question if requested to do so. Was there a specific language or vocabulary demand which held her back on this task? Jennie had the ability to use correctly a question when she was reading but could not be specific about what the punctuation mark did. It was hard for her to ask a question on demand even for permission. Was this concept in her oral reading still to transfer to her oral speech? Was this true for the others? Did they sometimes learn a concept only in one context?

The query about the use of the comma elicited some interesting responses. David and Tommy both said "...comma" which was acceptable, so was "little rest" from Kristy. Megan said "a small c" meaning the letter c. Was she over discriminating? Jennie said she knew "...the whole got messed up," meaning it was not like a period? Daniel and Chelsea had no idea what the question mark meant. Not one of the children was able to tell me about quotations marks. David looked long and hard at them and said, "... questions". Megan said, "...comma, comma." The others all declined to answer or said, "don't know".

Locating specific letters, such as 'Tt', 'Bb' in Stones or 'Mm', 'Hh' in Sand was easy for David, Jennie, Daniel, and Kristy. Chelsea could find the 'Tt' in the Stones book but her troubles with identifying 'Bb' showed up again. Megan could find the lower case letters of 't' and 'b' only, while Tommy, who had opted for the Sand book, only pointed out the 'm' before losing interest in this task.

The last task was to locate the only capital letter on the page to see if the child understood the concept of capital. Megan pointed to the last word on the page while Tommy stared into space, obviously confused as to what was needed. Maybe Tommy did not know this concept in isolation. His writing usually began with capital letters. Megan sometimes used capitals at the beginning of her sentences but here she confused the language of capital and last. She appeared to know it meant sometime to do with a letter in the sentence. David pointed to an 's' which was not the capital letter. Remembering that David wrote always in capital letters I was not surprised that he was not aware of this concept because he never used it. All the others, Chelsea, Daniel, Kristy, and Jennie, easily identified the capital letter at the beginning of the sentence.

Hierarchical Concepts

The hierarchical concepts which include the identification of letters, letters within words, and words within sentences, allowed the children to show whether they clearly understood the difference between these concepts. All the children in Table 5.3 were able to demonstrate that they could do word by word matching by placing their finger on a word as it was read to them or reading it to themselves. This ability had been reinforced a lot in all their classes. However, the other concepts in this cluster were harder for the majority of the children. David was the only child who could locate with ease one letter or two letters when asked, but when asked to show me one word and then two words, David only indicated one word. Does this mean he is not certain what two words really means? He uses spaces between most of his words when he writes, I had observed.

Megan could get two letters but her visual scanning skills were not up to indicating both one letter and two letters. Her confusion became evident when she next indicated two letters again for two words. If you look back at her writing, Megan does not always use spaces between her words. Kristy clearly misunderstood what the question was. She answered, in a way, correctly. She first pointed out one letter. Then when she was asked to point out two letters she did so saying, "...there is the two letters." In so doing, she covered the first letter.

She did the task in sequence one letter at a time. She easily demonstrated one word and two words. She used spacing nearly all the time when she wrote, so on the practical level of using this knowledge, she did appear to know this concept. Jennie was able to show one letter, then two words, but not two letters. She successfully did the task of showing one word then two words. Does this mean she was still not certain about what is a letter as opposed to a word? She knew that letters make up words as seen by her dictation, where she attempted to write several letters in a word.

Kristy was the only child who was able to indicate that she understood the concept of first and last letters in a word. None of the other children could get this concept completely. Jennie pointed to an 'e' for the last letter, which it often is. Megan said, "last" while pointing to the 'h' in hill, and David pointed to the 's' for the last letter, showing he was not certain of these concepts. Tommy, Daniel, and Chelsea, clearly confused, refused to answer any more and lost interest in these last tasks.

Additional Examples of Miscues from Task 4: The Running Records

Samples of the children's syntactic miscues:

Megan: ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ was ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Text: Once upon a time, there were three billy goats who were called Gruff.
(from The Three Billy Goats Gruff)

Megan too used an incorrect form of the verb but perhaps she was using the more familiar pattern from her language.

Kristy knew that the spider was searching for a costume and got her tenses mixed up trying to express this. Her language too was interfering with the text. She gave every indication later that she had understood the story.

Kristy: ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ didn't try ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Text: No matter what costume I tried on, I still looked like me.
(from How the Spider Saved Halloween)

Chelsea seldom used contractions in her speech so it was not surprising that she missed one here.

Chelsea: Here ✓ ✓
Text: Here's the ball.
(from Play Ball!)

The substitution Tommy used here was more normal for the speech of the children in his class. The substitution of this preposition made sense if Tommy's language was taken into account and the speech patterns of his peers. This same kind of syntactic substitution was seen in Daniel's miscue as well.

Tommy: ✓ ✓ ✓ for. ✓ ✓ ✓
Text: The first day of school was over.
(from Arthur's Teacher Trouble)

Daniel: ✓ ✓ get ✓
Text: The clown got on,
(from Bicycle)

Daniel looked at the picture directly above this text and assumed he was looking at two pairs of feet walking. It made perfect sense to assume this. He was clearly using the picture as a semantic cue.

Daniel: ✓ walk.
Text: Feet hop.
(from Feet)

Samples of the children's self-correction miscues:

Jennie self-corrected here using semantic, syntax and visual/phonetics when she realized that she was not talking about her own dog, but the one in the story.

Jennie: My Sc ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Text: Our dog Sam likes to have a bath.
(from Our Dog Sam)

Here David used his predicting skills from previous text on another page to add the words 'with me,' which seemed logical to him. He realized his miscue when he looked back up this page to see that the pattern had changed on this page to self correct. Was this not effective self monitoring using semantic and syntactic cues?

David: ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ with me SC
Text: So who can stay ?
(from Who Will Be My Pet)

Megan realized after she had read the word 'Goat' that she needed to repeat and start this sentence again because she had left out the word 'Big,' which was important since this was the first time the big goat was mentioned. Up to now the text had referred to the little billy goats. This was self-correction as a result of monitoring and using the semantics of the text.

Megan: _SC ✓ ✓ R ✓ ✓ ✓
Text: Big Billy Goat will be next.
(from The Three Billy Goats Gruff)

Description of the Types of Responses Emerging from Task 1: Environmental Print Games

Functional

I took a functional response to be one where the child tried to describe the object by demonstrating what to do with the object. Sometimes they were able to describe verbally what to do with the object but could not read the print on the object. The children were able to make it very clear through their actions that they had a very good idea about the function of the object. For example Jennie said, "newspaper...because someone reads it," then she demonstrated reading the newspaper and said, "My dad and Mum and me, I know what to do every time and read." She was using representational language to describe an action. David pointed to the words and said, "I don't know," clearly implying that he could not read those words but showing me what to do with the newspaper as he ran his fingers along the print. I felt he was using a form of directive language to convey his functional message. Daniel pointed to the 'Z' in "Citizen" and said, "newspaper, ..read" then did pretend reading of the paper. He then went on to say, "put in box..blue, put it there when finished." He pretended to put it in a recycling blue box. Daniel was demonstrating his functional knowledge of the newspaper and using representative language to elaborate his actions.

Categorical

A categorical response occurred when the child identified the object as belonging to a particular class or category of items by assigning it a label. At other times the child associated the object with something else in his/her

categorical response. For example, Chelsea said "bubble gum," when looking at the Trident gum package, which was an example of representative labelling language. Tommy said, "MacDonalds, French fries," when presented with the large red MacDonalds' French Fries box. Here Tommy is using representative language, associating the box to a food he liked. Daniel said, "gum, ...chew the gum,..eat it" when shown the Trident gum package, illustrating a good representative language choice and some simple detailing language to describe the process.

Graphic

A graphic response occurred when the child pointed to the print, logo, colour, picture or spelled the letters. The children would not necessarily be able to read the printed label correctly, but they were clearly using the graphics on the objects in their attempt to read it. Jennie did this when she pointed to the word 'Citizen' and sounded, "...c...cit..." The fact that she was pointing to the first letter and syllable of the word was important here, as it signalled that she knew the print carried a message. She was using directive language for herself as she tried to decode the word 'Citizen.' When David spelled out, 'd-i-e-t coke,' he was interacting with the print in a significant way. He was indicating to me that he could decode the letters of the first word and say the second word, 'coke,' for this item. He used this directive language strategy more than once when he saw the Eaton's shopping bag. He spelled, 'E-a-t-on.' Then he said, "eat-on, buy at the store, eat-on-s," showing me he could use syllables or words to decode. He saw the 'eat' the 'on' and the 's' all as separate units, but at the same time he had some idea of using this representative associating language to tell where the object came from.

Specific

The specific named response took place when the child could correctly respond to the printed text on the object and, in some cases, go on to read any supporting text. I was very generous in giving the child credit if they could correctly read any aspect of the print on the objects. For example, Kristy said, "salt and vinegar, Hostess on package... are chips,... I like chips. You eat them at after supper." She was able to read all the printed text on the package and, using representational language, to label the contents and narrate when she was allowed to eat them at her house. She used personal language to express how she felt about them. In another example, Megan said, "apple juice, you drink it," pointed to the words and went on to say, "you buy it." The print she pointed to said, 'Allan's apple juice.' She chose to ignore Allan's and read only "apple juice," but I gave her credit for reading the print. Jennie said, "cheerios," then pointed to the print and went on to say "honey nut". She did not stop there, but went on to describe how "...my mum made it ..she shake in bowl." She was using representative language to describe the actions of her mother, as she demonstrated by shaking the box over a pretend bowl.

APPENDIX 3: **ENDNOTES**

1. The topics were adapted from Durkin, D. (1966). Children Who Read Early: Two Longitudinal Studies. New York, NY: Teachers College Press and Dyson, A.H. (1981). A Case Study Examination of the Role of Oral Language in the Writing Process of Kindergartners. Doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas, Austin.

2. Excerpt from: parent interview 19/04/95

Kate....right away, I'd known there was such a thing as the infant styme program, I'd known that....she was probably stimulated more than normal children....whenever she made a sound...because I had taken the Hanen (program) when she was just a few weeks or months old I knew what to expect so I was right on top of her! So when she made sounds we modeled back right away, so it was early, early,...I'm talking about a few months old, modeling that sort of thing!...I would read a story book just so that she could hear my voice...lots of tapes with music, we used that...and our own stack of books, we have lots , lots , and lots of books...

3. Excerpt from parent interview 19/04/95 p.6

Dean- ...Do you or your husband read for pleasure?

Kate- A lot, yes....well I read the paper ...I usually take about 40 minutes a day sometimes longer it depends on what's in the paper to read....and I like to read for enjoyment. I try to read every night before I go to sleep...She'd see me in the morning reading the newspaper...

4. Excerpt from: parent interview 19/04/95 #2 home visit

Kate.....yes I mean you saw the principal first...

5. Excerpt from: teacher interview 28/03/95 p.5

Steve..... Yes, they need as much modeling or more modeling actually than the other kids do and it has to be done somewhat differently because of their ability to comprehend vocabulary and what not. Yes, it (language) still has to be modeled, it has to be given to them and have them given the opportunities even more than the other kids and that's where somebody like Christine comes in because Jennie wouldn't be able to answer many questions or be involved a lot in a discussion of what the other children are working on, but she can sit through that discussion and listen and hear and get some input. Then Christine can come back with her and ask questions and have Jennie give answers. She probably has more opportunity to speak and use language than any other kid in the class simply because she had somebody there to talk to and to model that speech pattern all day long whereas the other kids - we sort of say, you can't speak unless you put your hand up and I ask you a question.....she probably has a wide advantage over the other kids.

6. Excerpt from principal interview 10/03/95 p.2

Leah... an eclectic approach to reading is something that is absolutely necessary because not all children do learn to read the same way and it (the eclectic approach) certainly provides the variety that would not be there if you did focus and concentrate on one single method or way of going about it....

7. Excerpt from principal interview 10/03/95 p.3

Leah...with the integration of special needs children again there has to be a very conscious knowledge or very conscious process followed on the part of the teacher so that the children do pay attention or ..notice in a concentrated focused way....keep them with their peer group....their peer group is going to rapidly make progress and pull ahead in abilities of being able to read novels, being able to comprehend or answers questions or deal with language in a way far beyond the child with special. That isn't to say that the special needs child can't participate or can't be a part of the classroom ...if there is a lesson on fruits and vegetables and nutrition and so on, while the

children at grades 4 or 5 level - 9, 10 year olds - could learn about calories and fats and grams and the scientific and the mathematical terminology, the teacher should still include Jennie into the group by saying something like ...what fruit did you have for breakfast Jennie? or something she can answer in a positive that is tied into the lesson but may not have the sophistication of the questions that are being asked of the other children.

8.Excerpt from: # 2 parent interview 15/02/96

Joan....I can't remember what they did tell us. We have read a lot since - ...They basically told us it was possible that it (fragile X) was one of the causes of autism so they didn't give us anything different - it was just the hospital basically considered that (fragile X) the explanation for David being autistic...That's the medical reason so far...they didn't try to explain how David was different because it was fragile X instead of (just) autism but they said the fragile X explained the autism, by then it had been called autistic tendencies...

9.Excerpt from: # 2 parent interview 15/02/96

Joan.....they realized I was in the slump of a depression after David's assessment and that's what started me back getting out of it realizing there were people and there have always been people along the way that have helped in one way or another.

10.Excerpt from principal interview 8/12/95

Emily...I guess I believe that children learn to read in a wide variety of ways, that they need to have many different kinds of experiences to put their feelings of reading together. I've always had a strong belief in phonics.... I appreciate the whole language method and I think that method adds a lot to sort of the whole reading structure , but I feel that phonics is very very important that in order for the children to get a good grounding in reading and have something to fall back on, they need to have a basic phonic background. In our school, we have four Grade 1 - Grade 1-2 teachers who I would say are all teaching reading in a variety of ways, some more structured than others and some using different methods and I think that's okay because I think that each teacher who teaches reading tailors it not only to the way they learn but also to the group of children that they have in their room... I think teachers and principals I guess have to look at the different children's learning styles and adapt the method of teaching reading to the different learning styles that the children have.

Dean- Where does writing fit into all of this?

E- Well I guess I always believe you learn to read from reading and to write from writing and that would be my basic philosophy of teaching children to write would be to get them to write. They start in their journals by drawing pictures which they think are writing, putting down scribbles which they think are writing, doing modified spelling which they think are starting at and just the more writing they do the better they are going to get at it and gradually over time with help and instruction, the writing will be developed and I would think it would be exactly the same way with children with special needs. Again, I don't know because I don't have that experience to draw on..... but I would think you would take the same approach. I think providing them with a variety of different methods of teaching reading would be beneficial to them. You may find with someone who is developmentally delayed that there is one way that they can learn better than another and so I think it would be good to find out what is that special way andthen concentrate on that adding the others as you need to do.....I think developing language, you need a wide variety of language experiences going on - very rich environment so that talking is good. I would compare that to in the 60s where the ideal classroom was if you could hear a pin drop then that was the perfect class so there was very little language going on in that instance. Whereas now our classrooms are all noisy and talking and that is going on all the time.

D - What about for developmentally disabled kids?

E- Well I would say to guess the same thing is they learn to communicate to talk by talking. Even though I am not in direct contact with one of our special children, I can see the growth that he has made over the year and a half that I have been here and I feel it's because many people speak to him, not only his teacher or his assistant, but the teachers in the hall and I'll hear a teacher saying oh, this child said hello to me today or I asked this child a question and this child - so the whole school, for these children, the whole school actually has taken them under their wing. The whole school tries to help them not just the teacher and we can do that in language. We can't really do that in reading like we can't ... In language that you see them in the hallway, see them out in the playground,

you can talk to them and I hear sometimes people saying things like would you like to say that again and look at me when you are saying it so there is more to the language than just the speaking, the social component is in there. So they are trying to teach them the social skills as well and I think that's interesting when people do that.

11.Excerpt from parent interview 13/12/95

Barbara..... shortly after 2, because he was having seizures at 16 months and because he was on phenobarb which has a lot of side-effects on children with language and cognitive skills, so I started to paying a lot of attention in that area in realizing that he wasn't going at the rate he should be at his age...he was checked by the Children's hospital at 3 so that's when he was diagnosed and labeled...I was instrumental in this ...I was going back for a 3 month visit with the neurologist...I had to prompt and made another request for (assessment)....that I did get somebody saying, recognizing that there was something else here..

12.Excerpt from teacher interview 12/12/95 p.1 & 2

Evelyn...think there is a variety of ways children learn to read. Children learn from experience and from listening, they learn from watching others and mimicking others, they learn from being taught the sounds of the symbols that they are looking at. They learn by looking at pictures and telling stories and relating the words to the stories - there is a variety of ways children learn to read. I don't believe in total phonetics, I don't believe in total sight words, I think there has to be total mixture depending on the children and the child. Some children learn by sight, some children don't. So, in my philosophy with children, I try to incorporate all of them because I tend to think that they all have different needs and in many ways I let them look at the whole picture and then bring down to certain words and sometimes - I did a lot of incorporating with research and social studies and things like that are so the importance of that.

13.Excerpt from teacher interview 12/12/95 p.2

Evelyn....The one that I've started on this year in my classroom is the Reading Mastery Program for the lower ability child that needs a little more structure in phonetics and a little more structure in seeing the print word and a little more structure and we read together, we attack the words together. They learn by mimicking because I say the word first and then they say the word, they work in a group. It's a very teacher directed program. I am not convinced its going to be the be all and the end all. But I've heard so much about it working for so many of these children that I'm dealing with this year, we decided to try it with and they feel very happy in the program, I guess because they are feeling successful. It's easy, this is really easy so that's good, that's going to bring them into reading so I guess that is one instructional program that I would relate to the children experiencing difficulty in the language program.

14.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 8/02/96

..... Well, in Tom's case, something must have happened because he went in sitting able to sit, the babble, did all the baby things, mumbling and humming and all the rest of it. He went in sitting - came out a vegetable and that was it. Now you are talking 10 years ago procedures have changed and also follow-up tests have changed. At the time, they did not do a follow-up cat scan to see how the actual brain looked, whether ventricles were okay and stuff like that. Over the months, they said, oh you are a hysterical mom he's fine, he will get over drama. I said, no, no, no - finally they agreed to do a cat scan and they found out he has partial communicative hydrophiseplis. They will not admit to this being a direct relationship to the actual surgery outcome but this is very rare to have this condition and because it took so long to figure that out because you are talking months, damage was done and they said okay let's see if he will outgrow it. Well he didn't outgrow it and within a year they put in an LP shunt which is at the base of his spine. They said there were no blockages of fluid moving around his brain and around his spine, there was just too much fluid. Well, within 2 days he developed double inguinal hernia and they said ooh, we'll have to fix this but this means the shunt is working because it's draining all the fluid. So when they went in to fix his hernia, they found his shunt all rolled up in his scrotum 4 feet of this stuff. So anyway, they did 2 emergency surgeries - corrected the hernia, put in a new shunt and said, he's fine, take him home and of course, the damage was done because you are talking 2 months. Nothing (the hospital) moves quickly and of course, they did all the testing on him without considering the fact that this kid is suffering. At the time, they did not give kids enough pain medication

so they traumatized this kid. He would start crying from (home) until we left..... - And it didn't matter if it was an hour visit or 3 days. So medically speaking, Tom had a horrible time..... - And he crawled into a shell after the last surgery - he just shut the door....The last surgery would have been around the age of 2. - But he just slammed the door shut - locked everyone out and it took a good year and half to get him to open that door a little and sort of let the world back in. Now, I personally think Tommy suffered from traumatic infantile autism because of everything that had happened. There is no medical definitions or proof of that but.... - He had lost everything - he lost all his muscle tone - complete loss of muscle tone..... he could not walk until he was 2 literally. He didn't have a muscle - strength even to stand up.....

Migraines are going to be a part of Tom's medical pattern from now on and that has to do with the development of his cranial structures and the rest of it. He has lots of jaw problems because of the cranial deformity of..

15.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 8/02/96

Amy-.....Tom would never walk, he may never speak, he may never do anything ever. They said he is the way he is, take him home and let him do what you can.....They said, you know you can look at RespirCare on a regular care if you would like - you can look at a home if you want. It depends on the doctor. My caseworker was useless, I knew more about stuff going on than she did. I just remember her saying well there is this special needs at home program if you want and it's babysitting and here's the form and they told me this the same day they told me my child may never walk, never talk, never speak and you only absorb so much information.

16.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 8/02/96

Amy.....I talked to the school board...because I said I don't really think it is fair to Tom to just spring him on you. I said Tom does need extra support, he can cope but he needs support, so student services came to my home. They came to the nursery school to actually observe him there. They said at 5 leave him in nursery school until he is 6. At 6, we will take him because the numbers were better, the support was better, the program was better geared for Tommy's timeso I agreed with that..I was not in a hurry to push him so 5 came and went, 6 came and I said all right you guys, let's put him in school.

17.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 8/02/96

Amy-....and Laura Secord School took him. It was arranged by Mrs. Brown that Laura Secord School take him and they had the Assessment Class Program there and within months Mr. Moffett had made things right for Tommy and he was a happy child, he was learning, he trusted staff again. I mean he lost a lot of trust for adults - they let him do this and unfortunately the Assessment Class was moved that year so Tommy had to make many adjustments and he started at St. Peters in Grade 2 fully integrated but through the Assessment Class so...

R - Through the Assessment Class as a back-up?

A - So he would do Grade 2 work in the morning and the Assessment Class would keep him and do one on one and really focus on communication skills and that's where we built up on the computer.

18.Excerpt from teacher interview 14/12/95 p.1

Carla..... Basically, I think children learn to read by having stories read to them to start with and I think everything develops from there, both reading and writing and - I have a hard time knowing what to say about this but I think that the children learn to read by being given the opportunity to read and I don't think it matters much how they learn as long as they have the opportunity to try out different ways. For instance, I would prefer that a child have both a whole language program and a structured program and I would think you would have to then decide how you would adapt the program to suit the individual child. For instance, some children really don't need Fives because they are already reading and spelling and so on but if they are weak, I think they do need a very structured program.

.....Now as far as the writing, I think that follows the reading. I think if a child can really read and understand language then they can even begin to write. I think mostly they learn to write by being given the opportunity to write.....I don't think I need any particular program. I like picking and choosing and like the theme approach.....Well I still think children learn language by hearing it and having stories read to them. I think that is the best way of learning and I don't think it has to be always a school-related activity either. I tell the parents when they come in

that they should have their children reading from the newspaper, maybe it's the comics or read a recipe to them when they are cooking or basically whatever, read the sports news or read the TV guide - whatever they are interested in, take that and make it a reading experience without being a directed lesson kind of thing or a chore...I guess I keep going back to the fact that children just need to be immersed in language. I used to be the librarian here and I had all of the classes and I tried to spend a good deal of time on different types of literature so that they became acquainted with poetry as well as prose..... Some people think like in math you don't need to drill and drill that if they have understanding, but I don't quite agree with that because I think that they do need the drill because it's the only way they get so they can easily use things and I don't think it's all that different in reading and writing. For instance, I think just using any word will teach them to spell it but they have to use it more once, they have to use a number of times before they can spell it.

19.Excerpt from teacher interview 14/12/95

Carla-.....Well I really don't know a lot about that (special needs children) but from what I have seen Tommy is able to hear the story being read and he is able to get ideas from it because if you give him a sentence with a blank that relates to the story, he can fill in the blank but I really don't know how much he gets from the story and as far as creative writing goes, if you start a sentence and direct him towards an idea, he usually can finish the idea as long as it is a simple something like the weather or what he did or something he saw.....Well basically we are just trying to do our best and we are only proceeding by trial and error. What works and what doesn't work.

20.Excerpt from teacher interview 14/12/95

Carla....Well, we put on Tommy's desk some guides for instance, he has on his desk, I need help, so that if he needs help and he can't verbalize it at that particular time, he can point to that. He has Yes and No on his desk, so that if I say Did you have fun outside and he can't answer me, he can point to Yes and usually if he points to it, then he will answer or you might ask him, one of the questions is Do you have a headache? so questions like that are on his desk and that seems to help guide him and help his reading....

21.Excerpt from teacher assistant interview 15/12/95 p.3

Wendy-...The teacher is amazing, the kids are wonderful as well. If they see him doing something that is good for him they will come up and say Tommy I like the way you are doing this today. They have been given the positive reinforcement so they are able to turn around and use it with him. They fight over who is going to read with him, they fight who is going to play with him, who is going to help him write his stories so that not only is it giving him the social but it is also feeding into what we want him to do with the reading and writing.

22.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 7/02/96 p.4

Veronica-The reason I say that is that when she was 2, she went into Koragon, a segregated pre-school and one of the advantages that they did have, they taught them sign language and it was when she learned sign language and she could ask us for something - the first time I think it was cookie that she asked us for and we knew what she was talking about and the look on her face was there is a God, they know what I am saying.

Dean- Yes, she could communicate?

V - And then, it just came from there - her speech came after her sign language. She dropped sign language probably the next year.

D- So you were using it as a crutch really to get her over the hump?

V - You know once she could communicate, it seemed like her speech came in.

D- Did you and your husband learn sign language? Did you become quite proficient or just sort of basic?

V - sort of basic and her brother learned sign language.....

D- Yeah. Did you or your husband work with a speech therapist during those early years?

V- Yes,(the) pre-schools had their own therapists when they set them up they had speech therapists who came in and saw the students about twice a week. There was occupational therapists and physiotherapists.....

23.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 7/02/96 p.9

.Veronica.... And other thing that I remember is that John was in 4 year old kindergarten so I picked Megan up in PD day and I picked her up at school and she was still at Koragon School at this point, we went to Burger King.....for lunch and there was a young man busing the tables and he recognized Megan as having Down Syndrome - he came over and he was a graduate of Jewel and he was telling me all about Jewel and how he has this guy now that comes and visits with him once a week sort of I am not quite sure sort of a foster brother or a big brother and that he was now going to night school to learn how to read and write and that was right there where they lost me because I was thinking if he could learn to read and write when he was 21 or 22 he probably could have done it a lot sooner and that was a big waste. And everything crystallized right there - no way my daughter was going to that school or that program because I wanted a program where she would succeed and I think that's what crystallized was - I could still remember him talking about this and I'm going, over my dead body...

24.Excerpt from #1 parent interview 12/12/95

Veronica -...When she started at Community, her language started to improve and its been becoming clearer because the thing is she would also be coming out with more words -it wasn't just we knew she was using more words, we had no idea what they were.....We knew that she had a bigger vocabulary than we knew and so then it was us trying to figure out what the vocabulary was and I think that is what being in a regular system is she hears more words. Some of them may not be the words you want to hear.

25.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 7/02/96 p.8

Veronica.....I could not understand when they were saying, have you been down in Jewel so I said, oh, I'll go look at this school because they had been telling me what a great school it was.

Dean- Who is they?

V - People who had new children. (would say to Veronica) Oh well I know somebody who has a child at Jewel (the four Board Segregated School)- it's a wonderful school. So I went to see Jewel P.S. and they were making the famous peanut and jelly sandwich with 4 knives! They obviously had somebody to do dishes! At our house, it's 1 knife because I do the dishes.....And I looked at this and I thought, well,.. the other one was how to use a can of Right Guard and I thought well these are skills that are a parent's responsibilities. That's something I taught my son - how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich so why are you teaching them - that's my job - your job is to teach them reading and writing and then we got into an argument about what a life skill was because I said, a life skill was the ability to read and write, add and subtract because before you can do anything in this world, you have to be literate. They thought a life skill was making a bed that you weren't allowed to lie on it so I was not too impressed at what was offered so then I went looking and I ended up talking to some people at Integration Action and listening to their horror stories and basically thought well I guess it's going to be another horror story but this is what I want.

26.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 7/02/96 p.7,10

Veronica..... I put her in everything - I had her in story time, I had her in Sunday school where she joined Sparks when she was 5 and she had worked her way through she went into swim lessons and gym and swim so she became somebody that they knew....The thing was that any time there was anything like when you visited John, (referring to his school) I would bring Megan.

Dean- They knew?

V -.....they couldn't miss Megan and I kept saying she was going to St. Barts and then when we got a new principal because Megan was then turning 5. We got a new principal and he introduced himself to the PTA and I said that I would like Megan here. So we'll look at it - so it was...

27.Excerpt from teacher interview 13/12/95 p.3

Patricia.....because they're Grade 4s I just have them read what they have written and to read that out loud to the class rather than prepare a separate speech and at the end of it, the other boys and girls ask questions and then the person who is doing the book report gets to respond to them in a sort of impromptu way and I found that most of them were a little bit nervous during the prepared part of their speech but then seemed to relax during the

questions except for those children, the three children that I spoke about who have difficulty and they found that quite nerve-racking and what we did with Megan was we helped her by giving her questions to ask. They were written on a piece of paper so that she could participate - that she could ask some questions and we had children ask her questions that we knew that she would be prepared to answer so that she could participate in that. If we hadn't done that I don't feel that Megan would have been able to participate in that part of it.

Dean- Sounds like you set it up for success?

P- Yes. That's what we were doing and she did a very good job with her book report. We noticed that she was more nervous in front of the class which is a normal reaction. I have many children who are normally quite precocious and bold who when put in that situation, suddenly spoke with very quiet little voices. So what Mrs. Jones and I thought we would do next time with Megan is to let her practice in front of perhaps her reading group or a few other children.

28.Excerpt from teacher interview 13/12/95 p.1

Patricia-....When I studied music, we talked a lot about teaching music the same way children learn language and I've seen it work in the area of music which we don't take it as much for granted as we do speech but I think that babies first of all learn to imitate just sounds that would pertain in this case to the English language that they don't say words but they are imitating consonants and vowels that are common in the words that are important to them. A baby might say Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma or Da, Da, Da, Da, those are their first words that they might pick up and they go from there to being able to name things using nouns, just to name the things that are important to them and from that, they then progress to putting a few words together and finally to being able to string a whole sentence together and I think it comes from hearing good language at home, hearing parents speak with correct English, with correct grammatical patterns. Children would also pick up on a broader vocabulary if they hear the adults around them using it. I think that its more important to hear real adults than just television or tape although those things can help too but with a real person speaking that way I think the modeling is stronger than from a TV or tape although I think that those things do have merit as well.... and again, its practicing their good language patterns and being given the occasion to use language or to - for example I am working with a small group this year of children who don't speak very much - they don't seem to feel confident enough and they are not accustomed to expressing their ideas verbally. Two of them, interestingly enough, are extremely good at writing and they seem to write their ideas rather than express them verbally so we are working on a program with them that they are given more opportunities in a small group to get more comfortable expressing themselves because we know the ideas are there - they are just locked inside - how to get them out, how to make them feel comfortable hearing their own voice, taking chances that they might say something that isn't right but it's no big deal, nobody is going to embarrass them or they needn't feel ashamed you know in order to say something that they can take risks and sometimes they are going to say something good and sometimes they might say something that's maybe not a right answer, not as terrific and they don't need to worry about that, that it's okay to make mistakes, and it's okay to take the chance.

29.Excerpt from teaching assistant interview 7/12/95 p.3

Dean- How does a classroom environment like a regular classroom environment support (Megan)?

Ava- I think good modeling, it provides the opportunity for the language in productive ways. Lets say even drama classes would do that and it helps with the language process. We have listening centers through the MI. (Media Integrated) Program - that would help too. These are regular children and again, for Megan it would be the same thing. We could take a MI., a listening center and modify it that she can use by herself.

30.Excerpt from principal interview 13/12/95 p.3

Tom - .. we have board consultants, educational consultants who have assisted us in developing the programs. We had a very strong resource teacher who has moved on - she helped develop programs for Megan for the first 5 years and then now we have a new resource teacher and her expertise in helping an individual plan. Ava Jones, the assistant, has developed expertise. They had Megan working always with other children too - I think she learns best when she is working with others and is motivated by others. We have had the financial resources to buy programs- there hasn't been a obstacle there where we can't afford a certain kind of program. I think one of the key things in Megan's development is she has been in regular classes right from the start.

31.Excerpt from principal interview 13/12/95 p.1

Tom...I think its fairly obvious that they would learn to read in a variety of ways. Certainly, the experiences at home the early experiences with being read to and then seeing the printed word. Television has a big influence now - children learn to read and recognize the letters and so on. Sesame Street and those shows are wonderful and assist to formal education for sure. In school, I think it continues, some children learn better visually and others auditorally. Teachers have to take that into account and use all their strategies.So, I think that the children with special needs, it depends on disabilities but they learn out of the same ways. Puzzles, from dot to dot, right through to the sound and working with resource teachers to develop individualized programs..... A lot of repetition a lot of high interest (materials), a little slower but I think in a lot of the same ways it just takes a little longer to catch on and develop sight vocabulary, build from there..

D- What about writing?

T- Well, most stories start in kindergarten. The experience story....Putting sentences up, even though they can't necessarily read them, they are exposed to it , then in Grade 1 to building their stories with the teacher and then slowly I guess it comes.

32.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 10/04/96 p.8

Mary....When Kristy was very young, she relied a bit on signing and I don't have the program but her speech language therapist at (the clinic), like we learned the very basic ones for like more, or friends, same or different, cookies - the ones that she used in everyday language so when she was very young she did do a bit of signing but her language pathologist and us too, we didn't want her to rely just on signing, so if she signed cookie even if she couldn't say it, we made her do the word approximation like she had to try. We wouldn't just accept her saying cookie, she would have to say it and sign it too. I think it's important. I think signing is great but if you let them become so reliant on that and you don't use the language and I don't think it's going to develop if you don't use it and you are going to lose it.....I think as parents we play a major role in her language development because each week after she has seen her speech language pathologist, she is given homework and it's really fun - it's like tick tack toe or bingo or memory game but rather than using the typical memory pieces or with Xs and Os, you use cards with names or it might be -it's various words to practice - different sounds. The last one we worked on was like the CH sounds so all the words had CH in them somewhere like the beginning, middle or end and it really is effective like I think just the repetition of doing it over and over again but it's amazing if you really concentrate on these board games, you can really notice a difference in the articulation so it's homework that we have to reinforce at home but it's fun like -she likes it.

33.Excerpt from parent interview 10/04/96 p.12

Mary.....I think I worried, I didn't want them to pre-judge her, I didn't want them to go home and read something that was written and then had her fit into that so I think I worried but the first year I went to an integrated pre-school and that worked out fantastically - so well that the next September that was when she was 3, when she was 4 the next September, a lady down from the school 2 streets down had a pre-school (nursery) in her basement and I thought, she's going to go pre-school with the kids in the community and I took her and she even had a tracheotomy which I thought might be a deterrent or they might feel nervous. I took her and they opened their doors and the pre-school teacher that had her at age 4, she still writes to her - she still sends cards to her. So at pre-school level, we had a really positive experience..... - I think there was 12, like 12 in the morning, 12 in the afternoon and she went 3 days a week and they didn't have any extra support or help..... At that age, it was more for socializing so there was no extra help needed like you didn't need a TA. She was fully trained - she was able to feed herself so in my mind, she was another kid.

34.Excerpt #2 parent interview 10/04/96 p.13

MaryThen my husband took a transfer mid-way through the year and we moved to Ontario. She finished the kindergarten class in a regular school setting in her home school but we were very strongly coached to have her be bused into a segregated classroom.

35.Excerpt from resource teacher interview 24/04/96 p.5

Carol...Because here it has been a growth process.....And we want to make it easy for people to change their perceptions instead of backing them into a corner, getting their hackles up and saying, people are forcing me to do something that I don't feel comfortable with and so that the comfort level of all the teachers that have worked with these students I think is really quite high.

36.Excerpt from resource teacher interview 26/03/96 p.1, 2 & 3

Carol..... I think the thing that has most affected my thinking in the last 10 years was probably the work of Donald Graves.....when I came to this school it was as a special education class teacher and one of the reasons that I wanted to come was to be in a position to implement some of his ideas about writing as a process and as a continuous process that develops from within the child rather than being laid on by the teacher externally.... From the outside, I had seen a lot of journal writing but didn't see where journal writing necessarily fit in with the bigger picture but I was very impressed by the way ideas were presented - not saying that you have to lay on ideas for people to write about but assuming that either teachers or students whoever is going to be writing has plenty of things that they want to share, and envisioning writing as a method for sharing rather than a distinct domain that has to be attached separately. So that, I think would be the biggest influence on my conceptualization of writing.I have put a high emphasis on not keeping a journal but talking about experiences with children and making sure that you have covered what of their own experience they want to share with you before you start laying on - this will be a topic for creative writing. I think that laying on a topic very often forestalls a lot of the essential sharing that doesn't take place and so we have tried to structure a program where first of all kids have a chance to share orally what's important to them at the moment. We have got our program set up so there is a 20 minute sharing time every day, even for kids who have a chance to share in the regular classroom when they come into the resource room setting. It's a smaller group- it's a high needs group but it's kids who are learning to cope with how to express it (language and ideas) in a way that is socially acceptable - how to work on conversational tools like turn taking. This is something that is not easy for them. ... Then the other thing with both reading and writing, that has been a major influence in my teaching in the last 10 years would be, the growing role for the computer. When I was first introduced to the Mac and realized what an impact that would have on learning disabled kids who are scared spitless to put something on paper because it is going to be so hard to make corrections and that they don't have to worry about that any more. That they can get that rough draft down, then they can go back and do any corrections that need to be done, any revisions that need to be done and with a printer, they can come up with a printed product that looks just as good as anybody else's. For me that was one of the big barriers that I was seeing in children's literacy is as soon as they got to the point where they understood - I have a problem putting things on paper - it's such a big problem for me that I will just opt out and not put anything down - that, that was what was slowing it down. So I have tried to maximize use of the computer to make sure that kids understand the difference between a rough draft and a finished draft and try to give them as much space first time around to do it on their own then instituted an editing procedure which they start themselves. They know that there is a check list. They have to go back and check for capitals and periods before I will look at their paper. They have to have checked using spell check and that's one thing that we teach them as well that they don't have to learn all the spelling rules in English before they get some help with spelling. That a spell check on a computer is there to help them mechanically to do that and then to make sure that once they read it over, they can see where their sentences begin and end - that is marked with end punctuation and a space physically on the computer. Then they are ready for what you call a check by the editor-in-chief and that's where I come into the process and what we do when they are working on the computer is they start off by printing a copy of their rough draft that they have done all on their own - that's dated, that says draft at the top and that is kept in their files. Then we have as a point of comparison, what happens after the revision process is done so that we can see what concepts they are working on - what ones they are struggling with and when they come into fruition and they start to use them independently so that gives us a hard copy. Usually what we do is print 2 copies at the same time so one stays in their file here and one is shipped home that very day to mom and dad both a copy of the draft and of the final revision so that mom and dad know exactly what we know about the composition process with their children.

37.Excerpt from resource teacher interview 26/03/96 p.4

Dean - What about language?

Carol- I think from looking at the learning language aspect, to me it works best if there is always a very visual purpose - that people know why we are using these words. We are using these words because it is part of my spelling. We are using these words because I am working with those in my novel study or in my environmental

study or we are using oral language because I have a chance to invite a friend for lunch. I have to know how to frame that invitation to get him from the classroom down to the lunchroom. That kind of functional language I think is the starting point in everything but also making sure that because they are integrated in a regular classroom, the challenge is always there to match as closely as possible language levels that they haven't yet attained.... Every day they see around them language models that are something that they can aspire to and so language is not something that is diluted for them but that something that is always in the enrichment direction.

D- Did you find that that happened in special education segregated classes?

C - Very often, and I think it's because of the structured view that we had of language with a behavioral framework. We would take their language apart and put it into little bits and pieces and as soon as they had mastered these little bits and pieces, then we would start on the sentences. I think it's what's happening now in cognitive sciences is showing us that language does not work that way at all. We have to give them a framework to hang those bits and pieces before they make any sense to them - before the memory capacities that do have are going to kick in. The better the framework we can provide, the better the memory pieces and the language acquisition pieces are going to work so that everything works together but the whole idea of looking at the whole picture instead of doing a task analysis on language and saying, pronouns are weak, we will do 2 weeks on pronouns and then they will fall into place was really self-defeating. It has caused a re-thinking of my delivery of service from where I am now, in my own mind, there is no way I would ever feel intellectually honest in going back to a special ed delivery of service to kids where you are looking at segregated settings.

38.Excerpt from teacher interview 3/04/96 p. 1

Matt.....it has been my experience having spent most of my years in the junior grade levels that it's very important that some real good basic foundations have been laid in the primary coming in.... I like to do is reinforce learning patterns and reading patterns through the use of phonetics, sounding out words, so on and so forth. I have used various different themes during the year.... We will integrate. Well, some of the themes that we have had this year have been medieval studies, space unit and presently, we are into a science unit - Voyage of a Mimi. What I have tried to do as far as reading goes, is use novel studies that parallel the theme units that we are working on. For example, when we were doing our medieval unit, we used 2 novel study books in the class **Adorn the Wall** and **The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe** which we geared to medieval times and so we tried to parallel the theme..... What we do is we have group reading time together. We also have individual silent reading time together. All of these reading periods are reinforced through question and answer. The actual reading at various times during the year, I actually sit with an individual student and listen to them read. Also we hear in a group reading, I am hearing everybody read and so are the other students hearing each other read. It becomes evident that certain students have a better reading ability than others. Now if we take Kristy, the big plus for Kristy is the fact that she has (Sylvia) as her TA. (Sylvia) does a lot of work with her in pronouncing - trying to pronounce phonetically in the words that she reads and she stresses that. It's very difficult for me as a teacher of 28 students in the class to spend as much time that Kristy needs with her individually although every now and then I try and sit and hear her read or get her to converse with me because I think conversation is an extension of reading. So hopefully that sort of answers how I approach the reading.

Dean - How does the writing fit into this way of developing reading?

M -We spend a lot of time on sentence structure in Grade 5 and so what we want to do is take those words, put them together, develop good sentences, then further to that, then we take the sentences and build on them, and form paragraphs and from that, we get into a lot of creative writing as well. The creative writing is continual through the year so that we can see a progression in their writing habits. Editing becomes important in Grade 5 and we spend a lot of time doing editing, especially with Mrs. (Holdaway) who helps us out there as well. The fact that we have them do a lot of work on computers, so it is easier to edit things. In Kristy's case, her writing skills she prints most of her work still and she has become, I would believe, a very good printer in how she puts things on paper. And if she is copying information, she does a decent job at it. She has difficulty if you ask her to write (cursive) things. However, she has very little skill in being able to connect letters together from what I have seen.....As far as her writing of sentences go, I think the work that we have done in class on sentence structure has helped her a lot. She also gets a lot of reinforcement from (Sylvia) sitting next to her as I am teaching lessons, she is being reinforced and her creative writing I think has shown a lot of improvement over the year. In the beginning, everything was me this or me Daddy etc. Now into her sentences, she is being able to write things like, My Daddy can do things and sentences are starting to expand and we are starting to now see that the odd adjective or adverb is being thrown in as well..... I believe that the more students talk with each other or with staff members, they pick up words through conversation that they learn - words that they may not have heard before and you try and elaborate on that and to expand their vocabulary. I think reading expands the vocabulary of students. By doing different theme units in class, we are dealing with an extensive amount of new vocabulary for students and I

strongly believe that all this if you put it all together, it makes a student grow.

39.Excerpt from teacher interview 03/04/96 p.3

Matt...I think Kristy because of her phonetic pronunciation is very self-conscious when it comes to speaking at various times, but we put her in a situation in our theme units where on various occasions, she has to speak to the rest of her peers. Now, while her language at times is, sort of, I guess, the best term would be garbled at times. But you can get a general overview of what she is trying to say and she is certainly trying but because her tongue is the size it is, she can't get pronounce certain letters. Now she definitely has expanded her vocabulary nicely even through our spelling tests that we give each week. She is doing an extremely good job. She started the year in what we call a 10 word group. I believe that you start students in a group where they are going to be able to achieve. Well, Kristy has now moved up to a 15 word group and on any weekly spelling test, she gets anywhere from 12 to 14 correct out of 15 and with the use of these words which all come from our theme units, she is expanding her vocabulary.

40.Excerpt from teacher assistant interview 26/03/96 p.4

Dean - Different from regular kids or are there similar patterns?

S - Different with other kids in that I think the other children learn a lot through just reading. Now Kristy is just beginning to read on her own and even though she always loved being read to. She would be sitting on the couch in Grade 2 and we would read and we would read novels chapter by chapter. She would answer questions either in the school or at home but there was never, I felt that interest in a book. Whereas right now, I think that sort (literacy) is beginning to waken up. Yeah, I can read a book on my own - I don't have to have Mrs. Hyman read it to me or Mommy and Daddy read it to me - I can go off and read a book and maybe enjoy it and of course, she is getting a little bit more mature.....

.....with the computer that she loves to be at a computer, and I think she sees the result when she is writing something from her journal. She sees what she has done. Now that she has learned how to spell check as well, she can say oh yeah, that is wrong so she makes another copy and then she sees the difference - the first copy and the better copy...

..... she does not learn fast from reading like the other child would or seeing something once and remembering everything,.....

.... and anything that's a little bit more abstract I find is very difficult with Kristy...What I find her different between her and the average child in the classroom is that she has difficulty in getting started to do things - like she does not know how to organize.

41.Excerpt from # 2 parent interview 25/04/96 p.9

Ruth -.....if we had been different people, they (medical authorities) could have convinced us to let the baby die by not feeding her....They still tried to do that when she was 3. I am sorry it's not cost effective for open heart surgery. She won't be a productive citizen. Thank you very much. Ta ta, we are off to (Toronto). We had all Chelsea's major surgery was done in (Toronto). We don't like Children's Hospital at all.....(Toronto) was very aghast at the treatment that she received health wise and treatment wise and they said, we are going to sue. We will initiate and we'll sue them on your behalf. I said, well that is very nice of you and I realize the righteousness of it but, if my kid severs an artery, I am 5 hours away! I don't need that hassle thank you very much so I don't want to make enemies with them but I want to make effective changes so I joined the Down Syndrome Association. I became the Vice-Chairman. We made a nice parent pack and I taught the nurses and doctors and I said if you don't know what to say, don't! Here is a pamphlet, it says it all starting with congratulations, you just had a baby—— you lived....everybody who has lived through labour.... you need to hear, good job, you are alive! - you need to hear that. So we provided the parent pack with all the hospitals and public health nurse and things like that take away all those negative nasty things that you don't need to hear at all - anybody. Another thing we have done is I have prevented any child with down syndrome seeing these particular cardiologists that I dealt with.

42.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 25/04/96 p.11

D - That's exactly what some of the other Moms - that's the way they have dealt with it as well. The child went everywhere with them so they got used to seeing her or him.

R - But that makes it easier in a small town because there is so much speculation. Sure by the time - 2 weeks after she was born - I am sure every thought she had John Merrick's disease or something. They just weren't sure what Down Syndrome was. Nobody knew what Down Syndrome was - isn't that scary?. I didn't know what it was. Chelsea is only 8 but the word wasn't out there enough. There was mongoloid, mongoloid, mongoloid. Give me an idea - down syndrome? I don't know - what is it all about?.....I even find now, people still use the wrong words. You mean - oh, you are the special needs child. (mother) I don't, I have a child. Oh yes, she has got special needs so I try and turn it around on people. It's more important to me that - it's not saying, oh you have a cancer mother. No, I have a mother with cancer. It's a little thing but it's important for the community to hear those things.

43.Excerpt from #2 parent interview 25/04/96 p.16

Ruth -.....Oh their idea this year was "okay for next year let's put Chelsea in the primary resource room (segregated special education class) and that's where she can have her class." It's like excuse me, do you realize the little boy you want her to sit next to, sexually abused her for 4 months at your school. Kiss my royal fanny - the teacher who teaches the class was in on Chelsea's failure the first year at school. Believe me, she is not going anywhere near the (special education) department, no Chelsea is doing very well where she is. She may never and probably will never keep up with her peers in her class. They are friends - they like her, she likes them. She is part of the gang, she feels part of the gang. She is learning - she is making great strides in academics in reading, in printing, in lots of things and that is where she is going to stay..... Like I say, she is never going to keep up with the peers. I don't expect it..... - The problem is that everybody else who is not with this program (inclusion) or with these children says, (say) they are going to be normal - they are going to sit for 45 minutes in a circle time!..... - No, that's not it, they are retarded. It's okay to be retarded but making it not okay and that's what they are trying to do - make them normal..... - My kid is - I don't hate the word - my child is retarded and that's okay. You are never going to stop Chelsea talking no matter how much reprogramming you are never going to stop her from bursting into the room and saying, "Hi guys!" I don't expect her ever stop doing that, nor do I want her to!

D - Yes, that's part of the delight of her actually!

44.Excerpt from parent interview 11/04/96 p1

RuthThe children learn their letters, they learn the sounds of them, they learn to print them by copying. They learn to sound things out. Some of it is sight, but for the most part it's phonetics. Learning to pronounce things, put the letters together, put the sounds together. That's how I learned to read and write. That's how I am teaching my children to read and write. more flash card type ideas, putting each one of the letters, we have to learn that first, and then it's putting the th's and the sh's together and using a whole bunch of words with that. Just a number of flash card idea. A lot of repetition, a lot of copying, a lot of different media tools.....We use tapes, we use audiotapes, we use videotapes, we use Sesame Street type ideas.....It works.....It works really well with Lisa....., it doesn't work with Chelsea. Chelsea is not an audio learner. She's not a phonetic learner. She will eventually. I would like to teach Chelsea to read and pronounce things phonetically, but she's just not ready for that right now and yet she's so eager to learn to read and she's so proud of her reading skills. Hers seems to be simply sight. She's a visual learner. She learns -- with the flash cards, she memorizes them in a day. She can give you 30 cards the next day and know all the words on them. She learns a lot through videotape. We have a lot of videotapes with songs and whatnot that she had learned.....All the actions and most of the words and we know what she's saying,.....She doesn't take kindly to repetitious correction of her phonetics all the time, but if it's a new word, if you can jump right in there and make her say it correctly the first time then she says it correctly forever. She's a very visual learner. She's done that since she was born. That's the only way that child learns anything.....And the same thing with her writing. A lot of it is copying, so again it's the sight learning, but it's also the memory. She can spit back out words.....You know, I mean when you tell her write Chelsea, write dog, write whatever, and she will write it with nothing in front of her....Chelsea's language,Chelsea again learns language from other people. She learns it from -- I guess it would be audio. She has to learn it audio, but also she tends to do better again visual. She would learn words easier on a videotape as she would from Mommy and Daddy repeating them. She learns a lot from other children. She really wants to copy what the other children are doing. So, when they say the words she is saying the words as well.

45.Excerpt from teaching assistant interview 9/04/96 p.4

Lisa.....I don't know if I would say that she is necessarily higher than other children, it all depends, children with learning disabilities or Down's (Syndrome) children are all at different levels. It depends what's in her background. Her home environment I should say. She has a lot of support at home and the expectation is to have her involved in as much normal activity outside the home and in school as possible. I think the fact that home and school work very well together and that Chelsea has been expected to follow the same expectations or as many expectations as any of the other children in the normal school program has really benefitted her. I think other children would also benefit from it (inclusion) as long as there is that consistency between home and school and that the expectations modified to what they are capable of.

46.Excerpt from teaching assistant interview 9/04/96

Lisa.....I think that in light of speaking about a child like Chelsea and working so closely with her. She is in the school to be educate but by being in this school, she is also educating the rest of the school. In the sense that people have problems with a child like Chelsea being in an inclusive program or whether she is in a regular school in a special education class and do not understand sometimes the fact that this is a child who is a delayed learner because of her syndrome. Chelsea has now learned to read and one of her treats is just like some of the other children is to go to the office and read to the principal or to the vice-principal. We have expanded it on occasion where she goes and reads to the volunteers in the library. She will read with the office administration and they have responded very positively which had made Chelsea feel that much more part of the community and part of the school. She is known by most of the children and quite a few of the staff as our social ambassador for the school because she makes people really feel welcome. As her language continues to grow and as the expectations for normal or acceptable social behavior stay in place, I think Chelsea will develop into a very important part of this community as well as in this school.

47.Excerpt from teacher assistant interview 9/04/96 p.1

Lisa...90% of the reading that Chelsea is doing at this time is sight. There are no phonetics. There is doesn't seem to be any connection between the words or phonetics. She understands. her letters and that is a problem when it comes to breaking down words and sounding. One of the strategies we have started with is spelling out the words and in the next few weeks we are hoping to introduce some of the vowel sounds and more phonetic approach so that she has additional skills. Her reading has excelled substantially since November. She initially was going over words from her Mr. Mugs (basal reader)series book. The book was read over and over and over again, when I began. I felt that she had memorized a lot of the book, but also I felt that she knew these words and gave her the following book. To our amazement, Chelsea read two stories in the second book and started to read some of the words in the third story of the second book. Therefore, she didn't just memorize the words that she had sight learned....with the writing aspect...Chelsea's fine motor really inhibits her writing or printing and the clarity of it. She goes over the alphabet day in and day out. She knows her alphabet, she knows her upper and lower case ..down pat. On occasion we'll play the guessing game.....putting letters together -spelling. We are hoping to put together a spelling program with her and as her fine motor improves, I believe her writing will improve immensely and things will just slowly come together.....her language has improved I think ...a combination of learning to read and seeing the word and us insisting on more and more sentences. That (has made) her speech come along beautifully and now that she can express herself, she is growing day by day because language is coming more easily to her....

48.Excerpt for field notes 6/05/96

Lisa confessed today to me that she did not feel she knew enough about how to teach Chelsea to read. She thought a special education or some resource teacher should be teaching Chelsea her language arts now. I thought this odd but insightful on her part. I wondered why she was not getting more direction from Diana. Did Lisa feel she could not ask because Diana was too busy with the other children? It made me see despite Chelsea being in the class she was really, Lisa's student.

49.Excerpt from teacher interview 15/04/96 p.6, 7

Diana....But you know it is not discouraging at all working with her because there is a lot going on with that little girl....I don't think anything else can support it (inclusion) as much as the classroom environment that she is in now

because she gets an awful lot of benefit from all the other things that are going on in the classroom with the normal children. She is hearing proper language, she is seeing proper behaviors, caring behaviors, cooperative behaviors. She is seeing consequences - I mean we don't just time-out Chelsea, we time-out other people as well. Their heads are down and she knows there is a consequence for a behaviour that's inappropriate. She is playing games with the other children. She is interacting with them. She was writing the other day with Sammy, who had his writing folder and she was just copying letters off. So now we have given her a writing folder. Why not have her at writing folder time, why not encourage her to copy her words from her word cards or copy letters - copying matters! Again, it goes back to the early writing stages where she is copying - she is making squiggles whatever she is doing - she is writing and that is to be supported.

50.Excerpt from teacher interview 15/04/96 p.1

Diana.... obviously all the readiness for reading as well as writing actually starts right back in the home....they are learning to recognize symbols in their environment....hearing the order of language and they are picking up sounds of course.... their 5 senses... prepare them for reading. Taste, touch, seeing, speaking and hearing...In addition to all of those things happening,..... A child is also experimenting ...how to write with crayons and pencils ... before they get to school they have usually mastered their name...the first thing they do learn...to write usually the sequence of their name and other very early drawings....the beginning steps in learning to write... it starts off as scribbling and various other very primitive forms.... we have a child then coming to school who has heard great deals of language, who has been read to, who has interacted with his own language with parents and other members of his family and care givers and siblings and friends....This child would normally then be ready to be interested in print. There has to be a sort of desire to be interested in books and an enjoyment hopefully has been fostered in that child that will encourage that child to further their reading readiness which has already been put in place in those first 4 years at home.

51.Excerpt from teacher interview 15/04/96 p.1

Di - Well, it takes a while to get to know Chelsea and Chelsea's particular disabilities but for what I can see of her in the way she has come into the Grade 2 classroom and her level of readiness, I would say that for sure the graphophonic the sound symbol relationships and the preparedness for understanding sounds and symbols is certainly not established and will be a slow one to get established..... I think she doesn't have an understanding of the concept that these letters that she is now quite familiar with also have a corresponding sound. I really don't think that concept is in her knowledge right now - her bank of knowledge. I don't know that her sound acuity, ... probably isn't as developed as a normal child's. I don't think her hearing as such is minimal or lacking, but for instance, she wouldn't be attending for as long or be able to sustain listening and therefore, be as aware of the sounds that I am making.... look at her word order or her syntactic development I think that is certainly delayed greatly. I can tell that she has had a tremendous background of experiences and time with her family,...animals...holidaysswimming.... a tremendous support network....there is a certain awareness of word order. It's just that certain words aren't important to her. For instance, verbs of course are lacking in a lot of her speech. People's names and what they did, where they are - the location is often there - home, shopping.... it is evident in her reading...the syntactic development where she is understanding meaning in print - meaning in her reading, is not well developed either and I think that is something though that will come more readily than perhaps even the sound symbol. I think we are going to be able to make quite a few gains in that area at a readiness level - at a Grade 1 level and we are starting to see that now. So Chelsea has certainly come in with a lot of delays in her readiness for reading and writing but what has been done in the home has been a great help to her..

D- Are you saying what needs to be done for typical children needs to be done for a child like Chelsea?

Di -..... Well yes and no, I think you have to do more for a child like Chelsea than you have to for a normal child. You certainly have to do things in sorter bursts. You have to repeat them far more and more times.... I like the language experience type of approach with someone like Chelsea because she brings so much of that to the classroom....so much of that with herself that appears to be a good sort of point to be starting from but on the other hand, she has been responding fairly well with a basal program but...the progress is slow - the steps that she makes are very slow but they are moving along in the right direction. Just the speed of her grasping of language and reading and writing is slower but the program certainly has been modified to accommodate her shortened attention span, her difficulties with speech.....- I haven't spoken about her good visual abilities yet -that has been certainly a revelation to me, is that she has a tremendous ability to visually memorize words and so that has been a tremendous asset for her learning to read but again, the comprehension is lagging behind.....

..... Recognizing sight words is just tremendous - that has just unlocked a door in terms of picking up a very easy to read book and getting into it, but that's not all that reading is. Reading is not just reading isolated words so where we are making a lot of success with reading a book, we have to develop the other parts of reading where we have some sound symbol relationships, where we have comprehension, where we can answer intelligent questions about what we have been reading so yes and no about the program. The program can basically follow sight word development, some phonic intervention, some writing- certainly printing - learning to write the alphabet, graduating into words and copying and follow the dots and all that...you would do with late kindergarten early Grade 1 students but that accelerates so quickly with a normal child, There is an eagerness there and whereas I find that although Chelsea goes to books readily, she is not as anxious to pick up a pencil and print spontaneously certainly not back in the Fall

52.Excerpt from Kristy's Mum's interview 10/04/96 p. 4

Mary -..... oh, the library. Kristy uses the library at school, like they go once weekly and generally she gets 2 books on Mondays at school and she also uses the public library and I would say she goes to the public library probably at least 2 days a week but sometimes more but on average, 2 times a week and she will generally walk maybe one or two days a week for sure she will walk to the public library after school just with a group of kids after school. She will tell me that morning, I am going to the library with Sarah after school and then she will say, bring my library card and I'll pick her up at 4. She knows I will be there at 4 with her library card so generally she takes books from the public library a couple of times a week and sometimes she will go with us, but I would say she goes to the public library more with a friend after school.

Dean - So it's a form of social activity as well?

— And she looks forward to it - like she will say well, I'm going to the library with Sarah after school and there has been a couple of times she has wanted to go but maybe Sarah's Mom was picking her up that day or something and it was like a real let down that she didn't get to go to the library.

D- What kind of books does she take out?

M - From the library - sometimes it's the Babysitters' club again, sometimes it's Goosebumps and sometimes it's still picture word story. It varies really - like a variety.

D - She does read them?

— She does read them like the Goosebumps and the Babysitters ones like it will be the two of us doing it together. Yeah, she does read them. I mean she has had some of them for so long that they have phoned and said, oh Kris' book was overdue yesterday or two days ago and it's like oh, we really got to get that back or get it renewed so we hold on to them until she is ready to let them go.....Her Dad is a frequent reader and he reads daily for pleasure and he borrows books from the library constantly and he'll often have books specifically ordered in for him to go read. Mom doesn't read as much - mine is mostly magazine reading and stuff. I don't specifically go out, (to find books) I find am not reading books all the time like my husband would be. I would have to say my husband is the more prominent reader in the family.....We are both reading but I find that I do use the library but I just don't use the library as much as he does.

53.Excerpt from Daniel's Mum's interview 22/03/96 p. 1

Barbara -....We visited libraries - we were involved with story times at libraries.

54.Excerpts from Daniel's mum's interview 13/12/95 p. 1

Barbara -....Well with my older son I guess how I found that he was learning to read basically was from the stories that we had been reading to him ever since he was a young child and we did the same thing with Daniel.

Excerpt from Daniel's mum's interview 22/03/96 p. 1

Barbara -.....well we have always done reading preferably before bedtime to give ourselves an hour or so before bedtime and there are books in the bathrooms also....car trips - so books have always been an important part (family life).

55.Excerpt from Jennie's Mum's interview 19/04/95 p.1

Kate -we started really, really early to read. I don't know, a couple of months old or whatever, I don't remember but very early. Picture books at first, lets see, and sometimes I would read a story book just so that she could hear my voice.

56.Excerpt from Chelsea's mum's interview 11/04/96 p.1

Ruth -it was very interesting when my second daughter came along, she loved the baby until she could speak, as soon as (Rachel) could say "I want cookie" and I would go and get it just like that, she didn't want anymore to do with her. She hated her and the look on Chelsea's face, I even put it in her baby book, She hated her the venom that came out of that child's eyes, like you witch, that was too easy for you! Do you know how hard I'm working here? That was the end of their relationship, as far as the loving, I'll look after you big sister kind of deal.....after she got over the hurt of the baby being able to speak better than she did, she copies a lot now of what (Rachel) says. So we use (Rachel) as a tool.....The other day someone was in, Chelsea spoke, and they didn't understand and Rachel translated for the stranger, and then Chelsea used those words correctly the second time.....once she heard Rachel say them.

57.Excerpt from Tommy's Mum's interview 8/02/96 p.1

Amy -Well Tommy's favourite books have always been books that have rhyme to them. Tommy learned to speak by singing or listening to music and following the musical pattern. He didn't speak at an early age. He was between 2 and 3 before he even uttered his first word so it was a long time coming and the first few words stayed with him for the first few years..... he liked books that rhymed. He loves - one of his favourite books is One Thumb, One Thumb, Beats on a Drum. We read all the Dr. Seuss Books but he loves the Christmas theme- Charlie Brown, The Grinch Who Stole Christmas - he wants to look at books like that, he wants to listen to books on cassette like that, he wants to watch the videos on those topics.

58.Excerpt from Daniel's parent interview 22/04/96 p.1

Barbara -I'll just start with the favourite book and we are going back to I'm not sure - well we've always had books and plastic books in the bathtub and squeaky books with pictures and one also that I can remember is the Sesame Street books with Burt. The other books I remember that were quite popular with Daniel were the Spot books which had the little picture pages that would open up with the cover and inside was the picture. So that was exciting for him. Daniel has always enjoyed books.

59.Excerpt from Jennie's mum's interview 19/04/95 p.1 & 2

DeanDid she have a favourite book when she was really little?

Kate - Well, I would have to go and look at the library books., I can't remember. (laughter)...it was almost eleven years ago!

D - Does she have a favourite book now?

K - Oh yes, "Goodnight Moon"!.....oh she'll pick scratch and sniff books that she'd had before from Christmas. She's had the "Snowy Day" out a few times...."Curious George", she's had before...and Robert Munch books even though we have the same book here she'll pick it out, the same book at the library at school.

60.Excerpt from David's parent interview 15/02/96 p.1

Joan.....he has always liked books - he has always loved to have a story read to him and it is a treat for him - it's a good reward if he has done something good to sit down with him. The special needs worker has had things to read to him a lot - just to calm him down... but also to develop his language more. Violet just gave me a note, there was a time when he liked Richard Scarey. He liked the books that had a lot of words in them - dictionary type books....

61.Excerpt from Jennie's parent interview 19/04/95

Kate -she likes to pretend ...to read to her dolls... she's very good at dramatization

62. Each participant had a separate set of objects to identify. The children were told they could only help each other if the person who's turn it was asked for help. For the first condition both children were presented with the actual object. The children were each asked three questions about the objects, as I placed my hand under the print component of the object. The three questions were asked. One, what do you think this says? Two, what things do you see that help you to know what this says? Three, tell me some of the things you know about this? In the second condition the same peer accompanied the focus child. This time the object had been decontextualized by photocopying it and presenting it to the children. Again I placed my hand under the print component of the picture and quoted to each child what they had told me during the first game. I then asked them, do you want to add any more ? In the third game, the children were presented with just the printed text of the object on a white sheet of paper. They were asked what do you think this says.