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Children + parents + books = enhanced literacy

Carolyn Ann Olsen

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CHILDREN + PARENTS + BOOKS = ENHANCED LITERACY

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education: Reading Option

by
Carolyn Ann Oleson
March 1992
SUMMARY

Hardly a week goes by without a parent asking "How can I help my child with her reading?" Most first grade parents are acutely aware that their child is at a crucial stage in her education. Parents, and other adults involved in the child's life, want to help, but they either don't know how, or they are confused as to what is the correct procedure. An effective parent involvement program can help teachers and parents work together to enhance literacy.

The research is overwhelmingly supportive of parents being involved in education. According to Henderson, "parent involvement in almost any form improves student achievement" (1981, p. 1). Researchers have looked at the different ways that parents can be involved in their child's schooling, which are most effective, and what the connection is between involvement and achievement.

The family literacy project developed from this research consists of ten literature-based lessons designed for a classroom teacher to use in a once-a-month after school
program. A limited number of children, together with an adult partner, would sign up in advance. The teacher would demonstrate one of the three reading strategies that are keys to the program: reading aloud, shared reading, and guided independent reading. Children and parents will be given opportunity to practice the strategy, and further extend comprehension of the reading by involving themselves in a choice of activities. In providing these experiences, it is my hope that parents will continue to use the same strategies in working with their children at home. It is also my intention that parents understand my philosophy of reading instruction and become my ally in its development.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is for my family--Dave, Chris, and Sarah--without whose support and encouragement this project could not have been accomplished.

This is for my parents--Elmer and Leona--who instinctively knew how to become involved in my education to encourage literacy within me and help me find my voice in this world. You have been my inspiration.
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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Hardly a week goes by without a parent asking, "How can I help my child with her reading?" Most first grade parents are acutely aware that their child is at a crucial stage in her education. Parents, and other adults involved in the child's life, want to help, but they either don't know how, or they are confused as to what is the correct procedure. And who can blame them—even teachers are confused as to what is the "correct" procedure!

The pursuit of the "correct" method to teach literacy has spanned time as philosophers vie for control of education. In the United States at the turn of the century, Patrick Shannon (1990) counts four distinct groups that were attempting to dominate education: (a) the Humanists, a conservative group that wanted to preserve traditional literacy lessons that were based on a literal, syllabic, or word system; (b) the Child-centered approach that said education should proceed according to the child's nature, while the teacher observes, analyses, and incorporates the child's interests; (c) the Scientific Management group that would have us use exact
standards and measurements to intervene in the natural
development of the child in order to train her in a curriculum
developed through deductive logic and scientific investigation;
and (d) the Social Reconstructionists who wanted to use the
classroom to solve all the social problems in America and saw
literacy lessons as something to be expanded beyond the
classroom. No wonder the average teacher is confused if that
teacher has failed to work through the many philosophies of
literacy education to develop her own personal beliefs.

In developing her own philosophy, the teacher may find it
helpful to look carefully at the three major current
perspectives of the reading process. They are frequently
displayed on a continuum (Harste and Burke, 1980), with the
decoding model (or traditional view) on the far left, and the
whole language model (or transactional view) on the far right.
In between these two extremes is the skills model (or
interactive view).

The decoding model of reading is based on the most
abstract elements of language--the graphic elements that
make up words. Because it concentrates heavily on the symbol
to sound relationship, meaning is said not to be achieved until the word is sounded out. The model can best be pictured as a pyramid, with the sound/symbol relationship serving as the base of the pyramid, words building upon that, and finally, the meaning relationship comprising the smallest portion of the pyramid. An observer would find the teacher needing to give out extrinsic rewards to make the learning seem worthwhile. The classroom is completely controlled by the teacher and the publisher of the textbook that is used.

The teacher and publisher are also in control of the classroom in the skills model. However, instead of emphasizing letters and sounds, the skills model concentrates on four distinct areas: high-frequency vocabulary, letter/sound relationships, grammar, and comprehension. Language acquisition in this model is viewed as a pie, with each part of the pie easily extracted for separate instruction. It is in this view that one would most often see vocabulary word card drills to achieve mastery before going on to the next book in the basal series. It is also in the skills model that the meaning is said to be on the page, left there by the author for
the reader to interpret literally by stringing the words together. This model is probably the most common one found in today's classrooms, as well as the classrooms of many years past. It is for this reason that most adults feel more comfortable helping their child with word card drills and sounding out words, since this is how they were taught.

The model on the far right of the continuum is the whole language, or transactional, view of reading. "When used accurately the term describes reading programs that are built on the body of knowledge coming out of the work of educators, cognitive psychologists and systemic linguists; it has to do with real kids using real language" (Watson, 1982, p. 7). It is a meaning-based approach in which both the author and the reader interact to create meaning. A metaphor of this approach is usually a sphere, with the semantic system at the core, enwrapped with the syntactic system in the next ring, and the graphophonemic system in the outer ring. When the information the reader selects is combined with the information the reader possesses beforehand (her schema), we say the reader has read.
The chief benchmark of the whole language reading philosophy is that all the systems of language are used together so that they can support each other. No one would try to separate the phonetics, pragmatics, semantics, or syntax to teach them as distinct functions of language. Rather, the systems are observed as a whole as children are read to, read to themselves, write, share familiar language, and participate in language experience, extended literature activities, and reading strategy lessons.

Whole language also involves student voice. Whereas the teacher was in control of the classroom and curriculum in the decoding and skills models, we find that the student has a voice in these matters in the whole language classroom. Allowing this voice means the teacher trusts the student to engage in meaningful literacy activities, selecting the books she wants to read and the topics about which she wants to write.

When I began the master’s program, I was forced to verbalize my own particular philosophy of reading instruction, something I had not had to do previously. It was a difficult
task and far from what I believe today. Rather than trying to state my current philosophy, it is more helpful to think about what I believe about children and learning first.

Each Child Is A Unique and Gifted Individual.

We cannot assume that all children will learn the same thing, at the same time, or at the same rate. We can assume, though, that each child has strengths and abilities that the teacher can use to build other skills. Therefore, the teacher must develop her program to meet the needs of each child.

Language Acquisition Is A Natural Process

Children have a need to communicate and will learn because of three basic tenets that were defined by a Victoria, British Columbia symposium and detailed by Frank Smith in his book, Insult To Intelligence: “1) all children learn constantly, 2) children learn what others do, and 3) children learn what makes sense to them” (1986, p. 32).

Children Can Be Trusted To Learn.

Because children learn constantly, the teacher needs to only inspire them to take hold of a learning situation and explore the opportunities provided.
Children Come To School Knowing A Lot About Literacy.

We only need to observe the preschooler “reading” the MacDonald’s sign to know that she has discovered the relationship between symbol and meaning. Children also come to school with some attempt at written communication, developed at home as they observed mother making out a grocery list, or a big sister making a Christmas list, or dad paying the bills.

Children Learn Best In An Environment That Promotes Risk Taking and Trust.

The child who feels confident that her ideas will be accepted and valued will continue to explore and find new ways to develop her literacy.

Based upon these beliefs about children and learning, I have developed my philosophy of literacy instruction. I believe it is closely aligned to the whole language model of reading. Literacy instruction will promote, first and foremost, the integrity of both the student and the teacher. Each is seen as a lifelong learner, growing together to enhance the quality of human existence. To that end, the teacher acts as facilitator,
offering choices of language opportunities in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and respecting the choices the student makes. The student, likewise, sees the teacher as making choices of language opportunities.

Language is presented in context, so that it is meaningful to the reader. For this reason, reading instruction takes place with “real” literature and not controlled-vocabulary stories that have little meaning. Literacy moves from wholes to parts. Children would benefit from exposure to whole stories, whole paragraphs, whole sentences before they are ever asked to deal with the sounds and letters. Literacy events are perceived as being real and dealing with children’s everyday lives.

This philosophy does not mean that the parts of language—grammar, sound/symbol relationships, the situational context, and the meaning—are ignored. I believe that each of these subsystems may be dealt with as literature is read and enjoyed. The difference is that the student will see the relevance of the part because it is contained within the whole.

This philosophy of literacy development, therefore, enables me, as a teacher, to develop a curriculum that
embodies these beliefs. Without a well-defined philosophy, the teacher is at the whim of textbook publishers, administrators, workshop leaders, and whoever else would seek to guide the education of our children. Once the teacher knows what she believes, she is no longer one of the confused teachers who is unable to offer support and guidance to parents, but rather, one who has become empowered to share her knowledge.

It is with this empowerment that I am proposing a curriculum for first grade teachers to use with their students together with their parents or adult caregiver (see appendix A). Not only do parents typically want to be involved in their child’s education, research shows that parent involvement positively affects school achievement across diverse populations (Henderson, 1988). Teachers would do well to make use of this resource, especially in these times of threatened school choice issues. When parents are involved, they become our best advertising agency.

This project consists of ten literature-based lessons designed to be used in a once-a-month family literacy program.
A limited number of children, with their parent or caregiver, would sign up in advance for the evening program offered that month. Activity choices would be offered that would center around a selected piece of literature. The literature selection is chosen to reflect my philosophy of literacy and how well it lends itself to demonstrating a particular reading method, as well as what I believe about children and how they learn. All participants will be regarded as co-learners, and sharing will be encouraged among families.

In providing these experiences, it is my hope that parents will continue to employ the same methods in working with and encouraging their children at home throughout the school year. It is also my intention that parents understand my philosophy of reading instruction and become my ally in its development. The next time someone asks, “How can I help my child with her reading?” I will be ready with an invitation to a family literacy night.
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The research dealing with parental involvement in education is overwhelmingly supportive. According to Henderson, "parent involvement in almost any form improves student achievement" (1981, p.1). Researchers have looked at the different ways that parents can be involved in their child's schooling, which are most effective, and what the connection is between involvement and achievement. In the planning stages of a parent program, it is helpful if school personnel look at this research to avoid wasting valuable time and money on a program that becomes only a publicity stunt designed to convince taxpayers that our schools are doing the job. The goal of any parent involvement program might be to enhance our children's education by offering them a further opportunity to learn and become literate citizens. With this goal in mind, I have reviewed the literature to determine the connection between involvement and achievement, the many ways parents can become involved, and which are the most effective ways.

The Connection Between Involvement and Achievement.

The study of the relationship between parental
involvement and student achievement in the classroom may begin with the findings of James Coleman (1966). While his study did not directly consider this relationship, Coleman produced a large data bank of material that has been analyzed by other researchers to reveal many links between home involvement and success in school. Coleman found that a student’s positive attitudes about himself and his ability to control his environment are essential to high achievement in school. Since factors regarding class size and teacher credentialing were not critical, Coleman concludes that family background plays a major role as the most important factor in a child’s education.

The family’s role was further analyzed when George Mayeske re-examined Coleman’s report in *A Study of the Achievement of Our Nation’s Students* (1973). He was able to identify three factors of family influence that determine achievement: (a) students’ and parents’ expectations for academic performance, (b) involvement in activities to support these expectations, and (c) the students’ attitudes about hard work as necessary for success. A further study of Coleman’s
data by Christopher Jencks (1972) revealed that schools with active PTA's had higher average student achievement than schools which did not have active PTA's.

From these studies, we can begin to make an argument for parental involvement. When parents show an interest in what is going on in the classroom, students perceive that what they are doing is important. When parents learn how to help their children with their school work, even greater gains are made. Miriam Stearns shows the effect parents can have on their child's school work (see appendix B).

Stearns' study involved three roles for parents to assume: tutors, employees, and decision makers. As tutors, parents could improve their children's performance in school. This role also produced higher IQ scores in the children, as well as better parent attitudes about themselves.

When parents are employed as classroom aides, the results were less clear, chiefly because the classrooms that employed the parents also introduced many other changes at the same time, so it was difficult to tell which factor made the positive impact or whether it was all of them together that created the
increased achievement. The same is true of Stearn's third role for parents, that of decision maker.

Any discussion of the role of parent involvement in schools must acknowledge that there is often a wide variation in what parents expect of their school and what a school expects of its parents. It takes a great deal of communication to bridge the gap between the two views, with each group willing to listen carefully to the other. Trevor Bryans (1989) puts it well:

While both parties have a vested interest in the well-being and success of the children in the school, they may not hold similar views on the schools' priorities, resources, time allocations or even fundamental philosophy, so that airing these differences may itself radically change the communication system of the school and its community, not always for the good. (p. 34)

Even though the possibility exists that involving parents could cause problems as well, the use of parents is so valuable that it is worth the extra effort it takes to communicate effectively. Urie Bronfenbrenner (1974) discovered from his
 studying early intervention programs that long-term gains in cognitive growth can only occur if the mothers become actively involved. Preschool enrichment programs are ineffective when they treat only the child and not the family. In one longitudinal study done in Florida by Barry Guinagh (1976) involving parents and children in a preschool program, significant advances were found in reading and math tests upon entering school and maintained at least through grade three.

The early childhood parent involvement programs that were studied tend to be home-centered. When children enter school, however, the programs shift to involving parents in the classroom or training them in how to reinforce what is taught at school. One such program was studied by Mary Gross (1974) at a large inner-city elementary school serving a black, disadvantaged neighborhood in Washington, DC. Parent involvement included holding informal parent group discussions, sending home ideas for parents to work with children, recruiting parents to participate in an afterschool parent program, and organizing parent/teacher mini-
workshops. There were 800 students involved from grades 1-6. Their scores from the previous year were compared to the scores obtained after the year of intensive involvement by parents. All grades showed a significant increase in both reading and math scores, with a 20% increase in 1st grade students' reading at grade level (p. G3).

Another study aimed at elementary age children took place in three Michigan school districts after the State legislature authorized funds to improve reading skills in local schools (Gillum, 1977). All three school districts developed programs that had parent involvement as one of its components. The major difference in the three programs was the degree of parent involvement. District A school principals held four informational meetings during the year. District B schools held open houses at the beginning of the year and presented demonstrations of the program at a PTA meeting. District C, however, had an intensive in-service program for all staff and parents. Forty parents received leadership training to lead sessions for other parents on what was going on in the schools, on cooperating with the schools, and on reinforcing
the curriculum at home. The students in all three districts were found to score significantly higher than they would have been expected to score normally, but the students in district C scored better than A and B:

For most districts where parent involvement was 'pro forma' and consisted either of filling out a questionnaire or attending large group meetings, the achievement of the pupils was similar, but less than the achievement in the district where parents participated in deciding what was taught and had responsibility for working with the teachers and children. (p. 18)

What becomes clear to me from reading the research on parent involvement is that we cannot afford to be without it. If families are not involved in the learning process, we all lose --teachers, parents, and most importantly, children. The whole language philosophy of learning uses integration of subject matter as one of its important tenets. We need to also integrate home and school for learning to be relevant to our children. But how is this accomplished? What is the best way to integrate two often divergent points of reference? The
remainder of this review will concentrate on the ways parents can be involved and which are the most effective.

Ways to Involve Parents

There are many ways to involve parents in their child’s education. One parent program in New Jersey at Magowan School District in Edgewater Park developed a continuum of parent involvement that ranks the involvement from low to high (see appendix C). The goal of this particular parent program was to see greater percentages of parents involved at the high end of the continuum.

An eight-step procedure for increasing parent involvement was initiated in Magowan ten years ago, when parent participation was only on the lower half of the continuum. Since that time, participation has increased each year in both the number of parents involved and the level of involvement. What is obvious to me from this study is that an effective parent program does not happen overnight.

The Magowan study provides a broad overview of the ways that parents can be involved. For the purposes of this project, I will consider further research that studies two basic ways to
involve parents in the process of developing literacy: (a) in the home, and (b) at school.

In the Home

As children's first significant educators, parents taught them many things--how to walk, how to talk, how to eat with utensils, and many other things we often overlook. Urging parents to apply the same principles to helping their children learn to read is the job of the schools.

There are many activities in which parents could be encouraged and trained, if needed, to try at home. Perhaps the most significant factor in increasing literacy is simply letting children see their parents read. Wepner and Caccavale (1991) report that the amount of time that children saw their parents reading was a powerful influence on children's success in elementary school. Whether they read books, magazines, newsletters, or any other type of reading material was not as important as the amount of time spent reading. (p. 228)

One program that confirms this research was the Project CAPER (Children And Parents Enjoy Reading), which took place
in one school district in New Jersey (Wepner, 1991). The purpose of the project was to measure attitudinal changes that might occur as volunteer teams of parents and their children read separate materials together each day. A Likert-type survey was given before the project began, and again at the end of the year long study to measure changes in attitudes about reading. The results of the survey were statistically significant (p<.05), indicating improvement in attitudes toward reading.

A second way for parents to help their children toward the goal of literacy is to provide additional instruction in reading while at home. Annette Shuck and others (1983) write about a parent tutoring program that was developed in a Pennsylvania innercity school with 75 low socioeconomic status children. All of the children were behind at least two grade levels in reading, but were of normal intelligence. Another comparable group of 75 children was selected as the control group. The Parents Encourage Pupils program provided training for parents and sent home activities for them to help their children. They were usually asked to help their children read a
book, do the homework assigned, work on a word list, or play games that were available for check out. Results of PEP showed that the group receiving parent help scored one full grade level in reading ability above the group without parent help at the end of the project.

A third piece of advice for parents to help, and probably the best, is to read to their children. Butler and Clay (1979) report on a project conducted by Dr. Margaret Clark in Glasgow in 1976. The thirty-two children studied all could read by the time they came to school. They came from varying socioeconomic backgrounds, but they all had one thing in common—they came from families where books were read and stories were told. “The evidence showed overwhelmingly that parents matter” (p. 9).

Rasinski and Fredericks (1990) list three reasons why reading to children is such good advice: (a) reading is an easy activity, (b) research documents the important role that reading aloud plays in literacy growth, providing vocabulary development, an understanding of story and getting meaning from the printed text, and a significant role model that values
reading as something important to do, and (c) reading to children is an enjoyable activity for both parent and child.

Teachers are advised to give timely tips on how to insure the success of a home read aloud program, things that might be obvious to a teacher, but not considered by the average parent. “Make read aloud part of a routine....Use good reading materials....Connect read alouds to family experiences....Talk about what is read....Be a good model of reading” (Rasinski & Fredericks,1990, p. 345).

A further activity for family involvement in the reading process is to encourage journal writing. Fredericks and Raskinski (1990, p. 692) suggest a family journal in which each member of the family records items that are important to them. The result can be bound together and provide many hours of enjoyable reading now and in future years.

All of these home-based activities are worthwhile. However, unless we communicate their effectiveness to parents and other caregivers, we will not fully realize their benefits. Nancy Mavrogenes (1990) suggests that parents, especially low-income, need incentives to try these activities,
firm ideas about what the school expects, and good support. She suggests a series of training workshops and several points to consider in making them successful. The workshops should contain: (a) affective components, (b) an explanation of theory, (c) a demonstration of the theory in use, (d) an opportunity for parents to practice the desired behavior, and (d) a chance for parents and teachers to give feedback at the workshop and throughout the school year.

If 100% of the parents in our schools would commit to involving themselves with just these home-based activities, the increase in literacy development would be phenomenal. However, there are additional ways that parents can help, ways that, in most cases, involve going to the actual school site.

At School

Volunteers have been an integral part of reading programs for many years. Volunteers extend and support the goals and objectives of the classroom reading program by contributing time and effort. Moreover, they can add immeasurable worth to the reading curriculum by
extending its services and influence throughout the student population as well as the local community. (Fredericks & Rasinski, 1990, p. 520)

Enlisting the help of parents in the classroom and other areas of the school takes careful planning. Care must be taken to invite all parents to volunteer and to discover the areas where they can be most helpful. Training must be available so that parents know what is expected of them, as well as where they can go for help when needed. Since volunteers are just that--working without pay--it is important to recognize their efforts periodically so that they will feel appreciated. Finally, critical to any program is a plan of evaluation to determine whether the goals and objectives have been met and what areas may need to be revised.

One example of a school that has successfully used these basics of a parent volunteer program is Neubert Elementary School in Algonquin, Illinois (Fredericks & Rasinski, p. 521). Parents are made to feel an integral part of the school’s program, are accepted eagerly by both teachers and students, and assist in many different tasks at the school. Nearly 150
parents are involved at some time during the year. One of the
tasks that parents often help with is assisting one-on-one
with children. With careful training, the volunteer can be a
successful extension of the teacher, making it possible to
provide more students with immediate feedback on reading and
writing activities.

Parents can be trained to do conferencing, editing,
recording, and publishing of student writings. Fredericks and
Rasinski (1990) single out The Scenic Hills Publishing
Company run entirely by parents of students at Scenic Hills
School in Springfield, Pennsylvania, as a good example of
parental involvement. Volunteers, working with classroom
teachers, help turn student-created stories into finished books.

Another way that parents can become involved in the
reading program is to serve on an advisory council. Criscuolo
(1980) tells about some reading advisory councils organized by
principals and composed of parents and teachers. Their
objective was to review the reading program at their school
and plan ways to link home and school.
Any kind of activity which involves the parent in the classroom is likely to raise achievement levels. A study done by Wellisch (1976) concluded that schools where parents are involved in the classroom were more successful in raising academic achievement. An interesting side-note of this study indicated that schools using aides who were not parents had lower achievement.

Tasks which parents may perform in the classroom can include reading aloud to one or more children. Research continues to emphasize how important reading aloud is to literacy development, and even though we have good parent involvement programs, there are always those children whose parents do not take the time or are unable themselves to read. Other adult role models in the classroom can provide some opportunities to fill in the gap in these children’s lives.

Parents may also assist in the classroom with clerical tasks or the construction of learning centers or learning aides. Although not directly involved with students, some parents feel more comfortable with this kind of assignment and should be encouraged in their efforts. Fredericks and Rasinski (1990)
elaborate on the importance of involving everyone:

The distinguishing factor that appears time and time again in successful and effective parent involvement programs is the fact that all parents are aggressively recruited and involved in the affairs of the reading curriculum. No one segment of the classroom, school, or community is excluded or ignored—rather, every attempt is made to solicit and enjoin all parents in promoting the goals and objectives of successful reading development. This means a concerned effort on the part of educators—one that constantly seeks to make every family a reading family. (p. 425)

The review of the literature is an essential step in developing a curriculum for parent involvement. I have undertaken this task so that I will have some ideas about what has worked well for others, what things to avoid, and where to begin. The family literacy lessons of this project will focus on parents reading aloud to their children, participating in shared reading, and guiding their children in independent reading. All of these methods have been proven effective in my
own classroom, but there is also additional testimony from experts which supports their use.

The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to your children....The benefits are greatest when the child is an active participant, engaging in discussions about stories, learning to identify letters and words, and talking about the meanings of words. (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson, 1985, p. 23)

Parents often mistakenly think that once a child begins to read for herself, they should stop the read-alouds. Nicoll (1991) makes it clear that reading aloud continues to be important, even in junior high and high school. They are able to learn more complex language patterns, develop vocabulary, and continue to enjoy story patterns when read by a more mature reader.

Shared reading, according to Routman (1991), is “any rewarding reading situation in which a learner--or group of learners--sees the text, observes an expert...reading it with
fluency and expression, and is invited to read along” (p. 33). It offers a non-threatening approach to reading, especially useful for struggling readers. It also enables the expert reader to build a framework of literature and language for the early reader.

Guided reading is the third method to be addressed in this family literacy project. “In guided reading the teacher and a group of children, or sometimes an individual child, talk and think and question their way through a book of which they each have a copy” (Mooney, 1990, p. 11). This is really the heart of the instructional program for reading. There may be oral reading of passages for many different purposes--backing up a statement in discussion, for example--but never the old-fashioned round robin reading.

All of these methods are key elements in my family literacy project. It is these elements that need to be shared with parents so that they might help their child toward greater literacy. However, it is a recurring problem to find that the children who need the most help have parents that are the most reluctant to help. It has been especially useful to
find ways to encourage parents who usually do not become involved. I am hopeful that this knowledge will increase the scope of my literacy lessons and make them useful to many more of my students’ families. It is my ultimate goal, along with Fredericks and Rasinski, that all families become reading families, and that they enjoy together the rich storehouse of literature we have available to us.
GOALS AND LIMITATIONS

The goals of this family literacy project are both broad and specific. The overriding goal is to create, in the words of Fredericks and Rasinski, “reading families” (1990, p. 425), families that consider reading and writing activities important things to do. To meet this broad goal, I have created three specific objectives.

The first specific objective is to inform parents of different methods they can use with their children as they learn to read. Included in this objective is demonstration and practice of the particular method. The methods to be included are reading aloud, shared reading, and guided reading.

The second specific objective is to inform, demonstrate, and practice various ways of responding to what is read. The responses will include both written and oral modes, as well as using art, music, and drama as ways to respond to literature.

The third specific objective is to help parents become knowledgeable regarding selection of appropriate materials for their child to read. Criteria will be presented, as well as an annotated bibliography, to aid parents at the library or
bookstore.

Another broad goal of the family literacy program is to acquaint parents with the whole language philosophy. This may also be achieved by the incorporation of several specific objectives, the first of which is that families learn to recognize what their children can do. Just as the whole language teacher discovers and builds on what children have already learned to do, parents may use that same approach at home for the learning to be consistent.

A second specific objective is that parents learn to honor the child's voice. As Watson, Burke, and Harste write, "learning is best realized...when value is placed on each person's uniqueness, when individuals contribute who and what they are, without censure" (1989, p. 24).

A third specific objective is parents may understand that children will naturally learn to read and write if it makes sense to them. "Kids learn to read and write because they need and want to communicate" (Goodman, 1986, p. 40).

The last broad goal this project hopes to achieve is that parents will know that they are an important part of their
child's education and will become involved to a greater degree than they were before participating in the family literacy program. This will be demonstrated, at least initially, in the empowerment they feel as they learn ways to help.

This project is not intended to substitute for effective classroom teaching. The teacher remains the primary source of instruction. The parents' efforts are meant to enhance and compliment what is done in the classroom.

This project is also limited by the availability of a facility in which to hold these meetings. If school sites are used, the project depends on the amount of access to the school buildings during afterschool hours and the willingness of other school personnel that need to be involved, such as administrators and custodians.

Limitations are also set concerning the participants in the project. It is not intended for use with students only. Parents, or other caregivers, are an integral part of any family literacy program. The students are limited by their grade level, since this project was written with material appropriate for first graders. Adaptation is needed for use at
other grade levels.

Further limitations may be incurred if the parent or student population has limited English proficiency and there is no available translator or books in their native language.
EVALUATION

The evaluation of this project will be based on its three broad goals: (a) to create reading families, (b) to acquaint families with the whole language philosophy, and (c) to increase parent involvement. Each goal will be treated separately.

The first goal is to create reading families. To determine whether this goal is met, reading logs will be used. A reading log will be distributed monthly. One side of the log is for parents to record their reading (see appendix D), and the other side is to record the students' reading (see appendix E). The logs will be returned to the teacher at the end of the month. The use of these logs will be discussed at the monthly family literacy meetings, as well as the Back-To-School Night held at the beginning of the school year. For the purposes of this project, a family will be considered a reading family if their log shows participation 55% of the time or greater.

The second goal is to acquaint families with the whole language philosophy. This goal will be evaluated by observation of parents as they work with their children and as
they interact with the teacher. The teacher will keep a page in each child's portfolio that will indicate the kinds of things she will look for in these observations, the date, and the circumstances under which they occurred. It is hoped that the teacher will be able to answer "yes" to many of the following questions: (a) Does the parent value what the child says? (b) Does the parent encourage the child to discover unfamiliar words in more ways than just "sound it out"? (c) Does the parent encourage the child to write in her own way, without emphasis on correct spelling? (d) Does the parent frequently read aloud to the child?

Knowledge of the whole language philosophy will also be evaluated by both parent and child at the end of each literacy lesson. They will each be asked to respond to a series of questions about the lesson (see appendix F).

The third objective will be evaluated by a survey (see appendix G) taken at the beginning of the school year, and again at the end, to measure the degree of change in parent involvement. Using the Magowan continuum of parental involvement (see appendix C) as the basis for the survey,
parents will answer questions regarding their participation in their child's education. It is hoped that 55% or greater of the parents will increase their involvement at least one level.

An additional form of evaluation will take place as families turn in journals that they are asked to keep as part of homework assignments. One night each week will be designated as journal night. Each member of the family will be asked to contribute to the journal in some way. The student will be asked to bring the journal at the end of the quarter to share with her classmates.

The evaluation of this project would not be complete unless the results are discussed with a group of parents. The project will need to be modified to benefit each group of students and their parents, to include each language group for which translators and books are available, and each socioeconomic group. Just as it is imperative that teachers meet children in their schema for learning to make sense, it is also essential that we meet parents in their world and help them to make sense of the world of school.
REFERENCES


A Family Literacy Curriculum

This family literacy curriculum is based on ten instructional lessons, designed to be used in a once-a-month after school program. A limited number of children, together with an adult partner, may sign up in advance. Each lesson is designed to instruct both parents and students in one of three reading strategies. A reading strategy is defined, for the purposes of this project, as a technique a teacher may use to help children interact with print. Those strategies which were selected to reflect the whole language philosophy are reading aloud, shared reading, and guided independent reading. Each lesson will follow the same general format, including the components of demonstration of the targeted reading strategy and one extension activity, practice of the reading strategy by parent and child, practice of an extension activity by parent and child, and closure activities designed to inspire continuation of the newly acquired reading strategy at home.

The lessons contained in this curriculum may serve as guidelines for teachers to create their own lessons, appropriate for different levels of learning. They are meant to
be suggestions only. The teacher is welcome to adapt or add to them as she finds necessary for her audience.

The teacher, as guide and facilitator, is crucial to the success of the program, and may serve the following functions:

+ establishing a comfortable environment
+ demonstrating the reading materials in an enjoyable and effective way
+ facilitating discussion as a way to learn

Environment. In order for a high degree of interaction to take place among the participants, they need to feel free to express themselves about issues that may be very personal to them. The teacher can set the tone by sharing her own ideas and experiences and by listening attentively as others share.

Demonstrating. As the teacher is demonstrating the strategy, it is helpful to think of it as “thinking out loud,” thereby giving learners a model to imitate. The three reading strategies addressed in this curriculum are (a) reading aloud, (b) shared reading, and (c) guided reading. The strategies are described in each lesson plan.

Discussion. Discussion is an important part of the learning
process, but it is more than just casual conversation. It can be thought of as focused inquiry. Learners present reactions to the reading and share personal experiences. Others react to what is said and ideas are modified and new insights result. The teacher's task involves trying to keep the discussion on track while at the same time allowing for anything that will enrich the insights being developed. It also involves helping the participants to see relationships between comments and moving the discussion into broader meanings.

It is my hope that this curriculum will promote and enhance literacy among school children and their adult caregivers.
Lesson One

Children's Book:  *Fish Eyes* by Lois Ehlert
Reading Strategy:  Shared Reading

Introduce the topic: fish.
Stimulate learners' background.
The teacher may ask questions such as:
+ Close your eyes. What do you see when I say “fish”?
+ Have you ever caught a fish? Tell us about it.

Introduce the children's book.
*Fish Eyes* is a counting book that uses brightly colored paintings of fish to illustrate numbers up to ten. Use a Big Book copy of the book to show the cover and read the title. Ask the learners if they can predict what the story will be about. Write the predictions on the chalkboard or chart paper. Tell the learners that they will listen to the story to see if anyone guessed what the story is about. Read the story through one time. After the reading, check the predictions and decide if each one happened.

Demonstrate the strategy.
Tell the learners that you are going to demonstrate shared reading, one strategy that can be used in reading. Read *Fish Eyes* again, this time using a pointer or finger to follow the words as they are read. The teacher keeps in mind that she is modeling good reading. Read *Fish Eyes* a third time, this time inviting the learners to read along. For the last time the book is read together, the teacher omits key words or phrases
for the learners to fill in orally.

Practicing shared reading.
Pass out copies of *Fish Eyes* to each family unit. Invite them to try the shared reading strategy just demonstrated. Review the elements of shared reading: (a) the adult reads first with fluency and expression, using a finger to follow the words in the text, (b) the adult reads again, but this time invites the child to join in where she is able, and (c) the adult invites the child to read alone where she is able.

Demonstrate an extension activity.
The teacher demonstrates an extension activity for the learners. For this book, she may choose to use Reader Response, in which the teacher may ask one or more of the following questions:
+ What did you notice about this book? or
+ What did this book make you think about? or
+ How did this book make you feel?
To record their answers, the teacher may provide fish-shaped paper. The child may dictate her answer to the parent, to be recorded on one side of the paper. The teacher may ask for learners to share what they have written.

Practicing extension activities.
The teacher may invite the learners to choose one of the following activities to practice extending the reading selection:

*Art Extension*--The teacher provides paper, paints, markers, crayons, glue, and scissors with the suggestion to create the fish "you'd wish to be." She may encourage the child and parent to discuss the characteristics of the fish they have created.

*Math Extension*--The teacher provides each family
member with a package of “Sharks” (the fruit treat available at the market), graph paper, markers, and pencils. She may invite them to predict how many of each fish will be in each of their packages, confirm their predictions, and graph the results. Prediction is a strategy good readers use often.

Science Extension--The teacher may provide a bowl of tropical fish to observe, inviting the participants to record all they notice about the fish. The teacher may wish to have a class science log available for recording. They may wish to conduct experiments to see whether the fish respond to light (provide a flashlight) or sound (provide a bell).

Patterning Extension--The teacher may provide several sizes and colors of cut-out fish (use the Ellison). Invite the learners to see how many patterns they can create, choosing their favorite to glue down on a large piece of paper. She may suggest that the learners talk about their pattern and share why they selected it.

Closing activities.

The learners may reassemble as a large group. The teacher may use this time to review the Shared Reading strategy and suggest its use at home. To encourage parents to continue this, the teacher may provide an assortment of books appropriate for this activity (appendix H), and invite families to choose one to keep. Invite families to fill out the evaluation sheets (appendix F) before they leave and place in a specially marked container. To provide further closure to the evening’s activities, the teacher may wish to serve refreshments.
Lesson Two

Children's Book: Mrs. Wishy-washy by Joy Cowley
Reading Strategy: Shared Reading

Introduce the topic: farms
Stimulate the learners' background.
The teacher may choose from the following activities:
+ Bring in a live duck or other farm animal. Learners may observe and create lists of words about the animal.
+ Present pictures of many kinds of animals, including some farm animals and some wild animals. Learners may discuss ways to sort the animals.

Introduce the children's book.
Mrs. Wishy-washy is a repetitive book that non-readers find easy to read. Mrs. Wishy-washy tries to keep all her animals clean, but they love mud so much that they can't keep from rolling in it. Show the cover of the book, using a Big Book copy, and read the title. Ask the learners if they can predict what the story will be about. Write down the predictions. The teacher may tell the learners that she will read the story to them, but while she is reading, they might look for a reason for Mrs. Wishy-washy's name. Find out their opinions after reading the story through one time. Also check the predictions that were made.

Demonstrate the strategy.
Tell the learners that you are going to demonstrate shared reading, one strategy that can be used in reading. Read
Mrs. Wishy-washy again, this time using a pointer or finger to follow the words as they are read. Read Mrs. Wishy-washy a third time, this time inviting learners to read along. The book is read one more time, with the teacher leaving out key words or phrases for the learners to read aloud by themselves.

Practicing shared reading.

Distribute copies of Mrs. Wishy-washy to each family unit. Invite them to try the shared reading strategy just demonstrated. Review the elements of shared reading: (a) the adult reads first with fluency and expression, using a finger to follow the words in the text, (b) the adult reads again, but this time invites the child to join in where she is able, and (c) the adult invites the child to read alone where she is able.

Demonstrate an extension activity.

The teacher may demonstrate an extension activity for the learners. For this book, she may choose to guide the learners in creating a Story Frame. Divide a large sheet of butcher paper into five sections, labeling each section in this order: (1) story title, (2) characters, (3) setting, (4) problem, and (5) solution. Invite learners to choose one of the sections to illustrate and write what they think should go in that section. Provide brief definitions of sections. When the sections are completed, the teacher may guide a discussion of the results, being careful to honor all responses.

Practicing extension activities.

The teacher may invite the learners to choose one of the following extension activities to practice with their partner:  

Art Extension:--The teacher provides materials to create a three-dimensional cow (see appendix I). The learners may discuss how they want their cow to look.  

Science Extension--The teacher may suggest a few
experiments with water designed to understand the properties of water and how soap helps water clean dirty things (appendix J). They may record their observations in the class science log.

Math Extension--Invite the learners to create story problems about farm animals and record them to share with others. Provide plastic farm animals, paper, crayons, and pencils.

Music Extension--Invite the learners to listen to one or more farm songs (Old MacDonald Had A Farm or Down On Grandpa's Farm, both available on Raffi tapes), and create something new for the song, perhaps a new verse, or a handclap, or motions.

Closing activities.

The learners may reassemble as a large group, sitting in a circle so that all have eye contact with one another. The teacher may use this time to invite learners to share the results of their extension activities, review the shared reading strategy, and suggest its use at home. To encourage home reading, the teacher may suggest that each family pick one book from the selection of books for shared reading (appendix H). These books are meant to be a gift to the participants. Invite the learners to fill out the evaluation sheets before they leave (appendix F) and place in a specially marked container. To bring the evening to a close, the teacher may wish to serve refreshments.
Lesson Three

Children's Book: *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins
Reading Strategy: Shared Reading

Introduce the topic: walking
   Stimulate learners' background.
   The teacher may conduct any of the following activities:
   + Bring in a live chicken. Ask learners to observe the way the chicken walks.
   + Invite individuals to demonstrate walking in relation to objects: across, around, over, past, through, and under.

Introduce the children's book.
   *Rosie's Walk* is a story about a hen that goes for a walk all around the farmyard. Without Rosie's knowledge, a fox is following close behind. The pictures tell a delightful story about Rosie's close call and the fox's many misadventures. Use a Big Book copy to show the cover and read the title to the learners. The teacher may ask for and record predictions about the content of the story. As the story is read, ask the learners to look for where Rosie's walk took her. After reading the story, check predictions to confirm.

Demonstrate the strategy.
   Tell the learners that you will demonstrate shared reading, one especially good strategy to use with beginning readers. Read *Rosie's Walk* again, this time using a pointer or finger to follow the words as they are read. The teacher keeps
in mind that she is modeling good reading. Read *Rosie's Walk* a third time, this time inviting the learners to read along. The last time the book is read, the teacher may leave out key words or phrases for the learners to fill in and read alone. This procedure is called *cloze* procedure and encourages the learner to use meaning to bring closure to the sentence.

**Practicing shared reading.**

Distribute copies of *Rosie's Walk* to each family unit. Invite them to try the shared reading strategy just demonstrated. Review the elements of shared reading: (a) the adult reads first with fluency and expression, using a finger to follow the words in the text, (b) the adult reads again, but this time invites the child to join in where she is able, and (c) the adult invites the child to read alone where she is able.

**Demonstrate an extension activity.**

The teacher demonstrates one extension activity for the learners. For this book, she may choose to model on the overhead projector the creation of a flip book (see appendix K) that uses the format of *Rosie's Walk*. For example, the teacher may ask for suggestions of other animals that may go for a walk, i.e. a dog, and use the framework of prepositions in *Rosie's Walk* to create a story for that animal. The phrases may then be printed in a flip book and illustrated. Invite learners to choose the writing extension to practice this activity.

**Practicing extension activities.**

The teacher may invite the learners to choose one of the following activities to practice ways to enrich the reading selection:

**Writing Extension**—The teacher may provide already prepared flip books (see appendix K). To make a flip book, use four sheets of 8 1/2" x 11"
paper. Fold one sheet 2” from the top, one sheet 3” from the top, one sheet 4” from the top, and one sheet 5” from the top. Assemble the pages with a long-arm stapler. The learners may select an animal or person to write about their walk, using one prepositional phrase for each page of the flip. Pictures may be created under the flip to illustrate.

Social Studies Extension--The teacher may provide a poster-size copy of a map of Rosie’s neighborhood (appendix L), building blocks, legos, toothpicks to represent hay, and models of Rosie and the fox. Learners may re-create the story on top of the map, discussing where to build the henhouse, the beehives, and all the other landmarks important to the story.

Art Extension--The teacher may provide materials to create a torn-paper collage of Rosie on one part of her walk: many colors of scrap pieces of construction paper, glue, and paper for mounting. The learners may talk about how they want to create Rosie before they begin and while they are working.

Math Extension--Learners may compare the step of the adult to the step of the child. Provide a large sheet of butcher paper to mark steps on, an inch ruler, and a centimeter ruler. Each learner takes a step, while the other learner outlines the footprints. A line may be drawn between and measured. Predict how many steps it would take for each one to walk across the room. Take the walk and count the steps. Try the same activity with walking to different destinations.
Closing activities.

The learners may reassemble in a circle. The teacher may use this time for learners to share extension activities, review the shared reading strategy, and suggest that parents continue this at home. Provide the learners with the shared reading books list (appendix H), and invite them to select one book to take home and keep. Ask families to fill out evaluation sheets (appendix F) before they leave. The evening may close with refreshments being served by the teacher.
Lesson Four

Children’s Book: *Pumpkin, Pumpkin* by Jeanne Titherington
Reading Strategy: Shared Reading

Introduce the topic: pumpkins.

Stimulate learners’ background.

The teacher may choose from the following activities:

+ Bring a pumpkin sealed inside a box. Tell the learners that you have something in the box and they may find out what it is by asking you questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no”. When someone thinks they know what is in the box, invite them to come and feel inside the box to confirm their prediction.

+ Display a pumpkin. Ask the learners to help you list words that describe it.

Introduce the children’s book.

*Pumpkin, Pumpkin* is a simple story of a boy who plants pumpkin seeds, takes care of the plant that grows, harvests a pumpkin, and carves a jack-o-lantern. Use a Big Book to show to the learners. Ask if they can predict what the story is about. Read the story to check predictions.

Demonstrate the strategy.

The teacher may demonstrate shared reading. She may read *Pumpkin, Pumpkin* again, this time using a pointer or finger to follow the words as they are read. She should keep in mind that she is modeling good reading. Read *Pumpkin, Pumpkin* a third time, inviting the learners to read along when...
they would like. Finally, the story is read with the teacher leaving out key words or phrases for the learners to supply.

Practicing shared reading.

Distribute individual copies of *Pumpkin, Pumpkin* to each family unit. Invite them to try the shared reading strategy. Review the elements of shared reading: (a) the adult reads with fluency and expression, using a finger to follow the words in the text, (b) the adult reads again, but this time invites the child to join in if she likes, and (c) the adult invites the child to read alone the parts that she likes.

Demonstrate an extension activity.

The teacher may demonstrate an extension activity. For this book, she may want to develop a group sensory poem using this pattern: noun, two adjectives for sight, three adjectives for touch, two adjectives for taste, noun. An example might be:

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Pumpkin
Orange, Round
Smooth, Hard, Bumpy
Sweet, Spicy
Pumpkin
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Practicing extension activities.

The teacher may invite the learners to select one of the following extension activities:

**Math Extension**—The teacher may provide pumpkin seeds in an estimating jar, a counting mat and cups for tens and hundreds, and paper for recording. The learners may estimate how many seeds they think are in the jar, then count them by filling each of ten “tens” cups with ten each, dumping those ten into a “hundreds” cup, and continuing until there are less than ten seeds in the ones place on the
mat. Write a numeral to show how many are in each place.

Science Extension--The teacher may provide pots, soil, pumpkin seeds, and science logs. Learners may plant pumpkin seeds and begin a log by writing and illustrating what they did. The pot and the log may go home with the learners. The teacher may suggest that they observe the pot at least once a week and record in their log what they see.

Patterning Extension--The teacher may provide cut-outs of green and orange pumpkins. The learners may discuss and create a pattern, gluing it down onto a long piece of butcher paper.

Art Extension--The teacher may provide materials to create a jack-o-lantern. The learners may first talk about how they want their jack-o-lantern to look, listing words to describe it. The jack-o-lanterns may be made of paper materials or real pumpkins.

Closing activities.
The learners may reassemble as a large group. The teacher may use this time to encourage sharing of the extension activities, to review the shared reading strategy, and to encourage continued use of shared reading at home. The teacher may distribute copies of the shared reading books (appendix H) and invite the learners to select one book to keep at home. She may also ask them to fill out an evaluation sheet (appendix F). To provide closure to the evening, the teacher may serve refreshments.
Lesson Five

Children's Book: The Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg
Reading Strategy: Read Aloud

Introduce the topic: The North Pole
Stimulate learners' background.
The teacher may ask questions such as:
+ Close your eyes and imagine the North Pole.
  What do you see?
+ What is the coldest place you can think of?

Introduce the children's book.
The Polar Express is a Caldecott Medal book. It tells the story of one boy who is magically whisked aboard a train headed for the North Pole. The boy receives the first gift of Christmas from Santa Claus, only to lose it before he gets back home. Show the cover of the book and read the title. Ask the learners if they can guess what the story will be about. Record their predictions.

Demonstrate the strategy.
Read the story, stopping at key points to check predictions and ask "What do you think will happen next?" After the story is read through, check remaining predictions to confirm. The teacher may tell the learners that she has just demonstrated a read-aloud strategy, when predictions are made before and during reading and confirmed after reading.

Practicing the read-aloud.
The teacher may distribute a copy of the book to each
family unit. She may encourage the parent to read aloud to the child, this time asking the child to focus on the question, "What do you think the North Pole looks like?" She may encourage the parent and child to discuss their response to the question after the reading.

**Demonstrate an extension activity.**

The teacher may demonstrate an extension activity appropriate for *The Polar Express*. She may choose to introduce literature logs at this time. Literature logs may be purchased spiral bound notebooks or booklets made from construction paper and lined notebook paper. Each family unit may wish to have one. The teacher may demonstrate on the overhead projector how she would make an entry in her literature log after reading the book. Literature log entries may include responses to open-ended questions, freewriting, vocabulary words, or illustrations. After the demonstration, the teacher may ask the learners to respond in their journals to the question, "What would happen if Santa Claus said that you would receive the first gift of Christmas?"

**Practicing extension activities.**

The teacher may invite the learners to choose one of the following activities to practice extending the reading:

**Art Extension**—The teacher may provide construction paper, markers, glue, yarn, small silver bells, and a hanger. She may invite the learners to talk about and create a mobile of important parts of the story.

**Science Extension**—The teacher may provide materials to study magnetism: different kinds of magnets, iron fillings, magnetic and non-magnetic items, and a science log. She may suggest that the learners discover what kinds of things are magnetic, if any material stops the
magnetism, and what will a magnet do if allowed to dangle from a string. The learners may record their observations in the class science log. **Writing Extension**--The teacher may invite the learners to create a pop-up book (appendix M). She may suggest that they create the character or thing they feel is most important to the story. They may write about why it is important on lined paper glued to the inside of the book.  
**Math Extension**--The teacher may provide cut-outs relevant to the story--trains, Santas, gifts, bells. The learners may decide on a pattern and reproduce it several times on a long sheet of paper. They may talk about their pattern and how it repeats.

**Closing activities.**

The learners may reassemble as a large group. The teacher may use this time to review the read-aloud, emphasizing that stories are to be read for enjoyment, but it is good practice to ask the listener to look for something in the story as you read to help them focus on the material being read. It is also important to discuss the story when it is concluded. The teacher may also provide a list of good read-aloud stories at this time (appendix N), and invite the learners to choose a book from the selection to keep as a gift. She may also want to pass out evaluation forms (appendix F) at this time and serve refreshments.
Lesson Six

Children's Book: *The Mitten* by Jan Brett
Reading Strategy: Read Aloud

Introduce the topic: winter
Stimulate learners' background.
The teacher may choose to use one of the following:
+ Bring in various items of winter clothing and talk about when they would be worn. Examples might be mittens or gloves, ear muffs, woolen scarf, and a heavy coat.
+ Ask the learners how they think wild animals keep warm in winter. Record ideas on the chalk board.

Introduce the children's book.
*The Mitten* is a Ukrainian folktale retold by the author in an usual way. A boy gets a new pair of mittens from his grandmother and goes out to play in the snow. Amazing things happen to the mitten that he loses. Show the cover of the book and ask the learners what they think the story will be about. Record their predictions on the chalkboard. Ask them to listen to the story and try to decide if they think this story could really happen.

Demonstrate the strategy.
The teacher may tell the learners that she will demonstrate one way to read aloud. Read the story through, pausing in key places to ask the learners what they think will happen next. At the end of the story, discuss the predictions and whether they think the story could have really happened.
Practicing the read-aloud.

The teacher may distribute a copy of The Mitten to each family unit. She may encourage the learners to try the read aloud, asking the listener to focus on what the boy is doing as the animals are squeezing into his mitten. After the reading, the learners may discuss what the boy does, and tell how they knew that.

Demonstrate an extension activity.

The teacher may select another version of The Mitten to share with the learners. Tressault is one author of another version. Read the new version and prepare a Venn diagram on a large sheet of butcher paper to record what is unique about each version, and what is the same.

Practicing extension activities.

The teacher may invite the learners to choose one of the following activities to practice extending the literature selection:

Math Extension--The teacher may provide a game of Snowball Math, which includes a coffee can, dried marshmallows with a different number written on each one, and paper and pencils. The first player shakes the can and picks out two marshmallows. She then must add the two numbers together. If she is correct, she gets one point. If not correct, her partner helps her figure the correct answer. The second player takes a turn. The first player to reach a score of 15 is the winner.

Art Extension--The teacher may provide patterns of mittens, markers, construction paper, and glue for the learners to create their own mittens. The learners may talk about how they would like to make their mittens look before they begin.
**Science Extension**--The teacher may provide books, magazines, and other materials for learners to research how animals really keep warm in the winter. The learners may wish to create an illustrated report of what they learn.

**Patterning Extension**--The teacher may supply cut-outs of mittens, bears, mice, rabbits, badgers, owls, foxes, moles, and hedgehogs. Learners may create a pattern, repeating it several times and gluing it down on paper. The learners may be encouraged to verbalize their pattern.

**Closing activities.**

The teacher may ask the learners to reassemble in a large circle. This time may be used to review the read-aloud strategy, share a list of recommended books (appendix N), and ask the learners to select one book from the list that they would like to take home now and keep. Evaluation forms (appendix F) may be passed out now, and refreshments can be served.
Lesson Seven

Children's Book:  *Crow Boy* by Taro Yashima
Reading Strategy:  Read Aloud

Introduce the topic: Japan
Stimulate the learners' background.
The teacher may choose one of these activities:
+ Bring some items from the Japanese culture--chopsticks, kimono, rice. Ask learners what they know about these things.
+ Ask the learners what they think of when they hear “Japan”.

Introduce the children's book.
*Crow Boy* is a Caldecott Honor Book about the story of a backward boy from the country who travels long distances to go to school. The teacher may introduce the story by reading the title and asking what they think a crow boy might be. Record their answers.

Demonstrate the strategy.
The teacher may tell the learners that she will read the story aloud while they listen to see if their ideas about what a crow boy is were what the author had in mind when he wrote the story. The teacher may stop in key places to ask “What do you think will happen next?” After the story is read, the teacher may guide a discussion about what a crow boy is.

Practicing the read-aloud.
The teacher may distribute a copy of the book to each family unit. She may invite the learners to try the read-aloud
strategy by reading Crow Boy again, this time looking for all the things that Chibi does well. The learners may discuss their findings after the story is read.

Demonstrate an extension activity.

The teacher may demonstrate an example of an extension activity. For Crow Boy, she could guide the learners in developing a picture map of the story. The teacher may pass out paper to each learner, inviting them to tell something about the story by drawing a picture. On a large sheet of butcher paper, the learners can paste the pictures, discussing the order of the events that were drawn.

Practicing extension activities.

The teacher may invite the learners to choose one of the following activities:

Art Extension--The teacher may provide materials for the learners to experiment with pen and ink drawings, colored in with crayon. She may suggest studying and discussing Yashima's drawings first. She may also provide additional books by Yashima.

Social Studies Extension--The teacher may invite the learners to find Japan on a map of the world. They may also make a list of all the things that they think might happen in Japan because of where it is located.

Math Extension--The learners may create story problems about the crows that Chibi sees on the way to and from school. They may write them down and illustrate them.

Drama Extension--The learners may create a play about Chibi, using puppets. The teacher may provide simple puppets, paper for writing the script, and a puppet stage for presentation.
Closing activities.

The learners may reassemble into a large group. It is here that the teacher may want to review the read-aloud: (1) read the story for enjoyment, (2) give the listener a reason for listening, and (3) discuss the story after reading. The teacher may also provide a list of good read aloud stories (appendix N) and invite the learners to select a book to take home and keep. Evaluations (appendix F) may also be passed out, and refreshments served.
Lesson Eight

Children's Book: *Frog and Toad Together* by Arnold Lobel
Reading Strategy: Guided Reading

Introduce the topic: amphibians

Stimulate the learners' background.

The teacher may choose one of the following activities:

+ Ask the learners to think of a frog and tell all the words they can about a frog.
+ Bring in a toad. Guide a discussion about the toad's features.

Introduce the children's book.

*Frog and Toad Together* is part of a series of books written by Arnold Lobel. This particular one is a Newberry Honor Book. It tells the adventures of Frog and Toad, who are good friends. The teacher may show the book to the learners and ask them to predict what this story is about. She may record their answers to check for confirmation during and after the reading.

Demonstrate the strategy.

In guided reading, the teacher and learners think and talk their way through the selection. The teacher may distribute the individual copies at this time. For the demonstration, the teacher may choose the first chapter of the book, *The List*. She may ask if someone can tell what this chapter will be about by looking at the picture on page 5. The teacher may list the suggestions on the board. She may ask if someone is able to read the title. The teacher may then ask the learners to read pages 4, 5, and 6 to find out about Toad's list. After reading,
learners may discuss the list, and try to guess what they think might happen next. Learners may then preview the pictures on pages 7, 8, and 9 and discuss what might be happening in the story. They may then read to confirm. At this point, the teacher may want to stop the demonstration and ask the learners to try the same thing in their family units, the parent guiding the reading.

Practicing guided reading.

Parent and child may continue with the same kind of activity—talking about the pictures together before trying to read the words, reading the words, and guessing what might come next. The teacher may suggest that they finish the chapter in this manner.

Demonstrate an extension activity.

The teacher may demonstrate an example of an extension activity. For *Frog and Toad Together*, she might tell the learners that they could make an eight-page booklet (appendix O) to record what happens in *The List*.

Practicing extension activities.

The teacher may invite the learners to choose one of the following activities to extend the literature selection:

- **Science Extension**—The teacher may bring in a frog or a toad and invite the learners to observe it. She may also provide crickets, ladybugs, or mealworms to feed the frog or toad. Learners may record their observations in the class science log.
- **Art Extension**—The teacher may invite the learners to create a frog or toad out of clay. She may provide pictures as models, or a real frog or toad. The learners may discuss how they want their frog or toad to look.
- **Math Extension**—The teacher may invite the
learners to leap like a frog and measure the
distance with an inch ruler. They may like
to compare the measurement to centimeters.
Drama Extension--The teacher may provide puppets
and a puppet stage for the learners to re-create the
story, or create a new adventure for Frog and Toad.

Closing activities.
The learners may reassemble in a large circle. The
teacher may use this time to review the guided reading
strategy: (1) predicting what the story is about, using the
pictures and title, (2) reading to look for an answer to a
question posed by the adult, and (3) discussing the answer to
the question after reading. The teacher may also distribute
copies of the guided reading list (appendix P), invite the
learners to select a book to keep at home. She may also ask
the learners to fill out the evaluation forms (appendix F).
Refreshments may be served to close the evening.
Lesson Nine

Children's Book: *Henry and Mudge Get the Cold Shivers*  
by Cynthia Rylant  
Reading Strategy: Guided Reading

Introduce the topic: dogs  
Stimulate learners' background.  
The teacher may choose one of the following activities:  
+ Survey the learners for types of pets they have and graph the results.  
+ Ask for volunteers to share special stories about their pet.

Introduce the children's book.  
*Henry and Mudge Get the Cold Shivers* is one of a series of books by Cynthia Rylant about Henry and his dog, Mudge. This story begins with Henry sick with a cold, Mudge catches the cold, and they help each other get well. The teacher may show the book and read the title. She may ask what the learners think the story will be about, and record their answers.

Demonstrate the strategy.  
The teacher may distribute copies of the book to each family unit. She may tell the learners that she will demonstrate guided reading—the process of talking and thinking their way through the text. They may turn to page 5 and talk about what the picture tells them. The teacher may ask if someone can read the title of the chapter. She may then
suggest that they look at pages 6 and 7 to see what will happen next. The teacher may then invite the learners to go back and read pages 5, 6, and 7 to find out what happens when Henry is sick. Discuss their answers after reading.

Practicing the strategy.

The teacher may invite the learners to practice guided reading, suggesting that they read the rest of this chapter to find out what happens to Mudge. She may remind the learners that they might "read" the pictures first and try to guess what might happen. After reading, they might talk about what happened to Mudge.

Demonstrate an extension activity.

The teacher may guide the learners to create a Readers’ Theatre version of The Sick Day. Working in a group, the teacher and learners together may write a script, rehearse it, and perform it with a few props.

Practicing extension activities.

The teacher may invite the learners to choose one of the following activities to complete:

- **Writing Extension**—The teacher may provide materials to create a poster to advertise the book. Materials may include poster board, markers, pencil, construction paper, and glue.
- **Art Extension**—Invite the learners to make a bookmark, illustrating some part of the story. Materials may include tagboard, markers, crayons, glue, and scissors.
- **Math Extension**—The teacher may create a game for the learners to play. To make the game, she could make several tagboard dog bones, laminate them, and write a different subtraction problem on each. All the bones are placed in a container. Each player...
draws out a bone in turn. If she is able to give the correct answer, she keeps the bone to feed to her “dog” (the teacher may make tagboard dogs to “feed” for each player). If she is not able to give the correct answer, the bone goes back in the container, and the next player takes a turn. The player with the most bones at the end of the game is the winner.

Science Extension--The teacher may provide numerous reference books about dogs and large pieces of construction paper, suggesting that the learners write and illustrate a Big Book about dogs.

Closing activities.

The teacher may ask the learners to reassemble as a large group for some closing activities. At this time, she may want to review the procedure for guided reading: (1) predicting what the story is about, using the pictures and title, (2) reading to look for an answer to a question posed by the adult, and (3) discussing the answer to the question after reading. The teacher may also distribute the list of suggested books for guided reading (appendix P) and invite the learners to select a book to take home and keep. She may also ask the learners to fill out the evaluation forms at this time, and then serve refreshments.
Lesson Ten

Children’s Book: George and Martha by James Marshall
Reading Strategy: Guided Reading

Introduce the topic: friendship
Stimulate learners’ background.
The teacher may use one of these suggestions:
+ Think of your best friend. What are the things that you like about your friend?
+ Hand out friendship bracelets (appendix Q) to all learners. Discuss the reasons why these might be called friendship bracelets.

Introduce the children’s book.
George and Martha is a short chapter book about two hippos who are good friends. Their adventures are good discussion starters for what makes a good friend. The teacher may show the cover of the book and read the title. She might ask who they think are George and Martha.

Demonstrate guided reading.
The teacher may distribute copies of the book to each family unit. She may tell the learners that she will demonstrate guided reading—a process where readers talk and think their way through the text. She may ask them to turn to page 5 and read the words on that page. They may talk about what they think will happen in the first chapter of the book. They may then turn to page 6 and “read” the picture, predicting what will be on this page. The teacher may ask the learners to read the words to find out what Martha is cooking. After it is
read, they may discuss their answer to the question.

Practicing guided reading.
The teacher may ask the learners to practice guided reading together on the rest of the chapter. She might remind them to “read” the pictures first, predict what will happen, read to confirm predictions, and, finally, discuss the story.

Demonstrate an extension activity.
The teacher may wish to demonstrate Reader’s Response with this book. She may have the learners write or draw an answer to any one of the following questions:
+ What did you notice about this story?
+ How did this story make you feel?
+ What did this story remind you of?

Learners may wish to share their responses.

Practicing extension activities.
The teacher may invite the learners to practicing extending literature with one of these activities:
Art Extension--The teacher may provide materials to create friendship bracelets (appendix Q). She may encourage the learners to talk about a special friend that they might want to give the bracelet to.
Writing Extension--The learners may create a new 8-page booklet (appendix O), write and illustrate a story about their best friend.
Social Studies Extension--The teacher may provide materials to create a friendship folder (appendix R) that learners can use to talk about characteristics of a good friend.
Cooking Extension--The teacher may provide a variety of soups to sample. The learners may warm the soup, taste, and graph their favorites. They may want to tell why they liked or did not the soup.
Closing activities.

The learners may reassemble in a large group to review the strategy of guided reading. The teacher may also distribute the list of suggested books (appendix P) and invite them to choose one to take home to keep. She may also ask the learners to fill out an evaluation form (appendix F) and leave it in a special place before they leave. The teacher may end the evening by inviting everyone to stay for refreshments.
APPENDIX B
Parents as Learners and Tutors of their Children

Chain A
Child Motivation

Chain B
Child Skill

Chain C
Parent Self-Image

Parent learns how to teach own child

Parent gives child individual attention and teaches new skills

Child sees that parent perceives education as important

Child learns skills better

Parent perceives own competence. Communicates confidence and fate control to child

Child feels confident to perform

Child performs better in school and on tests

**Magowan Parental Involvement Continuum**

Parents, *trained by teacher*, assist in classroom in such learning activities as conferencing on writing samples, assisting at learning centers, or helping with computer use.

Parents in classroom reinforce processes/concepts introduced by teachers.

Parents in classrooms practice with children on vocabulary words, number facts; help them enter answers on computer cards.

Parents read to children in the classroom.

Parents make classroom presentations or present hands-on activities in areas of expertise.

Parents participate in committees which directly influence school curricula and policies. Committees consist of parents, teachers, and administrators.

P.T.A. parents work on sponsorship and implementation of curriculum-related and family-oriented activities, e.g. cultural arts contests/displays, Family Fun Night.

Parents make instructional materials for classroom use, as directed by teachers.

Parents assist in school library, checking out and shelving books.

Parents participate as room mothers or room fathers.

Parents supervise on class trips or chaperone at school functions.

Parents visit classrooms during American Education Week or Back-To-School Night.

Parents attend classroom plays, presentations.

Parents attend school assembly programs.

Parents attend competitive games, athletic events at school.

Parents attend promotion ceremonies.

Parents attend parent/teacher conferences.

Parents are encouraged to help children with homework at home.

Parents are involved in P.T.A. fund-raising activities.

Parents are asked to join P.T.A.

Parents are encouraged to read school's handbook for parents.

No parental involvement.

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**Note:** From "Increasing parental involvement in elementary schools: The nitty-gritty of one successful program" by H. Galen, 1991, *Young Children*, p. 19.
# Parent Reading Log

Please fill in daily the amount of time spent reading and the title or type of material read.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This is my reading record for the month of ______________________

__________________________
Signature
APPENDIX E
Student Reading Log

READING LOG FOR STUDENTS

Please fill in daily the amount of time spent reading and the title or type of material read.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This is my reading record for the month of ________________________

__________________________________________
Signature
APPENDIX F
Evaluation Form

TELL WHAT YOU THINK

1. How did you like the story? ☺ ☻

2. How did you feel about having your parent read to you? ☺ ☻

3. How did you like the activity you did with your parent? ☺ ☻

4. Would you like to do this another time? ☺ ☻

If you have an idea about what we could do, write it on the back or tell it to me.

EVALUATION

1. Do you think your child enjoyed the story? yes no

2. Do you plan to do the same kind of reading at home with other books, using predicting and confirming? yes no

3. Do you think that you are more able to help your child learn to read after tonight? yes no

4. Would you like to come to another evening at school? yes no

If you have any suggestions, please write them here or share them with me.
Parent Involvement Survey

Please circle yes or no to the following questions:

1. I read the school’s handbook. 
   - yes 
   - no
2. I joined the P.T.A. 
   - yes 
   - no
3. I helped with P.T.A. fundraisers. 
   - yes 
   - no
4. I see that my child gets her homework done. 
   - yes 
   - no
5. I came to parent/teacher conference. 
   - yes 
   - no
6. I have attended programs at school. 
   - yes 
   - no
7. I came to Back-To-School Night. 
   - yes 
   - no
8. I have gone on class field trips. 
   - yes 
   - no
9. I have helped with class parties. 
   - yes 
   - no
10. I have made instructional aids for the classroom. 
    - yes 
    - no
11. I have served on the School Site Council. 
    - yes 
    - no
12. I have made a classroom presentation. 
    - yes 
    - no
13. I have read to children in the classroom. 
    - yes 
    - no
14. I have worked in the classroom directly with children to reinforce concepts the teacher has taught. 
    - yes 
    - no
APPENDIX H
Shared Reading List

Across the Stream by Mirra Ginsburg
All Fall Down by Brian Wildsmith
Brown Bear, Brown Bear by Bill Martin, Jr.
The Bus Ride by Anne McLean
The Cat Sat On the Mat by Brian Wildsmith
The Chick and the Duckling by Mirra Ginsburg
Have You Seen My Duckling? by Nancy Tafuri
I Like Books by Anthony Browne
Mary Wore Her Red Dress and Henry Wore His Green Sneakers by Merle Peek
My Book by Ron Maris
1 Hunter by Pat Hutchins
What A Tale by Brian Wildsmith
Cookie's Week by Cindy Ward
Crocodile Beat by Gail Jorgensen
Dear Zoo by Rod Campbell
Gone Fishing by Earlene Long
Greedy Cat by Joy Cowley
In A Dark Dark Wood by June Melser and Joy Cowley
Is Your Mama a Llama? by Deborah Guarino
It Looked Like Spilt Milk by Charles G. Shaw
Joshua James Likes Trucks by Catherine Petrie
Just Like Daddy by Frank Asch
My Bike by Craig Martin
Noisy Nora by Rosemary Wells
“Pardon?” Said the Giraffe by Colin West
APPENDIX 1
Three-Dimensional Cow
(Lesson 2)

You will need:

1 one-half gallon milk or juice carton
4 bathroom tissue rolls
crayons or markers
construction paper
pencil
ruler
scissors
 glue
tape

What to do:

Tape carton spout closed.
Flatten carton top by firmly pushing on it with your hand.
Cover three sides of the carton with construction paper.
Decorate with spots, if desired.
Draw cow’s face, tail, and milk bag on construction paper.
Cut out and glue in place on carton.
Color hooves around one end of each bathroom tissue roll.
Flatten other end of each roll.
Insert flattened end into 2 3/4” slits cut into bottom of carton.
Stand cow on her legs.
APPENDIX J
Experiments With Water
(Lesson 2)

Concepts
1. Water has special properties which give it surface tension.
2. Water is attracted to water; this is called cohesion.
3. Water is attracted to other surfaces; this is called adhesion.
4. Water surface tension can be broken with dish soap.

Materials
+ medicine droppers + toothpicks
+ wax paper squares - 7” + paper towels
+ cups of water + small amount of dish soap

Procedure
1. Put the wax paper square on top of a paper towel on the desk.
2. Using the medicine dropper, drop beads of water on the wax paper. Move the water beads around with a toothpick, connecting and disconnecting water drops. Notice how the water beads are attracted to each other.
3. Dip a toothpick into the dish soap. Try to move the water beads around again. The surface tension is broken by the soap.
4. Discuss why it is important to use soap to wash.
APPENDIX K
1. Use plain paper, 8 1/2" x 11".
2. Fold one sheet 2" down from the top.
3. Fold another sheet 3" down from the top.
4. Fold another sheet 4" down from the top.
5. Put the sheets of paper together at the folds, the 2" fold on the bottom and the 4" fold on the top.
6. Staple them together along the fold line, using a long-arm stapler.
Pop-Up Books
(Lesson 5)

1. Fold a sheet of construction paper in half.
2. Make a tab by cutting 2 slits, 1 inch apart, on the fold, in the middle of the page. Push tab through to the inside of the folded page.
3. Draw, color, and cut out a character or object from the story. It must be sized so it does not extend beyond the book pages.
4. Glue the character or object to the tab.

Creating a Pop-Up Book

1. Fold paper in half
2. Cut a tab in center of fold
3. Push the tab through to the inside
Read Aloud Book List

Bread and Jam for Frances by Russell Hoban
Chicken Soup With Rice by Maurcie Sendak
The Napping House by Audrey Wood
Read-Aoud Rhymes for the Very Young by Jack Prelutsky
Goldilocks and the Three Bears by James Marshall
The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
A Chair for My Mother by Vera Williams
Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Day by Judith Viorst
Chickens Aren’t the Only Ones by Ruth Heller
Every Time I Climb a Tree by David McCord
Ira Sleeps Over by Bernard Waber
Ox-Cart Man by Donald Hall
The Principal’s New Clothes by Stephanie Calmenson
The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs by A. Wolf as told to Jon Scieszka
Animalia by Graeme Base
The Ghost-Eye Tree by Bill Martin, Jr. & John Archambault
Now One Foot, Now the Other by Tomie de Paola
Miss Rumphius by Barbara Cooney
The Friends of Emily Culpepper by Ann Coleridge
Is This a House for Hermit Crab? by Megan McDonald
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Joffe Numeroff
Blueberries for Sal by Robert McClosky
Can I Keep Him? by Steven Kellogg
The Big Tree by Bruce Hiscock
Sam Johnson and the Blue Ribbon Quilt by Lisa Campbell Ernst
The Bedspread by Sylvia Fair
Making An Eight Page Book

1. Fold in half
2. Fold in half again
3. Then fold over
5. Open sheet and fold over to form a diamond. Push in sides to form...

8-PAGE BOOK!
Guided Reading Books

*Little Bear* by Else Holmelund Minarik (series)
*Tales of Oliver Pig* by Jean Van Leeuwen (series)
*Days With Frog and Toad* by Arnold Lobel
*Frog and Toad Are Friends* by Arnold Lobel
*Frog and Toad All Year* by Arnold Lobel
*Henry and Mudge* by Cynthia Rylant
*Henry and Mudge in Puddle Trouble* by Cynthia Rylant
*Henry and Mudge in the Green Time* by Cynthia Rylant
*Henry and Mudge Under the Yellow Moon* by Cynthia Rylant
*Henry and Mudge in the Sparkle Days* by Cynthia Rylant
*Henry and Mudge and the Forever Sea* by Cynthia Rylant
*George and Martha* by James Marshall
*George and Martha Encore* by James Marshall
*George and Martha One Fine Day* by James Marshall
*George and Martha Rise and Shine* by James Marshall
*Morris Has a Cold* by Bernard Wiseman
*When Will I Read?* by Miriam Cohen
*“Bee My Valentine!”* by Miriam Cohen
*Starring First Grade* by Miriam Cohen
*Jim’s Dog Muffins* by Miriam Cohen

Other authors to look for:

Crosby Bonsall
Bill Peet
Friendship Bracelet
(Lesson 10)

Materials
embroidery thread, 2 or 3 colors
masking tape

Directions
1. Cut thread into six 1-yard long lengths.
2. Knot all the strands together 4" from the top.
3. Tape thread above knot to desk.
4. Use left strand and knot it, one at a time, around all other strands.
5. Use the new far left strand and knot it, one at a time, around all other strands.
6. Repeat until thread is nearly used up. Tie ends together.
Appendix R
Friendship Folders
(Lesson 10)

Materials
collection paper
glue
stapler

Directions
1. Fold a large piece of construction paper in half to make a pocket. Staple two sides and make a picture of yourself on the outside.
2. Think about what makes a good friend. Make a heart for each thing you think of.
3. Put all the hearts in your pocket.
4. Draw one out each day and try especially hard to be like that for the day.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


